DRUG-PREP

WP3

HORIZON SCANNING

PORTUGAL

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REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA
SAÚDE

SICAD
Serviço de Intervenção nos
Comportamentos Aditivos
e nas Dependências

Index

1. INTRODUCTION

This document is a summary of the foresight exercise that, between May and June 2023, was carried out in Portugal by SICAD[1] in the scope of the Work Package 3 of the European project *Strengthening Preparedness of Drug Information Systems and Drug Policy Capacities to Respond to Emerging Drug Trends and Challenges* (DRUG-PREP).

This report presents the methodology and procedures that were followed, as well as the main conclusions that resulted from the exercise and the following validation workshop, with an emphasis on short and medium risks in the area of illicit drugs and on the responses that should be adopted to mitigate them.

2. FORESIGHT EXERCISE (HORIZON SCANNING)

Seeking to identify macro trends that, in short and medium term, will affect life in society at the national level, and analyze their potential implications in the field of illicit drugs, the foresight exercise carried out in the six countries that integrate the project had as its starting point two specific questions:

1. What future developments will have a significant impact on illicit drugs use, at medium term (2030 and beyond)?
2. What are the possible implications of these developments and megatrends?

This foresight exercise was designed to be implemented in two moments: first, a scenario building, via the systematization of megatrends, based on bibliographical research and on the expertise of the national team members, followed by a workshop with national experts to validate the work carried out and also to enrich the reflection and add different points of view.

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[1] SICAD's DRUG-PREP team is Alcina Correia, Elsa Lavado, and Vasco Calado.

2.1. TREND ANALYSIS (PORTUGAL 2030+)

In the Portuguese horizon scanning exercise, based on bibliographical research[2], nine megatrends likely to have a significant impact on the Portuguese society in a short and medium term were identified:

1. Increased levels of education and health
2. Touristification
3. Increased inequalities
4. Decreased natural resources
5. Environmental awareness
6. Climate crisis
7. Demographic crisis
8. Hyperindividualism
9. Digitalization

Due to lack of time availability, were identified megatrends on only three STEEP fields (*Society*, *Politics*, and *Ecology*). Each one of team members choose three megatrends on a specific STEEP field to be analyzed. However, the megatrends were not chosen randomly. On the contrary, the choice was the result of the bibliographical research that was carried out for this purpose. Nevertheless, it's important to stress that this doesn't mean that these are the most decisive megatrends for the future of Portuguese society, or that others that were left out are of lesser importance. Given the exercise's rational, the proposed methodology presupposes to select a certain number of megatrends and reflecting on their impact in the field of illicit drugs.

A common template to all six countries (annex 1) was used to systematize the megatrends analysis. The template included a summary of each of the megatrends identified and based on the evidence the impact in the field of illicit drugs and some of the responses that must be taken, considering monitoring systems and policymaking, were analyzed.

Next is presented the key information of the filled template in Portugal, resulting from the bibliography research and the discussion had among the national DRUG-PREP team.

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[2] The bibliography consulted consisted in a set of reports and other documents produced on the future of Portuguese and European society. Elaborated by international institutions (such as the EMCDDA or UNODC), or national ones (such as the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation or the Economic and Social Council), some of these reports seek to outline comprehensive future scenarios, while others focus on more specific areas (environment, energy, economy, etc.). See the bibliographic references section at the end of this report.

2.1.1. INCREASED LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Summary:

In recent decades, the health and education indicators of the Portuguese population have been increasing consistently, and it is very likely that this trend will continue in the near future.

At a national level, there is a positive relationship between the increase in the population's level of education and their health status. However, these gains in education and health are not homogeneous and differ considerably among different populations.

One of the challenges for the future is to provide timely and quality responses to the elderly, more affected by chronic and disabling diseases.

Some of these people have drug-related problems, including heroin users on long-term opioid treatment.

Impact:

In general, the increase in education levels may lead to a **decrease** in the use of illicit drugs, or, at least, to the adoption of less risky and harmful patterns of use, following the idea that higher levels of literacy and education for health lead to a safer drug use.

Greater health education means a greater sense of responsibility in promoting individual well-being and health, as well as greater knowledge on drug-related risks. Health gains may lead illicit drug users to use them in a more sporadically way, or to opt for less harmful substances, or adopt use patterns with lower associated risk. On the other hand, it's possible that the consumption of illicit drugs for therapeutic use, will get larger relevance, with emphasis on cannabis and hallucinogens.

Despite the improvement in health levels, due to population aging, chronic diseases and disabling health problems will be more prevalent in the future, which could be especially problematic in the case of older users or former users of illicit drugs. Therefore, the illicit drugs use may **increase** or to be **resumed** among this population.

Responses:

It will be important to improve the collection of health indicators at national level, as well as to harmonize registration procedures in information systems. The focus on long-term opioid substitution programs should continue to pay special attention to the elderly population, who, over time, will be more likely to be affected by other types of health problems associated with aging.

2.1.2. TOURISTIFICATION

Summary:

In recent years, the tourism sector has become one of the driving forces of the Portuguese economy. In 2022, tourism represented around 17% of GDP (*Gross Domestic Product*), and its weight should continue to grow in the near future.

The continuous increase in tourist activity implies that the supply chains of goods and services aimed at the tourism sector (restaurants, leisure, and culture, among others) must reorganize and innovate the associated business models.

