

C-EHRN ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

SUMMARY OF
ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

Correlation

 European Harm
Reduction Network

Title

C-EHRN Activity Report 2023. Summary of activities and impact.

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Correlation - European Harm Reduction Network

c/o De Regenboog Group

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1. FOREWORD

C-EHRN is proud and grateful to present its 2023 Network Report, providing a summarised version of the activities undertaken last year. In this document, we are looking back at a year full of tasks, challenges and opportunities.

One of the challenges C-EHRN is concerned about is the changing European and international political landscape characterised by the rise and strengthening of extreme right, xenophobic and populist governments. People who use drugs, migrants and other marginalised communities are disproportionately affected by these developments, and experience increasing stigmatisation, criminalisation and scapegoating by their governments. We also observe that the space for civil society and its freedom are shrinking in some European countries, and the socio-economic inequalities are deepening.

C-EHRN responds to these challenges through maintaining and expanding its activities and support for its members and other civil society organisations and policymakers.

In 2023, we continued our basic, core activities in the fields of networking, cooperation, monitoring and research, capacity building, knowledge exchange and advocacy. In addition, we intensified the cooperation with external partners, including networks and initiatives. This resulted in

developing a variety of joint activities and signing the Memoranda of Understanding with several networks and institutions to strengthen the collaborations and increase the impact of our work. We carried out a series of consultations to inform the C-EHRN Strategy (2024-2028), which will define our strategic priorities in the forthcoming years. The strategy is now finalised and will be published in early 2024.

In the framework of the BOOST Project, we organised - in cooperation with EHRA, EuroNPUD and DPNSEE - a series of online consultations, including nearly 100 experts and community members to inform a joint Advocacy Strategy for comprehensive health and harm reduction services in Europe.

In cooperation with UNITE, we organised online consultations on drug use & migration and drug consumption rooms, resulting in a Policy Brief on Harm Reduction Advocacy Challenges and Opportunities in Europe.

As part of our 2023 work plan, C-EHRN published a total of eight thematic publications, including a joint publication on drug consumption rooms, developed in cooperation with the EMCDDA.

Our continuous monitoring activities resulted in 11 publications in 2023, including six chapters on (1) HCV and Drug Use, (2) Essential Harm

Reduction Services, (3) New Drug Trends, (4) Drug Checking Trends and snapshot of observations in cooperation with TEDI, (5) Mental Health among Harm Reduction Staff (6) 5 City Reports.

One of the main highlights of our work in 2023 was the Member and Expert Meeting on 4-6 December in Budapest, with more than 120 participants attending the event. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to collect valuable input and feedback from key stakeholders.

Looking back, we can see and feel that our Network is becoming more vibrant and needs-driven. We are proud to hear that C-EHRN members and partners value our work and feel represented. We continue to reflect on and integrate input and feedback,

which will - along the new strategy - inform our activities in 2024 and beyond.

We thank our Members and Focal Points who continue to collect information for our monitoring activities. We are also grateful to the Advisory Committee, the Scientific Advisory Board and the experts who contributed to various activities by providing input and scientific advice and supported us with their expertise. We also thank the consultants who have provided relevant work.

Last but not least, we thank the European Commission and De Regenboog Groep for providing continued financial and moral support in 2023.

Katrin Schiffer
C-EHRN Director

2. ABOUT C-EHRN

BACKGROUND

C-EHRN was established in 2004 in Amsterdam (NL) as a European civil society network and centre of expertise in the field of drug use, harm reduction and social inclusion.

C-EHRN is hosted by Foundation De Regenboog Groep (FRG) - a non-governmental, low-threshold service-providing organisation in Amsterdam. As its hosting organisation, FRG provides C-EHRN with a stable foundation, as well as the operational and financial capacity to develop and implement EU projects and grants. The organisation employs 360 paid staff members and works with more than 2000 volunteers, including a significant number of people with living and lived experience.

