

Background document for the Public Consultation for the 2016 evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan on Drugs

The 2013-2020 EU Drugs Strategy and the 2013-2016 Action Plan on Drugs

Drugs are a complex social and health problem that affects millions of people in the EU. The human and social costs of drugs addiction are very high. They generate costs for public health (on drug prevention and treatment, healthcare and hospital treatment), public safety, the environment and labour productivity.

To respond to all these challenges, the European Union and the Member States have developed together, over the past two decades, a European approach to addressing drugs sustainably. This approach is enshrined in the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020 and the EU Drugs Action plan on drugs (most recent covering the period 2013-16).

The 2013-2020 EU Drugs Strategy was adopted in 2012 by the Council of Ministers to provide a political framework and priorities for actions in the field of drug policies for the period 2013-2020.

The objectives of the Strategy are:

- to contribute to a measurable reduction of the demand for drugs, of drug dependence and of drug-related health and social risks and harms;
- to contribute to a disruption of the illicit drugs market and a measurable reduction of the availability of illicit drugs;
- to encourage coordination through active discourse and analysis of developments and challenges in the field of drugs at EU and international level;
- to further strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and third countries and international organisations on drug issues;
- to contribute to a better dissemination of monitoring, research and evaluation results and a better understanding of all aspects of the drug phenomenon and of the impact of interventions in order to provide sound and comprehensive evidence-base for policies and actions.

The Strategy is made operational via EU Drugs Action Plans. The most recent one, the 2013-2016 **EU Action Plan on Drugs**, sets out actions to achieve the objectives of the Strategy in the fields of drug demand reduction, drug supply reduction, coordination, international cooperation and information, research, monitoring and evaluation.

The EU Drugs Strategy requests the Commission to initiate an external mid-term assessment by 2016, in view of preparing a second Action Plan for the period 2017-2020. This public consultation forms part of the evidence base for the evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan and the work ahead the new Action Plan 2017-2020.

To prepare for the evaluation, the Commission prepared a [roadmap](#) outlining the main objectives of the evaluation, the questions to be examined, who will be consulted during the evaluation process. This was published by the Commission in July 2015.

In this framework, the Commission is conducting a broad stakeholder consultation, including an open public consultation. The stakeholder consultation seeks to gather views from

individual citizens, non-profit/private organisations, and industry and from national/regional/local public administrations on all 5 objectives of the EU Drugs Strategy and corresponding actions of the Action Plan and on the key evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU value added.

On 27 November 2015 the Commission also published a [Progress report](#) on the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan covering the period 2013-2014, accompanied by a [Staff Working Document](#).