Impact:

People in a situation of social exclusion and long-term unemployment, will be able to find job opportunities in the tourism sector, as the touristification of Portuguese society will lead to a growing creation of medium or low specialization jobs. Taking into account the rehabilitation and socio-professional integration of drug addicts, this could be an area to invest in as a response to employment, which will contribute to less social exclusion. Less unemployment and poverty may mean, **less illicit drugs use** as a response to personal problems and social exclusion.

By making more money circulate in the Portuguese economy, touristification could lead to an **increase in consumption in a recreational context**, as more people will have the income to attend bars and clubs.

Theoretically, lower unemployment and greater social integration will lead to less consumption of depressant drugs to the detriment of stimulants. Tourists can also contribute to changing the panorama of illicit drug use, introducing new substances or new ways of consumption, unknown or without much expression in Portugal.

Responses:

It will be important to take advantage of job creation in the tourism sector to increase the chances of social reintegration of former or current problematic drug users. This requires the elaboration of programs in this specific area.

Regarding the foreseeable increase in the consumption of recreational drugs, it is important to invest in responses to reduce risks and minimize harm in a recreational context: pill testing, information, multidisciplinary outreach teams.

2.1.3. INCREASED INEQUALITIES

Summary:

Portugal has one of the most skewed distributions of wealth in Europe.

Even with the touristification of Portuguese society, the difficulty in creating wealth and well-paid jobs should continue to grow, so as not to accentuate the social inequalities that are difficult to overcome due to the lack of economic opportunities and social ascension.

At European level, Portugal continues to show high rates of poverty and socioeconomic deprivation, serious difficulties in economic growth and a strong dependence on the State and abroad.

It is expected that the arrival of migrants and associated clandestine activities will continue, thus allowing the emergence of socially excluded population groups, with extreme poverty.

Impact:

For many, it is likely that living and socioeconomic conditions will not improve in the future and even worsen, which could lead to **increased** consumption and drug addiction, knowing that the problems associated with illicit drugs are greater in situations of social crisis and economic vulnerability.

Increased social exclusion means a greater number of people vulnerable to comorbidities, but also willing to participate in illicit activities such as drug trafficking.

Responses:

Social responses should be improved and increased in the several areas related to the use and abuse of illicit drugs, namely treatment, harm reduction and reintegration. Investment in Residential Programs should be created or reinforced.

Specific responses must be created, even if integrated into existing ones, for migrant populations, with different cultural origins and who need an approach that addresses the particular needs that facilitate access to services and responses.

2.1.4. DECREASED NATURAL RESOURCES

Summary:

In Portugal, as in other countries, consumption of all types of goods is increasing, although, at the same time, there is a scenario of scarcity of natural resources and environmental degradation, with an impact on the environment and people's health.

In the near future, pollution is likely to increase, and new diseases and pandemics may appear.

All of this, will bring a major pressure on ecosystems and lead to competition for natural resources, compromising their efficiency (namely water systems).

Impact:

The looming environmental degradation and scarcity of natural resources are likely to result in increased disease and epidemics. These will have a greater impact on the most vulnerable populations and may lead to an **increase** in the use of illicit drugs as an emotional release.

On the other hand, organised crime is related not only to the trafficking of drugs and human beings, but also to the trafficking of forest products, including wood and wild animals, minerals and precious stones. Waste thrown into water without any control is highly harmful. These organised crime groups exploit flaws in the criminal justice system, unprotected borders, lack of law enforcement and impunity, motivated by high profits from illegal trade.

Responses:

It should be set up a more effective surveillance in the field of cross-border territory, greater rigor in the application of the criminal framework, as well as filling existing gaps in the penal system. On the other hand, there should be an increase in responses and greater flexibility in them, regarding the needs of illicit drug users.

2.1.5. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Summary:

In the near future, greater environmental awareness may lead into the adaptation of government and civil society to the new social and population challenges, created by increasing urbanization, demographic crisis (population ageing, migratory movements), technological advances, and the need to find good practices in water system management. Regarding this, it will be necessary to turn the economy in a more sustainable way and adopt "green" policies.

Impact:

The increase in environmental awareness is inevitable, facing climate change and the consequences that lie ahead, therefore, governments must guide economic and social policies, with more environmentally conscious consumption patterns. This can be reflected in the loss of jobs and sources of income, which can lead to the initiation/increase of the use of illicit drugs, in order to deal with this new reality and seek emotional relief.

On the other hand, it is possible that illicit drug users, trying to reduce their carbon footprint, increasingly choose to produce/cultivate the psychoactive they consume, instead of buying substances produced in distant parts of the planet.

Finally, it is also possible that environmental awareness leads to discouragement and lack of hope in the future, and thus, make the new generations adopt risky behaviors, including the use of illicit drugs, since they feel that they have nothing to lose.

Responses:

To understand the relationship between consumption and increased environmental awareness, it will be necessary to carry out qualitative studies, namely focused on the issue of consumption motivations. At the political level, it will be necessary to implement support policies for those who will lose incomes or their jobs, as a result of economic policies adding some ecological parameters.

2.1.6. CLIMATE CRISIS

Summary:

In the near future, the climate crisis could bring extreme weather events, which have already been felt, but whose magnitude will be much more. We can witness the loss of individual and family property and assets, which will leave many people and families without resources and in a situation of great social vulnerability. The societies dynamic will get many difficulties to respond to needs, and the health systems themselves may be mortgaged.

The challenge is to minimize the impact and adapt the Portuguese society to the foreseeable climate changes, namely with regard to agriculture, forests, quality of drinking water, air, climate, etc.

