



# *reporter*

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

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## ABOUT THE DRUG POLICY PROGRAM

**The** HCLU Drug Policy Program promotes evidence-based drug policy which respects the human rights of people who use drugs. Our two long-term strategic goals are to decriminalise drug use, and to improve access to harm reduction programs. Unlike other programs, the drug program has an international focus, and it places more emphasis on innovative communication tools, such as online videos and media campaigns, rather than just traditional legal advocacy. HCLU is one of the leading drug policy reform NGOs in the region. Through our European Drug Policy Initiative (EDPI), we provide technical assistance to other NGOs to improve their advocacy at national and international level. Drugreporter, the drug policy website of the HCLU, is a major international news outlet, having produced 142 (91 Hungarian and 51 English) news articles in 2014. We have added 94 videos to our online drug policy film database this year, ranging from a few-minutes-long record of conference speeches, to twenty-minute documentaries and campaign videos.

## INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING



The Core Group of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs

**The** head of the Drug Policy Program was elected co-chair of the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network, leading the Steering Committee of the network representing hundreds of individual and group members. As co-chair, he represents the network at international events, and led discussions at the Steering Committee meeting in Vilnius in October, to formulate a five-year strategy for the network.

The head of the Drug Policy Program was elected to be a member of the Core Group of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs, an expert group of the European Commission, consisting of forty leading NGOs from Europe. As one of the five Core Group members, he participated in three meetings in Brussels in 2014, to consult with the EU Commission as well as representatives of member states. He is in charge of coordinating communication between CSF and

the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, the monthly meeting of member states in Brussels. CSF advocacy was successful in influencing the EU position, in terms of preparations for UNGASS 2016.

He was also invited to make presentations at many international seminars and conferences - for example, the European Harm Reduction Conferences in Basel and Amsterdam, the International Symposium on Drugs and Health in Istanbul, a seminar on new psychoactive substances in Barcelona, and a drug policy seminar in Wellington, New Zealand.

We were generating media coverage at the High Level Segment of the CND. The HCLU contracted eight journalists to come to Vienna in March 2015 to produce in-depth reports of the proceedings. [Their reports are available online.](#)





## TRAININGS

We organised a training together with the International Network of People Who Use Drugs, for 15 drug user activists. The former or current drug users came from Nepal, Sweden, India, Indonesia, Australia, Georgia, Canada, Lithuania, the Russian Federation, the UK, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine. The four-day training, held in Russian and English, was at the European Youth Centre, a residential educational establishment belonging to the Council of Europe. On the first day, participants learned how video can be used effectively for advocacy purposes. The second day was about production: how to set up and use the camera they were given to take home. Participants learned the basics of composition and framing, and how to conduct interviews. In the afternoon, they broke into groups, with a variety of filming missions in the city, all related to harm reduction in Budapest. On the morning of the third day, Péter

Sárosi taught the participants how to deal effectively with the media. In the afternoon, and on the last day, the participants learned how to edit on Adobe Premiere Pro CC 2014, using the footage they'd shot the day before. After the AIDS conference in Melbourne, the New Zealand Drug Foundation invited us to hold a two-day video advocacy workshop in Auckland, New Zealand, and to deliver a presentation in Wellington. The 14 participants invited by the New Zealand Drug Foundation were activists from various social fields. The video advocacy program director held two 3 day long trainings for 14 human rights activists who are members of the European Civil Liberties Platform of the Open Society Foundations. We also held several presentations in Budapest and abroad about our drug policy video activism.



# LEGAL & DRUG POLICY ADVOCACY IN HUNGARY



Highlighted case: the ombudsman vindicates HCLU's position on harm reduction. The HCLU submitted a complaint to the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, asking him to investigate the closure of the largest needle and syringe program in Budapest. [In his report, the ombudsman](#) condemned the closure as a violation of the right to health of drug users, as well as the right of non-drug using residents to a healthy environment. This represents an important milestone for harm reduction service providers. The pro-government media launched a smear campaign, and accused the HCLU of manipulating the ombudsman; the case received intensive media coverage, and the ombudsman was found not guilty by a parliamentary committee.

Surgeon General asks health services not to call the police for OD patients. The HCLU reported a negative trend of emer-

gency health care providers informing the police if they suspect their patient may have consumed illegal drugs. Patients are criminalised as a consequence. In our letter to the Surgeon General, we pointed out that this is a harmful practice, because it deters young people from calling the ambulance and it violates their right to personal data protection. [The Surgeon General agreed, and sent a circular letter](#) to all emergency health care providers, reminding them that it is against the law to call the police for patients who have used illegal drugs.

School drug testing & school police activities. [In a press release, the HCLU called the attention of the public](#) to the fact that that policemen appointed as "drug counsellors" are not reliable helpers, because they have a duty to enforce the law and arrest drug users. When, in early December, a government politician announced a



plan to introduce mandatory school drug testing, the [HCLU led a short but effective media campaign](#) to counter the proposal, which was finally defeated by public pressure, with the government now only talking about voluntary drug testing.

