

# **Towards a coherent policy on psychoactive substances**

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## **Motivation for changing from a differentiated approach towards a coherent one?**

- Dissatisfaction with the results of previous policies
- Increase of poly-drug use and mixed consumption of legal and illegal substances
- New research finding on addictions patterns
- Trend towards evidence-based policies
- Overall trends in society concerning substance use

## What is understood by 'coherent drug policies'?

Coherence in policies is achieved when:

- different policies **complement** or support each other
- do **not undermine** one another or cancel each other out
- create **synergies** between different policies

## **Policy coherence can mean:**

- Co-ordination of different policies
- Coordinated approaches to demand and supply reduction
- Coherence between research findings and policies
- Coherence between different policy levels
- Single policy approach on licit and illicit psychoactive substances
- Overarching policy on all types of addictions

# **Feasibility of policy coherence**

## **Global level**

- Applied by OECD and UN in the area of international development aid

## **European level:**

- Pompidou Group: work programme 2011-2015 on coherent and integrated drug policies
- European Council adopted the European Policy Coherence on Development (PCD) in 2005

## **Relevance of coherent policies for psychoactive substances**

- Parallels with other policy areas
- Implication in the political economy of globalisation
- supply and encompass under-developed, developing and developed regions of the world
- close link with other policy domains
- infused with conflicting ideological, moral and cultural attitudes

# **Measuring policy coherence**

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## **Policy coherence markers (indicators):**

1. Conceptualisation of the problems
2. Policy context
3. Legislative/regulatory framework
4. Strategic framework
5. Responses/interventions
6. Structures and resources



**Putting coherent policy into effect**

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### **Common goals:**

Public health

Public safety

Human rights

# **Making coherence work**

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## **Essentials to make coherence work:**

- Seek to eliminate policy inconsistencies
- Identify opportunities for policy enhancement
- Develop mitigation policies to overcome the adverse effects of non-psychoactive-substances policies
- Ensure consistency in politics
- Set and prioritise objectives
- Co-ordinate policy and its implementation
- Monitor, analyse and report
- Build capacity and capability
- Heed to dynamics

## **Challenges in establishing coherent policies**

- Public opinion
- Political ideologies
- Institutional cultures
- Structural incompatibilities
- Diverging professional interests

## **Opportunities in policy coherence**

- Viable option to tackle poly-drug use
- More effective integration of services
- Effective continuity of care
- Providing an overall objective cooperation
- Less struggle over influence and resources
- Reduced overlaps and double work
- More synergies
- Integrating drug demand and supply reduction