



A global advocacy campaign Support. Don't Punish

**Eastern Europe and Central Asia
(EECA)**

2019



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INTRODUCTION

Madness of repressive drug policy: DOING THE SAME ACTIONS HOPING FOR A NEW RESULT

Every year, hundreds of millions of people around the world take drugs. Despite the fact that drug use is widespread and not related to violence, the main approach on the part of governments around the world is to prosecute and punish those who use drugs or keep them for no sale purpose.

Governments and law enforcement agencies still believe that with these repressions, drugs will disappear, and with them all their consumers. Every day, in the name of this ILLUSION, millions of people find themselves in prison and commit numerous crimes in the field of human rights - from inhuman and compulsory treatment to the death penalty and extrajudicial killings.

WHAT IS MADNESS?

Madness is doing the same thing over and over hoping for a new result. «The Ministerial Declaration on strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem and fighting it» was adopted at the 62nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in Vienna in March 2019. We, ENPUD activists, can't call this Declaration in any other way rather than the DECLARATION OF MADNESS.

The Ministerial Declaration takes stock of the implementation of the commitments made over the past decade to jointly ADDRESS and counter the world drug problem in the light of the 2019 target date set in the 2009 UN Political Declaration to Counter the World Drug Problem.

The Ministerial Declaration states the following: «We acknowledge that tangible PROGRESS has been achieved in the implementation of the commitments made over the past decade in addressing and countering the world drug problem, including with regard to an improved understanding of the problem, the development, elaboration and implementation of national strategies, the enhanced sharing of information, and the enhanced capacity of national competent authorities.»

According to the new Ministerial Declaration, governments will continue to «COUNTER» the world drug problem during the next 10 years, focusing on prosecution of people who use drugs.

WHAT HAS CHANGED OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS?

Millions of people in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) use drugs every year. This number has increased since the adoption of the 2009 Political Declaration. Despite the fact that drug use is not associated with violence, the main approach of our governments is criminal prosecution and PUNISHMENT of people who use drugs or those who possess drugs without intent to sell.

Millions of people have been imprisoned over the past 10 years. Possession of small amounts of drugs (in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania) and drug use (in Kazakhstan, Ukraine) are considered as CRIMINAL OFFENCES. Nowadays, people who inject drugs account for almost 50% of all prisoners in EECA.

Thousands of human rights crimes and violations have been committed against people who use drugs, ranging from inhumane and compulsory treatment to extrajudicial killings. «Drug corruption» in law enforcement destroyed the agencies and institutions that should have protected the citizens and the law. The HIV/AIDS and hepatitis epidemics have killed thousands of drug users who have been denied treatment. At the same time, billions are wasted on «War on drugs» in the EECA instead of funding the development of healthcare and education.

Moreover, due to the strengthened «COUNTERING» of the world drug problem over the last 10 years, new psychoactive substances (NPS) have flooded the illegal drug market in EECA. Due to the emergence of NPS people often do not know what kind of substance they may buy, which resulted in the epidemics of drug intoxication and death. Nowadays NPS are synthesized at a reckless pace, while their impact on the lives of drug users in the region cannot be predicted.

WHAT DO WE WANT FROM OUR GOVERNMENTS?

The 2019 Ministerial Declaration shows that governments in EECA still believe that repressive methods are effective. However, we can say for sure today that the prohibitive approach endorsed by the 2019 Ministerial Declaration will only INCREASE the devastating impact on human rights and public health in the next 10 years, especially it will negatively affect the lives of thousands people who use drugs.

In this regard, we demand EECA governments to assume responsibility for human rights violations committed AGAINST PEOPLE who use drugs, review the 2019 Ministerial Declaration as soon as possible and stop prosecuting people for drug use or possession of drugs for personal use.

The governments have waged a «War on drugs» for too long, using disproportionate and absolutely INEFFECTIVE measures that come at a high cost for the citizens of our countries. We can no longer turn a blind eye to evidence of the dangers of punitive drug laws.

If the governments do not recognize the incapacity of the Ministerial Declaration as soon as possible, we, as MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY, will assume the responsibility to become a force that will not ignore the situation of the ongoing «War on drugs» and will continue to counter the repressive drug policy in EECA.

We call our GOVERNMENTS to END THE «WAR on DRUGS», that comes to the same thing in all countries, that is, the war against people who use drugs. War, oppression and violence are not effective! Drug-related problems should be treated by doctors and not by the police.

We call OUR GOVERNMENTS to change their attitude towards drug users and eliminate their prejudices. PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS should be TREATED AS EQUALS and responsible members of civil society entitled to every right and human dignity.

We call OUR GOVERNMENTS to abandon the inefficient repressive drug policy. It is necessary to give priority to DECRIMINALIZING POSSESSION OF DRUGS without intent to sell and to abolish any types of punishment.

IT'S TIME FOR SUPPORT, NOT PUNISHMENT!

ACTIONS WITHIN THE CAMPAIGN

«Support. Don't punish» in the EECA region

BELARUS

«Legalize Belarus»: Minsk

On June 26, Minsk hosted a large music festival for a humane drug policy called «Do not Punish! Festival of personal freedom», which brought together more than 250 participants. Activists and musicians spoke about the problems of drug legislation in Belarus, including disproportionately long prison sentences for substance users.

«If the state, for example, represses the drug user, what benefit does an ordinary person get from it and who generally benefits from it other than a state that makes money from it. Half of the work of the judicial system: police, etc. - these are drug cases. Naturally, most of the people who are being repressed are ordinary consumers. Belarus throughout Europe is the headliner for the brutality of anti-drug legislation and drug policies», said Stas Horek, «Legalize Belarus» coordinator.

In order to express their position regarding personal freedom and the inviolability of a person, four groups played on the stage of the «RE: PUBLIC» Minsk club: «Kitchen stuff only», «Mutnaevoka», «Čas Łajna» and «Botanic Project», one of the vocalists of which was sentenced to nine years under the «narcotic» article 328. Today in Belarus about fifteen thousand people are serving sentences under this article of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus.





«Your chance»: Minsk, Pinsk, Brest, Gomel, Grodno, Zhodino, Svetlogorsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Vitebsk

In the largest cities of the Republic of Belarus - Minsk, Pinsk, Brest, Gomel, Grodno, Zhodino, Svetlogorsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Vitebsk, a series of actions was organized by the organization «Your Chance». The aim of the actions was the mobilization, development of regional leadership, strengthening local initiatives of the community of patients with OST (opioid substitution therapy) and people who use drugs.

Important topics of the past actions, which were also heard in cities, were changing the attitude within the community to the possibility of influencing processes affecting its interests, overcoming drug-phobia and existing stereotypes, protecting health and human rights at the heart of drug policy, increasing the visibility of women who use drugs, and their special needs.

Your chance's activists initially planned to train regional activists to independently conduct the global campaign «Support. Don't Punish». To do this, Skype calls were constantly conducted, team members traveled around the regions for informational and educational work with people in the field.

In the process of preparation, activists identified the most active and most problematic regions in order to cover them with a campaign, identified leaders from the regions and trained them, coordinated the activities of the regions, and received feedback. Whenever possible, they tried in the regions to inform and attract the medical staff of OST sites.