Representation of civil society at the Drug Council. The head of the drug program was selected as a civil society member of the governmental advisory body. The Council held four meetings in 2014, where civil society put important issues, such as the funding for harm reduction, onto the agenda, and discussed them with government officials.

Civil Society Coordination Network. The four umbrella organisations representing prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and harm reduction NGOs created [a new network at a May conference](#) to improve

communication and advocacy efforts at a national level. The head of the drug policy program was elected as international coordinator of this network.

National harm reduction conference. The HCLU organised a national harm reduction [conference in November in Budapest](#) with approx. 100 professional and decision-maker participants from all over Hungary. We invited speakers from Greece, Romania and the UNODC to discuss relevant issues around harm reduction.

Media Monitor Program. Mediamonitor is a subprogram of HCLU's drug policy program, with the aim of raising awareness among media workers and media consumers. During 2014, the program monitored the media and provided factual responses to misinformation.

ROOM IN THE 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT CAMPAIGN

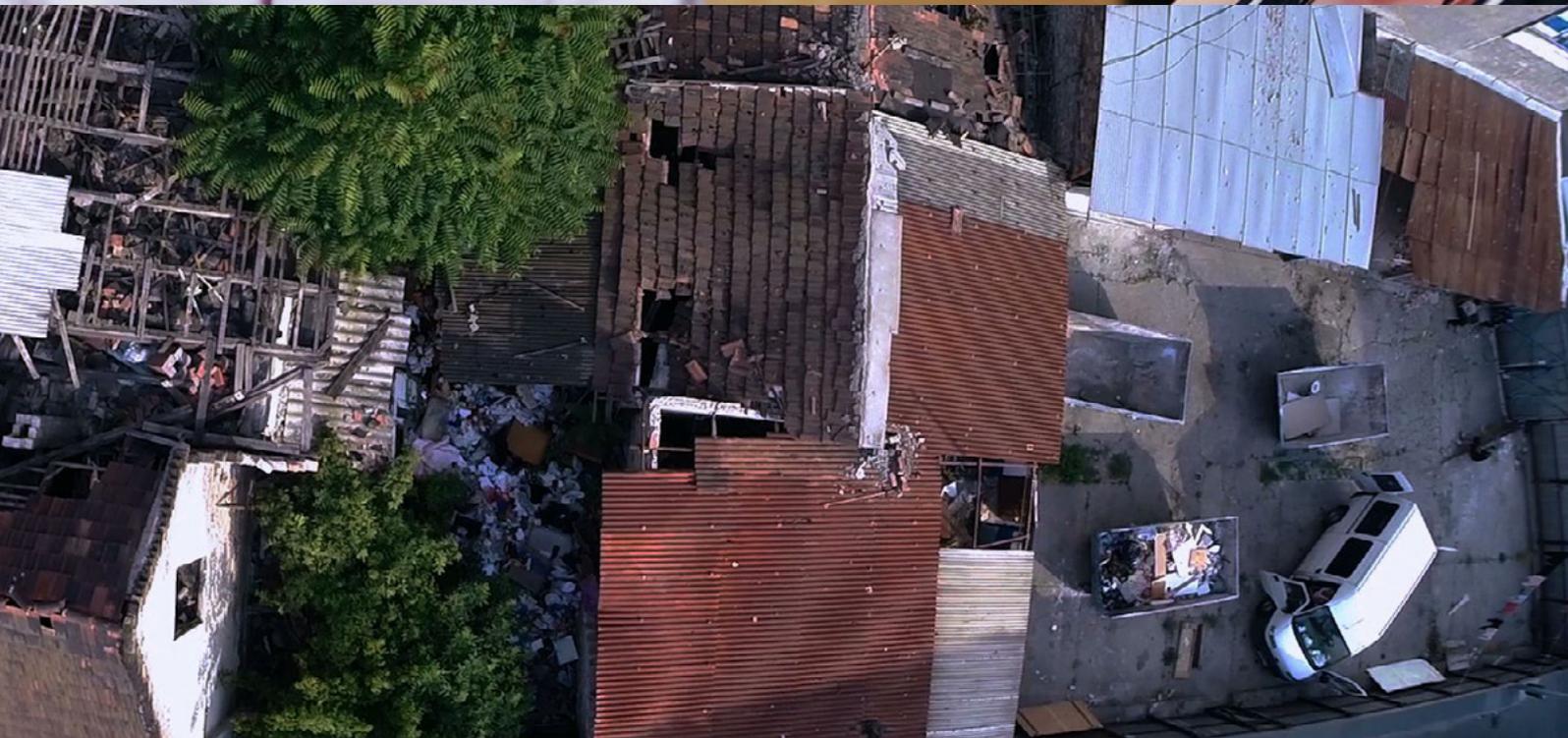
**— SZOBA A —**  
**NYOLCBAN**



**We** launched a campaign for injection rooms in Budapest, especially in the 8th district. Despite the first HIV transmissions among drug users, the largest Hungarian needle and syringe program in the 8th district has been forced to shut down. The local mayor has blamed the needle exchange for drug problems in the district. We approached the issue from the standpoint of local residents, and our campaign aimed to convince people that the real solution is not less, but more, harm reduction. We worked with the PR firms Urban Communications and White Rabbit, to provide us with technical assistance on graphic design, advertising and on-site campaigning. **We created a campaign website to communicate this message, with various multimedia contents.** We produced a 20 minute long **documentary** and a **teaser**. We also made 4 thematic movies **on the drug problem in Budapest, the issue of drug litter on the streets, on the dangers of an HIV and Hepatitis C epidemic, and the possible solution.