USING EVIDENCE AS THE BASIS FOR MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS IN THE DRUG POLICY AREA

RELEVANCE FOR STRENGTHENING THE BI-REGIONAL DIALOGUE (LA-EU)

MS. TERESA SALVADOR
Scientific Basis: Evidence

- **Assessment of the impact obtained through the policies applied**
  - Market control measures
  - Information and awareness strategies
  - Education strategies
  - Assistance, alleviation, and damage-reduction strategies

- **Evaluation (experimental or quasi-experimental) of theoretical models: prevention and assistance**

- **Meta-analysis**

- **Genetic studies and progress in neuroscience**

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Drug research: thematic distribution, in percentages, of the total number of studies reported (EU countries, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metodología</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecanismos y efectos de las drogas</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determinantes, riesgos y factores de protección</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suministro y mercados</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecuencias del consumo</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalencia, incidencia y patrones de consumo</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respuestas</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EMCDDA. Annual Report, 2010
Evidence

- Drug use is not a static phenomenon
- It is dynamic and changeable

The epidemic dimension of drug use and its associated problems can be reduced through public policies of proven effectiveness, combining strategies in the areas of:
  - Prevention and health promotion
  - Protection for vulnerable or at-risk populations
  - Market controls

Source: European Comparative Alcohol Study (ECAS), 2001. Swedish National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) and the Alcohol and Drug Research Group, National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES), Finland. (European Union (EU) financed study).
Prevalence of tobacco use in the general population, 16 years and older (United Kingdom, 1948-2004)


Trends in the prevalence of cannabis use during the past year among young adults (15 to 34 years, EU countries)

Source: Annual Report, 2010. European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions (EMCDDA)
Marijuana users: lifetime


Cocaine users: lifetime

Changes in annual total per capita consumption of alcohol in different regions of the world between 1990 & 2000 (liters of alcohol per adult per year)


Per capita consumption of liters of wine, beer, and liquor (France 1961-2000)

Per capita consumption of liters of wine, beer, and liquor (Spain 1961-2000)


Perception of easy accessibility, disapproval of occasional consumption, and risk perception of consumption one or more times during the month.

Public policies can modify drug use

But some things are not possible...
Evidence: Risk factors or promoters

- Sectoral market interests
  - Production
  - Distribution networks
  - Accessibility / availability
    - Points of sale
    - Spaces where drugs are consumed
  - Strategies and sectors that benefit from direct or concealed promotion

Evidence: Protection factors

- Strategies for prevention – promotion of healthy lifestyles
  - Information/awareness
  - Education
- Assistance, alleviation, or damage-reduction strategies
- Social inclusion strategies
- Protection strategies
  - Legislation
  - Reduction – control: supply – market – profit
  - Rural development
    - [+ impact related social problems
      + strengthening of democratic values and instruments]
Evidence

The problem of drug trafficking and use requires an integrated, coherent approach that combines public policies in several areas:

- Health
- Social
- Education
- And cooperation between law-enforcement authorities and international agencies.

Source: European Commission, Strasbourg, 25 October 2011
COPOLAD
A project for bi-regional cooperation and dialogue
with the main objectives of:

1

Strengthening the *Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism on Drugs Matters between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean* (CCM - LAC)

2

Promoting and facilitating the availability of comparable information between the two regions, to enable the adoption of informed, evidence-based decisions (which requires strengthening and encouraging coordinated, comparable work by the National Drugs Observatories of the EU and LA)
COPOLAD
A project for bi-regional cooperation and dialogue
with the main objectives of:

3

Optimizing the coordination of efforts by promoting:

- Consensus on minimum quality criteria for drug-related prevention, assistance, and damage-reduction programs
- Optimization of professional training and political coordination in the areas of:
  - Demand reduction
  - Supply reduction
  - Rural development

Working Method

A program that involves all the members of the Consortium from the planning phase onwards

Created to help strengthen consensus-based, agreed-on, coordinated answers

To contribute to the identification of strategies, methods, and instruments based on:

- the experience of each country
- the available evidence

www.copolad.eu
1st Meeting of the Consortium  Madrid, 1 February 2011

Consensus on the indicators to be gathered

Strengthening of those Observatories in the initial phases

Optimization of the training efforts needed to establish stable and compatible information systems

A dialogue and exchange between EU and LA, based on objective data and not on *a priori* or ideological perceptions

Training and working tools for DR and SR

COPOLAD’s Contribution
At the end of the presentation, Teresa S-L will:

- thank Gustavo and Rafael for their contributions
- add a brief word of summary
- insist that all the LA countries are beneficiaries, and
- announce the possibility for the Caribbean countries to participate
- open up the forum for discussion

Main Strategic Challenge

- Increase coherence between:
  - Research
  - Policy
  - Practical application

- Optimize bi-regional exchanges: dialogue and exchange based on evidence

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Beneficiaries: All the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean

Target groups:
- National agencies, ministries, and other public bodies responsible for global or sectoral drug policies
- National Drugs Observatories
- Community organizations, institutes of education, NGOs, and other sector agencies

Thank you very much

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