For a wider involvement in the campaign, «Your Chance» activists agreed on support with patient organizations in Belarus: «People PLUS» (organization of people living with HIV), «YANA» (organization of women living with HIV, lesbian and transgender women), The Belarusian Helsinki Committee human rights organization.

June 26 as part of the «Support. Don't Punish» campaign took place on 13 OST sites in 10 cities of Belarus, about 250 people became participants. There were no problems, since preliminary work was carried out with the medical staff of these sites.

Based on the results of the campaigns, it can be said that the community of people who use drugs has come together, leaders in the regions have been identified and trained, and women leaders have also come together. There was a lot of information and reposts in social networks about the preparation and conduct of actions in Belarus. Your chance organization has new partnerships in advocating for the interests and rights of people who use drugs: «People PLUS», «YANA», The Belarusian Helsinki Committee and plans for further cooperation. The community saw the power of unity, even more people learned about the campaign and its goals, many of them took part in it for the first time.





UZBEKISTAN

Tashkent

In Tashkent on June 26, two initiative groups of activists: outreach workers of the Tashkent harm reduction project and women who use drugs or have experience in drug use, held a flash mob in support of the «Support. Don't Punish» and a discussion that discussed a further interaction strategy between key communities. Special attention was paid to the problems of women who use drugs. One of the main directions of further community actions is the fight against stigma and discrimination and strengthening the role of key groups in decision-making at the state level.



RUSSIA

Moscow

June 26, in Moscow on the day of the international campaign «Support. Don't Punish», Andrey Rylkov Foundation has gathered friends and like-minded people at the Paper Factory art platform to discuss drug policy issues in Russia, outline a solution vector and have some fun. The action program included speeches by speakers, music, poetry, consultations and the provision of harm reduction services on the fund's bus.

The message of the rally: «Thousands of drug prisoners are behind bars. Those drug users who are fortunate enough to remain at large are surrounded by stigma and a wall of silence. We want to destroy it. We want to support, not punish.»



**ФОНД ИМ.
АНДРЕЯ РЫЛКОВА**

ЛЕТО 228

УБИЙЦЫ CRYSTAL

**ШУМНЫЕ
И УГРОЖАЮЩИЕ
ВЫХОДКИ**

ПОЗОРЫ

**26 ИЮНЯ 20:00
БУМАЖНАЯ ФАБРИКА**



Orsk-Orenburg

The purpose of the action in Orenburg and Orsk was to draw attention to the repressive Russian legislation in relation to people who use drugs, and in particular women. The rallies were dedicated to the memory of Alena Asaeva, activist of the Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs (ENPUD). The task was also set to mobilize activists in Orsk (the birthplace of Alena) by involving actions in this city in events.

On June 26, actions were held simultaneously in two cities - Orenburg and Orsk with the participation of women activists of the NGO «The Right of Everyone». Activists in T-shirts with the logo «Support. Don't Punish» and a portrait of Alena Asaeva held a picket near the Leninsky Criminal Court, which sentenced Alena Asaeva for possession of drugs, and narcology, where she underwent compulsory treatment at a memorial place in Orsk («I love Orsk» stella).

In Orenburg, the rallies took place near the administration building of the Leninsky district, at the Government House of the Orenburg region, in the Square near the city council. In all places, activists deployed a roll-up with a photo of Alena and the action logo, handing out leaflets on the streets with the action logo and the requirements of the community of people who use drugs, talking about its significance and the content of the global campaign.

As a result of the rally, new activists from Orsk were attracted, the local community (including journalists) now knows about this day (the last time the rally «Support. Don't Punish» was held in Orenburg about 10 years ago). It was possible to reach an agreement with Orsk Narcology on providing contacts of the NGO «The Right of Everyone» to patients. And the most important thing is to devote this day to activist Alena Asaeva, who was at the origins of the birth of the Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs (ENPUD) and participated in the preparation and implementation of the «Support. Don't Punish» throughout the EECA region.





Kaliningrad

In Kaliningrad, the aim of the action was to increase the potential and mobilize the community of people who use drugs, and improve their access to effective protection and a fair trial.

Activists of the Initiative Group of People Who Use Drugs «The Becoming» planned events two months before the date of the event. Their work is directly related to the protection of human rights in relation to people who use drugs. One of the areas of activity is the protection and assistance to community representatives during the investigation and in court.

The position of the activists is that the presence of a social worker in court as a witness in drug cases is very important and plays a key role during the sentencing. It is important that social workers of narcological services also go to the courts, who can, on behalf of a state institution, petition the court for alternative punishment, which is not happening at the moment. In this regard, a narcological dispensary was chosen for the action. The target group was activists and clients.

On June 26, activists of «The Becoming» met in the morning at the office of the partner organization «YULA», dressed in T-shirts with the logo for the campaign «Support. Don't Punish», took information material for distribution to people on the street and at the Narcological Dispensary. The event was agreed with the leadership of the Narcological Dispensary a month before the event. After that, the activists met with decision-makers, where they were informed about the goals of the action and an understanding of their role in protecting the rights of people who use drugs. T-shirts with campaign logos were also handed out to friendly doctors.

In addition, activists handed out leaflets to clients in the corridors and waiting for a doctor's appointment - 40 leaflets with stickers were distributed, information materials were also distributed to social workers at the Narcological Dispensary and patients undergoing rehabilitation here. Then the activists went to the main street of the city, where they also distributed informational materials. On the eve of June 25, during outreach work, information materials were distributed to patients of the Infectious Diseases Hospital and the Tuberculosis Dispensary.

The next place in the framework of the planned events was the Public Chamber of the Kaliningrad Region, where Initiative Group of People Who Use Drugs «The Becoming» took part in a round table in the form of a joint meeting of the Commission for the Development of NGOs and Social Entrepreneurship, the Commission for Public Control, interaction with public councils and the media, as well as the community professionals and activists working to curb the spread of drug abuse and HIV among people who use drugs.

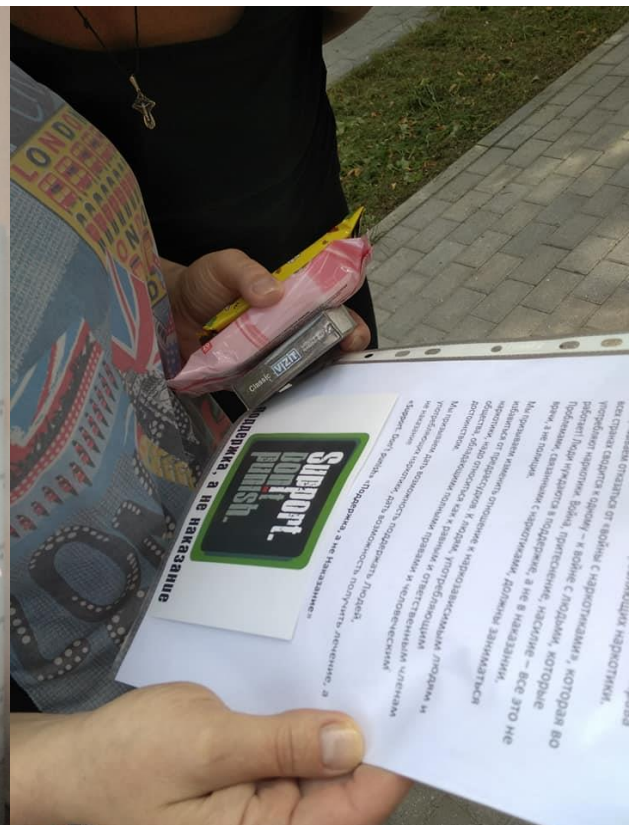
At the round table there was presented the study «Respecting human and citizen rights in relation to people who use drugs» on violation of human rights in relation to people who use drugs. Activists of Initiative Group «The Becoming» took part in the development of this study. They

also participated in a survey of people who use drugs. After presenting the monitoring results, a lively discussion began. The roundtable participants agreed that an analysis of the legal support of people who use drugs by the community will help to reduce their discrimination and improve access to treatment.

