

ENCOD VZW
European Coalition for Just and Effective Drug
Policies

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ANNUAL REPORT 2004

Antwerpen, 17 May 2004

Dear reader,

Herewith we are proud to present you the annual report of activities for 2004.

This annual report is divided in four sections:

1. Forword
2. Situation of the coalition
3. Finances
4. Campaign activities
5. Conclusions

Annex 1: Proposal for a new structure

Annex 2: Current list of members

Annex 3: Spreadsheet of Financial report 2004

Enjoy the reading.

Best wishes,

Joep Oomen
On behalf of the ENCOD Steering Committee

ENCOD ANNUAL REPORT

2004

1. Foreword

Like the year before, 2004 was full of intense activity. Between the EU Summit in Dublin in May and the approval of the Catania report in the European parliament in December, we managed to obtain a position inside the debate on drug policy on the highest level in Europe, and use it. We established many alliances with key players in the debate, like Members of (European) Parliament, dissident officials and others, and with other actors in the drug policy reform movement, such as the cannabis industry.

However, as a result of this, the expectations about the impact of our efforts to effectively change current drug policies have increased. And meanwhile, the financial situation of ENCOD evolved negatively. Since 1 November 2004, we are no longer capable of paying any salaries to staff members, and the ability to organise activities is seriously limited by the lack of funding.

In the first months of 2005, we have focussed our main activities to our continued presence in the EU drugs debate (the Public Hearing in the European Parliament) as well as to explore various possibilities to raise more funding. It will depend on the outcome of these efforts, in terms of concrete perspectives for a solution of the funding problem, if the present activity level can be ensured. At least the current co-ordinator, Joep Oomen, has announced that he will significantly reduce his commitment after the Berlin GA if no financial perspectives are found to ensure an improvement of the situation in the near future.

On the General Assembly in Berlin we will be able to make an evaluation of this situation, and take decisions accordingly.

2. Situation of the coalition

Members

On 1 January, ENCOD had 70 members (organisations and individuals). Throughout the year, this number increased to almost 100. However, due to the weak financial situation it was decided that all members who would not pay annual membership fees nor collaborate in any other way to the functioning of ENCOD would be suspended as member. Finally, on 1 January 2005, the number of members was 86.

Among the new members are several companies, cannabis associations as well as user organisations from Eastern European countries (like Bulgaria). For a current list of ENCOD members, see Annex 2.

The General Assembly of Members was held on 25 and 26 June, in Copenhagen, Denmark, excellently hosted by the Danish Drug Users' Union and the Fri Hash Movement. Here, a new name, new statutes and a new Steering Committee were approved. The Steering Committee elected on 26 June consisted of former members Joep Oomen, Farid Ghehioueche (CAM-RD, France), Bruno Valkeneers (LA, Belgium) and Andria Efthimiou-Mordaunt (JMT, UK), as well as new ones: Fernanda de la Figuera (ARSECA, Spain) and Dasha Ocheret (New Drug Policy Alliance, Russia). In September, Dasha Ocheret was replaced by Peter Sarosi (Kendamar, Hungary). In May 2005 Andria Efthimiou-Mordaunt resigned from the Steering Committee.

Two active ENCOD-members died during 2004: Tommy Larkin of UISCE, Dublin and Gerard Leblonde Valièrgue, of Lige Blanche, Paris. They will never be forgotten.

Steering Committee and secretariat

In spite of the steady growth of the network, the perspectives of the organisation to ensure a decent structure in order to carry out its activities became more unstable in 2004. Due to the unclear situation concerning the NEF funding (for details see part 3) many problems arose for the coordination of ENCOD, as it had become impossible to hold regular meetings and even inside the steering committee it was difficult to find consensus about the right way to re-act on this situation.

In practical terms, the labour situation of the ENCOD-coordinator, Joep Oomen, has been unsure since 1 April 2004, where the funding of his salary through Boliviacentrum stopped. Between June and November, this situation could be repaired, but since 1 November 2004, Oomen is dependent on unemployment benefit for a living, but has a full time job coordinating ENCOD. This situation is not sustainable. In Belgium labour authorities can threaten to take away unemployment benefit if someone is not available for the labour market.

