

Measures to reduce drug related stigma

Pompidou Group 2021 Executive Training



Dates and Locations

**Module I:
6-9 July 2021,
venue to be
confirmed**

**Module II:
5-8 October 2021,
venue to be
confirmed**

Why?

Although drug policies are aimed at reducing drug use and its harmful effects they can have unintended consequences. Stigma is one of the consequences with the broadest impact. It affects to a large extent, not only people who use drugs themselves but also other people, such as relatives of people using drugs, patients in need of pain relief and palliative care, and also the society in general. Furthermore, the stigma is often reflected on professionals working in services and professions related to drug use.

Stigmatisation due to drug use is multifaceted - starting from the label of being an 'addict' to criminal labelling, leading to social isolation and rejection thus reinforcing low self-esteem and the risk of identifying with the role of being an outcast. As a result, disempowerment sets in driving those with problems even further to the margins of society. Such social maladjustment may, in turn, lead to recidivism and further drug use.

For a long time, drug use was seen as a personal choice of free will and deviant behaviour. Affected people often internalise these stereotypes and avoid seeking treatment which explains why a high proportion of addictions remain untreated. In parallel, the negative stigma reflects on medical professionals working

with addictions creating additional stress that can inhibit professionals willing to work with people who use drugs and have addiction problems.

On top, it is commonly acknowledged certain from ethnic groups or minorities that people who use drugs may experience a double, or 'compounded', stigma. This is due to the prevalence of popular images that characterise visible minorities as habitual drug users, especially since many illegal drugs come from outside Europe. As the UNODC states, in the case of substance abuse, people often conveniently blame 'foreigners', 'outsiders' or generic 'others' for the spreading of drugs and associated social problems. The list of possible 'cumulative disadvantages' can be continued, it ranges from women to LGBTQ populations to people with HIV/AIDS.

Putting into place strategies and practices aimed at reducing stigma contributes to creating safer and healthier societies, as well as ensuring compliance with obligations under international and national legal instruments that safeguard human rights, in particular the right to non-discrimination, the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment, and the right to health.

How?

The Pompidou Group Executive Training is a highly interactive learning platform where participants are learning by doing and sharing worldwide experiences. It is based on modern approaches to knowledge gaining through active participation, thought provoking discussions and practical vision on challenges and opportunities.

The Executive Training provides participants with needed tools for implementation of effective, comprehensive and innovative drug policies adopted to their national context. This unique format of further education for professionals is inviting open-minded people ready to engage, interact, share and grow together. One of the key features that sets the Executive Training apart from other training offers is the two-module concept.

This gives participants the possibility to get to know each other better, an aspect which is crucial for active and meaningful networking to learn more in-depth about practices in other countries. In addition, a combination of theory and focus on hands-on practices looking at what works and what does not shape the format of this yearly training.

The Executive Training combines plenary sessions, individual and group work, as well as on-site visits to selected projects and institutions. Places for the seminars are selected to allow for meaningful study visits. High-profile facilitators and resource persons from around the world are engaged to provide the best available expertise, reaching beyond European experiences, in meeting participants' professional needs.

What?

The training will address ways and means to effectively mitigate adverse consequences resulting from the stigmatisation of people who use drugs.

Professional experience

Experiences and results of different promising practices, and criteria for successful strategies for law enforcement, health and social services will be presented and discussed. The 2021 Executive Training focuses on 'how to do it' and will provide insights and guidance on how stigma can be reduced in practice by different professions.

International Standards

The training builds on the UNODC Technical Consultation on Stigma around Substance Use, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will incorporate the work done by the Pompidou Group on unintended consequences in drug policy and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.

Professionalism

The programme will cover multiple facets of today's real-life diversity and the key factors in society that contribute to drug related stigma. An important aspect will be the analysis how stigma is negatively reflecting on different professions and disciplines and those professionals who work in contact with people who use drugs.

Course Programme:

1st

Module

The first module seminar will address the origins, types and effects of stigmatisation.