The next day, June 27, a seminar was held, to which a lawyer of international law was invited as a speaker. The title of the seminar is «Legal and social aspects of defense in criminal cases under Art. 228» (an article in the Criminal Code defining responsibility for drug possession in Russia), the leader of «The Becoming» also participated in the seminar as a speaker.

As a result of the actions and events, it was possible to draw attention to the barriers to medical access and effective defense in court available to people who use drugs. The activists managed to arrange a meeting with the leadership of the Narcological Dispensary on a possible solution to the problems of access to naloxone. It was possible to attract new activists to the Initiative Group, to train activists and clients in the legal and social aspects of defense in court, which will be further disseminated within the community.





St. Petersburg

In St. Petersburg, activists of the informal association «Grass» celebrated the day of the international campaign «Support. Don't punish» awareness campaign. The program included the following activities: educational program on information security and training on stigma; acquaintance with activists of such activist associations and non-governmental organizations as «Narcoprosvet», «Anti228», «Hemp March», «Humanitarian Action», «Summer 228» and The Forum of People Who Use Drugs; a lecture hall on problems and assistance to people who use drugs - and a discussion on the draft drug policy reform.

The participants of the event had the opportunity to get handouts and ask their questions to people who use drugs, people with addiction, or those who have faced persecution under criminal code article 228 of the Living Library, where Books are people with unique experiences with substances, and Readers are viewers asking them questions in a personal conversation. The participants had 30 minutes to communicate with one Book in the company of four more interested Readers. In the first 5 minutes it was possible to leave the circle if the Reader understood that he was uncomfortable or had expectations of something else. There are no awkward questions at the Living Library - you could ask them without hesitation. However, the Book could refuse to answer if some question is too personal or inappropriate.

For the safety of the participants of the event, a room was made where you can't shoot videos, photos, write audio, tell private stories outside. There was, on the contrary, a place where you could take pictures with the poster «Support. Don't punish» and others. There was also the opportunity to make a badge «Do not take pictures of me».





Togliatti

In Togliatti, the non-governmental organization «April» held a flash mob on the day of the international campaign «Support. Don't Punish». Activists used the symbols of a global campaign to urge city residents to advocate for humane drug policies, for effective treatment and support, for ending discrimination and violence, for ending the harassment and punishment of people who use drugs.

Representatives of the community of people who use drugs, Togliatti posted stickers «Support. Don't Punish» on himself, on various parts of the body: on the faces, hands, necks and walked with them around the city. Then, having made a photo with stickers, activists posted them on various Internet resources.



LITHUANIA

«Two is not one!»: Vilnius

On June 26, in Vilnius, activists of a group of participants in the OST program «Two Not One!» made 8 visits to the city polyclinics. They transmitted letters to the administration of these medical institutions about the need to increase the number of OST patients in them. As a result of solving this problem, the Center for Dependencies could free up space for those people who have been waiting for them since last August.



«Young Wave»: Vilnius

In Vilnius, «Young Wave», an organization of young users of psychoactive substances, organized and conducted an information campaign in the media, as part of which it initiated a discussion on harm reduction in Lithuania. The campaign consisted of several posts on social networks. In these publications, activists described the lack of harm reduction services, low coverage of OST programs for people who use drugs, and the costs of keeping people who use drugs in prisons instead of financing scientifically sound and effective harm reduction programs in the country.



Kaunas

In Kaunas, the Social Support Center «RIGRA» and The Initiative Group of Users of Psychoactive Substances in Lithuania conducted a series of actions as a part of the international campaign «Support. Do not punish». The main requirements of the 2019 campaign were the following:

- Free naloxone is available to everyone who uses psychoactive substances!
- Support, not punishment! (Only psychosocial and medical can help people who use drugs).
- The drug control system is disproportionate and repressive - it needs to be reformed!
- People who use psychoactive substances should no longer be prosecuted for their use!

First stage. On June 25, the action was held next to the Kaunas branch of the Republican Addiction Center, where the OST program works. Its goal is to show the stigmatized attitude of the Lithuanian society towards people who use psychoactive substances.

Activists were struck by the fact that the center's employees, who should support patients, were not photographed and ignored the action. Patients of the center also did not participate in the event, because they feel self-stigma. The action was held by the new director of the center, Dr. Loreta Stonene, who previously worked at UNODC and various NGOs. Today she uses scientifically based new treatment methods in the Kaunas department, is always included and is aimed at helping every patient who is waiting for help. As a result, the center gradually ceases to be a place of punishment and intimidation. Change does not happen in one day - it is difficult to break the system that has been created over the years. Activists believe that even if one person begins to feel freer, such actions are worth it.

Second stage. On June 29, a discussion on drug policy in Lithuania took place at the Social Support Center «RIGRA». «RIGRA» friends and partners from other cities of Lithuania participated in it: Egidijus (Gargždai), Dainis (Alytus), Laimute (Vilnius), Egidijus and Kestutis (Kaunas) and many others.

A separate topic for discussion and actions of activists in Kaunas on this day was the availability of naloxone. Despite the fact that on December 10, 2018, the Minister of Health of Lithuania adopted Order No. 2018 V-1420, which defines the format for the provision of naloxone in low-threshold programs, nevertheless there are difficulties for receiving it in harm reduction programs. Activists sent official letters demanding state power to end the war on people who use drugs and change drug policies to a system based on human rights. Particular attention should be paid to harm reduction programs and the unhindered provision of services, and the receipt of preventive materials.

In a letter to the Ministry of Health, activists demanded that naloxone as a tool to save the lives of people who use drugs be included in the list of harm reduction measures that was prepared and

approved by the state system of guaranteed financing. Naloxone should be used as a standard harm reduction tool, like syringes, needles or alcohol wipes. Its price is only 1 euro, and this is the price of human life.



MOLDOVA

Chisinau-Balti

In Chisinau and Balti, The Initiative Drug Users Group «Pulse» held a series of actions and events as part of the global campaign «Support. Don't punish». The goal was to initiate a dialogue with decision makers in Moldova on the criminalization of people who use drugs. This should be a start for considering alternative penalties for the use and possession of any substances for personal purposes, as well as revising drug policies and laws that provide for different penalties.

At the preparation stage, activists held a group meeting, on which, based on resources, they determined the activities of the event in the framework of the global campaign «Support. Don't punish». «Pulse» received substantial assistance in conducting events from the NGO working in the area of harm reduction «Youth for the Right to Life, Balti», namely, the opportunity to use the premises for group meetings and holding a round table.

