

European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)

Annex I

Approved by the EUCPN Management Board in 2018

Please complete the template in English in compliance with the ECPA criteria contained in the Rules and procedures for awarding and presenting the European Crime Prevention Award (Par.2 §3).

General information

1. Please specify your country.

Cyprus

2. Cyprus Is this your country's ECPA entry or an additional project?

Cyprus's ECPA entry

3. What is the title of the project?

Protocol of Cooperation for the Referral of Young Offenders from Drug Law Enforcement Unit – Cyprus Police to Public and NGO Treatment Centres

4. Who is responsible for the project? Contact details.

Cyprus Police - Drug Law Enforcement Unit , Sophocleous 15 Nicosia 2121, +357 22607101, dleu@police.gov.cy, www.police.gov.cy

5. Start date of the project (dd/mm/yyyy)? Is the project still running (Yes/No)? If not, please provide the end date of the project.

1st December 2008 . Yes

6. Where can we find more information about the project? Please provide links to the project's website or online reports or publications (preferably in English).

www.police.gov.cy , Units, DLEU, Prevention Office
<https://www.naac.org.cy/el/therapy>

7. Please give a **one page** description of the project (**Max. 600 words**)

The "Protocol of Cooperation for the Referral of Young Offenders" aims at early intervention/treatment, provided by the Public and NGO Treatment Centres, with the goal to rehabilitate them from drug use. The arrested persons are referred to the Treatment Centres by the "D.L.E.U. Social Intervention Officers", an innovative service by the Police (specialized personnel: Police Officers - with academic background in social sciences, with specialized education, appropriate training and expertise to address addiction problems of all forms). Their main objective is to motivate young people who are having drug problems, as well as their families, to ask for help from experts.

It targets adolescents and young individuals aged 14-24, who have been arrested for a first time as a result of using or possessing illicit substances and gives them the opportunity to mitigating the legal consequences. Besides the age, the rest of the criteria are that the seized quantity of drugs is such as to be solely intended for his/her own personal use, at the time of investigation or arrest, immediately before or immediately after, the person has not committed any offence.

Provided that the arrested person fulfils the above criteria and responds to a meeting, he/she shall be motivated and briefed orally by the "Police - Social Intervention Officer" about the Treatment Centres and the possibilities of mitigating the legal consequences that may arise as a result of the completion of a Treatment Programme provided by State and NGO Services. In case the arrested person responds, D.L.E.U. sends the referral note in connection with the arrested person to the respective Treatment Centre. If the person stops attending the Treatment Centre, he/she has been included in, the D.L.E.U. is informed in writing. In the event of the D.L.E.U. receives a completed Certification of Completion of a Treatment Programme from the Treatment Services within 2 years, the case shall be filed as "Otherwise disposed of" (case closed) provided that the respective General Attorney has granted his consent. In the opposite event, the case shall be brought before justice.

The bodies involved in this Protocol of Cooperation are Cyprus Police-Drug Law Enforcement Unit, Governmental and NGO Treatment Services and the Cyprus National Addictions Authority.

Moreover, this Protocol does not exclude cases of individuals who do not meet the above criteria, provided that their referral shall not be related to the legal consequences in the event of any criminal drug case pending against them.

I. The project shall focus on prevention and/or reduction of everyday crime and fear of crime within the theme.

8. How does the project contribute to crime prevention and/or the reduction of crime or the fear of crime? Does it focus on raising citizens' awareness or does it apply other mechanisms? (**Max. 200 words**)

The particular project was launched to fill a gap in the existing support system for young drug users, namely to implement early intervention, among young users, by using selective prevention. One of the projects outcome was to increase the percentage of young people who sought help for the first time in their lives. Another was the provision of upgraded services, which included a shift in the way the subject was approached by both Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations, which in turn brought about an increase in the requests for help by young drug users. This, in turn helped authorities to facilitate the accessibility of these young people to therapeutic settings, which already existed. Also, various NGOs have developed to serve the same purpose. Referrals are carried out against theoretical backgrounds that underpin the practice and policy of the Social Service of the DLEU.

