



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate D – Internal Security
The Director

Brussels
HOME.D.5/MAT

Dear Ms Schiffer, dear Mr Duffin,

I come back to you following your letters sent on behalf of Correlation - European Harm Reduction Network (C-EHRN) to Commissioner Ylva Johansson and myself, respectively registered under the references Ares(2022)5426661 and Ares(2022)5427290.

In these letters, you express your and other organisations' concern in relation to the funding available at EU level in respect of harm reduction in the field of drugs as well as your disappointment as regards the limited emphasis on drug demand reduction in the latest call for proposals on better law enforcement in the area of illicit drug trafficking¹ published under the Internal Security Fund.

I would like to reiterate the Commission's and the EU's commitments for a balanced approach to drug policy encompassing actions aimed both at supply and demand reduction. This is reflected in the EU Drugs Strategy² and Action Plan³ for the period 2021-2025 which include measures aimed at addressing health-related aspects of drug use such as harm reduction, social reintegration and recovery.

The Internal Security Fund is framed by Regulation (EU) 2021/1149 of the European Parliament and the Council⁴ and it notably seeks to contribute to preventing and combating crime, including drug trafficking. As indicated in recital 18 of that Regulation, the Internal Security Fund aims at enhancing both reduction in supply and demand, by supporting "*actions aimed at preventing and combating trafficking in drugs through supply and demand reduction, in particular measures targeting the production,*

¹ ISF-2022-TF1-AG-DRUGS.

² EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025, OJ C 102I, 24.3.2021, p. 1.

³ EU Drugs Action Plan 2021-2025, OJ C 272, 8.7.2021, p. 2.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2021/1149 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Internal Security Fund, OJ L 251, 15.7.2021, p. 94.

Katrin Schiffer, C-EHRN Director & Tony Duffin, Chair of the Steering Committee of C-EHRN
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manufacture, extraction, sale, transport, importation or exportation of illegal drugs, as well as possession and purchase for the purpose of engaging in drug trafficking activities” as well as by covering “*the prevention aspects of drugs policy*”. Its scope has been expanded compared to the previous Internal Security Fund⁵, which focused on supply reduction, with the aim to include some of the elements that were covered by the former Justice programme. The current call for proposals builds on these elements and seeks to explore complementarities between drug supply and drug demand reduction in order to combat and prevent drug trafficking. In the area of drug demand reduction, it covers “*Activities aimed to prevent drug use and raise awareness of the adverse effects of drugs*”. We therefore encourage you to participate in the current call for proposals, the outcome of which will obviously provide us with useful feedback for the programming of the future calls for proposals.

Additionally, as set out in the EU Drugs Strategy, the financing for drug-related activities is not solely ensured by the Internal Security Fund but involves other funds, including the EU4Health Programme as well as Horizon Europe, Cohesion Policy Funds, the Digital Europe programme and the Rights and Values programme. In particular, the EU4Health Programme⁶ covers aspects related to drug demand reduction and harm reduction as it seeks to support actions for disease prevention, for health promotion and for addressing health determinants, including through the reduction of damage to health resulting from illicit drug use and addiction. This may include actions to complement measures of Member States in reducing damage to health due to illicit drug use and addiction, including information and prevention.

Finally, I also take the opportunity of this exchange to reiterate the Commission’s support to promoting and ensuring a meaningful participation and involvement of civil society at all levels of development and implementation of drug policies. I take note of your observation that national and local funds would be decreasing and that the space for civil society in this sector would be shrinking in several Member States. Through the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan, Member States committed to the promotion of civil society participation and agreed on the need for ensuring sustainable funding. We will take the information that you provided into account in future exchanges with Member States concerning the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan.

Together with our colleagues of DG SANTE, we remain available to hold further exchanges on these topics.

⁵ Regulation (EU) No 513/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing, as part of the Internal Security Fund, the instrument for financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis management and repealing Council Decision 2007/125/JHA, OJ L 150, 20.5.2014, p. 93.

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2021/522 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 March 2021 establishing a Programme for the Union’s action in the field of health (‘EU4Health Programme’) for the period 2021-2027, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 282/2014, OJ L 107, 26.3.2021, p. 1.

Yours faithfully,

Laurent MUSCHEL

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