Impact:

The climate crisis and the extreme events associated with it, will highlight the socio-economic condition of some populations in greater vulnerability, contributing to situations of extreme poverty. This may lead to an **increase in illicit drugs use** as a response to social exclusion, as well as drug trafficking as an economic opportunity or livelihood.

Responses:

A quick and effective execution of the emergency plan in the context of a catastrophe must be ensured, in order to face the interruption of the response capacity in these situations. With regard to illicit drugs the *Strategic Reservation* of the *National Medicines Laboratory* includes methadone, used in the treatment of opiate addiction.

2.1.7. DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS

Summary:

The demographic changes of recent decades anticipate a strong demographic crisis across Europe. With fewer births than deaths, Portugal is witnessing a quick aging of the population, which also contributes to the tendency of young people to leave abroad in search of better opportunities.

The scenario will be worse in the interior of the country, especially in rural areas, where one can even speak of desertification. Despite everything, the negative demographic balance is mitigated by the arrival of foreigners, including digital nomads, people retired, refugees, migrants and unskilled labor from developing countries.

Migration is considered one of the greatest public health challenges, and migrants are a fragile section of the population, regarding addictive behaviors.

On the other hand, in Portugal, immigration can make an important contribution to development and to solving the demographic problem that the country faces.

Impact:

Knowing that the consumption of illicit drugs is higher among young people than in the general population, one should bear in mind that in the future there will be fewer young people which could means a **lower prevalence** of drugs use.

Migrants and refugees are populations at particular risk of problematic consumption, so greater migratory movements of this type can lead to a **greater prevalence** of drugs use and, to a greater dimension of the problem, namely in certain urban and rural areas.

Some migratory flows imply greater cultural diversity, and with that, new drugs patterns. Despite the desertification of some rural areas, it's possible that some medium-sized cities, due to their specificity (as is the case of the Idanha area, next to the Boom Festival place), manage to attract young people from outside or from the main cities, introducing new patterns of use or different illicit drugs. With this, there is a risk of the development of new illicit drug trafficking networks.

Responses:

It's urgent to develop epidemiological studies aimed at needy migratory populations, as well as qualitative studies on rural areas where settled populations from abroad or from urban areas.

NGOs and refugee support services should be integrated into the monitoring system. Networking with professionals and authorities in areas where nomads' populations settle, should be encouraged.

At the political level, the creation of responses aimed at needy migratory populations, should be reinforced, namely programs to support refugees, focusing on education in the addictive behaviours area, also including professionals who work with these populations.

2.1.8. HYPERINDIVIDUALISM

Summary:

Hyperindividualism is characteristic of hypermodern societies and stems from the growing importance of the individual face the collective one, reflected in the breach of the social contract.

Linked to this, in recent decades, leisure has taken the place of work as a main aspect of social identity, making leisure over evaluated, both individually and collectively.

There´s an increasing importance of self-image, healthy lifestyles, and the cult of the body or physical fitness. This contributes to the culture of screens (Internet, smartphones, and videogames).

At the same time, on the social level, the hyper-individualist trend can lead to social anomie and a general lack of interest in some themes and, on the individual level, to atomization and disengagement.

Impact:

The greater concern with healthy lifestyles and physical fitness may imply, in short and medium term, in a **decrease** in illicit drugs use (especially those seen as more harmful) or, at least, the adoption of regulated patterns of use (frequency, quantity and quality).

Given that the pressure for image and physical shape tends to increase among people with self-image problems and low self-esteem, it´s possible that they could find emotional relief in illicit drugs. Drugs use could also **increase** among those who lead a lonely and socially excluded life.

Hyper-individualism can contribute to the use of performing-enhancing drugs, as well as the therapeutic use of drugs (CBD, microdosing, psychedelic therapy, etc.) reaching a greater expression.

Responses:

It's important to invest in qualitative studies, in order to better understand the motivations for illicit drug use, and the association with self-esteem problems. Studies on the therapeutic use of illicit drugs should also be encouraged.

Regarding the monitorization, experts who deal with adolescents, and health professionals working on the therapeutic use of CBD and Ketamine, should be integrated into information networks.

There should be a focus on training skills related to the use of illicit drugs among professionals who work with adolescents.

2.1.9. DIGITALIZATION

Summary:

Changes in production and trade processes have been based on digitalization. This trend was stressed with the COVID-19 pandemic, which made the Internet with even greater importance in the people's life.

In Portugal, there is a focus on teleworking, and a discussion on changes in working hours, which could lead to a more free time.

At the same time, greater connectivity is anticipated, in the sense that Internet coverage and the percentage of the population that is constantly online are increasing.

Despite the advantages, there are also disadvantages, such as the loss of concentration and productivity, as a result of constant notifications. Digitization could lead to the end of certain jobs and increased unemployment.

Impact:

The work from home and the shortening of the working week, mean fewer trips, fewer hours in traffic, and, consequently, less stress and more time for family and friends, moments of well-being, relaxation, or physical exercise, which could mean **fewer people using illicit drugs** (especially stimulants) as a response to everyday stress.

Knowing that drug use is especially related to the recreational context, an increase in free time, can mean more party settings and, **more opportunities to use illicit drugs**. Also those who will lose their jobs due to the increasing digitization, and the autonomization of jobs, may resort to illicit drugs as an emotional relief.

The generalized loss of concentration due to the continuous online use, may lead a greater number of people to use illicit drugs with a stimulating effect.