Moreover, the involvement of the criminal justice system in tackling the phenomenon of illicit drug substances, contributes to the treatment and reduces the relapse of users.

On a cooperative level, this project has improved the collaboration between the Public, NGOs, Mental Health Services and the Police. Another positive result of the project, was the achievement of a closer contact between all parties involved, which has also reduced the red tape, which often creates obstacles and delays of cases, in practice. The achievement of a better Inter-departmental cooperation between the Police, the Office of the General Attorney and the Mental Health Services has been upgraded at a more elevated level.

Additionally, one of the most important outcomes of our Project was the cultivation of a more positive image and response of the public towards the Cyprus Police.

With that came the increase of the sense / feeling of security and justice among the public. Also, the public has become more sensitive to issues of drug abuse, contributing to the view of this phenomenon as an important issue of public health.

Another benefit arising from this project was the minimization of health and social damages and costs, both at an individual and societal level.

Given all the above, it can be said that this Project can very well be adopted and adapted by other countries, with similar agendas, in order to better prevent the serious problem of drug use, among their young people.

II. The project shall have been evaluated and have achieved most or all of its objectives.¹

9. What were the reasons for setting up the project? Was this context analysed before the project was initiated and in what way (How, and by whom? Which data were used?)? In what way did this analysis inform the set-up of the project? (**Max. 150 words**)

The need to set up this Project which entails selective prevention arose due to a lack of such interventions and according to the epidemiological indicators produced by Cyprus Focal Point (National Addictions Authority of Cyprus) as well as the Cyprus Police, Drug Law Enforcement Unit indicators.

The Project was also created due to the observed increase of young people being arrested by the DLEU. Given that the Cyprus Police was the first respondent to such incidents, involving young drug users, the need arose to create a specially designed Project to address this exact target group.

A Survey was carried out by DLEU in 2008, in cooperation with Cyprus National Focal Point, which drew on a sample of 173 people who were arrested in 2008 for drug offences (out of a total of 679). The survey showed that the vast majority of such offenses (78%) were referred to therapy for cannabis use. Regarding the type of offence, it was ascertained that 44.6% concerned drug possession, 36.5% drug use, 7.3% possession with the intent of supply and 11.6% severe offences (cultivation, importation, supply).

Since the most commonly used illegal substance in Cyprus was cannabis, there was an immediate need to provide treatment for this. There were no intervention mechanisms for these offenders, especially the ones who were arrested for the first time. In the past, it usually took 8-9 years for a drug user to seek treatment. This project enabled the authorities to provide quicker access to treatment, which significantly improves their chances of treatment.

While in the past, the DLEU had difficulty responding to treatment requests, which increased over time, the Project has enabled it to respond in a more uniform, professional and successful way to such demands.

The initial idea originated from "FreD" – "Early Intervention for First time noticed young drug users", which was developed at the end of 90ties by the LWL (Coordination Office for Drug Related Issues), created and implemented in Germany. Between 2000 - 2004, it was evaluated positively by the German authorities and then promoted to European Bodies, in 2007 as "FreD goes net" (became a net project). It had acquired an European Dimension and had since been adopted by 16 other European Countries, among them, Cyprus. It gave the

¹ For more information on evaluation, see Guidelines on the evaluation of crime prevention initiatives (EUCPN Toolbox No.3): <http://www.eucpn.org/library/results.asp?category=32&pubdate>

chance to each country to mark out the status of the country, as it concerns the selective prevention programs and their efficiency, as well as the access to the drug users' population. From December 2008 until December 2009, a pilot implementation was decided and in February 2010 the final project came out with the title "**Protocol of Cooperation**".