**

We created city light ads, and collected around 8 thousand signatures for a sane drug policy, **online** and offline by setting up posts in the district. We held a discussion forum for locals. The campaign movie has been watched 100 thousand times. Several television and hard copy magazine stories were released about the issue. We filed a complaint to the ombudsman, who condemned the closure of the needle exchange in the district. The right wing media attacked the ombudsman and the HCLU's drug Policy program director, by leaking out an email, in which Péter Sárosi asked for the possible publication date of the ombudsman report, so he could prepare. The right wing media blamed us of manipulating the ombudsman's office. Even a parliamentary committee was set up to investigate the issue (**we made a short movie of the event**). They did not deal with the real issue: closing down the needle exchange that serves the biggest population of legal high injectors in the city will cause disastrous consequences.









## FILMING

There is a growing debate on how to control new psychoactive substances (legal highs) in New Zealand. We were invited to film at the Pathway to Reform conference hosted by The Star Trust, and give an insight into the innovative policy

introduced by the government. In 2013, policy makers created a new law which aimed to create a legal, regulated market for certain new drugs – so long as the distributor could provide clinical evidence that they pose a low risk to public health.



We produced a summary movie “A FOOT IN THE DOOR: A New Approach to Drugs in New Zealand” and published all the 19 speeches of the conference. Later, in Budapest we organized a screening of

our movie on New Zealand’s regulations of legal highs. As part of his tour in Europe, Grant Hall spoke at our event. We uploaded his speech and the round table that followed afterwards.



Mephedrone (or as chemists call it, 4-methylmethcathinone) is a stimulant drug, first synthesised in 1929, but not known to the wider public until it was rediscovered in 2003 by a man who calls himself Dr. Zee. Is he the “Crazy Chemist” depicted in government-led anti-drug campaigns, using young people as lab rats for testing his substances? Why is he experimenting with unknown substances? Was it his intention to sell these drugs to millions of young people? Does he feel guilty for the harms caused by mephedrone, the deaths, the suffering? The Drugreporter video team met him in New Zealand in March this year, and took the opportunity to carry out an exclusive interview with him and ask these questions. Our aim was neither to judge nor to justify him - just to show the man behind the discovery of mephedrone.



While we were there in New Zealand, we took the opportunity to visit the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective (NZPC) and interview [Annah Pickering and Catherine Healy](#), two sex worker activists, about the unique model of decriminalising sex work in New Zealand.



In New Zealand sex work is legal, and labor and human rights laws apply to sex work. there is no special legislation, but all the work.