Some users of illicit drugs, namely the ones with problematic use, may have fewer digital skills and less computer literacy, which, brings a greater difficulty in accessing a job and, in a certain way, some kind of social exclusion.

Responses:

The training of illicit drug users in a situation of social exclusion must be reinforced, mainly in the digital literacy. Programs for access to the world of work must be created for this population, considering that today the world of work involves skills in the IT area.

Interventions in recreational settings must be strengthened.

2.1.10. MAIN CONCLUSIONS

One main conclusion of the systematization of the nine megatrends mentioned is that the near future will likely bring greater difficulties for several underprivileged populations, thus increasing the risk of developing drug-related problems. Although all the megatrends imply both negative consequences and opportunities, most will make life harder for individuals in a situation of social and economic exclusion, which includes the drug abusers population.

Taking this into account, policy makers should target policies towards the most disadvantaged groups and strengthen monitoring of drug use among these populations. Thus, it's important that <u>the national alert system include professionals working with people in social exclusion situations</u>, namely migrants and refugees. Investment in <u>training and qualification of people at risk of social exclusion</u> (as problematic drug users typically are) must be strongly reinforced, in order to face the difficulties that the future will most likely bring.

At the same time, due to various social factors related to hedonism, leisure and tourism, recreational illicit drug use is likely to continue, and perhaps increase. There are also those who make use of illicit drugs, for well-being and medicinal reasons (self-medication). Therefore, policy makers must be aware of so-called recreational uses and new therapeutic uses, <u>including in the monitoring networks professionals working in recreational settings, in harm reduction and in the area of mental health</u>.

2.2. WORKSHOP (PORTUGAL 2030+)

The second moment of the Horizon Scanning exercise was a workshop. Initially the idea was to invite key national experts on drug use to discuss and reflect on the work previously carried out. However, since many of them will be invited to the national dialogue that will take place in the scope of WP5, we decided to organise a partially 'domestic' session. Since SICAD is the EMCDDA focal point and cover many drug use fields (treatment, harm reduction, prevention, research, monitoring, communication, etc.) we invited all SICAD's head of department. Additionally, we invited the head of each DICAD (regional coordination structures for the treatment and prevention area). This way, we were able join professionals with different expertise. SICAD's professionals with a more national point of view, and DICAD's professionals with a more local point of view and field-oriented knowledge.

The workshop was held on June 22nd in SICAD premises. On May 9th, participants were invited by email (annex 2) to attend a 3-hour workshop to know more on the DRUG-PREP project and reflect on the work carried out by the DRUG-PREP national team and contribute to a more in-depth discussion. 12 experts attended the workshop: From SICAD: João Goulão (general-director), Manuel Cardoso (deputy general-director), Carla Ribeiro (statistics and research), Domingos Duran (Therapeutic intervention), Maria Ribeiro (resources management), Patrícia Pissarra (prevention and community intervention), Sofia Albuquerque (dissuasion) and Sónia Ferreira (information and communication). From DICAD/ARS: Kerstin Hoffmeister (North region),

Emídio Abrantes Rodrigues (Center region), Joaquim Fonseca (Lisbon region), and Carla Carvalho (Alentejo region). Photo in the annex 3.

In the last minute, 4 participants were not able to attend: the head of DICAD/ARS Algarve, the head the planning and intervention department, the head of the international relations division and the head of the IT department.

A few days before the workshop, an email was sent to remind participants that the workshop would take place in the following week and explain with more detail what was the intention and what was expected from them (annex 4).

After presenting the DRUG-PREP project (objectives, methodology and some preliminary conclusions), participants were asked to reflect on the impact of each of the nine megatrends, in the scope of illicit drugs, as well as on the responses that should be implemented. In order not to bias the discussion, the participants were only presented with the summary of each megatrend, without having been made aware of the reflection already taken by the national DRUG-PREP team.

During the workshop, participants were explained the DRUG-PREP project (its goals, methodology and some preliminary conclusions) and the main aim of the workshop. Each megatrend summary was presented briefly, without specifying what will be its impact on drug use and what measures we think are necessary. After each megatrend was presented, participants were asked to discuss freely on their impact on the drug field.

Next is presented the main ideas discussed for each megatrend during the expert workshop. A few weeks after the workshop a report (in Portuguese) was prepared and sent to all participants with a summary of the discussion held and the main conclusions (annex 5). The feedback was excellent and no one expressed disagreements on the content.

2.2.1. INCREASED LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Workshop participants agree on the need to invest in health literacy, recognizing that the higher the literacy level, the greater the demand on health systems.

It was consensual the idea that is important to build knowledge in health and that the level of education is connected to risk behaviors, including drug use. Although a greater literacy does not prevent consumption, at least it tends to make it less problematic. Even so, it was stressed that higher levels of education could lead to a greater professional competitiveness, which may be associated with higher levels of stress, and so it could be balanced through the use of some illicit drugs.

The discussion highlighted that health literacy contributes to healthier lifestyles, and therefore to a better quality of life in old age. The trend will be to increase the number of elderly people, dependent on alcohol and other drugs, who do not want to stop consuming and who need continuous care. The need for greater investment in residential structures, centered on the elderly or former drug users, was also highlighted. This is an area where responses have been created (and there are already some good examples on the field), however, given the foreseeable future, greater commitment will be required.

The role of the State in the area of health was also discussed, in particular, in the illicit drugs users. Should or can the State interfere in individual behavior? Should it contribute to evidence-based knowledge, for example through fact-checking? How are individual rights balanced with the right to health? Should health education contribute to balanced consumption, thus reducing risks and harm?