10. What were the objective(s) of the project? Please, if applicable, distinguish between main and secondary objectives. (**Max. 150 words**)

The project aims primarily at the early intervention of drug use by young people (adolescents) and their protection from its harmful effects. The target group is young people who have been identified as first time drug users. The ultimate goal is to prevent and reduce the chances of regular and / or long-term use.

The treatment available is for people whose cannabis use has become problematic. Having in mind, that one of the objectives of the project is to encourage self-reflection regarding the multi-faced issue of drug use, the project has been instrumental in achieving this objective.

The project is implemented with well-designed programmes, tailored to each individual drug user. It also relies heavily on the methods of Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour (TMB) & Motivational Interviewing (MI).

Another important and innovating feature of the Project is the active parental involvement, which is highly encouraged, within the framework of the Project. This includes therapy sessions or similar activities which help users overcome their addictions. Through the Project, drug users are also informed of the available services / treatment centres in Cyprus.

One last objective was to adequately build a trusting relationship and cooperation among all parties involved in this difficult road to recovery, namely, the Police, the Criminal Justice System, the Health Services and other national stake-holders.

11. Has there been a process evaluation? Who conducted the evaluation (internally or externally?) and what were the main results? Which indicators were used to measure the process? Did you make changes accordingly? (**max. 300 words**) - *for more information on process evaluation, see EUCPN Toolbox No.3, p.9-10 & part 2 - section 2A*

To date, no official evaluation study was conducted specifically regarding the effectiveness of the Project. However, even in the absence of such an official

evaluation, the DLEU strongly believes that it has impacted the Cypriot society, at a high level. This is shown firstly, by the increase of the use of the Hotline of the Cyprus Police (Hotline 1498 for drug issues) whereby users can express their requests for treatment. Also, it has been observed that this Hotline is also used by their family members, in a search for advice and support.

Also, as mentioned before, there has been a steady increase of drug users requesting access to therapeutic centres, through the DLEU. Moreover, in the previously mentioned Survey, it was revealed that the participants, who were asked whether they would recommend the programme they had followed to their friends (through the Project), responded positively (98.6% said yes) to the question.

The DLEU intends to externally evaluate the Project, some time in 2020-2021, in order to establish its added value to the Cypriot society.

Has there been an outcome or impact evaluation? Who conducted the evaluation (internally or externally?), which data and evaluation method were used and what were the main results? Which indicators were used to measure the impact? (**Max. 300 words**) - for more information on outcome or impact evaluation, see EUCPN Toolbox No.3, p.7-9 & part 2 - section 2A

III. The project shall, as far as possible, be innovative, involving new methods or new approaches.

12. How is the project innovative in its methods and/or approaches? (**Max. 150 words**)

Through the Criminal Justice System, a structured social service was developed, ("Social Intervention Officers" -Police Officers-Social Workers) bridging the gap between the time of offenders' arrest, up to the period of contact with the health services.

According to the repressive and preventive nature of the police, within the framework of prevention, this Social Service was created, with the introduction of new methods and approaches, toward the service users. This model, is applied for the first time in Cyprus in the Justice System and is the largest referral body to state and non-state treatment centres approved by the Cyprus National Addictions Authority. The Social Service of DLEU is the largest referral body for state and NGO treatment services in the field of addiction. It is considered as a key factor for the implementation and development of the "**Protocol of Cooperation**".

IV. The project shall be based on cooperation between partners, where possible.

13. Which partners or stakeholders were involved in the project and what was their involvement? (**Max. 200 words**)

- **The Cyprus Police - Drug Law Enforcement Unit - (D.L.E.U.) Ministry of Justice:** The Protocol of Cooperation is operated in the framework of the criteria which have been set by the Cyprus Police. The "Social Intervention Officers" of DLEU contact in a short time of period, motivate and refer the service users (arrested drug users) to the relevant Treatment Centre according to their age and their needs.
- **State Health Services (Okypy)/NGO Services:** The State and the NGO Treatment Services received the referrals by DLEU and through their programs and treatment interventions offered, they send a feedback form to the D.L.E.U. Prevention Office informing whether there has been a contact with the programme, or whether there is a program completion or not.
- **Cyprus National Addictions Authority: "The Protocol of Cooperation"** is under the coordination of the Cyprus National Addictions Authority for implementation and monitoring purposes. Services are offered free of charge with confidentiality.