OUR VISION

C-EHRN envisions a future where Europe embodies a compassionate and equitable society where people who use drugs and other communities disproportionately affected by stigma, discrimination, and harmful (drug) policies have universal access to sustainable high-quality health and social care. We conceive an inclusive and respectful environment where social justice principles guide policies, and individuals and communities affected by harmful drug policies find empowerment and dignity.

OUR MISSION

C-EHRN's mission is to create spaces for dialogue and action to reduce social and health inequalities and promote social justice in Europe. Bringing together the harm reduction movement in Europe, C-EHRN serves as an agent of change by promoting and supporting rights-based and evidence-informed policies, services and practices that improve the health and well-being of people who use drugs, and other communities disproportionately affected by stigma, discrimination, health inequalities and harmful (drug) policies.

OUR PRINCIPLES

Evidence-informed Practice.

Through its activities, C-EHRN promotes an integrated, all-inclusive approach to generating and incorporating evidence in policy, programmes and practices. C-EHRN advocates for a 'knowledge to action' approach, where the expertise and values of practitioners and people who use drugs are integrated alongside scientific research to empower communities and strengthen care systems through engagement, cooperation and mutual support.

Community Leadership.

C-EHRN is committed to uplifting and upholding the well-being and rights of people who use drugs to thrive. We

recognise the leadership and expertise of communities representing their interests and needs. Through collaboration, participation and community engagement, we build solidarity with communities and ensure that policies resonate with those directly impacted by stigma, discrimination, health inequalities and harmful (drug) policies.

Intersectionality.

We embrace diversity in all its forms and acknowledge the compounding experiences of stigma, discrimination, criminalisation and exclusion that people who use drugs face. We promote movements, policies and services that recognise their unique individual experiences and address the interlinked historical, social and political inequalities that impact their lives.

Meaningful Collaboration in Policy Making.

We believe that achieving an equitable society free of stigma is only possible through collaborative efforts. C-EHRN actively collaborates with national, European and international organisations, recognising that cross-border challenges demand collective action.

Social Justice.

We firmly believe that every individual deserves equitable access to opportunities, resources and rights regardless of background. To increase access to social and healthcare, we strive to break down the geographical,

economic and systemic barriers that hinder marginalised communities.

Transparency and Ethical Governance.

We advocate for transparent and ethical governance in all policymaking processes. This includes open access to information, public engagement, government accountability and adherence to ethical principles, ensuring that policies are informed by evidence and firmly rooted in human rights.

3. MEMBERS & PARTNERS

Our Network unites community-based and community-led organisations, research institutes, social and healthcare agencies and policymakers. We welcome civil society, harm reduction organisations and individuals. Our members are based in the WHO Europe Region countries.

We closed 2023 with 340 Members, including 195 Organisational Members, all united by the shared goal of strengthening the harm reduction movement!

C-EHRN SECRETARIAT

Katrin Schiffer: C-EHRN Director
Rafaela Rigoni: Head of Research
Roberto Perez Gayo: Head of Policy
Iga Jeziorska: Senior Research Officer
Georg Bröring: Project Coordinator BOOST
Stefanie Kolle: Office Manager
Hanna Szabó: Communications Officer
Alice Pomfret: Research Support Officer
Arianna Rogialli: Policy Support Officer
Laoise Darragh: Research Support Officer
Joana Moura: Research Support Officer
Lea Curschmann: Project Support

EXPERTS & CONSULTANTS

Tuukka Tammi: Finland, THL
Daan van der Gouwe: Netherlands, Trimbos-Institute
Peter Sarosi: Hungary, Rights Reporter Foundation
Marta Pinto: Portugal, University of Porto
Guy Jones and Mireia Ventura: Spain, TEDI Network
Graham Shaw, UK
Beatrix Vas: Portugal, UNITE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tony Duffin: Ireland, Chair, Ana Liffey Foundation
Marianella Klok: Greece, PRAKSIS
Alina Bocai: Romania, ARAS
Peter Sarosi: Hungary, Rights Reporter Foundation
Róisín Downes: SSDP International
Perrine Roux: France, INSERM
Daan van der Gouwe: Netherlands, Trimbos Institute
Christos Anastasiou: Greece, EuroNPUD
Tuukka Tammi: Finland, THL