2.2.2. TOURISTIFICATION

The experts in the workshop agreed that the growth of the tourism sector in Portugal can be used in favor of illicit drug users, namely by providing jobs for the homeless and socially disadvantaged people.

On the other hand, touristification can also entail threats. For example, the phenomenon of gentrification in large cities pushes away inhabitants from the center, as house prices rise. Which means, difficulties in finding social housing for the homeless.

Due to the mobility of people coming from abroad, tourism can introduce new trends in the country, regarding the use of illicit drugs. For example, as happened with the phenomenon of *chemsex*.

Apart from the issue of tourism itself, it was discussed, the situation of migrants and less qualified workers, who have arrived in the country, and that probably will continue to arrive. This population, which takes the less qualified jobs, is particularly associated with more problematic illicit drugs use (for example, crack).

Thus, the participants argue that public services must have responses for those who's coming from abroad, whether they are tourists with socioeconomic capacity, whether they are migrants or refugees. Substituition Opioid Treatment is an example where it's urgent to increase the response of public services, and manage to deal with the expectations of foreigners, who pass through or settle down in our country.

2.2.3. INCREASED INEQUALITIES

Workshop participants agreed that, in recent years, Portugal has seen an increase in inequalities, as a result of the economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the worsening of socioeconomic conditions, there was an increase in the consumption of alcohol, injecting drugs, crack, and synthetic drugs. The pandemic context also has contributed to more relapses of users, who were until then, in abstinence, or in substitution treatment with opiates.

There was a consensus in that the worsening economic situation could lead to more harmful use of illicit drugs. Thus, it is important to ensure health care, to vulnerable populations, which includes illicit drug users. For example, migrants who arrive in the country illegally are not registered in the National Health System, which makes it difficult to access our health services.

It was recognized that, there are different health care offers, in different regions. The participants think that it's important, to reduce the regional discrepancies, regarding responses in the treatment area.

Also during the workshop, it was pointed out, a development in monitoring the situation in the field, which should focus both, on epidemiological surveys, and qualitative studies (national or local level). Besides this, one should put the focus in others scopes, as well, for example, the *drug checking*, or information get from Integrated Response Operational Programs (PORI) network, that can be better used. Also, it´s important to collect information from the National Institute of Medical Emergencies (INEM), and from the emergency rooms.

2.2.4. DECREASED NATURAL RESOURCES

The participants mentioned the importance of recording data in the SIPAF (Integrated System of Health Financial Support Programs), as well as the importance of record other information, in order to have knowledge of what is happening at the local level. SIPAF is an online platform that gathers joint information from the Directorate-General for Health (DGS), the Portuguese Institute of Blood and Transplantation, I.P. (IPST), the General-Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SICAD), and the Regional Health Administrations, I.P. (ARS), providing information and details about financial support to projects in the health area. This platform allows candidate entities to access the support granted, through a single online site, being able to control their applications, and technically and financially monitor their projects approved.

The importance of recording data in the Commissions for the Dissuasion of Drug Addiction (CDT) was highlighted, since these services implement the decriminalization law throughout the national territory. These services welcome the users of illicit drugs, who got caught by the police. The CDT's experts make an assessment of their situation, regarding illicit drugs use, and regarding as well, psychosocial needs, in order to get to close the users to the health area services.

In another domain, was emphasised the relevance of qualitative studies, and the importance of listening to consumers themselves. Thus, it´s possible to get a real picture at local level, in order to elaborate better field diagnostics, and projects design as well. Bearing in mind this purpose, we've got the Operational Program of Integrated Responses (PORI), financed by SICAD, whose applications must respond to identified needs. In this way, entities interested in submitting applications can get useful information, from the Regional Health Administrations, I.P., and from the Integrated Response Centers in the field.

Through the PORI, work has been developed based on a macro analysis at first, and then an analysis at a micro level.

2.2.5. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS / 2.2.6. CLIMATE CRISIS

In the opinion of workshop participants, it makes sense to merge this two megatrends, arguing that one derives from the other

Thus, in the discussion of the two themes together, it was mentioned with concern, the interruption of response capacity, namely in a setting of catastrophe (fires, floods, etc.). These events not only hinder access to responses, but also increase the population needs.

In this way, reflecting on the catastrophe scenario, it was resumed the problem of lack of water, and in a positive way, it was stressed the called Strategic Reserve, in Laboratory and Medicine Institute, which has a reservoir of various medicines (to be used under a catastrophe), as well Methadone.

From another perspective, but in the context of environmental awareness and the climate crisis, stress was also underlined in communities that are placed in climate crisis zones, for example, the inhabitants of some fishing communities believe that it will disappear in the near future.

2.2.7. DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS

Participants in the workshop focused mainly on the issue of migratory flows, as the opportunities generated by various factors, including the demographic crisis, bring many emigrants to Portugal. These peoples, namely refugees and migrants of low socioeconomic status, are looking for better living conditions. Regarding the illicit drugs in this scope, the participants mentioned that, from these migratory flows, some worrying questions arise. In fact, the demographic crisis had already been addressed previously in other trends.