V. The project shall be capable of replication in other Member States.

14. How and by whom is the project funded? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project is funded by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Cyprus National Addictions Authority, specifically fund the NGOs therapeutic programmes and activities.

15. What were the costs of the project in terms of finances, material and human resources? (**Max. 150 words**)

Financially, there is no official cost estimation regarding this Project, regarding finances, material or human resources. We can state however, that the cost of the salary of the three police social intervention officers, is 1,600 each monthly.

16. Has a cost-benefit analysis been carried out? If so, describe the analysis, including how and by whom it was carried out and list the main findings of the analysis. (**Max. 150 words**)

No, not yet.

17. Are there adjustments to be made to the project to ensure a successful replication in another Member State?

The successful replication in another Member State or other country depends on the national law and policy of each country.

18. How is the project relevant for other Member States? Please explain the European dimension of your project.

The international drug control conventions expressly allow the provision of measures such as treatment and education as alternatives to conviction or punishment for personal consumption offences and for all other relevant offences in "appropriate cases of a minor nature". Examples of this approach are the diversion of minor cases from the criminal justice system through the exercise of police or prosecutorial discretion, and the use of non-custodial measures as an alternative to pretrial detention or imprisonment. Proportionate and effective policies and responses (including evidence on alternatives to incarceration and decriminalization/depenalization of drug use). **(UN system coordination Task Team on the Implementation of the UN System Common Position on drug-related matters March 2019 pg. 28)**

Both the United Nations guidelines and the European Drugs Strategy urge states to develop, in the framework of the criminal justice system, such social and treatment policies and measures in order to support drug addicted individuals in the course of their rehabilitation and social reintegration. This principle is adopted in this project, through this "Protocol of Cooperation", constituting the basis for the referral of drug addicted persons who come into contact with the criminal justice system, to treatment.

Please provide a short general description of the project (abstract for inclusion in the conference booklet – **max. 150 words**).

This project is an effort to develop social and treatment policies and measures in the framework of the criminal justice system, in order to support drug addicted individuals in the course of their rehabilitation and social reintegration. The **"Protocol of Cooperation"** is operated in the framework of the criteria which have been set by the Cyprus Police (arrestees for a first time of using or possessing illicit substances, the seized quantity of drugs is such as to be solely intended for their own personal use, at the time of investigation or arrest, immediately before or immediately after, the persons have not committed any offence). The "Social Intervention Officers" of DLEU (specialized personnel - Police Officers with academic background in social sciences, with specialized education, appropriate training and expertise to address addiction problems of all forms) contact in a short time of period, motivate and refer the service users

(arrested drug users) to the relevant Treatment Centre according to their age and their needs. Provided that the arrested person fulfils the above criteria and responds to a meeting, he/she shall be motivated and briefed orally by the "Police – Social Intervention Officer" about the Treatment Centres and the possibilities of mitigating the legal consequences that may arise as a result of the completion of a Treatment Programme provided by State and NGO Services. In case the arrested person responds, the DLEU sends the referral form in connection with the arrested person to the respective Treatment Centre. If the person stops attending the Treatment Centre, he/she has been accepted in, the DLEU is informed in writing. In the event of the DLEU receiving a completed Certification of Completion of a Treatment Programme from the Treatment Services within 2 years, the case shall be filed as "Otherwise disposed of" (case closed) provided that the respective General Attorney has granted his consent. In the opposite event, the case shall be brought before justice.

The bodies involved in the "**Protocol of cooperation**" are the Cyprus Police-Drug Law Enforcement Unit, Governmental and NGO Treatment Services and the Cyprus National Addictions Authority.