

NGO Veza report from study visit to Slovenia

Implementing the National Strategy Against Drug Abuse (INSADA) project funded by European Union, NGO Veza organised a study visit to Slovenia from 11th to 14th April 2010 for 22 representatives of various institutions and civil society sector that are involved in work with drug users in the Republic of Serbia. Support was provided by the INSADA project to the Ministry of Health as a main beneficiary. The visit was hosted by Mr. Andrej Kastelic, Director of the National Centre for Treatment of Drug Dependency Syndrome in Ljubljana.

The main goal of this study visit was to enable the participants to get introduced to the services available and the methodology implemented in dependency treatment and harm reduction programmes for drug users in the Republic of Slovenia.

Participants visited the following institutions/NGOs and had meetings and discussions with relevant staff members, acquiring information regarding the main activities and methods used:

- National centre for treatment of drug dependency syndrome in Ljubljana
- Centre for prevention and treatment of drug dependency syndrome in Ljubljana
- NGO STIGMA – Drop in center in Ljubljana
- NGO Drog Art in Ljubljana
- Night shelter Altra in Ljubljana
- Centre for prevention and treatment of drug dependency syndrome Logatec
- Prison in Koper
- NGO Svit in Koper
- Centre for prevention and treatment of drug dependency syndrome in Koper
- Centre for prevention and treatment of drug dependency syndrome in Piran

During three days, the participants got introduced to the entire spectrum of direct services and models of practice that offer assistance to drug users within the health system, prisons and NGO sector in the Republic of Slovenia, with a special focus on: harm reduction programmes (substitution therapy, needle exchange, drop in centers, night shelters, clubbing and festivals, SOS phone line, counselling, therapeutic communes), treatment without medication (detoxification, long-term treatments, day clinics, rehabilitation, medical interventions), services focusing on special social groups, work with vulnerable groups in prisons, etc.

Analysing the example of the Slovenian practice enabled the participants to comprehend the importance and necessity of linking the civil society sector to state institutions, and the mutual benefits of such collaboration. Important contacts and cornerstone for future collaboration

have been made. The study visit initiated further discussions at the national and regional levels regarding further improvements and developments of drug dependency prevention and treatment services in the Republic of Serbia.

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