

Fifty-third Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Satellite Session

Time for an Impact Assessment of Drug Policy

Wednesday, 10th March 2010, 5.30pm – 6:30pm

Wine and cheese reception

Venue: VIC Restaurant (Function Room A/B)

Speakers:

Carel Edwards, Head of the EC Anti Drugs Policy Unit, DG JLS

Mike Trace, Chair of the International Drug Policy Consortium

Martin Powell, Campaigns Manager, Transform Drug Policy Foundation

All stakeholders in the drugs debate share the goal of a policy and legal structures that maximise social, environmental, physical and psychological wellbeing. Particularly at a time of economic stricture, it is also crucial that drug policy expenditures are cost-effective. Yet despite the many billions of dollars in drug related spending each year, there are great concerns about the outcomes of the current approach, at the domestic and international level.

However, the debate around improving drug policy has been emotive, polarised and deadlocked. Proponents of different views of the best way forward tend to focus on the arguments and evidence that support their perspective. In this context, national governments and international agencies need to take a structured approach to assessing the best mix of evidence-based drug policies to promote human development, human security and human rights. Impact Assessment methodologies provide a potential mechanism for conducting an independent, neutral analysis that all stakeholders can support. These methodologies have been used to great effect in other policy areas, comparing the economic, environmental and social costs and benefits of existing policies against a full range of alternatives. For an Impact Assessment of drug policy, these alternatives should include more intensive/punitive enforcement approaches, as well as options for decriminalisation of personal use, and models for legal regulation of drug production and supply.

This introductory event on Impact Assessment will consist of short presentations and a Question and Answer session covering:

- How Impact Assessments can help.
- How Impact Assessments might be commissioned and structured, both nationally and internationally.
- Opportunities and Barriers.
- Impact Assessment of drug policy and the EU.

This event is open to all delegates to the 53rd Commission on Narcotic Drugs, but seating and catering is limited, so please arrive early.



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