Other key staff members who have done lots of crucial work in the implementation of ENCOD activities, like Farid Ghehioueche, Artur Radosz, Andria Efthimiou-Mordaunt, Thorri Johannson, not to mention a dozen of other people who collaborate regularly, cannot be paid either, so in fact these people have to rely on their own personal resources to make actions, which in some cases is generating serious problems.

We believe 60.000 euro/year would be a minimum to fund the ENCOD coordination during one year. At the General Assembly in Copenhagen we decided to implement a fundraising strategy to obtain a this amount of money and some funding to support local groups. The Steering Committee worked out a concrete project with a budget and discussed how to obtain funding for it at both SC meetings we had (in London and Paris). We made efforts to contact possible funders, however, they did not bring the results that were hoped for.

Of course it is not easy to find money for ENCOD: donors need to be people who both understand the global drug issue and the importance of a bottom up strategy, and who have lots of money to spare at the same time! Secondly, they also need to be approached in a good way and this has to be prepared well. On this point, we must recognise that the current ENCOD steering committee has not been capable of forming a real 'task force'. We have not been able to work closely together, make and implement ideas and strategies, take quick decisions and follow them up in a co-ordinated way.

The main problem here is lack of good communication. The Internet is an effective medium, but E-mail communication has its disadvantages, as it is anonymous. On the other hand, the two Steering Committee meetings we held in the autumn of 2004 were rather chaotic events, due to the poor circumstances in which we had to hold these meetings (in private houses and in cafés), but also due to internal struggles caused by difficulties in language, culture and personalities.

In short, effective decision-making in the steering committee is difficult. Therefore the idea has come up to re-organise the structure and limit the number of 'first line decision-makers' to 3 in stead of 6. A concrete proposal on this will be discussed at the GA in Berlin. It is attached here in Annex 1.

Whatever happens, it seems that the first priority of the new decision-making group should be to raise funds.

3. Finances

2004 was the year of the "big deal that turned out to be a rip-off". To remind you: in July 2003 we issued a proposal for funding to the NEF Foundation (funder of the Senlis Council) for a continuation of the Vienna 2003 campaign). They kept us waiting until the end of October 2003, and then promised us verbally that they would be willing to pay at least 250.000 euro. Then some problems occurred (some NEF people got upset by the "out of code behaviour" of some people they connected to ENCOD) and 3 months after, at a meeting in Brussels on 3 February 2004, we were told that NEF had decided not to fund us. Until today, we never received a written explanation on the reasons that finally had made them change their mind.

In May 2004, after three months of quarreling with them about this attitude, we finally obtained 25.000 euro from NEF as a kind of "golden handshake". With this amount we could cover some expenses during 2004, and 2.500 euro was kept aside to fund the Berlin GA.

There were some other subsidies too in 2004: one from the Italian organisation GVC, who invited ENCOD to join a work programme on a drug prevention project financed by the European Commission, and another from the Antwerp municipal service on drugs, that financed a programme elaborated by the Antwerp Drug Users' Union, who have their secretariat inside ENCOD.

Since October 2004 we started to contact large companies specialised in the hemp industry. There are possibilities to meet the representatives of these companies on the hemp fairs that are organised several times a year, and therefore it is a good idea to continue assisting to these events. This has resulted in new memberships but no big donorships yet. But we are convinced there is a potential here that cannot be fully exploited also because of lack of time and opportunity to work on this with a group.

Among others because of these lights in the dark, a decision to close down the office as from 1 January 2005 was postponed to March, later to June 2005.

For an overview of the financial report of 2004, please see annex 3.

4. Campaign

With the few resources we had this year we could not plan big events or campaigns. However, we managed to obtain some impact with the activities we realised. In the first half of 2004, the **'Springtime to end the war on drugs'** campaign was organised, aimed at planting the seeds of legal regulation. 5.000 flyers were distributed. After Summer, a second campaign was launched, using the slogan **'It is time for a different drug policy'**. The goal of this campaign was to support a proposal for a real dialogue between EU authorities and civil society on the direction of future drug policies in Europe. 10.000 flyers were distributed, as well as 400 posters.

EU lobby

Our activities caught the attention of the Irish government who invited us to the EU Summit on future drug policy in Dublin in May 2004. There, we were allowed to speak as one of the representatives of European civil society, and our speech caused a lot of turmoil among the governmental delegates. Later, we were told that the intervention had caused some delegates to be opposed to any dialogue with ENCOD in the future. But we also received a letter of gratitude from the Irish government, wishing us success in the future.