Through this seminar participants will:

- Explore the roots and functioning of stigmatisation processes: addiction, criminalisation and compounding stigmas
- Understand stigmatisation resulting from addiction and criminalisation
- Examine consequences of stigmatisation: marginalisation, social exclusion, discrimination, human rights violations
- Understand effects of stigmatization on individuals, families, professional groups and society at large
- Recognize how stigmatisation affects prevention, harm reduction, treatment, law enforcement and criminal justice administration
- Analyse the role of media reporting and social media activity in perpetuating and amplifying stigma

2nd

Module

The second module seminar will present different types of actions and practices that can help prevent and mitigate the negative effects and consequences of stigmatisation.

Through this seminar participants will:

- Explore possibilities and limitations of regulatory approaches: incentives, sanctions, appraisal and performance management
- Develop skills through training, coaching and capacity building for different professional groups and multidisciplinary teams
- Examine examples of successful practices, encountered pitfalls and barriers, root causes of failures
- Identify opportunities to reduce stigmatisation in law enforcement, treatment, harm reduction, rehabilitation and detention
- Learn from people's lived experiences, the role and potential of civil society and NGOs in supporting attitudinal change
- Strategize around the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 'leaving no one behind' as a tool to drive change

Who?

Profile of participants

The Pompidou Group Executive Training targets professionals with managerial responsibilities from all sectors of drug policy engaged in social, health and law-enforcement sectors. These include:

- Staff from governmental or public institutions responsible for drug policies, related programmes, service delivery and cooperation with stakeholders.
- Members of civil society organisations working in various sectors related to drugs, addictions and drug policies.

The training aims at enhancing work related knowledge and strengthening managerial skills .

Applications:

Want to be part of the 2021 Executive Training?

To ensure a highly participatory learning process the training is limited to a maximum of 30 participants. Preference will be given to Pompidou Group and Council of Europe member States in case this number is exceeded.

Participants are required to commit themselves to prepare for and participate in both seminars. It is not possible to participate only in one module.

To apply for the training, please contact the Permanent Correspondent of your country or the Secretariat of the Pompidou Group and ask for the participation form. [Click here](#) to see the list of Permanent Correspondents.

Languages

To allow direct communication between all participants coming from different countries and continents the working language will be English.

Applications

The application deadline is **15 May 2021**.

Want to know more about the Executive Training of the Pompidou Group? Have a look at [this video](#).

Contact and further information:

E-mail:
pompidou.training@coe.int
Web site:
www.coe.int/pompidou

Executive Training: part of the International Drug Policy Academy

Starting from 2020, the Executive Trainings offered by the Pompidou Group are organised as integral part of the new Pompidou Group International Drug Policy Academy (IDPA).

The International Drug Policy Academy (IDPA) was launched by the Pompidou Group and aims to link policy, research and practice across sectors and build capacities for more effective elaboration, management and evaluation of coherent and sustainable drug policies and related programmes. In doing so, professionals working in drug policy related areas may obtain a formal recognition of their further education and strengthen the workforce. The IDPA utilizes engaged active learning and international collaboration to support effective drug policy management. 50 years of international cooperation and capacity building facilitated by the Pompidou Group and 10 years of experience with the successful concept of Executive Trainings in Drug Policy developed by the Pompidou Group, has gone into the development of the IDPA. On the academic side the IDPA was conceived and set up with academic advisement and support from Syracuse University, New York, and with the academic support of the University of Malta, enabling the academic validation of training programmes offered by the IDPA.

For 2021 the Academy offers two course programmes: the annual Executive Training in Drug Policy which is organised once a year on a specific topic with two 4-day in-residence seminars, and a further longterm comprehensive Drug Policy Executive Course leading to the 'Certificate in Advanced Drug Policy Management'.

Contact

For further information please contact:

Ms Elena Hedoux
Director of Programme Implementation
International Drug Policy Academy
Pompidou Group
Council of Europe

pompidou.training@coe.int