**REMEMBERING  
OUR  
COLLEAGUES  
ON FLIGHT  
MH 17**

enuf.org.au

SILENCE  
=  
DEATH

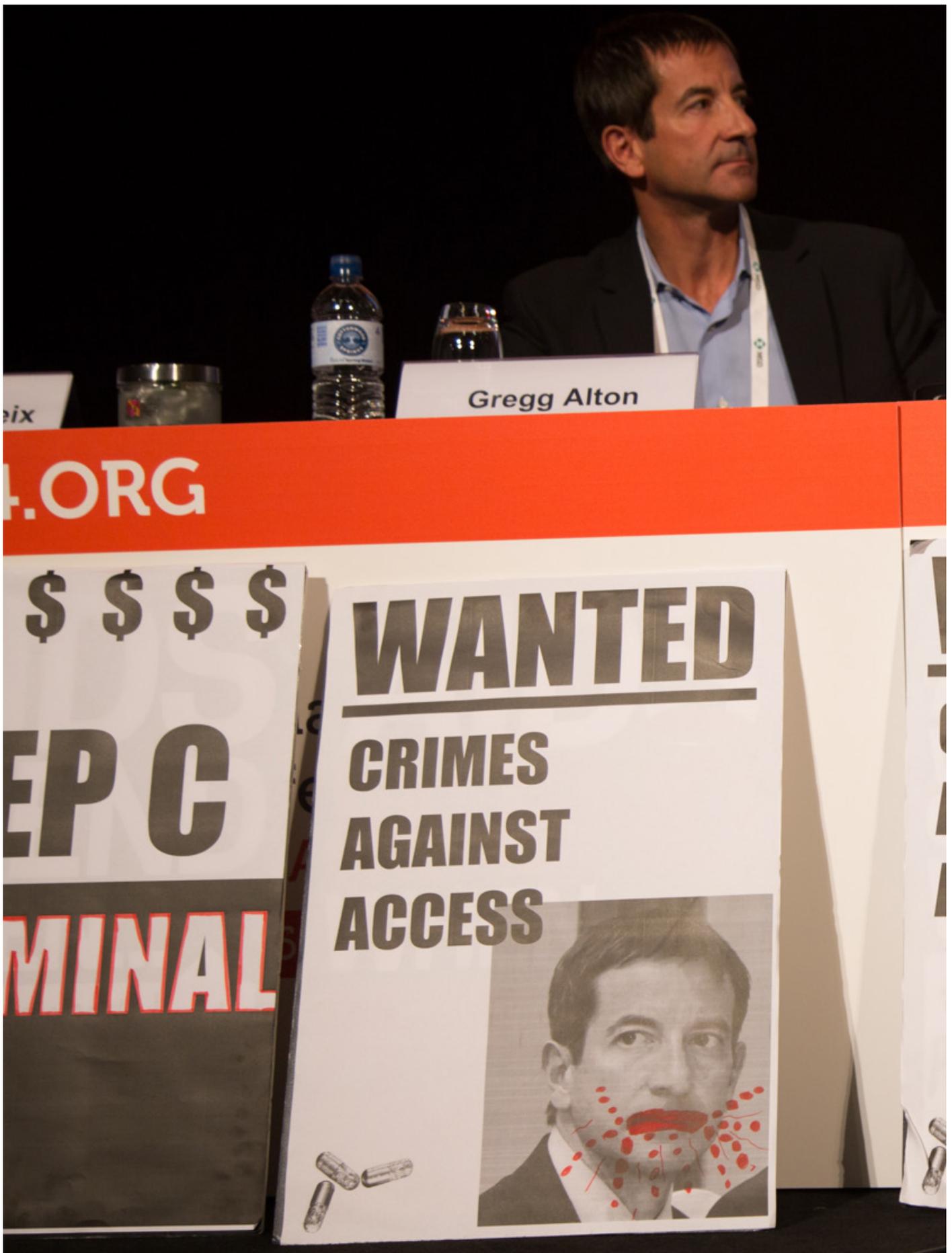
**SILENCE  
=  
DEATH**

**TGA  
LICEN  
PrE**



The Drugreporter participated as video journalists at the AIDS 2014 conference in Melbourne, Australia. The international AIDS conference was overshadowed by the tragedy of flight MH17. Six well-known HIV researchers and activists were on board, on their way to Melbourne, when separatist forces shot down the plane. According to some speculation, widely publicised in the media, “The cure for AIDS might have been on the plane”. But are we really that close to ending the HIV epidemic? Does it depend on one “secret formula” that might have been travelling in the suitcase of Dr. Joep Lange, former head of the International AIDS Society? Not really. The reality is, as usual, far more complicated. But in a sense, all these six professionals knew the antidotes for HIV,

and worked hard to raise awareness of them. [We produced a movie about what works to end AIDS for good and all.](#) [We uploaded two full press conferences from the conference, one held by the Global Commission on Drug Policy, and the other by the International Aids Society.](#) Harm Reduction International, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance and the International Drug Policy Consortium have launched a ground-breaking study highlighting the funding crisis for harm reduction. [Drugreporter filmed the presentation of the new report](#) and the speeches of Maria Phelan, David Wilson and Tanya Deshko at the AIDS conference in Melbourne. [We also uploaded the speech of Pye Jacobsson](#) on the Swedish Model of Criminalising the Clients of Sex Workers.