The arrival of socially disadvantaged refugees and immigrants, carry out major challenges to health services (mainly the public one), because of the cultural differences and the language issue. In this way, there is a need in the adaptation of services in the area of illicit drugs. It can be for example, by developing assistance guides for foreigners, in several languages, including the use of artificial intelligence. Another gap identified, is the lack of cross-cultural mediators in multidisciplinary teams, especially in the treatment, but in prevention, risk reduction, and minimization of harms, as well. The use of mediators can be of great importance, in the sense that the therapeutic relationship goes far beyond the treatment administered, and of course, the knowledge of the origin cultures facilitate the approaches.

This contributes to worsening living conditions, such as, for example, a greater climate of insecurity or crime, which includes illicit drug trafficking.

Regarding the higher socioeconomic status immigrants (for example, digital nomads, and retired from rich countries), their arrival in Portugal, may bring some new emerging phenomenon in the illicit drugs area (new substances or new patterns of use, for example).

2.2.8. HYPERINDIVIDUALISM

In the opinion of some participants, hyper-individualism affects even more other addictive behaviors, than the use of illicit drugs (namely screen addiction).

Even so, the discussion leads to agree on that a more individualistic and less cohesive society, based on competition instead on solidarity, contributes to the use of illicit drugs (self-medication related to stress). Digital nomads were pointed out as a social group that is particularly vulnerable to this kind of consumption.

There was some concern about an increase in the self-regulation of individual health, by using the Internet, and one knows that the information on there, is not always provided in the best way or is correct. It was addressed also, the danger from decisions by themselves, just before a device screen, without any advice or medical guidance.

There is an increasing attachment to idleness, including by young physicians. The younger generations do not put the focus only in work, which raises some questions, since it can affect the illicit drugs users in recreational contexts.

2.2.9. DIGITALIZATION

There was few time available to discuss this last trend, as three hours have been passed since the workshop began. Even so, the risks added by the Internet use in the illicit drugs area were briefly addressed, namely regarding to sales. At the moment, illicit drugs are for sale on all kinds of online platforms, including second-hand clothing buying, selling and trading sites.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Horizon Scanning exercise presented in this report was carried out within the framework of the European DRUG-PREP project (WP3) and was designed to test the prospective methodology and the potential of prospective studies, rather than for reaching exhaustive conclusions. In this way, it was above all an exercise and should be seen as such.

The work carried out made it very clear the added value of this type of exercise in the area of illicit drugs, as it allows to outline future scenarios and identify gaps and, thus, design and implement policies to anticipate the problems and challenges that are expected in the coming years.

Following the methodology adopted by the six countries in the DRUG-PREP, it was possible to identify a set of megatrends that are considered to be of great relevance for the future of Portuguese society, as well as to reflect on their impact on the illicit drugs field. In a second moment, a workshop was organised with a group of experts to broaden and consolidate the analysis. Essentially, the workshop was a validation of the work initially carried out by the national DRUG-PREP team, very often reaching similar conclusions. Furthermore, the workshop participants recognized the importance of this kind of exercises, and the gains that can result from it.

The key idea resulting from the prospective exercise as a whole is that in the short and medium term, the future will bring demanding challenges that must be faced. Although some trends point out in a more positive direction, there are changes related to the climate, demography and worsening socio-economic conditions, which will have worrying consequences in the illicit drugs field.

It's clear that the major concern for the future is the impact of these trends on disadvantaged populations, with emphasis on former drug users, who may relapse into consumption, refugees and migrants of low socioeconomic status. Thus, it important to invest on social support, in training and in empowering populations in situation of social exclusion. On the other hand, it is urgent to expand monitoring networks, incorporating professionals from different areas, in order to make them better prepared to anticipate problems and challenges in the short and medium term.

An empirical example of the importance of foresight studies in strengthening the monitoring systems in the illicit drugs area, are the latest events in Portugal: politicians did not anticipate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis that followed, namely the resurgence of problematic drug use and the growing visibility of drug addiction in the streets, causing social alarm.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, health professionals started to witness signs of a resurgence of the problematic consumption of illicit drugs, given the disturbance that the pandemic has caused in the lives of many people, especially former drug users who have lost their jobs or income, and got back in the streets. On several occasions, SICAD general-director publicly warned of the possible impact of the pandemic and consequent economic crisis on the consumption of illicit drugs, calling for greater commitment and investment in this area. Even without much evidence

from epidemiological studies, the signs of greater damage were there. However, there was no reinforcement of investment in public responses. That is, on the political level, it was not foreseen the worrying scenario that the professionals from the field warned about.

In short, based on the triangulation of signals and emerging phenomena, foresight studies can help to anticipate problems, allowing to set up proactive policies and allocating resources where they are most needed.

4. LIMITATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

This is somehow an unfinished report. In fact, this document can be used as a starting point for further reflection and for building more comprehensive scenarios.

We found difficult to select megatrends within a specific STEEP field, since most megatrends do impact different areas. A horizon scanning is very time-consuming and it would have been good to have more time and human resources available to this specific task. In addition, in the beginning it was hard to understand what we were supposed to do.

We now realize that both the trend analysis and the expert workshop focused more on problems than on opportunities. In fact, more attention was given to identifying gaps and challenges than on policies and concrete responses. This may be due to the participants (including the DRUG-PREP national team) work on ministry of health and are used to focus their attention on problems.

All participants seemed to enjoy the workshop and be glad to have participated in it. Many said that this was a good opportunity to think on the upcoming future, as many usually concentrate their efforts on what is happening at the moment and neglect on preparing on what the future will bring. Everyone agreed that foresight and scenario building are important.