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Tuukka Tammi: Finland, Chair, THL
Iciar Indave: Portugal, EMCDDA
Erika Duffel: Sweden, ECDC
Mojca Maticic: Slovenia, University Medical Centre Ljubljana
Ruth Zimmermann: Germany, Robert Koch Institut
Marie Jauffret Roustide: France, French Institute of Health and Medical Research
Daan van der Gouwe: Netherlands, Trimbos-Institute

4. OUR ACTIVITIES

This Activity Report is based on our 2023 Evaluation Report and describes our activities and impact against four key objectives and outputs:

NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

Strengthen the network, foster collaboration with members and external partners and share activities and results.

Here's what some of our stakeholders say about us:

"Correlation is filling the blind spots of the other organisations and networks. It covers the local level and gives the chance of this networking. I am really happy about it."

1

MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION

Increase knowledge and evidence through data collection with the support of our local Focal Points.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Increase capacities, skills and knowledge and facilitate exchange and mutual support.

"Events such as the European Harm Reduction Conference, networks such as the Correlation-European Harm Reduction Network and the European Network of People Who Use Drugs, transnational campaigns such as Support. Don't Punish, are all essential. Preserving and growing these spaces is critical – and donors should be aware of that too."

2

DISSEMINATION AND ADVOCACY

Raise awareness, disseminate results and organise advocacy activities to promote good practices and evidence-informed harm reduction and drug policy.

¹ The quotes in this report, unless otherwise specified, are from our 2023 Evaluation Report and are anonymous.

² Adrià Cots Fernández (2023): A new EU drug policy is coming. Will it be reactionary? <https://idpc.net/blog/2023/10/a-new-eu-drug-policy-is-coming-will-it-be-reactionary>, last download 20/12/2023

NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

HIGHLIGHTS

- We closed 2023 with a total of 340 members, consisting of 195 organisations and 145 individuals.
- We developed a multi-annual C-EHRN Strategy, covering years 2024 to 2028, which is now finalised and will be published in early 2024.
- We welcomed five new focal points into the C-EHRN Monitoring Network (Bielefeld, Newport, Iceland, Sofia, and Kyiv).
- We engaged 160 members and experts in the processes of conducting needs assessments and other consultations.
- We formalised the European Network of Drug Consumption Rooms (ENDCR), with more than 25 member organisations across Europe.
- We established collaboration agreements with other networks and agencies to enhance cooperation and amplify the impact of our activities.

OPPORTUNITIES

- We unite a broad range of stakeholders, including community-based and community-led harm reduction and health service providers, advocates, researchers, activists, community members and policy makers.
- We cooperate closely with other networks, organisations and agencies to increase impact and synergy.

"Our motivation to join the network was that we noticed that networking is everything, especially in fields of work where you don't have that many organizations or structures you can rely on. I think that is something that the harm reduction network provides, to seek information and talk to people who have the same struggles as you do." (Jan-Gert Hein, Drogenberatung e.V. Bielefeld)

"Everyone keeps talking about data, I don't really see it as data, I see it as a very practical network of very practical people, who, most importantly, have relationships with people who use drugs. This thing is gold dust - to researchers, to policy makers... The relationships that these people have across Europe is the groundwork. We don't necessarily recognise how important that is as often as we should."

MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION

HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2023 data collection engaged 35 C-EHRN Focal Points, representing 31 European countries, along with 100 additional experts.
- Our Civil Society Monitoring Data Report 2023 includes 6 Chapters: Hepatitis C Care, Essential Harm Reduction Services, New Drug Trends, Mental Health of Harm Reduction Staff, TEDI Snapshot Report and TEDI Comparative Report, and five City Reports.
- We prepared the Executive Summary of the Monitoring Data Report and made it available in ten languages.

