

Side Event

Decriminalize drug use and possession for personal use: Why, What and How?

Organized by the **Drug Policy Network South East Europe**

Objective

At this side event, we shall present the scientific and political background for such policy changes, models of decriminalization that may be used, and examples of results and challenges from countries and jurisdictions that implemented decriminalization.

Background

Decriminalization is defined as the removal of criminal sanctions for certain activities related to drug use and possession for personal use.

Since the 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session, many UN agencies have reported the negative impact of criminalization on people who use drugs and on communities and presented recommendations in favor of a decriminalization process in drug policies. This policy option is a core component of a rights- and health-based approach towards people who use drugs.

Around the world, 67 jurisdictions in 41 countries (as of October 2023) have adopted some form of decriminalization of drug use and possession, with models varying greatly from one jurisdiction to another.

Time and date

Wednesday, **20 March 2024, 9.10 – 10.00** a.m. in **M0E05**

Agenda

- Introduction: moderator **Katrin Schiffer**, Chair of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs
- Scientific and political background: **Susanna Ronconi**, Forum Droghe, Italy
- Models of decriminalisation and results of the CSFD survey on them: **Milutin Milošević**, DPNSEE
- Position of prevention and recovery organisations: **Augusto Nogueira**, ARTM Macau, Member of the VNGOC Steering Committee
- Experiences from Croatia: *Decriminalization in the Context of Recovery*, **Željko Petković**, Assistant Director of the Croatian Institute of Public Health
- Experiences from Italy: *The illusion of decriminalisation, the Italian case*, **Grazia Zuffa**
- Experiences from Greece: **Athanasios Theocharis**, President, The Organisation Against Drugs (OKANA)

Organisations that support the side event

The **Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia** to the OSCE and other international organizations in Vienna

The **Permanent Mission of Montenegro** to the OSCE
Correlation - European Harm Reduction Network
EU Civil Society Forum on Drugs

Fédération Addiction, France
Forum Droghe, Italy
International Drug Policy Consortium
Juventas, Montenegro
Knowmad Institut, Germany
Positive Voice, Greece
Prevent, Serbia
Villa Maraini, Italy