Later in the year we succeeded to establish a crucial alliance with a significant number of Members of European Parliament who are willing to support innovative solutions in the current drug policy dilemma. The result of this was the edition of the Catania report, a set of policy reform-friendly recommendations to EU authorities, that was approved by the European Parliament in December.

Although EU authorities until now (May 2005) have completely ignored the EP report, this in itself being an example of the lack of democratic control on drug policy, the report is a crucial tool to bring the call for reform of drug policy on a higher level.

We also addressed several letters to the members of the Horizontal Drug Group, a formal discussion platform of high level drug policy officials of all 25 EU Member States, among others to protest against an anti-cannabis resolution that was adopted by the HDG in July 2004, and against the lack of will to dialogue among authorities, that we had experienced in Dublin and afterwards.

Besides the positive experiences at the European Parliament we also established a good working relationship with the Pompidou group of the Council of Europe, that resulted among others in our participation to an official meeting of this Group in November 2004.

Public events

During the year, ENCOD steering committee members participated actively in the World Social Forum in Mumbai (India), the European Social Forum in London, the Latinamerican Harm Reduction Conference in Sao Paulo (Brazil), the Commission on Narcotic Drugs Meeting in Vienna, as well as major events on drug policy in the United Kingdom, Poland, France, Belgium and Spain. We also had stands at the hemp fairs in Bern (Cannatrade), London (London Hemp Fair) and Barcelona (Highlife), we organised a lobby action at the European Parliament during the vote of the Catania report in december 2004, offering coca tea to the MEPs. We supported the action in support of the Stapleford clinic in London, and made presentations at events organised by member organisations in Copenhagen, Berlin, Warsaw, San Sebastian, Zaragoza, Tudela, Paris, London, Amsterdam, Antwerp and Brussels.

In October, ENCOD co-published two documents: a small book in Dutch called 'A Good Deal – for a sustainable policy on drugs in North and South', and an printed overview in English called 'The Grey Zone', on cannabis policies in Europe.

5. Conclusion

Taking into account the developments that followed after the Catania report in the first half of 2005, it seems that we have been on the right track in lobbying the EU decision-makers. On the Public Hearing of the EP LIBE Committee of April 21st, 2005, it turned out that an alliance can grow among local authorities in favour of reform, Members of European Parliament and civil society in order to increase the pressure on authorities to take the call for change seriously.

The next step for ENCOD it seems should be two ways: firstly, we should strengthen the efforts of local members to heaten up the national debates on the course of drug policies by national governments. It is obvious that national governments hold the key to real drug law reform, as they can take the initiative to denounce or change substantially the UN Conventions.

Secondly, we should keep in mind that the next moment of putting pressure on the UN level to start this process of change is 2008, when the 10 year strategy of a drug free world will have to be evaluated. The idea is to guarantee a maximum amount of pressure in March 2007, one year before this evaluation has to be presented, to make sure they do not come up with another big lie.

Several strategies and possible actions have been discussed in the past year to obtain both political objectives and funding to carry out ENCODs work in the future. Funding remains a key issue to ensure the continuity and stability of our work, and until now, there has been no time to work out a concrete strategy to obtain this funding.

There are still large external and internal obstacles to our efforts to create a strong European drug policy reform citizens' movement. If we reduce the internal ones by building a structure in which democracy and transparency is combined with effectiveness and cohesion, we may be strong enough to resist the hardship in removing the external ones as well.

ENCODs work in 2004 could never have been possible without the active and excellent engagement of the following people (and of course the support of all members). Sorry if we forgot someone.....