First stage. Members of the IG «Pulse» held an action at the Police Commissariat and at the Mayor's Office in the city of Balti. The main requirement is the reform of drug policy in Moldova. During the rally there were reporters to whom the participants were interviewed. The action was covered in the media.

Second stage. Activists went to Chisinau and held an action near the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and handed letters to the deputies containing the community's demand to reform drug policy, decriminalize, and use European standards. All these actions should be carried out on the basis of the association of Moldova in the EU, taking into account agreements in the framework of associative membership and international agreements:

1. To review the quantitative indications of drugs in Government Decision No. 79.
2. To conduct an audit of the list of narcotic drugs.
3. To exclude from the legislative acts the concepts of «derivatives» and «analogues».
4. To develop alternative penalties for drug possession for personal use.
5. To abolish any responsibility for the use of any psychoactive substances and to provide wide access for people who use drugs to scientifically sound harm reduction programs. чёчё
6. When making decisions, ensure the wide participation of the medical and scientific community, experts, and representatives of the community of people who use drugs.
7. To ensure the wide participation of the medical and scientific community, experts, and representatives of the community of people who use drugs in decision-making on drug policy.

In addition to the Parliament of Moldova, letters with these requirements were also sent to the official addresses of key departments and ministries of the country: the Ministry of Justice, the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Prime Minister.

Third stage. On the same day, activists organized and held a picket at the Russian Embassy in Chisinau in support of Andrii Yarovy. A letter was sent to the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Moldova requesting the speedy release of Andrii Yarovy in the territory of the unrecognized Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) and his return to his family, friends and his professional humanitarian activities.

Fourth stage. Activists held a round table in Balti. Police officers, representatives of the local Roma community and local NGOs, medical workers in the field of narcology and infectious diseases participated in its work. Participants discussed an integrated approach to solving problems associated with drug use and the provision of various types of assistance in the city.

Actions in the framework of the global campaign «Support. Don't punish» made it possible to make the community visible in support of a humane approach to people who use drugs, based on European values and human rights, which were supported by both the police and the society.

Based on the results of the actions and events held, The Initiative Group «Pulse» expanded the list of media partners; mutual understanding has improved with representatives of the local Police Commissariat, who have invited activists to conduct joint events; representatives of the local Roma community expressed their desire to support various community initiatives as volunteers. NGOs and state medical institutions working in the field of psychosocial support, TB, HIV, hepatitis have shown interest in further joint work.

A letter from the community of people who use drugs, transmitted personally in Chisinau to key government agencies, should be answered within a month. Activists will use the received answers as an advocate tool in their further work on drug policy reform in Moldova.





KAZAKHSTAN

Almaty

In Almaty, the campaign «Support. Do not punish» was aimed at the fact that health and human rights should be at the center of drug policy. The slogan of the campaign in Kazakhstan was «Access to narcotic substances is a matter of medicine».

The purpose of the events and actions was to draw attention to the consequences of the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan in relation to people who use drugs, with a focus on women. To this end, as part of a global campaign, they were aimed at mobilizing the community to protect their rights and improve the quality of implementation of harm reduction programs, as well as supporting women who use drugs. This was expressed in two directions of action:

1. Thematic events, T-shirts and postcards with quotes and campaign slogans aimed at changing public opinion and attracting the attention of decision makers, deputies, representatives of law enforcement agencies, representatives of medical institutions to the problems of repressive drug policies in different cities of Kazakhstan.

2. Photo exhibition «Orange Morning» and a press conference as part of its work.

Long before June 26, an initiative group of people who use drugs united in WhatsApp and informed the activist community of Kazakhstan about the global campaign «Support Don't Punish». New activists from all regions of Kazakhstan were involved in the preparation. Stickers «Support. Don't Punish» and «Justice for Health - Health for Justice», leaflets and brochures were printed. All informational materials were distributed in the cities of Almaty, Nur-Sultan, Pavlodar, Temirtau, Karaganda, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Semey, Petropavlovsk, Kyzylorda, Taldykorgan and others, which conducted flash mobs on June 26.

Throughout the whole month, activists held photo sessions in the regions, posted photos on social networks or redirected through the WhatsApp group «Harm Reduction», which brought together 49 community activists from all over Kazakhstan. Also, in preparation for the campaign's activities, the Kazakhstan Harm Reduction Network was created, which brought together community activists.

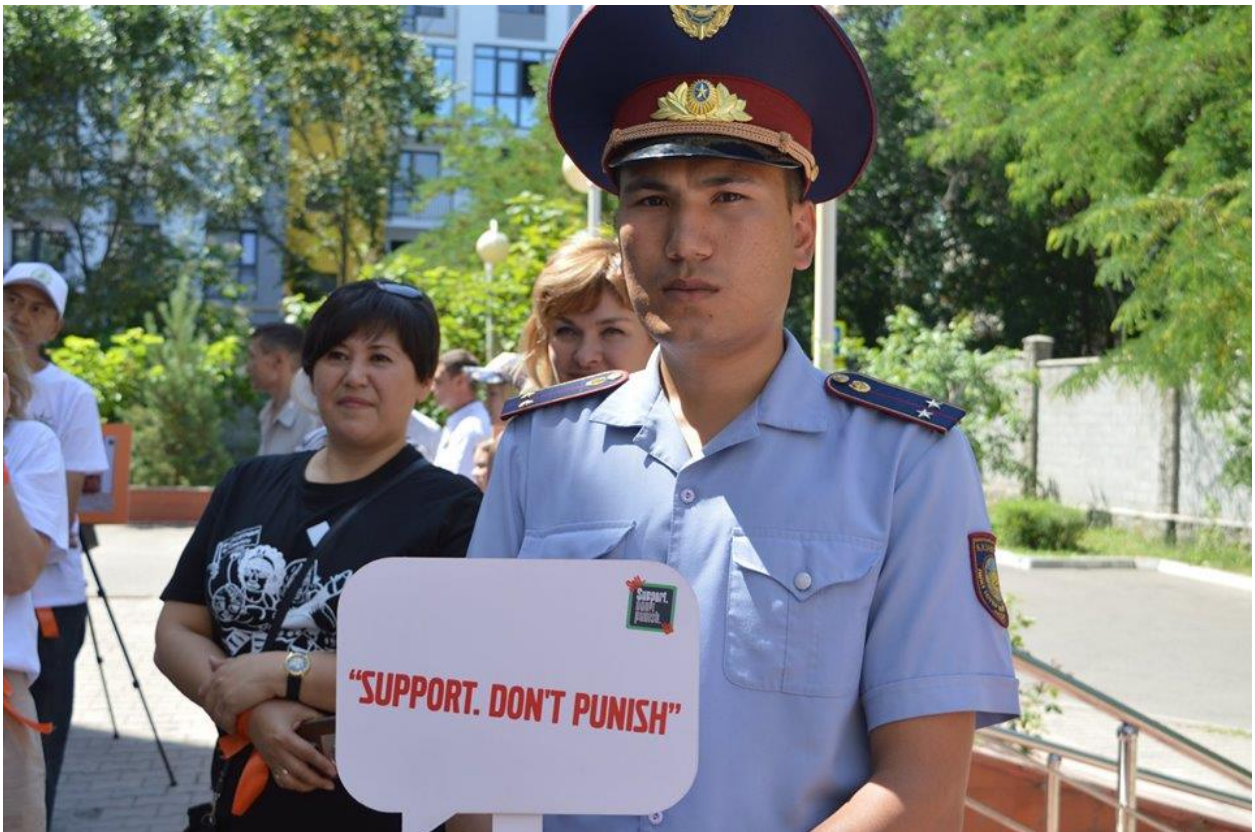
On June 28, the photo exhibition «Orange Morning» opened in Almaty. Participants in the photo exhibition are women who use drugs and have experience in the use of psychoactive substances, as well as civic activists. Women who use drugs face serious barriers to accessing social and health services in Kazakhstan. Due to stigma and prejudice, they have limited access to appropriate reproductive health services and supportive, substitution treatment programs. Many survived colonies, family breakdowns, loss of health and loved ones.