OPPORTUNITIES

- C-EHRN data collection and monitoring provides up-to-date information about health inequalities, needs and challenges at local and national level.
- C-EHRN monitoring data can be leveraged for advocacy at local, national, and European levels and inform drug and health policies.

"When we talk to politicians in my country, they ask what is happening in other countries around... So this is very useful information, the one collected by C-EHRN."

"The data provided is useful to represent as a data for the services, the organisation, as to donors, governmental institutions and to other service providers."

CAPACITY BUILDING AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

HIGHLIGHTS

- We organised four Meetings for our Focal Points, Members and Experts, with nearly 800 participants, including (1) a Focal Point Meeting in Lisbon, (2) a DCR Technical Meeting in Lisbon in cooperation with the EMCDDA, (3) a DCR Meeting in Strasbourg in cooperation with the Pompidou Group, (4) the C-EHRN Expert & Member Meeting in Budapest.
- We organised five webinars and streamed sessions with a total of 230 participants.
- We organised two DCR trainings in Ljubljana and Brno, involving 11 local organisations and 30 participants.
- We organised four case studies and eight focus group discussions to assess the level and quality of civil society involvement in drug policy in Greece, Finland, Hungary and Ireland, involving 20 organisations and 45 individuals.
- We published 6 thematic papers: (1) Harm Reduction in Prison Toolkit, (2) Civil Society Involvement Case Studies, (3) Census on Drug Consumption Rooms, (4) Peer Involvement, (5) Technical DCR Paper in cooperation with the EMCDDA,

(6) SCRA Use in Prison Settings in Ter Apel (NL).

OPPORTUNITIES

- We bring together harm reduction service providers, community members, researchers, advocates and policy makers and provide a platform for exchange.
- We utilise the knowledge and expertise of our Focal Points, members and experts and facilitate exchange.
- We increase knowledge, capacities, and skills through knowledge exchange, training, and the publication of thematic papers and articles.

"Correlation provides the opportunity to make those changes, they recognise the findings and they are able to move directions accordingly toward what is more needed. They don't stick to the original aims, they are flexible."

"The local stakeholders don't have that time to step back and look at the big picture. Correlation could invest in it and find opportunities for rather formal and informal gathering together and supporting monitoring as a sort of independent lens."

DISSEMINATION AND ADVOCACY

HIGHLIGHTS

- We prepared a new visual identity, which reflects our network's character and values.
- We reached 47.768 individuals through our websites, 7.237 through our newsletter, and 4.300 individuals through our social media channels.
- We published a Policy and Advocacy Report, based on two online consultations, assessing advocacy needs, challenges and opportunities in the field of (1) drug use and migration and (2) drug consumption rooms.
- We cooperated closely with other networks and organisations to develop a joint advocacy strategy which will be launched in early 2024.

OPPORTUNITIES

- We cooperate closely with other networks and organisations, increasing the impact of advocacy activities.
- We refer to the core principles of Harm Reduction when spreading the messages, underlining why harm reduction is needed.

"We need to guarantee they will not stop us from doing what we have done and we need to say the things so they know what harm reduction is about, take it to their agenda. This is a big problem in my country right now."

"And how do we do [advocacy]? We do things informed by evidence, informed by living experiences of people who use drugs."

HOW DID WE DO OVERALL?

General satisfaction with C-EHRN activities³

80%

of the members and partners consider C-EHRN activities as relevant and impactful for their work.

84%

considered that C-EHRN contributed to improving harm reduction policies and practices in Europe during the year.

100%

of the members who answered the satisfaction survey expressed that C-EHRN 2023 activities represented their organisations' interests.

59%

of members and key stakeholders considered their home organisations were "fully represented" by the network's activities.

³ Source: Evaluation Report C-EHRN 2023. Satisfaction Survey - feedback from respondents (members and key stakeholders) asked if they are satisfied with C-EHRN activities.