Alfonso y TRICOMA
Andria Efthimiou-Mordaunt
Artur Radosz
Beatriz Acevedo
Bruno Valkeneers
Christine Klüge
Eberhard Schatz
Eliot Ross Albert
Farid Ghehioeche
Fernanda de la Figuera
Franco Corleone
Fredrick Polak
Gaspar Fraga y Cañamo
Gerd Norup og Fri Hash
Movement
Grazia Zuffa
Henk van Dalen
Ian and Jill Harris
Iván Ugidos y los amigos de
León

Jan Ludewig
Jan van der Tas
Job Joris Arnold
Joep Oomen
Joergen Kjaer og alle BF'ere
Judith Laws
Kris Verdonck
Kristina von Stosch
Marina Impallomeni
Martín Barriuso
Martin Steidinger
Paul von Hartman
Peter Cohen
Peter Sarosi
Peter Webster
Stijn Goossens
Thorri Johannson
Virginia Montañes

Thank you and best wishes,

The ENCOD steering committee

ANNEX 1 NEW STRUCTURE PROPOSAL FOR ENCOD

Please find herewith a proposal for a new structure to facilitate the decision-making process in ENCOD.

At the moment we have three levels for decision-making:

1. The level of ENCOD Members – represented almost all at the eurodrug list.
2. The level of effective ENCOD members (one per country) – represented at the ENCOD Member List
3. The level of the Steering Committee, formed by five people

In practice, the ENCOD member list is never used. Some general decision-making goes on at eurodrug, and the more concrete decisions are made at the steering committee level.

During the past year, many decisions had to be made concerning ENCODOs survival (fundraising) and activities (participation in events, among others). This turned out to be very difficult, basically because the steering committee group was too large: diversity between members became a weakness rather than a strength, people stopped participating regularly and it took an unnecessarily long time to explain decisions, take them and follow them up.

There is a need to develop a new structure which can ensure more effectiveness in the decision-making process inside ENCOD

Here is a proposal, we can discuss it at the General Assembly, amend and approve it there.

First level: ENCOD members at eurodrug, General Assembly

General decisions about the course of the strategy will be prepared and taken here. Once a year, a General Assembly takes place.

We need to keep debate on ENCOD and on general issues separated, therefore we can start new mailing list only for information.

Second level: Steering Committee at steering committee list, SC Meetings

Steering Committee will monitor the staff and ensure that the general strategy is followed up. If possible, two SC meetings a year are organised.

Third level: ENCOD staff at staff list (to be created) and staff meetings.

This staff or task force consists of three people who will be in charge of the daily tasks. Among them they will share the general management (co-ordination of ENCOD activities, membership administration, website

maintenance and production of information tools) as well as carrying out specific tasks such as fundraising and working out action plans.

Staff members can be steering committee members too, although this should be avoided as soon as we have enough people who can play this role.

The steering committee can have access to the meetings of the staff but should remain a feedback group, giving consult and advise, not being directly involved in the decision-making itself.

The staff members meet ideally one time every three months, the steering committee can delegate one or two members to assist to these meetings, again under the same conditions as above.

Every month, the staff brings out a detailed report on its activities to the eurodrug list. This report contains an agenda for the next month that can be commented by all members.

VERY IMPORTANT: Staff members should be remunerated according to their own needs and ENCOD's possibilities. This is not only good for the involved people (who are in a survival situation today). It is also good for the organisation. In that way the staff members can be held accountable by steering committee members or others. In case a majority of the steering committee decides so, they can be dismissed.

Therefore this proposal may only be effective if there is enough financial stability.

If you have any comment to make to this proposal, that should be discussed and approved by the General Assembly, please send this comment before June 20th to encod@glo.be

Best wishes,

Joep Oomen

ANNEX 2: Current list of Members

Organisations:

AKZEPT – Germany
Amigo@s de Maria (AECAM) – Spain
AMOC – Netherlands
Arbeitsgruppe Schweiz Kolumbien, Fachstelle Bern – Switzerland
Asociación Ramón Santos de Estudios del Cannabis de Andalucía (ARSECA) - Spain
ASUD - France
AUPA'M - Spain
Blue Point Drug Counseling and Outpatient Center - Hungary
Bolviacentrum Antwerpen (BCA) - Belgium
Brugerforeningen - Denmark
Bundesnetzwerk Drogenpolitik - Germany
Bundesverband der Eltern und Angehörigen für akzeptierende Drogenarbeit e.V. - Germany
Bündnis Hanfparade e.V. - Germany
CAM-RD (Collectif Agir Pour Une Meilleure Reglementation Des Drogues) - France
CANNACLOPEDIA - Belgium
CAÑAMO - Spain
Central and Eastern European Harm Reduction Network (CEE-HRN) - Lithuania
Civic Association for legal Cannabis – Czech Republic
Club Cultural y de Amigos de la Naturaleza (CCAN) - Spain
Cooperazione Internazionale Sud-Sud (CISS) - Italy
DEBED vzw - Belgium
Deutscher Hanf Verband (DHV) - Germany
DOVERBA - Republic of Macedonia
DROLEG - Switzerland
DrugInfo Moldova - Moldova
Drustvo AREAL - Slovenia
Dutch Passion Seed Company - Netherlands
Eve & Rave - Switzerland
Federación Andaluza de Drogodependencias y Sida ENLACE - Spain
FILIP Z KONOPI SKR. - Poland
Flow - Belgium
Forum Droghe - Italy
Fri Hash Bevaegelsen - Denmark
Green De Luxe Tischler - Austria
Groupe Actualites Colombie (GAC) - France
Grup Igia - Spain
Gruppo Abele - Italy
Gruppo Volontariato Civile (GVC) - Italy
Healthy Options Project Skopje - Macedonia
The Hempire - United Kingdom
Hope Sofia - Bulgaria
HPPRY (Finnish Association for a Humane Drug Policy) - Finland
Hungarian Civil Liberties Union - Hungary
Institute for Informational Activity and Alternative Culture, project Konoplja.org - Slovenia
JES Rhein Main - Germany
John Mordaunt Trust - United Kingdom
KANABA - Poland
Kendamar - Hungary
Legalise Cannabis Alliance (LCA) - United Kingdom
Liaison Antiprohibitioniste - Belgium
LIGNE BLANCHE - France
THE LOST HIGHWAY - Ireland
MDHG Belangenvereniging Druggebruikers - Netherlands
MDMA (Movimento Di Massa Antiprohibizionista) - Italy
Monar Krakow Drugs Project - Poland

Mundo Antiprohibicionista - Spain
Nachtschatten Verlag AG - Switzerland
Netherlands Drug Policy Foundation - The Netherlands
The New Balance - Netherlands
New Drug Policy Alliance - Russia
NORMAL (NORML) - Norway
Norwegian Organisation for Cannabis – Norway
Paradise Seeds - Netherlands
Parents Against Lethal Addictive Drugs (PALAD) - United Kingdom
Pollinator Company - Netherlands
Pro Jugendschutz gegen Drogenkriminalität - Switzerland
PROLEGA - Spain
RADIO K CENTRALE - Italy
REFORM (DRUG POLICY INTEREST GROUP) - United Kingdom
REVISTA CÂNHAMO - Portugal
ROOR - Germany
Sensi Seeds BV - Netherlands
SPANNABIS - Spain
Stichting Legalize! - Netherlands
Svenska Brukarforeningen - Sweden
THC Ministry Amsterdam - The Netherlands
Transform Drug Policy Foundation - United Kingdom
Transnational Institute (TNI) - Netherlands
TRICOMA - Spain
UISCE (Union for Improved Services, Communication and Education)-
U-N-O (Utopische Non-prohibitionistische Organisation)- Austria
Yaroslavl City Center of Studying Public Opinion and Sociological Research (CIOMSI)-
Russia

Individual Members

Adriaan Jansen – Netherlands
Alessandro Coran - Italy
Beatriz Acevedo, Colombia/United Kingdom.
Benni Kierdorf, Germany.
Chass Vermeulen Windsant, Netherlands
Christopher Hallam, United Kingdom.
Eliot Ross Albert, United Kingdom.
Gerbrand Nootens, Belgium.
Hanne Joergensen, Denmark.
Jos Oomen, The Netherlands.
Juha Alakulppi, Finland.
Kris Verdonck, Belgium.
Kristina von Stosch, Germany.
Levent Bugday, Turkey.
Lorenz Boellinger, Germany.
Luis Mendao, Portugal.
Marcos Elias Pereira, Portugal.
Michael Benneke, Denmark.
Olivier Ferreira, France.
Paolo Crocchiolo, Italy
Peter Cohen, The Netherlands.
Peter Webster, France.
Raphael Carrez, France.
Stein Hoftvedt, Norway.
Stijn Goossens, Belgium.
Theodore Liakopoulos, Greece.
Thorri Johannson, Iceland.
Timothy Jake Gluckman, Germany
Uro' Skulj, Slovenia
Xavier Majo, Spain.