In the color of protest and in drawing attention to the need to overcome aggressive drug policies and stereotypes regarding people who use drugs, these women chose the orange color. At the opening of the photo exhibition «Orange Morning», the heroes of the photographs told their stories, presented arguments against repressive drug policies and the need for gender equality, the allocation of funds from the state budget for social, medical, legal, information and educational services for women.

Based on the results of the actions and events within the framework of the global campaign «Support Don't Punish», the Kazakhstan Harm Reduction Network was able to present itself as an initiative group that began to work in the field of drug policy at the international and country levels and talk openly about decriminalization in the country.

There was an active mobilization of the community in Kazakhstan, and people began to learn to talk about the consequences of punitive drug policy. During the events dedicated to the «Support Don't Punish» campaign, 25 new members joined the WhatsApp group «Harm Reduction» and 49 people are actively interacting in the group for this period.





Ust-Kamenogorsk

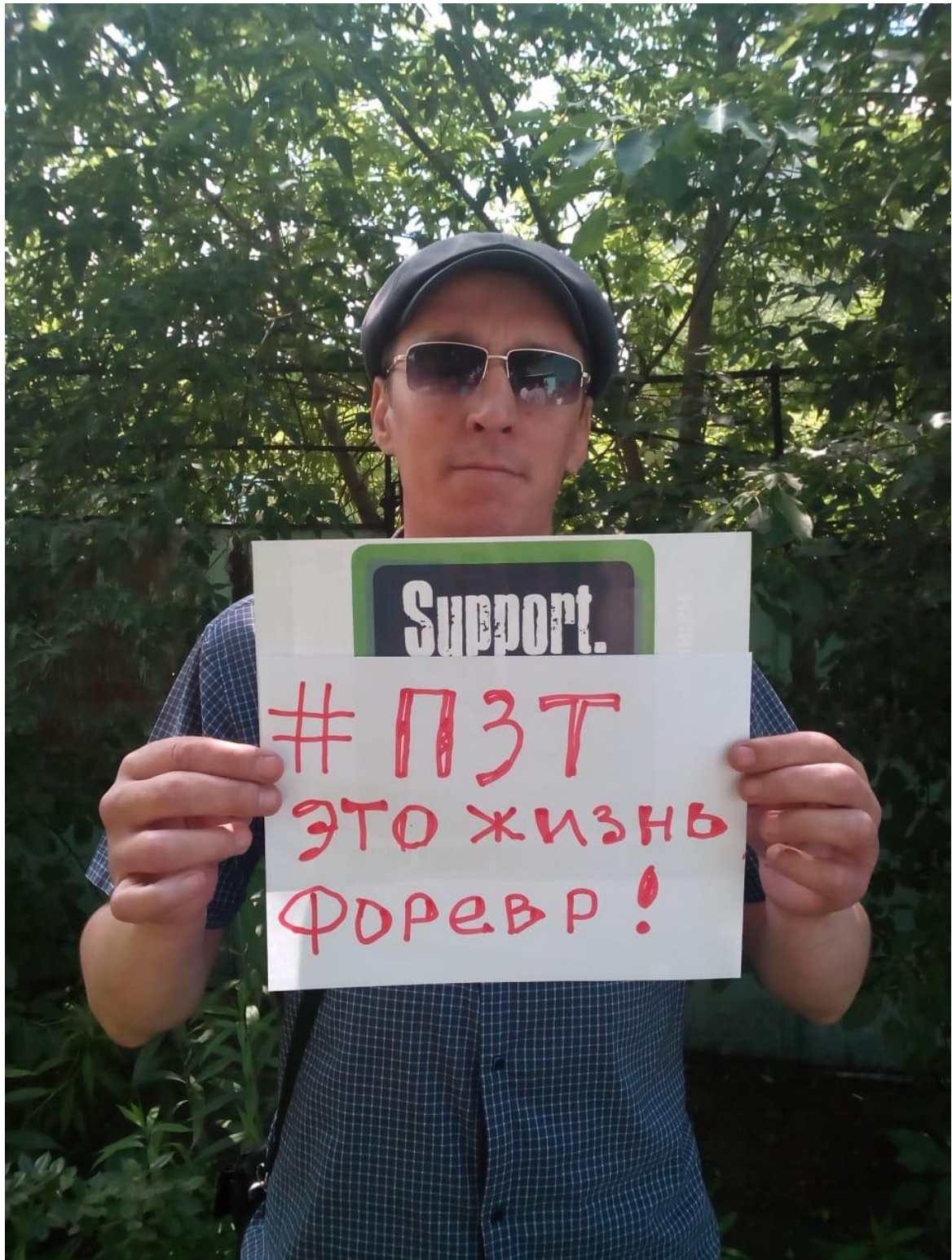
On June 26, activists of the Public Foundation «Answer» held a flash mob in Ust-Kamenogorsk, the main message of which is repressive drug policy that violates human rights, both men and women are equally victims.

Also in the city, the staff and clients of the Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) site conducted a flash mob «Support is access to substitution therapy programs for everyone who needs it!» and «Access to drugs is a matter of medicine!».



Semey

In Semey, members of the Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) site held a flash mob called «Support Don't Punish» demanding «Opioid substitution therapy for everyone who needs it!!!»



Талдыкорган

In Taldykorgan, the public association «Amelia» held a flash mob «Support is to live a full life!»

