

Throughout Europe, the call for an end to drug prohibition is growing stronger. Large amounts of public funds are being spent to the enforcement of a law that surrenders the control over the drugs market to organized crime and forces some users into lifestyles that are harmful for themselves and others. All scientific evidence is pointing at the same conclusion: the 'war on drugs' has failed, it is time for a peaceful alternative.

For several years now, important changes have taken place in the global drug debate. The authorities of five US states and the government of Uruguay have replaced prohibition of cannabis by legal regulation. In Europe, more and more regional and local governments are experimenting with policies that decriminalize drug use and intend to reduce the harm related to it. Still, real progress will have to be made in national parliaments, where laws have to be modified.

The drug debate has many stakeholders. Not all of them are equally represented. Huge financial interests (for instance of pharmaceutical and agroindustrial companies) hide behind organisations who claim to represent 'Civil Society'. Meanwhile, the voice of consumers or small producers is mostly ignored, as they are marginalized, as usual. As a consequence, the outcome of this debate remains unsure. Will the drugs market become a playground for multinational corporations? Will the state impose its monopoly? Will consumers, small scale producers and distributors have anything to say in this debate?

Since 1993, Encod has played a crucial role in efforts to convince politicians and authorities of the need to end drug prohibition. Now that those efforts are slowly starting to bear fruits, it is time to address the citizens themselves. The more people know about drugs, the less they will be manipulated. The best regulation of the drugs market will be obtained if citizens are both allowed and able to make well informed decisions on their life. This paper explains how we try to build a lasting peace on drugs.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO IN 2016

DRUG PEACE BRIGADE

In 2016, the United Nations will hold a Special Session of the General Assembly in New York to discuss alternatives to current drug policies. This UNGASS is expected to mark the end of a uniform drug policy in the world. Several countries have started to challenge the current consensus on drug prohibition and will continue to do so. Encod will actively encourage this tendency by sending a brigade of 'drug peace activists' to New York and follow up with events in Europe. The goal is to ensure that the interests of affected and concerned citizens are taken into account in the design of new drug policies.



THINK INSIDE THE BOX

Since 2005 Encod promotes the concept of Freedom to Farm: the right of any adult citizen to grow any plants for personal use. From this year onwards we will actively support all our members who grow for own use with information, technical advice and moral support. We will set up a help desk with information on how to grow, harvest and use cannabis in a responsible way, and provide legal support to members who encounter legal problems while growing or possessing for personal use or while they are associated to a Cannabis Social Club recognized by Encod.



GROW YOUR FREEDOM

Encod wishes to develop a just and effective approach to drugs based on the empowerment of affected citizens. Therefore we support the initiatives of citizens who —within the legal margins of their country - organize the production and distribution of plants to satisfy their personal needs, through a closed circuit and a non-profit basis. We promote networking among activists in Europe and elsewhere to ensure these initiatives count with the best available political and legal defense.





EVENTS ORGANIZED BY ENCOD DURING THE CHD 2015

Monday 10 March 2015, 11:00-12:00 pm, Conference Room M00110
REPORT ON THE CRIMINALIZATION OF CANNABIS USERS IN EUROPE
 Organized in partnership with UNODC - Association of European Lawyers Committee (AELC) and European Forum.

The session will include the presentation of a pilot study carried out in Slovenia, which focuses on social experiments that would help create indicators of harmful effects of drug policy and contribute to a more comprehensive evidence-based and humane approach towards drug use in general and the national and EU level. The presentation will focus on the main experience and lessons learned in the framework of human rights and public health and discuss important issues for the legal surroundings against cannabis users (medical and recreational use) in Slovenia and the EU.

Thursday 12 March 2015, 11:00-12:00 pm, Conference Room M00110
MEDICAL PERSPECTIVES OF CANNABIS: A PATIENTS REVIEW
 Organized in partnership with Institut Francoprimo Cannabis (IFC) and Health Justice Forum.

Possibly, 100 years ago, it would not have been necessary to organize an international session on the medical and social aspects of the use of cannabis. This is the first international session devoted to the medical and social aspects of the use of cannabis. It is organized by the Association of European Lawyers Committee (AELC) and the European Forum. It is organized in the framework of the European Forum. It is organized in the framework of the European Forum. It is organized in the framework of the European Forum.

For further information please contact:
 Julien Bello (ENCOD, Brussels Office)
 Tel: +32 (0) 27 133 854 (weekdays) / julienbello@encod.org
 Tom Scharif (ENCOD, London Office)
 Tel: +44 (0) 20 7464 4444 / tom.scharif@encod.org
 Kees Oomen (ENCOD)
 Tel: +31 (0) 452 172 224 / kees.oomen@encod.org

