

Proposal for a new Steering Committee

This year, the Steering Committee has been in function two years. As usual, the SC resigns and a new one is elected. For this occasion the Encod secretariat would like to make the following considerations.

Encods main activities can be divided in 4 categories:

Campaigns (*Cannabis Social Clubs - Friends of the Coca Leaf - Actions on drug war prisoners – Advocacy letters*)

Lobby (*Participation in CND and Vienna NGO Committee meetings, UN - Civil Society Forum, EU – Events in European Parliament*)

Information (*Website – Social media (Facebook etc.) - Monthly bulletin - Press strategies – Research*)

Organisation (*Membership and Financial administration – Fundraising - Contact to members, public and press - Installation and moderation of mailing lists - monthly SC skype meetings – General Assembly*)

In all these 4 categories, there are weak spots. We need to look into these weak spots and implement strategies to improve them.

Ideally, each of these categories should have an own group of people that should deal with the design, implementation and evaluation of strategies. Since the GA of 2009, we have tried to set up these working groups, but without much success.

In 2011 the amount of members of the SC was raised from 4 to 10 (later this number fell to 8). If we expected then that the SC could become the group that could take initiatives in all the 4 areas, we may be quite disappointed today. What are the reasons why the SC cannot be more effective?

In the first place, it could be that people become members of the SC with the wrong expectations. They may be more attracted by the representative tasks of the SC (participating in lobby activities) and less by the organisational tasks (for example working out a decent member or fundraising strategy). Many of them face organisational difficulties themselves and lack the time to concentrate on Encods needs. As a result the SC meetings have become a place to ventilate and discuss ideas and opinions, but not to elaborate practical strategies and implement them into concrete actions.

On the other hand, our resources do not allow big investments. With 8 SC members it is quite costly to organise a physical meeting. In order to be effective, it is much better to meet in person than on skype. In the past 2 years the SC did not even meet physically once. As a result the communication between Encod members, Steering Committee and Secretariat becomes poorer, which on the long run will have negative consequences for the organisation.

To obtain a more effective decision-making structure in Encod the following is proposed :

An inner circle (IC) is created, consisting of at least 1-2 representatives of every country that attends the GA. Other members who do not attend the GA may adhere to this group later. This inner circle would consist of people who can take upon themselves tasks in at least one of the above mentioned areas, and if necessary advise the SC.

Members of the IC who wish to candidate for the SC should present their candidature (including their plans for the future) at the GA that will elect three of them to form the SC. They will then be responsible for taking decisions on the organisation, in cooperation with the

secretariat. They would try to meet once every 3 to 6 months to establish and implement a work plan for the organisation. In between they would hold skype meetings to which also IC members would be wellcome to attend.

Encod secretariat, 14 June 2013