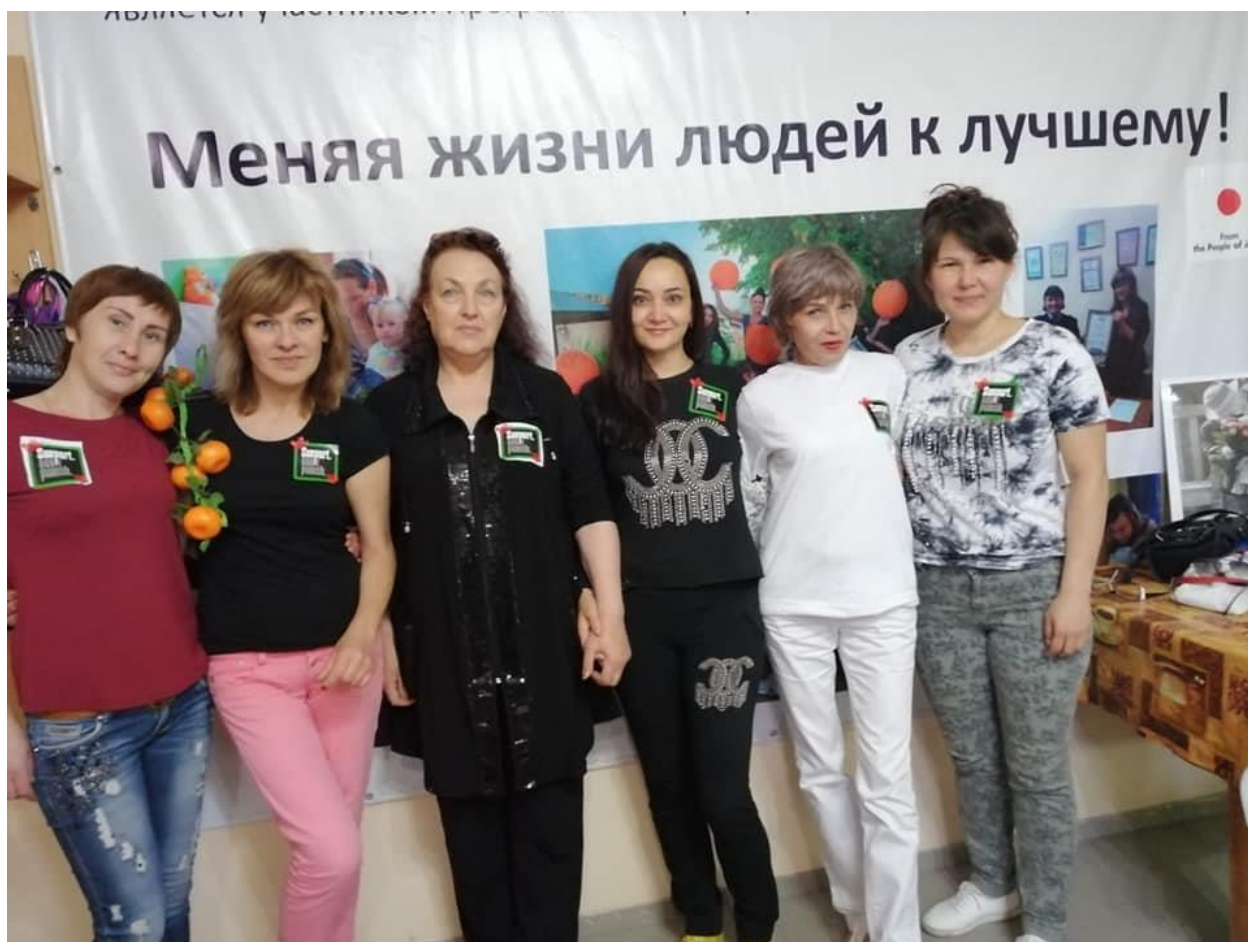


Temirtau

In the city of Temirtau, the public association «My House» held a flash mob «We are against punishment! We are for the priority of maintaining human health».

Also, employees of the Public Charitable Fund «Shapagat» took part in the global campaign «Support Don't Punish» in the form of a flash mob «We are not for the punishment of consumption - justice is on the side of treatment!»

Employees of the organization «Trust» also joined the flash mob with the message «Harm reduction programs for all who need it!»



ESTONIA

Tallinn

In Tallinn, as part of the international campaign «Support. Don't Punish» The Estonian Community of People Using Psychotropic Substances (LUNEST) held an action in Tammsaare Metropolitan Park. Despite the fact that Estonia uses European standards in the implementation of programs for the prevention and treatment of drug dependence, people with problematic drug use continue to be discriminated against and criminalized. That is why the main slogan of the campaign in Estonia was «Drug use is the competence of doctors, not the police».

The action was attended by several dozen people, some activists came with their children. They had banners in their hands that emphasized the existence of discrimination against drug addicts in Estonian society.

A year ago, a similar campaign in the framework of the campaign «Support. Don't Punish» was held on the Freedom Square in the capital. Then the activists called on the Estonian authorities to ensure the availability of naloxone in the free market. The situation with the availability of naloxone for the year has not changed. In addition, on the day of stocks - June 26 - the Estonian parliament was on vacation, and LUNEST intends to return to this topic on August 31. A new action is planned on International Overdose Awareness Day. In addition, naloxone does not always help - in Estonia such drugs are also common against which naloxone is powerless. Therefore, three main problems were highlighted at the current rally.

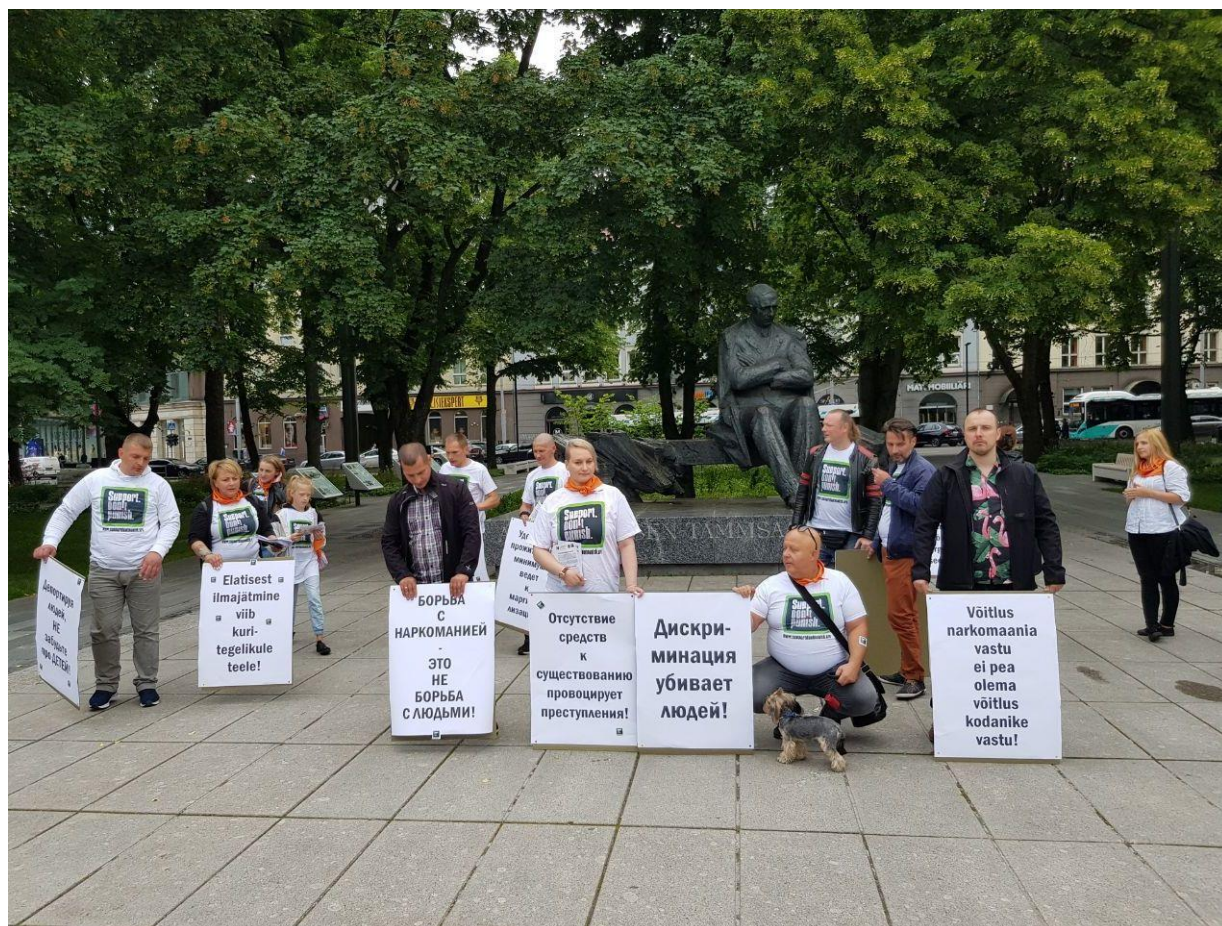
The first is deportation. She refers to people with Russian citizenship who were born and raised in Estonia. If such a person is a drug addict and has been punished by a court for drug crime, he can be deported from Estonia to Russia without the right to return for up to ten years. But such a person remains in Estonia all social connections, children, parents. And in Russia drug treatment programs differ from Estonian ones, which can have a detrimental effect on the health of the deported drug user.

