

Kyrgyzstan Association of Network of Harm Reduction

Kyrgyzstan country drug policy. In the beginning of 2019, the penalty for possession of small amount is from 500 to 4,000 Euro (average salary is 14 Euro per month). If one can't pay during three months, imprisonment is up to 2.5 years + upon release a person must pay 50% of the fine. 2018 - only 2 out of 10 people who use drugs are able to pay fine up to 400 Euro. The new rules are part of new Code of Misconduct and Code of Crime. New Codes of Misconduct and Crime were developed with President veto for any changes during the first years of implementation.

Community response

- ✓ Kyrgyzstan Association of Network of Harm Reduction (KNHR) has [put on](#) national and international agenda the issue of intended negative consequences on practical level of new Code of Misconducts and Crime Code and created the groups of allies for changing the laws;
- ✓ KNHR has applied to International Report on HIV and Laws the [community report](#) about high risk of violations of rights of people who use drugs;
- ✓ KNHR has created the monitoring system of expected negative consequences of the new Codes application (crime and misconduct, which will come into power at the beginning of 2019);
- ✓ KNHR has raised funding from AWEF for 15 months (2018-2019) for support of community-led monitoring system of New Codes implementation consequences.



EHRA technical support

- As co-trainer EHRA was invited to the Dialogue Platform “Challenges for the communities and definition of responsive measures”, organized by the Kyrgyzstan Harm Reduction Association. Result: groups of street lawyers in Bishkek and Osh were prepared for practical work. And more broadly, different communities have the same vision of the situation with the foreseen negative consequences of the introduction of new codes in the framework of judicial reform. More detail here in blog [Fine for freedom. Kyrgyzstan.](#)



- 61st Commission on Narcotic Substances, Vienna, Austria. One of the asks was to listen what governments speak about national situation on international level. There was a session prepared by the government of Kyrgyzstan. A representative of Kyrgyzstan government delegation gave to Sergey Bessonov an invitation to the session for the next day and told us what they were planning to speak about there. Sergey listened carefully, raised his hand holding the same invitation and said: “Yes, I know about the session of the government of Kyrgyzstan. That’s why I’m here, to listen to your reports.” It was clear for everyone watching that scene and judging from the representative’s reaction that the community folks were at the right place and that it was them who should ask questions and listen to the reports.
- One of the key tasks for EHRA mentoring program is to connect international experts directly with communities’ leaders in EECA countries. CADAP as international program was involved in creation of the new Criminal and Misconduct Codes. But international experts weren't informed about the real negative consequences of Codes implemented. Thanks to Harm Reduction Consortium work and support and CADAP from international level, that was only moment when community leaders were invited on high level meeting about drug policy in Central Asia countries.



Invitation letter to drug policy experts meeting to Ministry of Internal Affair, Ministry of Health and to community of people who use drugs - Kyrgyzstan Association of Network of Harm Reduction.

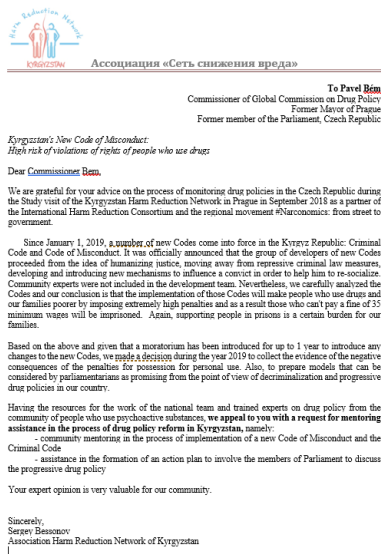
"The alignment of forces in the" balanced "approach to drug policy: out of 50 participants in the meeting 30% police, 30% drug treatment, 30% international affairs, 2 people from the community and two photographers. Do not ignore us, we can help you. This applies to research, and the processes of organizing and optimizing programs for us", - Sergey Bessonov voiced problems related to the special world — places of detention that have access to methadone, while the attitude to treatment by methadone among the prison community and their leaders is very ambiguous. "This means that the fact of receiving methadone for a person in prison lowers him in status among prisoners, denying access to information, benefits and opportunities to survive with dignity. Many people decide to stop OST treatment during the investigation. However, the need for a substance, a disease, does not go away therefore, the constant



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search for funds for the purchase or exchange of heroin, risky injection practices increase the risks of how to get an additional period of time, illness and a decrease in status in the community. Although there are many people who need methadone. 500-600 people (if there are 1,000-1200 people in total, or 40% of people in a given place of imprisonment), go for heroin, and the substance is already in liquid form, and the syringes that are so necessary at this moment may not be on hand, because contacting the administration for a syringe, as well as for methadone, is considered not correct, according to the principles of the community of people in prison. Harm reduction programs exist, but they require improvement in the area of quality. This is how the use of substances is decriminalized, while for storage - a period of 5 years of imprisonment. At the same time, the new codes do not solve this problem, on the contrary, they exacerbate," Sergei said reasonably during a high-level meeting on drug policy in Astana.

- **Study-visit** to Czech Republic for community leaders. Result on the national level in Kyrgyzstan: During the internship, at the request of the community, a consultation was held with Pavel Bam about the situation and possible actions to change drug policy in Kyrgyzstan. The commissioner of the Global Commission on Drug Policy offered his mentoring assistance in the process of developing and implementing community monitoring of the effects of the use of codes, including the formation of discussion platforms on drug policy reform in the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan.



The activities have been implemented thanks to supportive leadership and friendly mentorship of the [International Drug Policy Consortium](#) team, partnership support of members of [the International Harm Reduction Consortium](#) and thanks to financial resources for community needs and approach for reflecting (MEL) by [the Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund](#).



The EHRA [report about international activities](#) within the Consortium is here