P-PG/COST (2016) 2

15 June 2016

**4th meeting of the E**xpert group on Effects and associated costs of drug control policies

Reykjavik, 25 - 26 May 2016

**REPORT**

1. Objectives of the meeting

In meeting the objectives of the 4th meeting the expert group addressed the following items:

* Discussion and finalization of chapter contributions
* Review of submitted first draft
* Agreement on tables
* Structure of chapter 4 (conclusions and recommendations)
* Review and adjustment of tasks and timelines

The agenda of the meeting was adopted as in appendix 1, the list of participants in appendix 2.

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened Mrs Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen, Chair of the Expert Group, who summarised the progress of work of the group and outlined the main tasks remaining to finalise the report.

1. Presentation by Ögmundur Jónasson

Mr Ögmundur Jónasson, former Minister of Health and former Minister of Interior of Iceland outlined the dominant factors that affected political decision making following the austerity measures introduced by the Icelandic government following the financial crisis. He explained the difficulties of overcoming the highly mechanic decision making process in government and the institutional demands that make it often difficult to reach effective cost/benefit decisions for the benefit of society and the individual. The Icelandic experience showed that it was possible for governments to seek cooperation with civil society in the political decision making in times of difficult decisions and under the impression of financial austerity measures. The lessons from this experience to be drawn, globally speaking, are that policy decision should rather focus on goals (expected results and outputs) than objectives (process). This can lead to enhanced overall interaction between governmental sectors and governments and non-governmental stakeholders. In addition such an approach would allow institutions to work more results oriented.

Members of the Group thanked Mr Jónasson for his inspiring presentation and underlined the value of having a senior policy maker providing insights on decision making processes.

1. Discussions

In terms of the work on its report the group had so far not been able to develop a first draft of the full report with all chapter contributions. This was mainly due to the highly complex nature of the content and due to the heavy work load of several participants. In addition for a group of this comparatively large size (12 resp. 11 participants) consultation and commenting procedures absorb significantly more time than with smaller groups. This goes equally for the revision work that requires to be done after each round of comments, duly taking into account the received input. The Secretariat pledged to continue providing support for work of the group, including detailed content review of chapter contributions in terms of terminology and coherence.

The group was informed that EMCDDA had agreed in principal for a joint PG/EMCDDA publication of chapter 2. This would be an additional publication to the full report, which is expected to generate high visibility of the PG’s work in this field. From side of the Secretariat the wish was expressed to receive a specific deadline for submitting the text of chapter 2 for review by the EMCDDA editorial board in order to better plan the work of the Group. It would be desirable if the joint PG/EMCDDA publication could be launched by summer/early autumn 2017.

More globally the group discussed the need to keep tables rather short in terms of content and elaborate necessary details in the descriptive text passage of a chapter. Equally it should be ensured that the effects on non-users should be clearly visible in the tables for this aspect has not been widely recognized. Consequently the column ‘non-users’ should be kept. This concept should already be explained in the introductory information contained in chapter 1. Furthermore the discussion showed that is necessary to review the coherence of terminology with other Pompidou Group policy papers that had been formally adopted in the past.

By the end of the discussions there was agreement on the following:

* Shorten the main chapters where possible
* Ensure common terminology, acronyms, concepts and definitions throughout the study
* There will be no chapter on cost/benefit analysis
* Chapters 2 and 3 will have conclusions and recommendations at the end
* Chapter 4 with conclusions and experts’ recommendations is to be short and bring together the key conclusions and recommendations from each chapter
* The introductory chapter 1 is to set out the aim and concept of the study and is to be preceded an executive summary
* Where possible the report shall visualize key information by using graphs and info graphics

Following a meeting of the Secretariat with the Chair together with the Permanent Correspondent of Norway on **5 October 2016 in Paris,** a decision concerning the need for holding a 5th meeting of the expert group will be considered.

1. **Decisions**

**Tasks:**

The initially agreed allocation of tasks was confirmed as follows

Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen: Preparation of chapter 1

Fatima Trigueiros: Preparation of chapter 2

Yossi Harel-Fisch: Preparation of chapter 3

Claudia Storti: Preparation of chapter 4

Secretariat: Terminology review and info graphics

**Deadlines:**

1 June 2016                 Comments and notes from the meeting on tables and text parts of chapter 3 to be sent to Yossi-Harel-Fisch, copies to Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen and Claudia Storti.

10 June Deadline for any additional comments on revised chapter 2 to be sent to Fatima Trigueiros

15 June                Revised chapter 3 sent out to group members by Yossi Harel-Fisch

30 June Deadline for any additional comments on revised chapter 3 to be sent to Yossi Harel-Fisch

10 July Terminology review of tables and content of chapter 3 by Secretariat completed

20 July                 All final drafts of chapter contributions due to be sent to Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen, copies to Elena Hedoux and Thomas Kattau (Secretariat)

31 August            Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen has finalizes revised draft and submits to group and Secretariat

20 September         Deadline for any final comment/agreement by the group of the final draft

5 October            Secretariat meeting (Paris) with Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen and Torbjoern Brekke to review final draft

16-17 November            Submission of the report at the 79th PC meeting for feedback by the Permanent Correspondents

10 December      Deadline for any written comments by the Permanent Correspondents

                           Final revision of the report based on feedback and written comments by PCs

Spring 2017             Release of final report

Summer/autumn Joint PG/EMCCDA publication launched

Appendix 1

**Agenda of the meeting**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Progress report on the work by Anne Line Bretteville-Jensen, Chair of the group
4. Secretariat information on feedback and decisions by the Permanent Correspondents concerning the work of the group
5. Presentation by Ögmundur Jónasson, former Minister of Health and former Minister of Interior in Iceland
6. Consideration of possible aspects related to austerity to be included in the report
7. Discussion and finalization of contributions to ‘fill the gaps’
8. Review of revised first draft
9. Agreement of final conclusion/output/tool (taxonomy)
10. Review and adjustment of tasks and timelines
11. Any other business

Meeting documents

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| Report of the 3rd meeting | P-PG/COST (2016) 1 |
| Chapter contributions by group members |  |

Appendix 2

List of Participants

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**Israel**

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Drug Addiction and the Harmful Use of Alcohol

SICAD – General Directorate for Interventions

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