The second message of the action is to require the state to leave a living wage on the person's account. This will be useful not only for drug users, but also for those residents of Estonia who have debts and problems with bailiffs. Accounts, it happens, are arrested «at zero». LUNEST encouraged decision makers to consider amending the regulation on recovering funds from a debtor. It is necessary to introduce a ban on the recovery of the subsistence minimum determined by the state. Excessively high amounts of fines for drug use drive people into a «bag» from which it is difficult to get out. The number of fines negates the whole idea of decriminalization, which is just beginning to emerge in our country.

Lack of livelihood provokes crimes. Stigma and discrimination against people with problematic drug use by the population, government agencies, medical institutions, social services, employees of service organizations, marginalization of drug users has disastrous social consequences. This contributes to the vulnerability and social exclusion of people who use drugs. In turn, this leads to self-stigmatization, reduces the ability of people to contribute to the life of society and the state. And the third message is to urge the Estonian authorities to understand that drug users are a field of activity for doctors, not police officers. For example, today LUNEST implements the SÜTIK program, during which, instead of imposing fines and imprisonment, they look for the reasons for human use of drugs and try to solve their problems.

LUNEST activists have also expressed support and solidarity for women who use drugs and their efforts to end the drug war, which contribute to violence against women, endanger their health and increase drug-related risks for women. For those who wanted to draw attention to the problems and needs of women who use drugs, activists suggested joining the rally and wearing orange in their clothes, such as neckerchiefs. The orange color symbolizes support for women who use drugs, and are even more vulnerable and condemned by the public than men.





GEORGIA

Tbilisi

As part of the global campaign «Support. Don't Punish» in Tbilisi on June 28 and June 29 at the Lokomotiv stadium with the support of the Tbilisi Football Federation and the Georgian Network of People Who Use Drugs for Humane Politics (GeNPUD) held a futsal tournament.

The participating teams were represented by various community and civic organizations, and teams were formed within government structures. The following mini-football teams participated in the tournament: Tbilisi City Hall; Tbilisi City Council; Center for Mental Health and Addiction Prevention; European University; Youth Movement «Davitiani» and others.

Public organizations called on the Georgian government to abandon the «War on drugs» and give preference to harm reduction, health care, education and support, which should become the basis for a balanced and human rights-oriented drug policy.



KYRGYZSTAN

Bishkek

On June 26, in Bishkek, narco-feminists and the community of people who use drugs held a flash mob called «Let's Change Drug Policy Together!». They expressed their solidarity with the global campaign «Support. Do not punish».

Each participant wrote what support means to him. In addition, activists and activists made posters «Women are holding back the war against people who use drugs. Support and Solidarity» in English, Russian and Kyrgyz.



UKRAINE

Kiev

Traditionally, June 26 in Ukraine was held under the slogan «Support. Do not punish». This year, for the seventh time, The Alliance for Public Health has already supported the annual campaign «Support. Don't punish» for the humanization of drug policies and the decriminalization of drug addicts!

On June 26, opposite the Administration of the President of Ukraine, a performance action «Sleeping Beauty - Ukrainian Drug Policy» took place. The participants of the action - drug-addicted people, public figures and human rights activists staged an impromptu performance in order to thus draw the attention of the Head of State, officials and society to the current repressive drug policies and the problems that hundreds of thousands of drug users in Ukraine face daily. On this day, activists traditionally called on the authorities to decriminalize drug addicts, changing the focus of the law enforcement system to counteracting the organized drug business, and not ordinary drug users.

«Presidents are changing, governments and parliaments are changing, but, unfortunately, repressive drug policies in Ukraine are not changing, the result of which is the epidemic of HIV, TB and hepatitis, the criminalization of ordinary drug users against the backdrop of flourishing organized drug crime and the dominance of new synthetic psychoactive substances under the «roof» of the corresponding law enforcement agencies along with the invasion of unregulated «fake-rehabilitation services» for drug-addicted people! It seems that drug policy «went into hibernation». That is why we, like thousands of people in hundreds of cities around the world, came to «wake up» her and reiterate this day «Support! DO NOT punish!», - said Anton Basenko, Chairman of the Board of «The All-Ukrainian Association of People with Drug Addiction» («VOLNA»), who has many years of drug abuse experience and is an international expert on drug policy.

«While the Ukrainian parliament almost reached a consensus on the legalization of cannabis for medical purposes, from January 1, 2020 criminal fines for illegal possession of drugs (even for their own use) should increase 30 (!) times: from 1700 to 51 thousand UAH. It will negatively hit 350 000 drug-addicted people in Ukraine and their families, significantly increase the level of «drug corruption» among law enforcement agencies, increase the risks of exacerbating the epidemics of HIV infection and viral hepatitis C. More than 60% of those convicted of drug possession for governmental applications are criminal penalties for being in the most civilized countries in general it is not considered a criminal offense. Ukraine is now the time to «wake up»

and dramatically increase the «threshold size» of drugs in order to bring them into line with the best practices of the European Union», - said Pavlo Skala, expert in drug policy, director of policy and partnership relations of The Alliance for Public Health.

For the possession of drugs without a sale target, even in scanty amounts (for personal use), Ukraine has a criminal penalty of imprisonment for up to three years (Art. 309 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine). In the order of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine No. 188 of 08/01/2000 «On the approval of tables of small, large and especially large sizes of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors in illicit traffic», an inadequately low minimum threshold for criminal prosecution was established. It is much lower than in many European countries. The practice of applying criminal law indicates a high level of criminalization of people who use drugs. The result of these repressive and inhumane standards is the fact that every year thousands of people with drug addiction who receive criminal convictions appear in the dock, including imprisonment, instead of adequate treatment and rehabilitation.

«As part of the action, we, as a community of people with drug addiction, turned to the apparatus of the newly elected president of Ukraine with the requirement to influence the adoption of laws on decriminalization. As during past campaigns, we focus on resolving issues related to lobbying and humanizing repressive drug policies, changing regulatory documents to increase minimum doses of surfactants and the Criminal Code of Ukraine, namely, Art. 309, including its complete cancellation», - said Oleg Dymaretsky, Director of «VOLNA».

