

ReWIND – Rehabilitation Way in New Directions

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IMPLEMENTATION YEAR: 2014



The 2-year-old project ReWIND (“Rehabilitation Way in New Directions” project ID: JUST / 2014 / JDRU / AG / DRUG / 400006629) was implemented with the participation of the Oltalom Charity Society. It was financed by the European Union’s JUSTICE program. Other partners in the program, coordinated by the Italian organization Eughenia Società Cooperativa Sociale, include the Greek K.E.D.D.Y. of Evia, Spanish Fundacion Benefico Docente Docete Omnes, the Romanian Asociația de Mediere a Conflictelor “MISIT”, Portuguese Associação Intercultural Amigos da Mobilidade “Friends of Mobility” and the Austrian E.N.T.E.R. GmbH. The total budget of the project was EUR 335,261.50, 80% of which was a grant and 20% own share provided by the partners.

The project focused on identifying best practices and aimed to develop a rehabilitation and reintegration program targeting young drug users, with the following objectives:

- early intervention and targeted conflict deviance research in all situations that may contribute to formulating conflict deviations, including drug use and abuse, with a special focus on the global situation of minors and their families, and counselling for young people and their families; also for the non-problematic use of different substances;
- increasing the chances of relaunching healthy development through support for integrated processes; the establishment of a public-private partnership in which professionals with specific and unique experience and skills operate through continuous dialogue and networking;
- overcoming psychological and economic barriers through the implementation of new practices and operational processes that allow vulnerable adolescents and their families to benefit from a special service that is not very much part of preventive care in the traditional sense.



The priority of the project is therefore rehabilitation. The main activities of the partners during the two years of work were mutual learning, exchange of good practices and development of a culture of cooperation. The long-term and global result of the project was the creation of an innovative rehabilitation and reintegration program that involves not only young drug users as a direct target group, but also their families, who play a key role in rehabilitation and post-rehabilitation processes, in order to avoid exclusion from the community.

Activities:

- Identifying and describing the special needs of young drug users;
- Use the results of best practices implemented so far;
- Establish, share and transfer an Innovative Rehabilitation Program for young drug users and make it widely known.

In accordance with the research plan, the researchers mapped from the available sources the drug-related policy and legal framework that determined the given country, and collected the most important information on drug use and treatment. In the second phase of the research, the researchers built a database of services and providers to clients involved in drug use - prevention, harm reduction, rehabilitation - and looked for good practices in the field of drug rehabilitation. This was followed by fieldwork in each partner country, gathering the experiences of social and health care providers as well as young drug users and their families using a questionnaire. HUNgarian research has been hampered by the fact that in recent years there has been no survey of several age groups in Hungary that has examined drug use patterns. Based on expert estimates, Hungarian young people outperform their Western European mates in drug use. Similar to the European context, substance use affects younger and younger people and, unlike European trends, girls are not far behind boys either. The alarming trends do not seem to justify the effectiveness of the new Penal Code and the National Anti-Drug Strategy, which has been in force since 2013. That is, young people are not deterred from drug use by more severe penalties.



Behind the alarming drug use trends of young people, in addition to the widespread use of cheap synthetic cannabinoids and designer drugs, the decline of school prevention in recent years - for bureaucratic reasons - is also likely to play a role. Currently, barely half of schools receive drug prevention services. Many domestic organizations working on prevention, harm reduction and rehabilitation draw attention to the changing drug use habits of young people: "nowadays, the client who comes to us is a 17-year-old child with a half-year or up to one-year drug career, but completely ruined, with a broken nervous system, burned out and completely isolated by the drug". Risk factors gathered during the research - such as the lack of a secure family background; family members affected by drug use, alcoholism, psychiatric problems; unemployment; unstructured leisure time, failure even in the case of well-situated families - in

addition, Hungarian experts point out that Hungarian children grow up in a specific “culture” of alcohol consumption and medication, where the answer is “I drink something” or “I take a pill” for every situation. This pattern is repeated by young people later on using the current drug.

Number and types of beneficiaries of the project:

- 6 operators participated in the development of the program and 24 in the implementation and pilot phase,
- 35 drug experts participated in mutual learning and awareness-raising activities 18 months after the start of the project,
- 70 health professionals and social workers took part in mutual learning and awareness-raising activities,
- 70 stakeholders took an active part in the program,
- 2 pilot applications were implemented,
- 70 young drug users and their families benefited from the program,
- 7 multipliers were involved in the dissemination and exploitation of results,
- 70 health professionals participated in mutual learning and awareness raising events,
- 70 social workers took part in mutual learning and awareness raising events.



The long-term and global result of the project is the creation of an innovative 360-degree rehabilitation and reinclusion program targeting not only young offenders and drug users, but also their families as key actors in the rehabilitation process and in the post-rehabilitation or post-detention period, as they have key role in avoiding relapse. The project will achieve this global goal through the following tangible results:

- Research report on national best practices in the rehabilitation of young drug offenders
- Vademecum, which includes a rehabilitation and reintegration program,
- Testing to provide a reliable measure of effectiveness and impact,
- Formulation of guidelines for multipliers to involve stakeholders at different levels.

