



**EUROPEAN COALITION FOR JUST AND EFFECTIVE DRUG POLICIES –
ENCOD vzw**

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**Minutes of the 2005 General Assembly
Rathaus Kreuzberg Berlin Germany
June 25th and 26th, 2005.**

Participants:

- 1) Milena Naydenova/Hope/Sofia/Bulgaria hope_sofia.bg@abv.bg
- 2) Peter Sarosi/Hungarian Civil Liberties Union/Hungary/ sarosip@tasz.hu
- 3) Grazia Zuffa/Forum Droghe/Italy gzuffa@fuoriluogo.it
- 4) Bushka Bryndova/Oslik/Czech Republic / bushka@bushka.cz
- 5) Vito Georgievski/Doverba/Republic of Macedonia/ vitodov@yahoo.com
- 6) Marie Candius/Swedish Drug Users' Union./Sweden/ marie.candius@hotmail.com
- 7) Fernanda de la Figuera/ARSECA/Spain/ mfernandadelaf@yahoo.es
- 8) Joachim Eul/Bundesnetzwerk Drogenpolitik/Germany/ joachim_eul@snafu.de
- 9) Farid Ghehioeche/CAM R-D, Ligne Blanche/France/ farid@no-log.org
- 10) Bruno Valkeneers/Liaisons Antiprohibitionnistes/Belgium/ La@skynet.be
- 11) Freek Polak / Dutch Drug Policy Foundation / Netherlands / fpolak@knmg.nl
- 12) Artur Radosz / Kanaba/ Poland / artur@kanaba.info
- 13) Andria Efthimiou-Mordaunt/John Mordaunt Trust/U.K./ andria3a@yahoo.co.uk
- 14) Hanka Gabrielova/Konopa/Czech Republic/ hanka@ecn.cz
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- 19) Heidrun Behle/Bundesverband der Eltern und Angehörigen/Germany/ info@akzeptierende-eltern.de
- 20) Jürgen Heimchen/Bundesverband der Eltern und Angehörigen/Germany/ info@akzeptierende-eltern.de
- 21) Franco Corleone/Forum Droghe/Italy corleone@francocorleone.it
- 22) Hakan Wallen/Swedish Drug Users Union/Sweden/ hakan.wallen@brukarforeningen.com
- 23) Marina Impallomeni/Fuoriluogo/Italy/ mimpallomeni@fuoriluogo.it
- 24) Virginia Montañes/ Spain/ virginiamontanes@yahoo.es
- 25) David Czernak/Oslik/Czech Republic/ david@bytegang.com
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- 27) Laurent Appel / ASUD – Chanvre Info /France/Switzerland / kebra@noos.fr
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- 29) Christine Klüge/AKZEPT/Germany/ akzeptbuero@yahoo.de
- 30) Martin Steidinger/HanfParade/ Germany/ tribble@hanfplantage.de
- 31) Wolfgang Sterneck / Alice Project / Germany / contact@alice-project.de
- 32) Olivier Ferreira/ France/ olivier.ferreira@neuf.fr

Invited speaker: Dirk Schaffer / JES Netzwerk/ German Aids Info / Germany / dirk.schaeffer@dah.aidshilfe.de

Apologised: Kimmo Wilska (Finland) and Jorgen Kjaer (Denmark), they were represented by resp. Joep Oomen and Milena Naydenova. Dasha Ocheret (Russia) apologised one day after the meeting. Both Kimmo and Dasha have cancelled their effective membership (they continue to be normal members)

MEETING MINUTES

(by Milena Naydenova and Joep Oomen)

The meeting started with a presentation by Dirk Schaffer of the German organisation JES (Junkies, Ex-users, substitutioners) on drug policy in Germany. Afterwards, all participants presented themselves.

2. BUREAUCRITICAL DECISIONS

a. Annual report 2004

The Annual report 2004 was approved. Andria will forward a proposal for a reformulation of one paragraph which will then be added to the electronic version. The members of the Steering Committee were relieved of their financial responsibilities.

a. Statutes

Four new members will be admitted to the effective membership list: Artur from Poland, Jan van der Tas from Stichting Drugsbeleid, the Netherlands, Christine from Germany and Virginia from Spain (this in order to enable them to become member of the Steering Committee). We now have 11 effective members: Andria, Peter Sarosi, Farid, Bruno, Marina, Joergen, Joep, Artur, Jan, Christine and Virginia.

c. Steering Committee

Three members presented their resignation from the steering committee: Andria, Fernanda and Peter. The Assembly thanked them for their commitment. Later in the meeting a new Steering Committee was elected, of which Bruno Valkeneers does not longer form part. Also Bruno is thanked for his work.

It was said that Steering Committee members should meet various criteria: they should be able to contribute with thoughts, actions and attitudes. They should have a network in various parts of the movement, represent different regions and have an equal gender division.

Ideally we would have one steering committee of 7 and a staff group of 3 but this structure makes things difficult, as we have to organise meetings for 10 people. Therefore the staff group is included in the steering committee. Ideally we would have two SC meetings per year apart from the General Assembly.

The new Steering Committee consists of the following people:

Christine Klüge Secretary
Farid Ghehiouèche - Chair
Joep Oomen Treasurer
Artur Radosz
Virginia Montañes
Jan van der Tas
Marina Impallomeni

Only SC members can represent ENCOD, and only the chairperson or someone appointed by him can sign legally binding documents.

d. Internal Communication

The Eurodrug-list sometimes fails to meet its objectives, which are to enable ENCOD to co-ordinate activities. We need another list which can be accessible for all members, but is also an effective tool for decision-making. How to combine transparency and effectiveness? We decide to re-organise the e-mail lists. With regards to Eurodrug, we decide to transform it into a webpage organised as a forum, where also non-ENCOD members can have access. In this way automatically sublists can be created about specific issues (cannabis, harm reduction etc.)