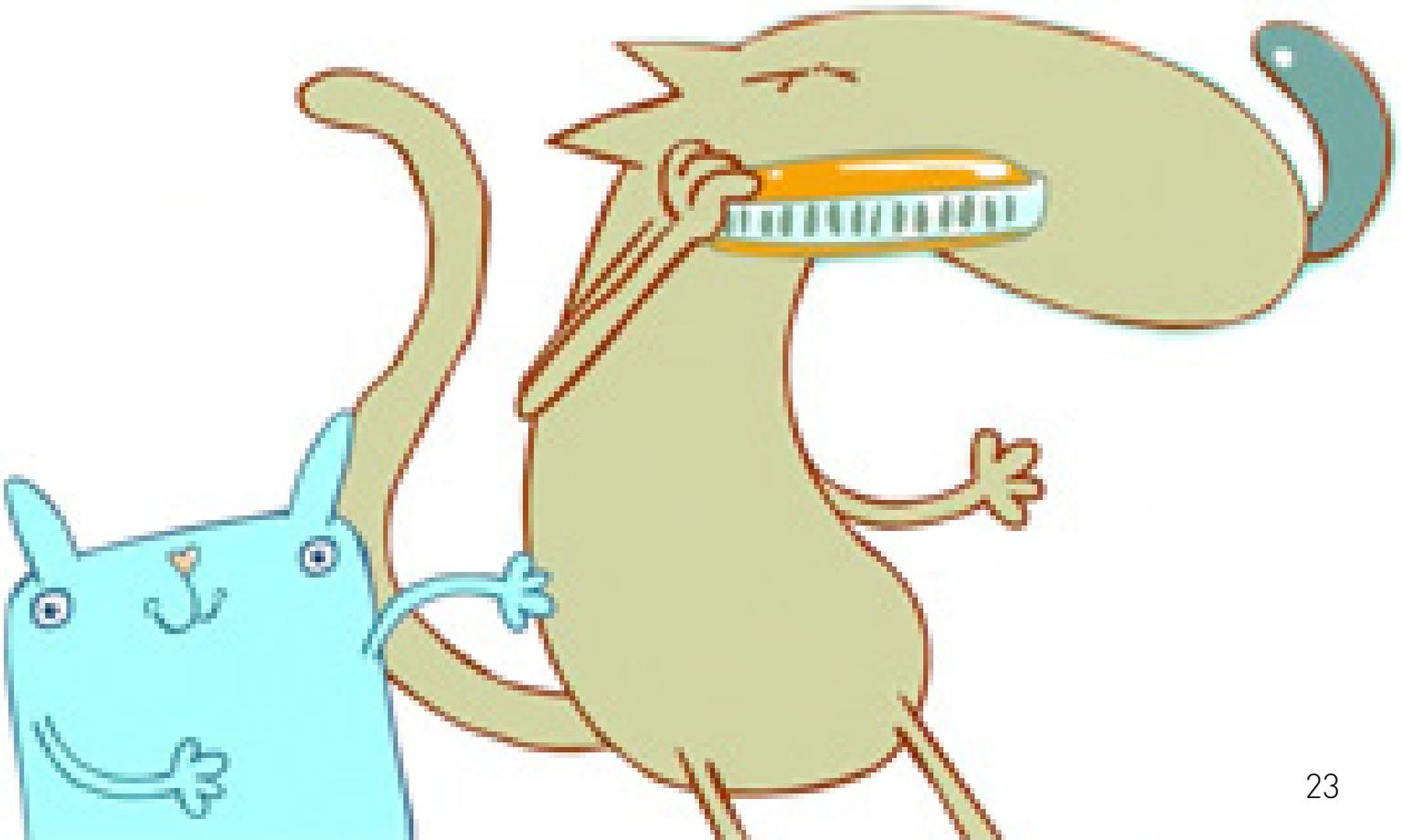


We recorded the protest against Gilead, the company which sells hepatitis C drugs for 2000 dollars a day.

**O**n the topic of Overdose, we produced a short animation:

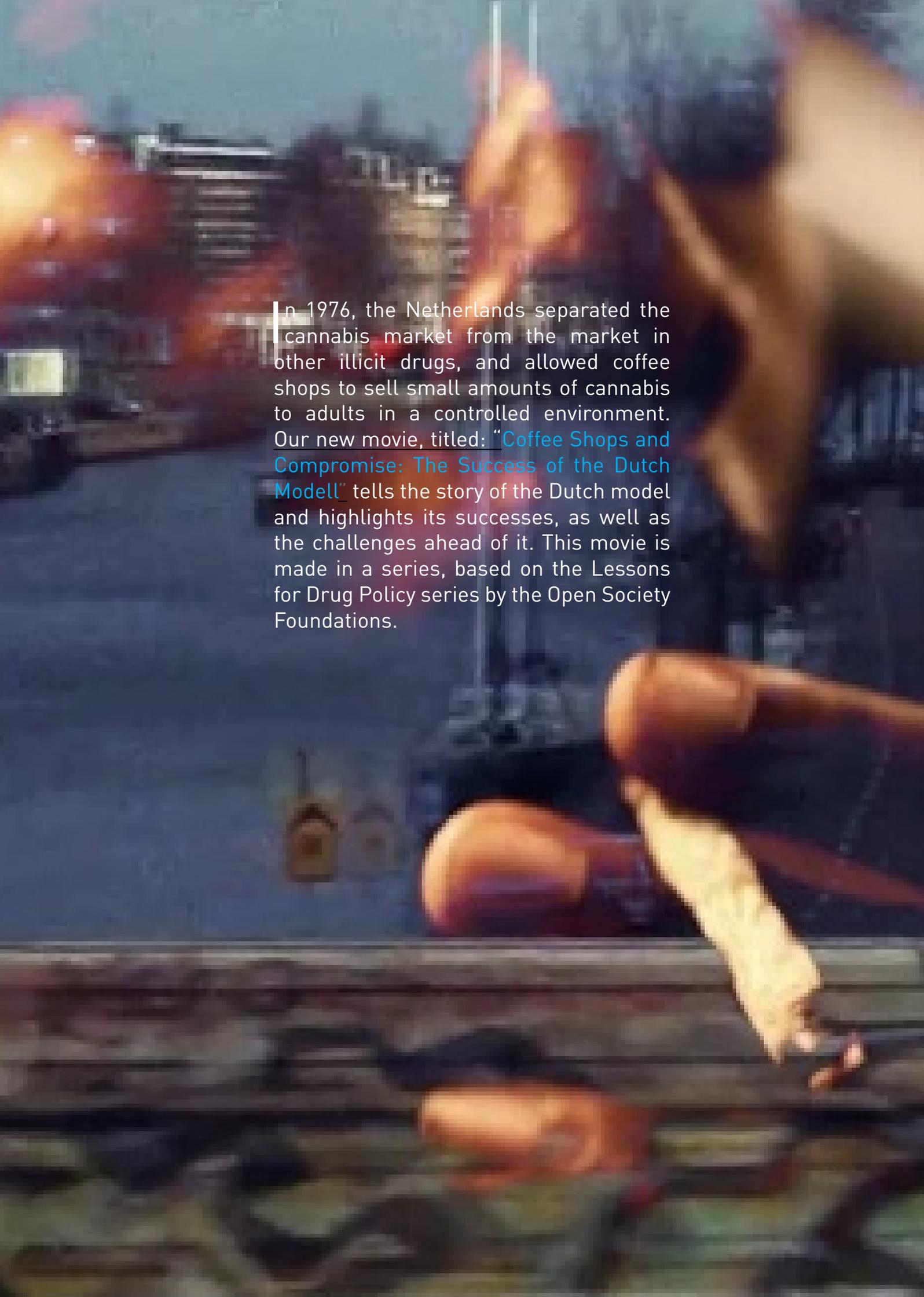
“Bunny and Wolf: An Animated Guide to Prevent Overdose Deaths”

