



Press Release
Paris, 20 February 2018

Risk reduction: European cities examine supervised drug consumption facilities and their impact

The European Forum for Urban Security (Efus) mobilises 12 European partners to reduce security risks posed by drug consumption in cities. The project consists in supporting cities that host Supervised Drug Consumption Facilities (SDCFs) and evaluating their local impact. The project will build on the experience of four cities that already have an SDCF and associate four others that are considering opening one, as well as associations and research institutes.

The European legislation is favourable to SDCFs

In its Action plan on drugs 2017-2020, the European Union encourages the exchange of good practices of Supervised Drug Consumption Facilities (SDCFs), which are legal in some Member States. Over the course of two years, Efus will allow cities and associations that want to open an SDCF to benefit from the experience of other cities that already manage one. Titled Solidify, the project will focus on those facilities that also offer services such as food, shower and clothes. Indeed, drug consumers are often very vulnerable, in particular those who are homeless, and consumption facilities can be their only point of contact with social workers.

Reducing harm to increase safety

Drug consumption is often considered and dealt with as a public health issue. But when it takes place in public spaces, it can also generate all sorts of problems linked to safety such as tensions with local residents, nuisance, crime or traffic. Since they offer a place where to consume safely and under supervision, SDCFs can prevent such problems and contribute to the feeling of security of the local population.

However, there are not many tools available to support their implementation and understand precisely what impact they have on local communities. One of the project's objectives is to design a methodology and qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure the impact of an SDCF on a given locality in the short, medium and long term.

The need to associate local residents

Local residents may be worried by the opening of an SDCF or oppose it. It is thus necessary to prepare such a move in conjunction with specialised associations, local and national institutions, the police and local residents. The Solidify project will help municipalities garner support for their harm reduction approach, and will identify the necessary conditions to build consensus around SDCFs and guarantee public tranquillity.

WHAT THEY SAID

Willy Demeyer, Efus’ President and Mayor of Liege (Belgium)

“ There shouldn’t be any dogmatism about harm reduction. Supervised Drug Consumption Facilities are but one element in a global prevention policy. With this project, Efus shows that local authorities are eager to act. But national and European authorities must give local authorities the means to experiment through adapted legislation and resources.”

Elizabeth Johnston, Efus’ Executive director

“Supervised Drug Consumption Facilities are an interesting solution. But there are also challenges, such as acceptance by local residents and evaluation of the local impact of these facilities. Barcelona, Essen, Paris and Strasbourg are among those cities that have progressed and overcome, in part, such difficulties. We have a lot to learn from their experience.”



About the project

Co-financed by the “Supporting Initiatives in the Field of Drugs Policy” programme of the European Union’s Directorate General Justice, the Solidify project is coordinated by the European Forum for Urban Security (Efus). From January 2018 to December 2019, it will study the implementation of SDCFs (at the time of opening and over a period of time) in various European cities and evaluate their local impact. The project gathers 13 partners from 7 European countries: the European Forum for Urban Security, the cities of Augsburg (DE), Essen (DE), Lisbon (PT), Liege (BE), Mannheim (DE), Paris (FR), Strasbourg (FR) and The Hague (NL) as well as Bruxelles Prévention & Sécurité (BE), the association Well Being and Development (ES).

About Efus

Founded in 1987 under the auspices of the Council of Europe, the European Forum for Urban Security (Efus) is the only European network of local and regional authorities dedicated to urban security. It includes nearly 250 local and regional authorities from 16 countries. Its objectives are to:

- > promote a balanced vision of urban security, combining prevention, sanctions and social cohesion,
- > support local and regional authorities in the design, implementation and evaluation of their local security policy,
- > help local elected officials get recognition for their role in the development and implementation of national and European policies.

Risk and addiction reduction is a key area of work for Efus. As a non governmental organisation, Efus is member of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs, which is regularly consulted by the EU on their anti-drug policies, in particular the new action plan.

www.efus.eu

Contact:

Margaux Rouillard, Communications manager
rouillard@efus.eu - 01 40 64 49 12