Yet a 3 hour workshop seemed too short. In fact, everyone agreed that to reach a more comprehensive reflection would need more than a morning or an afternoon. The discussion could last at least for another couple of hours. Again, this can be due to the fact that participants know each other very well at are at ease with each other. The discussion was enjoyable, very informal and in a good mood. Perhaps with participants that know each other, which tends to lead to more formal meeting, more than 3 hours would be very tiring.

We feel that this an ongoing task and other workshops could be organised in the future.

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ANNEX 1: TEMPLATE

MEGATREND 1					
Summary					
STEEP-Field	**Society**	**Technology**	**Economy**	**Ecology**	**Politics**
Impacts and Relevance for Drugs	Impact on drugs				
	Character of impact				
	National-level relevance for different areas				
	For emerging needs		For national-level drug monitoring		For national-level policy making
Research Evidence	Research Evidence Summary, Part 1: From the Past to Today				
	Research Evidence Summary, Part 2: From Today to 2030+				
	Initial information on policy pointers / actions and needs				
References					

Vasco Calado

De:	Alcina Correia
Enviado:	9 de maio de 2023 14:25
Para:	kerstin.hoffmeister; Emidio Abrantes Rodrigues; Joaquim Fonseca; Cláudia Maia; Francisco Serrano
Cc:	João Castel-Branco Goulão; Manuel Cardoso; Elsa Lavado; Vasco Calado
Assunto:	Workshop a realizar no SICAD no próximo dia 22 de junho, com inicio às 10h00m

Car@s colegas coordenadores das DICAD.

Vimos convidá-los a participar num workshop a realizar no SICAD no próximo dia 22 de junho, com inicio às 10h, que também contará com a participação dos dirigentes do SICAD.

Este workshop enquadra-se num projeto europeu DRUG-PREP subordinado ao tema *Sistemas de Informação e Políticas sobre Drogas*.

Como sabemos, a rápida mobilidade dos mercados globais e as novas tendências de drogas exigem uma resposta adequada por parte dos países aos desafios emergentes, no sentido de proteger a saúde e a segurança públicas. Reconhece-se que cada vez mais as políticas de drogas precisam se tornar mais robustas e resilientes para enfrentar os desafios futuros, usando metodologias prospetivas facilitadoras da adoção de políticas mais voltadas para o futuro.

O DRUG-PREP pretende promover o uso de ferramentas práticas para apoiar a definição de politicas, os decisores, investigadores e interventores, e os governos nacionais, a se prepararem melhor para os cenários do futuro.

Uma das dimensões mais relevantes neste projeto e exercício prospetivo é uma abordagem participativa, para explorar a dinâmica das futuras incertezas e mudanças no campo das drogas e seu impacto nos cenários nacionais, contribuindo para uma melhor preparação para se antecipar aos problemas emergentes.

O projeto DRUG-PREP pretende assim, contribuir para o **reforço da capacidade dos sistemas de informação sobre drogas nos países participantes**, assim como **fornecer informação para a formulação de políticas eficazes**.

Com o Workshop de dia 22 de junho pretendemos fazer um exercício de reflexão sobre os cenários que a equipa nacional do DRUGPREP tem vindo a trabalhar, com base em algumas tendências globais identificadas em diferentes áreas (sociedade, economia, ambiente, politica), com impacto nas "drogas" e que tipo de respostas se podem perspetivar.

Contamos convosco.

Alcina Correia

Elsa Lavado

Vasco Calado

DRUG-PREP

Com os melhores cumprimentos,

Alcina Correia

Dear colleagues,

We invite you to participate in a workshop to be held at SICAD on June 22nd, starting at 10:00 am.

This workshop is part of a European DRUG-PREP project under the theme of Information Systems and Drug Policies.

As we know, the rapid mobility of global markets and new drug trends require an adequate response from countries to emerging challenges to protect public health and safety.

It is recognized that drug policies increasingly need to become more robust and resilient to face future challenges, using prospective methodologies that facilitate the adoption of more future-oriented policies.

DRUG-PREP aims to promote the use of practical tools to support policy definition, decision-makers, researchers and interveners, and national governments, to better prepare for future scenarios.

One of the most relevant dimensions in this project and prospective exercise is a participatory approach, to explore the dynamics of future uncertainties and changes in the field of drugs and their impact on national scenarios, contributing to better preparation to anticipate emerging problems.

The DRUG-PREP project thus aims to contribute to strengthening the capacity of drug information systems in participating countries, as well as providing information for the formulation of effective policies.

With the Workshop on June 22nd, we intend to carry out a reflection exercise on the scenarios that the DRUGPREP national team has been working on, based on some global trends identified in different areas (society, economy, environment, politics), with an impact in illicit drugs and what kind of responses can be expected.

We hope you can attend.

Alcina Correia

Elsa Lavado

Vasco Calado

ANNEX 3: WORKSHOP PHOTOS

Vasco Calado

De:	Alcina Correia
Enviado:	15 de junho de 2023 13:31
Para:	Manuel Cardoso; João Castel-Branco Goulão; Sofia Albuquerque; Sofia Santos; Maria Ribeiro; Francisco Bolas; Carla Ribeiro; Sonia Ferreira; Domingos Duran; Patricia Pissarra; Graça Vilar; Joaquim Fonseca; Paulo Jesus; Cláudia Maia; Emidio Abrantes Rodrigues; kerstin.hoffmeister
Cc:	Elsa Lavado; Vasco Calado
Assunto:	Workshop - dia 22 de junho às 10h, no SICAD

Caras e caros colegas.