Opioid overdose continues to be a top killer of young people all over the world. In some countries, drug overdose deaths now outnumber those attributable to firearms, homicides or HIV/AIDS. Few people realise that most of these deaths are easily preventable with the right information, and an inexpensive antidote, Naloxone, which can reverse overdoses. The movie is available in [English](#) and in [Russian](#).



The 1st International Conference on Drug Policies in Portuguese-Speaking African Countries (PALOP) – a pioneering event and the first of a set of meetings – was held on the 15th and 16th of January 2014, in Cape Verde. The Drugreporter’s team was invited to film at the event. We created the movie: [FOCUSING ON THE HUMAN BEING - Drug Policy in Portuguese-Speaking African Countries](#). We also uploaded all the 28 speeches of the conference.



The background image is a blurred photograph of a city street at night. In the foreground, the lower legs and feet of a person wearing dark tights and high-heeled shoes are visible, walking across the frame. The background shows a street with buildings, streetlights, and a car, all out of focus. The overall color palette is dark with some warm lights from the street.

In 1976, the Netherlands separated the cannabis market from the market in other illicit drugs, and allowed coffee shops to sell small amounts of cannabis to adults in a controlled environment. Our new movie, titled: "[Coffee Shops and Compromise: The Success of the Dutch Modell](#)" tells the story of the Dutch model and highlights its successes, as well as the challenges ahead of it. This movie is made in a series, based on the Lessons for Drug Policy series by the Open Society Foundations.



**We** produced a campaign movie with our partner Regeneracija for support of harm reduction in Serbia.; titled: [“AT A CROSSROADS: Will Serbia Fund Harm Reduction Programs to Save Lives?”](#) Serbia is not eligible for any more money from the Global Fund - harm reduction programs are in danger.

Our movie and [the short teaser](#) give you a glimpse of the desperate situation of Roma injecting drug users in Belgrade, and calls for funding harm reduction.





**JOIN  
THE CAMPAIGN!**

**LEARN MORE AT:  
[drugreporter.net/INCB](http://drugreporter.net/INCB)**

**Upload your own  
video message  
to the INCB!**



Reporting from the CND: The consensus behind global drug prohibition is fading as you can see in "[Breaking Down the Vienna Consensus on Drugs](#)" that we filmed at the high level UN meeting in Vienna. On the left you can see a picture of the Coffee sniffer at the protest in front of the CND.

Video Campaign to debunk the INCB: The HCLU's Drugreporter has launched a video campaign to debunk the offensive of the International Narcotics Control Board against drug policy reform initiatives. 6 short video messages were sent and there are more to come.



**We** shot a short movie on the key issues surrounding harm reduction in Europe [at the 2nd European Harm Reduction Conference in Basel, Switzerland](#). The movie was screened at the closing ceremony. At the national harm reduction conference in Budapest,

presenters from Greece, Romania and Hungary reported that there are similar problems and challenges in relation to injecting drug use in Southern-Central Europe, but there are huge differences between government responses. Lack of political leadership is leading to growing



HIV and hepatitis C infections among drug users all over the region. [We uploaded all 6 speeches](#). As usual, we filmed the annual Hungarian drug policy conference and [uploaded 8 videos](#). We organized a public hearing at the European Parliament on our study on new psychoactive substances in

June where we have presented the report titled “The Not-So-Balanced Approach - Policy Responses to New Psychoactive Substances.” We [uploaded all three speeches of the event](#).

