



# Developments in EU and UN drug policy

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Living in an  
area of  
freedom,  
security  
and justice

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## EU Drugs Action Plan 2009 – 2012

- **Key objectives**
  - **Coordination** - Strengthening coordination and cooperation at EU and national level, with the involvement of civil society.
  - **Drug demand reduction** - Improving coverage, quality and effectiveness of drug demand reduction. Particular attention for vulnerable groups and the prevention.
  - **Drug supply reduction** – Improving effectiveness of law enforcement by making better use of Europol and other EU structures. Increase coordinated operations to respond to emerging threats through e.g. regional security platforms.
  - **International cooperation** - Better coordination of national and Community policies in international cooperation, including in alternative development.
  - **Information, research & evaluation** – Further increase knowledge about all aspects of drug markets and drug use, by enhancing research, data collection and evaluation.





## EU Drugs Action Plan 2009 – 2012

- **Coordination**
  - **Action 4** - Annual 'State-of-the-drug-problem' debate in HDG
  - **Action 7** - Continuation of Civil Society Forum on Drugs
  - **Action 8** - European Alliance on Drugs project
  - **Action 9** - Further support for involvement of civil society at national and local level





## EU Drugs Action Plan 2009 – 2012

- **Drug Demand Reduction**
  - **Objectives 5 & 6** - Advocating full continuum of measures, from prevention to early intervention, to treatment, to harm reduction and to social rehabilitation and reintegration
  - **Action 11 & 12** - Special attention for age of onset of drug use and specific at-risk groups
  - **Actions 17-19** - Focus on quality and benchmarks, EU consensus papers to be drafted by 2012
  - **Objective 9** - Special attention for measures in prison, including development of monitoring instruments





## EU Drugs Action Plan 2009 – 2012

- **Drug supply reduction**
  - **Objective 11** - Further strengthening of existing collaboration mechanisms and structures, including Europol and Eurojust
  - **Action 24** - Further focus on intelligence-led law enforcement
  - **Objective 13** - Introduction of measures that may enable rapid responses to emerging trafficking routes, i.e. by the establishment of multilateral cooperation platforms





## EU Drugs Action Plan 2009 – 2012

- **International cooperation**
  - **Objective 16** – Place greater emphasis on reflection of balanced approach in international cooperation in the field of drugs
  - **Action 50** - Aim to assess outcome of international drug-related assistance
  - **Objective 18** - Further unified positions towards international organisations, including the UN





## EU Drugs Action Plan 2009 – 2012

- **Information, research and evaluation**
  - **Action 63** - Increased attention for the improved of coordination and cooperation in the field of drug-related research
  - **Action 64** - Continued support for EMCDDA and Reitox network
  - **Action 65 & 67** - Further development of key and other indicators in drug demand and drug supply reduction
  - **Action 68** - Further investment in evaluation tools and instruments to assess policy impacts
  - **Action 72** - Independent evaluation of the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012 and the EU Drugs Action Plan 2009-2012





## Between theory and practice ...

- Member States have their traditions and practices in drug policy. EU drug policy is based on 'Unity in Diversity'.
- This entails that what might be legally possible, is not necessarily politically feasible or acceptable
- There are limited or no tools to 'impose' implementation of EU drug policy in Member States. Nevertheless, convergence has taken place in recent years.
- Drug policy is multidisciplinary field, involving many different actors, departments and structures at national, EU and international level. This is a challenge for coordination at all levels.





## Between theory and practice ... (2)

- High quality information to inform EU drug policy is not easy to obtain; EC depends on MS to deliver high quality data & information through existing structures such as EMCDDA and Europol.
- EU drug policy often consolidates policies that have already been implemented in a large number of Member States.
- The EU drug policy debate is still not free from political differences...
  - E.g. the recognition among experts of different gradations of drug use (experimental – recreational – problematic – dependence)





## UNGASS 1998 (2008)

- Negotiations in Vienna on Political Declaration in March 2009
- Political Declaration etc. is currently (10/2009) being negotiated in New York (UNGA 64, Third Committee)
- Note: UNGASS also covers issues like money laundering and precursors





## UN Drug Control System

- **1998 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs - Political Declaration (S-20/1)**
  - Setting the aims to significantly reduce the drug problem by 2008
- **Declaration on guiding principles of drug demand reduction (S-20/3)**
  - prevention, treatment, reducing adverse health & social consequences of drug abuse, rehabilitation
- **Declaration on Measures to enhance international cooperation to counter the world drug problem (S-20/4)**
  - Supply reduction, precursor control, alternative development, judicial cooperation, anti-money laundering
- **Action Plan on drug demand reduction (Res. 54/132)**





## Coordination of the UN Drug Control System

- UN Drug coordination & control mechanisms
  - **Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)** – Commission of UN ECOSOC; task of executing Conventions and coordinating world drug control efforts; 56 Member States
  - **UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** – implements UN Drug Control Programme at international level and assists Member States
  - **International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)**– set up to implement 1961 and subsequent conventions; statistical focal point for registration of legal manufacturing of drugs, etc.; ‘Guardian of the Conventions’





## UNGASS review process

- EU adopted a common position document in October 2008, with the following key principles:
  - *Reinforcing and strengthening the Balanced Approach*
  - *Greater emphasis on drug demand reduction (DDR)*
  - *Explicit adoption of harm reduction as equal element of DDR*
  - *Further implementation of proportionate supply reduction policies*
  - *Respect for human rights in all areas of drug policy*
  - *Non-conditionality as key part of sustainable alternative development*
  - *Importance of basing drug policy on best available evidence*
  - *Increased investment in data collection and monitoring*





## **UNGASS review process**

- **EU faced and uphill battle. A large group of countries supported EU objectives, but a powerful minority made any progress difficult**
- **EU is among the few ‘groups’ in CND that showed ambition to learn from past decade and improve policies**
- **EU faces key opposition on ‘harm reduction’ and ‘non-conditionality’ in alternative development, but other principles are also watered down**
- **EU unity was greater than before but became difficult to maintain**
- **New insights from new US administration were not yet there.....**





## Declarations and Action Plans, a few issues

- **Balanced approach vs. supply reduction oriented approach**
  - Containment, security belt etc.
- **Evidence based/informed policy vs. ideology**
  - Even the very basic information available only from a few geographical areas
  - Use of evidence and learning from that e.g. concerning harm reduction, especially on HIV/AIDS (WHO, UNAIDS)
  - Evidence/indicators on supply reduction
- **New substances and poly-drug use (especially alcohol)**
- **Medicinal products**
- **Regulation vs. prohibition**





## Conclusion (disclaimer: personal view)

- EU has managed to develop a “European model” for balanced and integrated drug policies, which is more than the lowest common denominator
- This has served and continues to serve as a model for Candidate Countries and most neighbouring countries (ENPI countries) in developing policies
- EU Action Plans aim for greater emphasis on evidence based/informed policies. New Strategy (2013 - ) is a crucial point in this respect
- Indicators are being developed also for supply reduction, even if interest is somewhat limited
- Unfortunately, the drug policy debate seems to be stuck
- Lisbon Treaty offers some new possibilities for majority decisions also in Justice and Home Affairs but these should be used cautiously





## **Conclusion C'ed**

**(disclaimer: strictly personal view)**

- **EU framework is very complicated for effective policy making. However, it's relatively effective compared to UN, which is**
  - **Global**
  - **Intergovernmental**
  - **Unanimity based**
- **EU should continue developing the European model and - in line with the EU Action Plan - put more effort in speaking with one voice in the UN**





**THANK YOU!**