Mais uma vez, muito obrigada por terem aceitado o convite para participar no Workshop.

Conforme já foi comunicado, este workshop enquadra-se num projeto europeu DRUG-PREP subordinado ao tema *Sistemas de Informação e Políticas sobre Drogas*.

Uma das dimensões mais relevantes no DRUGPREP é o desenvolvimento do exercício prospetivo por via da criação de cenários futuros e do impacto na área das drogas, preparando os Estados e os serviços para antecipar os problemas e encontrar antecipadamente soluções e respostas.

Conforme já vos referimos no mail anterior pretendemos no Workshop de dia 22 de junho fazer um exercício de reflexão sobre os cenários que a equipa nacional do DRUGPREP tem vindo a trabalhar, que antecipadamente colocamos aqui.

No exercício que fizemos identificámos megatendências que aqui colocamos, deixando margem para se identificarem outras que se entendam pertinentes no decurso dos trabalhos.

Tendências/Sumário	
Aumento dos níveis de educação e saúde	Em Portugal, existe uma relação positiva entre o aumento do nível de escolaridade da população e o seu estado de saúde. Um dos desafios para o futuro é dar respostas em tempo útil e com qualidade, atendendo às crescentes necessidades de cuidados dos cidadãos mais idosos, mais acometidos por doenças crónicas e incapacitantes. Alguns desses cidadãos têm problemas relacionados ao uso de substâncias.
Touristification	Nos últimos anos, o turismo tornou-se um motor crucial da economia portuguesa. Em 2022 o turismo representou cerca de 17% do PIB, sendo que o seu peso deverá continuar a crescer nos próximos tempos. O contínuo aumento da atividade turística implica que as cadeias de abastecimento de bens e serviços vocacionados para a animação turística (restauração, lazer, cultura, entre outros), se reorganizem, e inovem os modelos de negócio associados. Tendo em conta os processos de reabilitação e integração socioprofissional dos toxicodependentes, esta poderá ser uma área a apostar, como resposta ao emprego.
Aumento das desigualdades	Portugal tem uma das distribuições de renda mais desiguais da Europa. A dificuldade em gerar riqueza e empregos provavelmente continuará crescendo, gerando desigualdades sociais difíceis de superar pela falta de oportunidades. Portugal é, no contexto europeu, um país com elevados índices de pobreza, com graves dificuldades de crescimento e com excessiva dependência do Estado e do estrangeiro.

Diminuição dos recursos naturais	Aumento do consumo num cenário de escassez de recursos naturais e degradação Ambiental, com impacto na Poluição Ambiental e na Saúde (doenças e riscos de pandemias), trazendo maior pressão sobre os ecossistemas, traduzindo-se numa intensificação da competição pelos recursos naturais, comprometendo a sua eficiência (nomeadamente sistemas de água).
.....	

A nossa proposta para o workshop é debruçarmo-nos sobre o impacto que estas e outras tendências terão no uso de drogas num futuro próximo, bom como nas soluções e formas de tornar o dispositivo mais robusto e bem preparado. A discussão será centrada no impacto de cada tendência em três níveis diferentes:

- Necessidades emergentes;
- Sistema de monitorização nacional;
- Definição das politica nacionais.

Abraço,

Alcina Correia

Elsa Lavado

Vasco Calado

DRUG-PREP

Com os melhores cumprimentos,

Alcina Correia
Diretora. Director
Direção de Serviços de Monitorização e Informação. Monitoring and Information Department

Serviço de Intervenção nos Comportamentos Aditivos e nas Dependências
General-Directorate for Intervention on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies
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www.sicad.pt

PENSE ANTES DE IMPRIMIR

Dear colleagues,

Once again, thank you very much for accepting the invitation to participate in the workshop.

As already announced, this workshop is part of a European DRUG-PREP project under the theme of Information Systems and Drug Policies.

One of the most relevant dimensions in DRUGPREP is the development of the prospective exercise through the creation of future scenarios and the impact in illicit drugs field, preparing States and services to anticipate problems and find solutions and answers in advance.

As we mentioned in the previous email, at the workshop on June 22nd, we intend to carry out a reflection exercise on the scenarios that the DRUGPREP national team has been working on, which we have posted here in advance.

In the exercise we carried out, we identified megatrends that we present here, leaving room to identify others that are considered relevant in the course of the work.

[4 megatrends examples]

Our proposal for the workshop is to look at the impact that these and other megatrends will have on drug use in the near future, as well as solutions and ways to make the national institutions more robust and better prepared. The discussion will focus on the impact of each trend on three different levels:
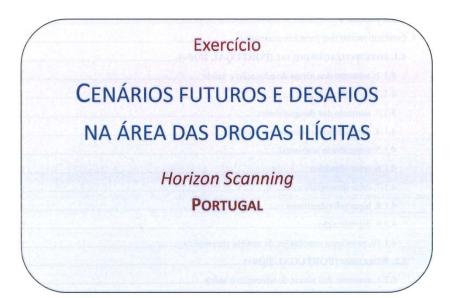
• Emerging needs;

• National monitoring system;

• Definition of national policies.

Exercício

CENÁRIOS FUTUROS E DESAFIOS
NA ÁREA DAS DROGAS ILÍCITAS

Horizon Scanning
PORTUGAL

Alcina Correia (DMI)
Elsa Lavado (DMI /DEI)
Vasco Calado (DMI/DEI)

2023

REPÚBLICA
PORTUGUESA
SAÚDE

SICAD

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