# INFOGRAPHICS



With the help of a graphic artist, the HCLU has produced several infographics - one about needle exchange programs, [one about the numbers showing the failure of punitive drug policies in Poland](#), one about HIV and TB threats in Romania, and another one about party-setting harm reduction in Serbia.

**DRUGFACTS**  
BY DRUGREPORTER

**SAFETY FIRST**

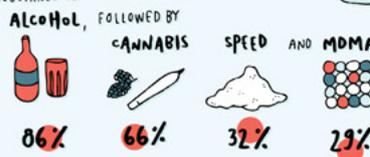
CONDOM, STERILE TOOLS & DRUG TESTING  
- MUST HAVES FOR SERBIA'S YOUTH

**PARTY CULTURE** IS ONE OF THE **BIGGEST SUBCULTURES** IN **SERBIA** AND PART OF A GROWING **GLOBAL SUBCULTURE**. A RECENT STUDY CONCLUDED THAT **RECREATIONAL DRUG USE** IS COMMON AT PARTIES AMONG SERBIAN YOUTH ACROSS THE WHOLE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY IN **BELGRADE**.

FOR **55%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SERBIA, THE **MOST COMMON** PLACES FOR **DRUG USE** ARE **CLUBS & PARTIES**.

**34%** OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS, USE DRUGS MAINLY AT **NIGHT** AND **15%** EXCLUSIVELY ON **WEEKENDS**.

AMONG THEIR FRIENDS, THE MOST POPULAR PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCE IS **ALCOHOL**, FOLLOWED BY **CANNABIS**, **SPEED** AND **MDMA**.  
THE AVERAGE AGE OF FIRST **ALCOHOL USE** IS **14**, AND **17** FOR INITIATION IN DRUG USE.



ONE PERSON IN **10** HAS TRIED A SUBSTANCE WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT WAS.

**25%** OF ALL PEOPLE USING STIMULANTS DO NOT DRINK **WATER** WHEN THEY USE THEM AT PARTIES, BUT **67%** DRINK **ALCOHOL** WITH STIMULANTS.

OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WHO USE PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES, **52%** USED SOMEONE ELSE'S **SNORT** AND **83%** USED **BANKNOTES**.

**86%** HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WHILE USING ALCOHOL AND **53%** HAD SEX WHILE USING DRUGS.

**HARMS** RELATED TO **DRUG USE** IN A PARTY SETTING CAN BE EASILY **REDUCED** IF **NIGHTLIFE OUTREACH** SERVICES PROVIDE **WATER, CONDOMS, INFORMATION** AND A **PLACE TO CHILL**. SUSTAINABLE HARM REDUCTION SERVICES NEED TO BE INTRODUCED TO THE PARTY SCENE IN **SERBIA**.

SOURCE: NGO RE GENERATION: CLUBBING AND YOUTH HEALTH, RESEARCH REPORT: 2019.

WWW.DRUGREPORTER.NET  
HUNGARIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION 2019 - WWW.TASZ.HU  
ILLUSTRATION: WWW.ZLDRAWINGS.COM

1. EVERY **3,5 HOURS**, SOMEONE IS ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF POSSESSION OF DRUGS.



2. EVERY YEAR, **18000** PEOPLE ARE SENTENCED TO



IMPRISONMENT,

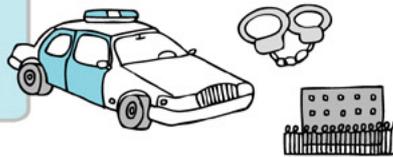
RESTRICTION OF THEIR PERSONAL LIBERTY

OR A FINE, FOR POSSESSING DRUGS.

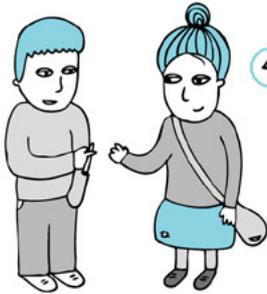
3. THE ENFORCEMENT OF HARSH DRUG LAWS IN POLAND COSTS MORE THAN

**80 MILLION** POLISH ZLOTY

(19,1 MILLION EUROS) EVERY YEAR.



4. DESPITE THESE DRUG LAWS, A BIGGER PROPORTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE USE CANNABIS IN POLAND THAN IN THE UK OR THE NETHERLANDS.



5. THERE ARE NO NATIONWIDE DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS, AND IN PRACTICE PREVENTION OF DRUG USE DOES NOT EXIST IN POLISH SCHOOLS.

