



10 September 2007

European network of partnerships between stakeholders at frontline level responding to drug problems

Terms of reference

Adopted by the Bureau of the Pompidou Group on 22 March 2007
Reviewed by the Bureau of the Pompidou Group on 4 September 2007

Background/Sources of Reference:

The Finnish EU Presidency in 2007 addressed the cooperation of various actors in the law-enforcement, health and social sectors in tackling drug-related problems during a major conference under the title "Moving Forward Together" which took place in Turku on 6-7 September 2006.

The aim of the conference, which was organised in close cooperation with the Pompidou Group, was to promote a constructive dialogue, provide information and share experiences between drug policy authorities and thus to improve the effectiveness of their work.

As a result, the Finnish EU Presidency suggested setting up a European network, based with the Pompidou Group, for multi-agency partnerships tackling drug problems at front-line level (ref. Conclusions of the Finnish Presidency).

During the 2006 Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group on 27 and 28 November 2006 the 2007 – 2010 Work Programme was adopted. This Work Programme includes the mandate for the Pompidou Group to set up the network proposed by the Finnish EU Presidency (ref. 2007 – 2010 Work Programme of the Pompidou Group, activity line 5.1.).

Name of Network:

EXASS Net

European network of partnerships between stakeholders at frontline level responding to drug problems providing experience and assistance for inter-sectoral cooperation

Aim:

The network will create a link between existing inter-agency partnerships bringing together different stakeholders such as institutions, municipalities, service providers, NGOs and individuals to help respond to drug-related problems more effectively. This will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences about what is happening at front-line level in individual countries and promote good practice.

Objectives:

- Exchange of experiences leading to successful cooperation
- Understanding failures and misconceptions
- Identifying barriers to cooperation
- Creating mutual support structures
- Facilitating Know-how transfer and technical assistance
- Developing good practice guidelines

Expected results over the next 4 years:

- Network set-up and running (2007)
- Regular Network meetings held (from 2007)
- Analytical report on the functioning of partnerships (2008)
- Training materials prepared (2008 - 2009)
- Training course organized (2009)
- Process evaluation carried out (2010)
- Innovative means of communication, support and problem solving (2010)

Nominations for membership:

The Permanent Correspondents of the PG nominate representatives of existing partnerships in member states for participation in the Network.

Selection criteria:

- Existing and functioning partnership
- Willingness and interest to participate
- Regional balance
- Compatibility
- Proficiency of French or English (working languages of the PG)

It is desirable that nominees have some knowledge of English in order to communicate directly with each other during periods between meetings.

Management:

1. Secretariat: Pompidou Group
2. Steering group of experts: Mary Calvert (U.K.), Werner Sipp (Germany), Elina Kortovita (Finland), Thierry Charlois (Democracy, Cities & Drugs), Johnny Connolly (consultant), Teuvo Peltoniemi (consultant)
3. Supervision: Bureau of the Permanent Correspondents

Working methods:

2 annual meetings of the network, one annual meeting on technical issues (cooperation, communication, training, networking, assistance) and a second framed around a thematic issue. EXASS Net members may decide on the place of the meetings following proposals received by participating partnerships to host a meeting.

1 or 2 annual 1-day meetings of the Steering Group and regular meetings immediately prior to the annual network meetings.

Tasks of the Steering Group:

Providing empowerment:

- Conceptual guidance
- Prepare meetings

Preparing analysis:

- Barriers and obstacles
- Prerequisites for success
- Transferability of experiences
- Identifying good practice

Promoting partnership:

- Preparing Manuals/handbooks for partnerships
- Preparing training for cooperation

Identifying thematic issues:

- Drug-related health problems (1st meeting)
- Interventions with hard-to-reach groups
- Public nuisance
- Laws, regulations, institutions and structures to support partnerships

The initial topic for thematic discussion will be drug-related health problems. The topic will include key issues such as public health, infectious diseases HIV/AIDS, TB, hepatitis, co-morbidity, dual diagnosis, drug-related deaths, intravenous drug use, treatment paths, police-health-and-social-services, low threshold interventions.

Coming up with Innovations:

- Using telematics and modern communication technology (internet, mobile phones, etc.) as a support tool for partnerships
- Direct cooperation between partnerships, including rendering mutual assistance, on specific issues and needs identified

Example: Partnerships can be very important for directly supporting practice in the field. This was illustrated by an example from Germany: young people from the Russian Federation who were drug addicts and required social care but could not access this due to language difficulties. For this reason, the German government published a German-Russian dictionary, about the most frequently used expressions by drug users.

Draft implementation plan:

Start up phase: 2007

Objective: getting the Network started with a core group of functioning partnerships

Anticipated outcomes:

1. Call to Permanent Correspondents for nominations for participation – end of March 2007.
2. Constituting meeting of partnerships held in Finland on 26 – 27 April 2007
3. 2nd meeting held in location of one of the participating partnerships - winter 2007

Interim Assessment: end of 2008

Objective: review and assessment of the inception phase

Anticipated outcomes:

1. Steering group reviews work undertaken to date
2. Process and outcome assessment prepared by Steering group

Consolidation phase: until end of 2010

5rd - 8th meeting of Network

Timescale and review of terms of reference

These terms of reference are endorsed by the Bureau of the Permanent Correspondents until the end of the 2007-2010 Work Programme. A review can be undertaken by the Bureau upon request by Permanent Correspondents.