When this page is ready, we will start a second list for ENCOD members only, on which only information on ENCOD activities will be exchanged. This list will be moderated (by Joep), so not every message that is sent to the list will automatically appear on it. Besides, the Steering Committee will have its own list.

3. FINANCIAL SITUATION

This situation is critical: we have no funds to create decent working conditions for the main activists: Joep, Artur, Farid. We need at least 20.000 euro to continue working on a professional level for the rest of 2005. With a specific proposal for sponsorship, we have approached some representatives of the European cannabis industry, and with some success: 33 % of this amount is already assured.

This proposal is about putting forward the claim for the right to grow, possess and consume plants. In our public messages, this will be conceived as referring to cannabis. Some people raised questions about this collaboration. It could be used against us, we could be accused of promoting the use of cannabis, and there are many other issues that deserve attention.

Various people said that we should not be too worried about this, as long as we make our position clear, which is promoting the beneficial and responsible use of plants, as an integral part of a drug policy that is aiming at harm reduction for all drugs that exist.

Decision: we approve this proposal and encourage the Steering Committee to go forward with it. One member (Xavier Mayó) abstains from this decision, but does not oppose it.

Other options for fundraising, such as merchandising, were also discussed. When they are ready, we can use the T-shirts to obtain members, as well as the DVD's (if anyone knows a cheap way to print DVD's, please inform Joep). The candles are nice, but not practical to manage. The idea of the tax stamps has been used in Switzerland, and not proven successful.

Apart from sponsorship from the hemp industry and merchandising, other possible sources are membership fees and donations. We ask all larger organisations that are already ENCOD-member to consider increasing their membership fee to 500 EURO. We ask everybody to help find people around who could become a member of ENCOD – 500 members paying 50 EURO in average means 25.000 euro. Also it can be argued that donations are a legal way to escape taxes, for this it should be possible to give the money not straight to ENCOD, but to a national member organisation with tax exemption status.

4. FUTURE PLANS

Several ideas were discussed for future actions inside the ENCOD framework.

a. Proposal to the European Commission, Health Department

Milena (HOPE Sofia) presented an idea to request the European Commission for funding a project for a survey done by drug user organisations about the experiences of drug users with treatment centres, health agencies and legal authorities in Europe. Several organisations expressed their wish to take part in the letter of intent, that Milena will distribute in the coming weeks. The deadline for this proposal is in April 2006.

b. Campaign

Joep explained the idea behind the campaign for the right to grow, possess and consume plants. We had a brainstorm about the tools of this campaign: a petition (with 1 million signatures we can make an EU citizens' initiative that will force the Commission to put forward this proposal, but first after the EU Constitution will enter into force), a platform text, flyers, a website, press releases, T-shirts, a DVD.

We would need 100.000 flyers to start with. We have 500 T-shirts already but need to print them with a slogan, which will be decided by the Steering Committee in the coming weeks.

Kris presented an idea to organise a festival (film, speeches, music) in Maastricht around the time that lord mayor Leers will organise his conference there (November 2005)

c. Catania report

We can use the Catania report as a tool to build alliances. ENCOD members are encouraged to use this report in their national campaigns, and we continue to pressure Catania and other MEPs to organise a follow up inside the Parliament. We have had one conversation with Catania about the possibility of organising a conference in the autumn of 2005 with local authorities who are in favour of drug policy reform.

Another idea is to ask VIPs to sign the petition for the Catania report, then we could publish their picture, this could help bringing people to the site.

d. Other ideas

Virginia presented the idea of offering workshops to legal experts (lawyers etc.) about drug policy, this could even bring in some money. She will be in contact with a similar initiative coming from Grup Igia in Spain, together with the Bar Association of Barcelona.

Joachim proposed us to make a quick overview on the national laws on drugs, we decided to do this via e-mail.

e. Future vision

In March 2008, we should be able to organise at least 50.000 people to give the message to the EU and UN that the Conventions must be modified. We envisage this to be a combination of a Hemp Fair, a Harm Reduction Conference and a Concert with famous artists.

We could start this process with several initiatives:

- To open a "closed" bank account to raise money for this objective.
- To start a research for good slogans (for example quotes from the Bible) that can be used to promote drug policy reform.
- To spread the word about 'Vienna 2008' and encourage other sectors to start focussing on this possibility.

ACTIVITY CALENDAR 2005/2006

21 July: Day of the Victims of the Drug War

9,10 and 11 September: Hemp Fair, Madrid (follow up: Fernanda?)

25.26 September (unsure): Hemp Fair, Cologne

14,15, 16 October: Hemp Fair Barcelona (follow up: Virginia, Artur, Joep)

21,22 and 23 October: Hemp Fair London (follow up: Kris, Artur, Joep)

1 November: International Drug User Day

25.26.1 November: Hemp Fair, London (follow up: Kris, Artur, Joep)

10-12 November: DPA Conference, Long Beach (US)

ENCOD has been invited to this Conference, as has been HOPE. (We decide to put the money together and send Milena, Joep and evt. Jan)

March 2006: Commission on Narcotic Drugs meeting, Vienna

April 2006: European Social Forum, Athens

6 May 2006: MMM

May 2006: International Harm Reduction Conference, Vancouver (Canada)

Next General Assembly:

Around 24 June 2006, probably in Italy