**PUNISHING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR DRUG USE IS HARMFUL AND MAKES NO SENSE. IT'S TIME TO REFORM DRUG LAWS IN POLAND!**

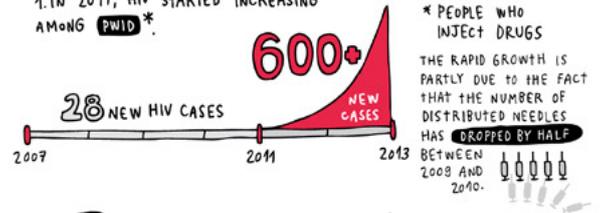
WWW.DRUGREPORTER.NET

SOURCES: 1. OFFICIAL POLICE STATISTICS 2000-2013, 2. OFFICIAL STATISTICS OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE OF POLAND 2008-2012, 3. THE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, PENALISATION OF DRUG POSSESSION - INSTITUTIONAL ACTION AND COSTS, ANALYSIS AND OPINIONS, 2009, 4. ESPAD REPORT, 2011, 5. REPORT OF THE SUPREME AUDIT OFFICE, DRUG RELATED PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS, JUNE 2013

HUNGARIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION 2014 - WWW.TASZ.HU

ILLUSTRATION: WWW.ZLDRAWINGS.COM

1. IN 2011, HIV STARTED INCREASING AMONG PWID\*



2. WHY?



PHARMACISTS ARE RELUCTANT TO SELL SYRINGES TO PWID.



IN 2008, NEW PSYCHOACTIVE DRUGS HAVE EMERGED ON THE LEGAL MARKET.

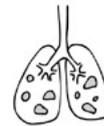
THESE DRUGS ARE

**LEGAL** BUT **UNTESTED**, **CHEAP** AND **EASILY ACCESSIBLE**. THEY **SEEM HARMLESS** BUT ARE IN FACT **DANGEROUS**.

THE GREATEST RISK OF INJECTING **LEGAL HIGH** IS THAT THEY ARE INJECTED **MUCH MORE FREQUENTLY** THAN TRADITIONAL DRUGS LIKE HEROIN, 10-15 TIMES A DAY.



3. ROMANIA HOLDS THE RECORD OF BEING #1 IN TUBERCULOSIS IN THE WHOLE EU.

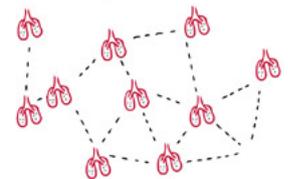


4. FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV, TUBERCULOSIS IS THE **FIRST CAUSE** OF DEATH.



5. THE ACCESS TO **TB** AND **HIV** TREATMENT IS THE LOWEST FOR PWID.

6. ADDICTION INCREASES THE RISK FOR **TB** TO TURN INTO **MULTI-DRUG RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS**.<sup>A</sup>



7. TB IS NOT SOMETHING THAT AFFECTS ONLY PWID. WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

THE EPIDEMIC WILL ONLY EXPAND IF REPRESSION AND DISCRIMINATION WILL INCREASE. THE ONLY WAY TO STOP IT IS TO TREAT PWID AS THE HUMANS THEY ARE, TO **PROVIDE CARE AND SUPPORT, NOT TO PUNISH**.

<sup>A</sup> MDR-TB IS A FORM OF TUBERCULOSIS THAT IS RESISTANT TO THE MOST POWERFUL FIRST-LINE TREATMENT ANTI-TB DRUGS.

RESOURCES:  
NATIONAL COMMISSION TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS  
NATIONAL DRUG REPORT 2013  
ROMANIAN HARM REDUCTION NETWORK

WWW.DRUGREPORTER.NET  
HUNGARIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION 2014 - WWW.TASZ.HU  
ILLUSTRATION: WWW.ZLDRAWINGS.COM

## THE DRUGREPORTER STAFF

**T**he head of the program is Péter Sárosi. György Folk is the European Drug Policy Initiative Coordinator. Tams Kardos is the Mediamonitor Program Director. István Gábor Takács is the HCLU's Video Advocacy Program Director.

## EQUIPMENT

**D**uring its seven years, the HCLU's video advocacy program has built up a great set of equipment, with which we can produce very good quality movies. We have two Canon 5d mark 3 cameras and two Sony NEX VG20s, which also use Canon lenses attached with the Metabones Speed Booster adapters. We use a Zoom H4 and H2 to record audio, and a Rode Stereo VideoMic with the DSLRs.

## DONORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

**W**e are grateful for our donors who make it possible to produce our movies and campaigns. Our largest donor is the Open Society Foundations. The Common Sense for Drug Policy Foundation supported our drug policy films. Private donors contributed to a large extent to our work. We are also grateful to our many volunteers who make our work possible. We have to thank Jerry Dorey, Joseph Foss, Dávid Fekete, Lili Török, Balázs Szigeti, Sasha Gurinova and Ágnes kövesi for their kind support.

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**HUNGARIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION**  
**2015**