

1ST CONFERENCE: EUROPEAN CITIES AT THE CENTRE OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN DRUGS

Palmengarten Frankfurt am Main

20 - 22 November 1990

FRANKFURT RESOLUTION

As a result of the

1. Conference: European Cities at the Centre of Illegal Trade in Drugs

the representatives of the cities of Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Zürich have agreed upon a permanent exchange of experience and co-operation concerning drug-policy.

The city of Leipzig has been participating as an observer for the 5 new federal states of Germany - out of a deep concern regarding possible future developments.

I. We declare:

1) The attempt to eliminate drugs and drug consumption from our civilizations has failed. The demand for drugs has not lingered despite all efforts and everything points to the fact that we will have to continue living with drugs and drug users in the future.

2) Drug use is based on deficits of society and cannot be prevented by drug policy. At its best drug policy can regulate and limit the results of drug use only.

Drug using is for the majority of users a temporary part of their biography, which can be overcome within the process of maturing out of addiction. Drug policy may not render this process more difficult, but it must support this process.

3) A drug policy fighting against addiction exclusively with the criminal law and the compulsion to abstinence and offering governmental and public aid under the assumption of drug-abstinence only has failed: The demand for drugs is still existing, the social and medical misery of users is increasing rapidly, more and more addicts get infected by HIV, more and more users die, the illegal drug trafficking is spreading making bigger and bigger profits, the dread of people in the cities towards the drug-trafficking and the acquisitive criminality is rising.

4) Drug related problems are not based upon the pharmacological mode of operation of drugs only, but they are rather a result of illegal drug consumption, which in turn makes drugs unclean, expensive and the dose uncalculable. Illegal drug consumption is the main cause for the misery of users, the cases of death and acquisitive criminality. Criminalization is a counter-part to drug-aid and drug-therapy and is a burden for police and justice they cannot carry.

5) The majority of drug-users live in cities or they come to the capitals, because there is the market, there is the scene und there is drug-aid. Therefore most of all big cities are afflicted with drug-problems and on the other hand the influence of cities concerning drug policy is limited and contradicted to the burden such cities have to carry.

II. We are drawing the following conclusions

1) The priorities of drug-policy have to be changed dramatically. The aid for drug-users must no longer be threatened by criminal law. Moreover together with prevention and education it must become the equal aim of drug-policy. In connection with drug related problems it is necessary to lay stress on harm reduction and repressive forms of intervention must be reduced to the absolute necessary minimum. Prosecution must be limited on fighting illegal drug-trafficking.

Everybody who wants to reduce criminality, harm, misery and death must liberate users from the pressure of prosecution concerning the consumption of drugs and must not tie the offers of drug-aid to the strict goal of total drug-abstinence: Vis-a-vis the dead drug-therapy will be an offer too late and aid for survival can be a first step in the direction of maturing out of addiction.

2) Within drug-policy we need a separation of Cannabis and other illegal drugs , whose addictive power, dangerousness and cultural integration are differing from each other enormously.

3) The distribution of sterile syringes and needles as well as treatment with methadon are important steps to reduce harm.

4) The option for "Shooting Galleries" providing medical help as well as the controlled medical distribution of drugs to long time users should be tested under unbiased conditions in a scientific frame.

5) The medically controlled prescribing of drugs to long term users should be considered unbiased in order to minimize the damage done and a scientific testing should be made possible.

6) We need a much better cooperation and coordination concerning drug-policy between the cities and their surrounding regions, among the cities as well as among the European countries. If only a small number of cities are following a drug-policy that accepts addiction and offers a system of low-threshold aid, the afflicted cities will attract drug users like magnets and they will be overstressed by the ensuing problems.

III. Therefore we demand:

1) Our conception of drug-policy must be supported legally, organisationally and financially by the national and federal governments.

2) the decriminalization of buying, possessing, and consuming Cannabis (like in Amsterdam). The trade of Cannabis products should be controlled legally.

3) Consumption of drugs, i.e. buying, possessing and consuming of small quantities of drugs must be declared free of prosecution.

4) The legal, organizational, and financial backround for the necessary increase of the prescribing of methadone should be established.

5) The legislature and the national governments have to prepare the backround for a low-threshold prescribing of methadone (like in Amsterdam) and for a medically indicated and scientifically escorted testing of the giving of drugs. The possibility for a psycho-social aid must be ensured.

II. Agreement

In connection with the European unification and the fall of national frontiers we are confronted with a situation that can only be handled on an international basis and has to rely on the cooperation and coordination between the affected cities.

* The representatives of the cities that partizipated in the conference therefore agree in close cooperation with the Council

of European Communities and the World Health Organisation- Section Europe upon the construction of a cooperation network that ensures the exchange of experiences between the cities on a regular basis. New methods in drug policy shall be discussed and prepared together.

Therefore the participating cities strive for realising the following:

- 1 The increase of a European coordination concerned with drug related problems.
- 2 Regular meetings of drug coordinators.
- 3 Exchange of specialists from the fields of drug treatment, prevention, police and public health
- 4 City conference on an annual basis

The circle of cooperating cities shall be enlarged continuously.

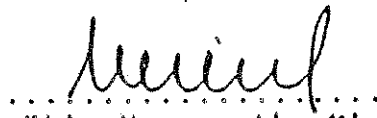
We consider it very important that an institution for the scientific research considering drug related problems on a European basis is founded in close cooperation with the Council of European communities and the World Health Organization - Section Europe - . The institution will coordinate and manage scientific research and initiate new ways of dealing with the drug problem in order to ensure scientifically guided new approaches.

The signatories vote for a necessary harmonization of national legal systems in regard to the European unification on a basis of a policy of decriminalization and depenalization of drug users and the reduction of harm.

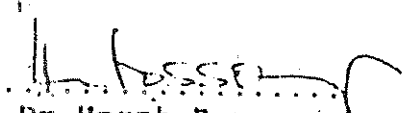
Frankfurt a.M., November 22nd 1990



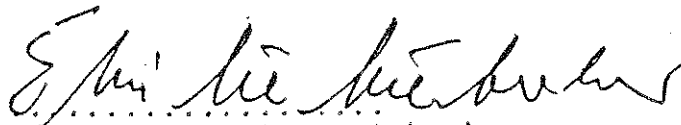
Paul Vasseur
drugscoordinator
Amsterdam



Stadträtin Margarethe Nimsch
Dezernentin für Frauen und Gesundheit
Frankfurt am Main



Dr. Horst Bossong
Drogenbeauftragter
Hamburg



Stadträtin Dr. Emilie Lieberherr
Vorsteherin des Sozialamtes
Zürich