The organizers of the action were «The All-Ukrainian Association of People with Drug Addiction» («VOLNA») with the participation and support of The International Drug Policy Consortium, The Alliance for Public Health, «100% Life» - the PLHIV Network in partnership with the initiative group OST «The star of your way», The All-Ukrainian Association of Women with Drug Addiction («VONA»), ENPUD and other non-governmental human rights organizations working in the field of drug policy.





«VOLNA» in the regions

On June 26, actions and flash mobs took place throughout Ukraine as part of the global campaign «Support. Don't punish». Almost all regions of the country took part in them. In small groups, holding hand-written posters, people took to the streets of their cities with one message «Support. Do not punish».

Activists responded to the call of «The All-Ukrainian Association of People Living with Drug Addiction» («VOLNA») to join the global campaign, and were not afraid to speak publicly about decriminalization and repressive laws in the country. In addition to Kiev, a campaign to change repressive drug policies was supported in another 20 cities of Ukraine this year.





Zaporozhye

In Zaporozhye, continuing the long tradition, The Charitable Foundation «Second Life» brought together activists and colleagues from The Charitable Foundation «Nadezhda», «The All-Ukrainian Association of Women with Drug Addiction» («VONA»), «The All-Ukrainian Association of People with Drug Addiction» («VOLNA») and others.

In order to support the action «Support. Don't Punish» this year, activists handed over to the head of the Zaporozhye Regional State Administration, the head of the Department of Health and the deputy head of the Main Directorate of the National Police in the Zaporozhye Region an information press release of the Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs (ENPUD), which formulated the main requirements for changes in repressive drug policies in our region and in Ukraine in particular.



Lugansk region (Donbass)

For residents of the Luhansk region, the global campaign «Support. Don't Punish» is not just an expression of one's opinion or position, it's really a struggle for survival. Many people have witnessed what happens when instead of a not very tolerant, but more or less progressive drug policy, which includes harm reduction programs and, in particular, OST, really repressive drug policy comes. When people without investigation and trial are taken out of the house, thrown into the basement and forced to take the blame under torture - what happened and what did not happen. When a person has to leave his home, work, relatives and relatives and leave without a clue when you can return to survive...

And that is precisely why activists come out with the slogans «NO REPRESSIONS» and other messages on this day so that people understand that not all people are drug-addicted, but all drug-addicted are people.



Kropyvnytskyi

Activists of the city of Kropyvnytskyi joined the international campaign «Support. Don't punish». They called for the abandonment of the persecution of people who use drugs. In Ukraine, one in ten people has been convicted of possession of drugs without a marketing objective. In most European countries this is not considered a crime. The message of the action is to decriminalize the possession of drugs without the goal of selling and completely abolish any punishment for it.



Slavyansk (Donbass)

On June 26, the Initiative group of the OST site in the city of Slavyansk supported the flash mob of «VOLNA». Since all members of the Initiative group are women and members of «The All-Ukrainian Association of Women with Drug Addiction» («VONA»), activists joined the flash mob to attract public attention to the needs of women who use drugs and put the end to violence and injustice towards them.

The fact is that many of the women, due to prevailing misconceptions or fear of breach of confidentiality, as well as possible gross interference in family life today, cannot use such an effective treatment method as OST. Some of the drug-addicted women do not go to OST sites for fear that social services will take away children, some are not allowed to be husbands for fear of publicity, some are simply poorly informed. All this is a cost of inhumane drug policy, so the demand for activists was the abolition of drug registration and the greater availability of OST programs.



The All-Ukrainian Network of Users

In Kiev, on June 26, «The All-Ukrainian Network of Users» held a peaceful campaign aimed at drawing attention to the problem of criminalization of drug use under the name #opendialogueonclosedtopics. In the city center, on Kontraktova Square, activists called on the government to stop the practice of punishing drug use and possession without a sale target.



ГЕРМАНИЯ

Берлин

In Berlin, Germany, The Berlin community of people who use drugs («BerLUN») conducted an action as part of the global campaign «Support. Don't Punish» and also celebrated his community's birthday.

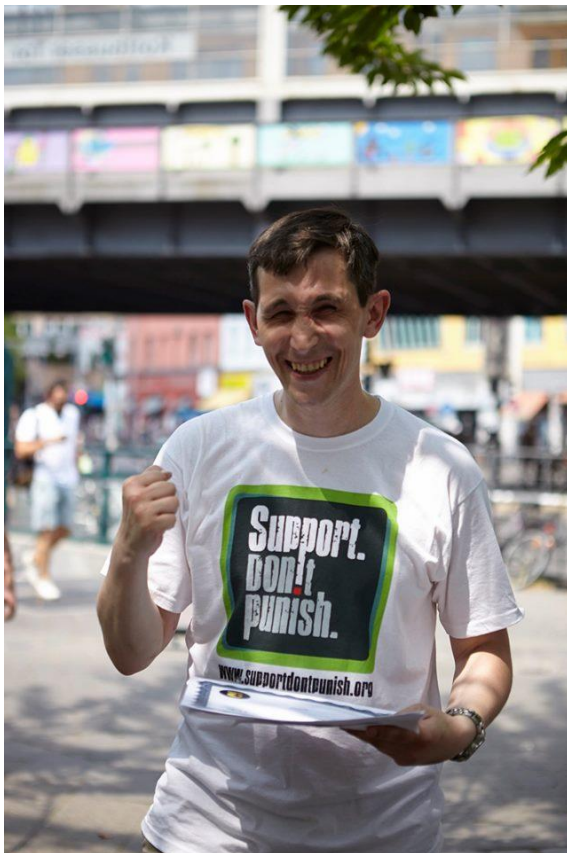
Exactly two years ago, 10-12 people gathered at the office of «Berliner Aids Hilfe» at the invitation of Sergio Grimalski. Sergiu introduced everyone to Larisa Soloviev and offered to support the action «Support. Don't Punish». Activists happily put on t-shirts with campaign logos and held a small rally.

Then, over tea, everyone discussed Larisa's proposal to create a community of people who use drugs who came to Berlin from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Nobody knew at that moment what would come of this. The participants simply shared their ideas and dreamed about their organization, which will help them live and protect their rights. So, on June 26, 2017, the first community in Berlin called «BerLUN» appeared.

June 26, 2019 «BerLUN» celebrated its second birthday with a protest and solidarity in Berlin. Activists called for the abandonment of the «War on Drugs», which in all countries led to a war with people; team up against brutal drug policies, discrimination and harassment; give people support, regain opportunities and rights and completely abolish any punishments related to drug use!!!

After the BerLUN activists took a joint photo with the guests. But before that there was one more memorable moment - memorable letters were handed out with gratitude to those who especially helped BerLUN last year. After the action, everyone went to a cafe to drink coffee with a cake and chat quietly. It was a good evening on a difficult but very important day. How the action went, showed that the BerLUN community in two years has gained experience and all the necessary knowledge in order to become a real community of activists.





CONCLUSION

We hope that our demands will be heard. If not, next year we will meet again on the actions of the global campaign «Support. Don't punish».

Time to act!

The Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs (ENPUD)

The International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC)

The Eurasian Harm Reduction Association (EHRA)