

# 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.

Denmark

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

The Danish ECPA entry

3. What is the title of the project?

Netstof.dk - early prevention of drug-related harm caused by drug abuse among youngsters, through digital counselling, in collaboration with 34 municipalities.

<https://netstof.dk/>

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

Rusmiddelcenter Slagelse, a municipal institution ([Drug Addiction Treatment Centre Slagelse](#)) and

The NGO; Center for Digital Pædagogik ([Center for Digital Youth Care](#))

Project Manager Karen Hatt Olsen

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phone: + 45 29 31 54 97

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.

01/10/2012. Yes, the project is still running.

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).

Information only in Danish:

[www.netstof.dk](http://www.netstof.dk) (the project website)

[https://issuu.com/cfdp/docs/ved\\_du\\_nok\\_om\\_unge\\_og\\_stoffer\\_-\\_net](https://issuu.com/cfdp/docs/ved_du_nok_om_unge_og_stoffer_-_net) (publication for youth educations in Denmark)

[https://issuu.com/cfdp/docs/netstof\\_magasin\\_endelig\\_udgave\\_-\\_t](https://issuu.com/cfdp/docs/netstof_magasin_endelig_udgave_-_t) (publication for municipal partners)

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

[Netstof.dk](https://netstof.dk) is a professional, digital counseling website for adolescents aged 14-25, who are experimenting with drugs or are experiencing substance abuse issues.

Substance-related problems pose a serious threat to adolescents' well-being, and it is a societal problem. The number of adolescents between 15-25 years affected in Denmark is estimated to 50.000. It is worrying, that only 8% of the vulnerable group receives treatment from existing municipal treatment services, and that they make contact to the treatment services very late in their abuse process, that is when their problems have become serious: debt, homelessness, mental instability and crime.

It is exactly the digital starting point of Netstof.dk, that make youngsters approach the counselling of the site, as early as they do. They are able to be anonymous and the platform is always accessible from all places. They can sit at home and receive counseling, and that is one less obstacle when it comes to facilitating the entrance to drug and alcohol prevention counseling.

Here's how youngsters use Netstof.dk:

**Peer-to-peer debate:** Youngsters discuss and share experiences on the forums on MDMA and other substances, hash and alcohol. Hash and substance debates are the most used, and some debate threads have more than 100 comments. The debates are playing an important role in the credibility and relevance of the site, as it is here the young users of the site are given the opportunity to express their opinion on drugs and put their own experience into play. The site's forums are monitored by a professional moderator, however, intervention is rarely needed.

**Knowledge:** The site contains a clear and fact-based lexicon of the most commonly used drugs. It is one of the most visited pages on Netstof.dk. Under each substance you can read about the substance itself, the effect and side effects. In addition to the lexicon, there is an article collection on, among other things, use, dependency and treatment as well as a FAQ.

**Counseling:** Netstof.dk acquires its strength and authority through the experienced and competent professionals, who are manning the four letterboxes of the site: Doctor, Psychologist, Drug Expert and Relatives. In the letterboxes, youngsters make contact completely anonymously. The anonymity is crucial to their first meeting with a counselor, which is often a big step for them. All questions and answers are published on the site and several of them have been read more than 10.000 times

**"Find Help":** A map of Denmark with contact information to all drug abuse treatment centers and other municipal support and intervention services. "Find Help " bridges the digital platform with the physically rooted services in the municipalities.

Netstof.dk is the only professionally manned online drug abuse counselling for youngsters in Denmark. Besides Netstof.dk, adolescents are left to user-driven sites, that often glorify intoxicants. On Netstof.dk, they get nuanced, nonjudgmental, answers to their questions. This line of treatment is making adolescents use the site so much and that seriously as they do. With netstof.dk, youngsters find professional knowledge at the time of day, on the day of the week, and at the place they are, when they need it.

Secondary, the project is aimed at the relatives of the adolescents. They often need knowledge of what they can do when, as parents, boyfriends or friends, they want to help a youngster who has a beginning or established abuse.

Netstof.dk has had 290.000 users in 2018 (in a 5.7 million population), and the site is widely known to professionals, throughout Denmark. The site is run with volunteer professionals from municipal abuse treatment centers. The counseling's operation and professional sparring group is provisionally funded by [34 member municipalities](#) across the five regions of Denmark.

**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**)

A study of young people between 11-19 years old points out, that the Internet is the primary source of health information for about 75% of youngsters. Young people with psychosocial problems are spending more time online, and have a higher tendency to use especially chatrooms, than other youngsters.

The largest group of adolescents find Netstof.dk when they google MDMA, hash or cocaine. In the Doctors letterbox there are many questions about injuries and advice on minimizing the risk of ingestion. In the Psychology and Drug Expert letterboxes and in the Peer-to-Peer Debate, youngsters especially seek help about problems of anxiety, depression, problems in their close relationships, on mental illness, violence and crime.

Serious answers to difficult and often risky issues, coupled with the anonymity of the Internet, are what we are working with in the digital counselling of Netstof.dk. Many youngsters state that this is the first time they have told anyone about the problem they have addressed. Netstof.dk thus means an early first step towards reflecting on one's situation, and one step closer to change a behavior that, in the case of adolescents, can lead to social vulnerability, crime and marginalization far into adulthood.

**II. The project shall have been evaluated and have achieved most or all of its objectives.<sup>1</sup>**

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 Social Ministry mapped that many adolescents' are seeking help in regarding to problems of drug and alcohol abuse related problems so late, that they have already dropped out of their education, have complex social and relational problems. Therefor a dangerous process has begun that makes them vulnerable to poverty, crime and poor mental health. The mapping showed that there was lack of professional, anonymous and digital knowledge and counseling services for this group, who want the anonymity that digitality offers, even when they have problems with drugs.<sup>2</sup>

Netstof.dk started a collaborative model with thematic work groups, respectively adolescents and professionals from different municipalities, who pointed out that it was particularly important to offer advice and not just passive information. This

<sup>1</sup> 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>

<sup>2</sup> Project material "Internet-based information and counseling services for young people" February 2012.

became the backdrop for the establishment of the professionally staffed Letterboxes, and the Peer-to-Peer Debate.

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

The primary objective is that more youngsters, at risk of developing a substance abuse problem, receive counseling to ensure mental and physical health and reduce harmful and negative effects of drugs.

Another purpose is that local, municipal treatment receive more inquiries from adolescents who are asking for treatment.

Finally, we expect the project's efforts will contribute to a preventive effect, so youngsters will be better at looking after themselves, and thus (ab)use of drugs will decrease in the longer term.

The objectives were formulated in the sub-objectives, so that the target group

- increase knowledge in relation to the use of drugs and receive relevant information as well as targeted advice
- receive relevant support to seek additional help with their substance abuse problems

Secondary, the purpose is that relatives of the target group will increase their knowledge in a way that enables them to support the youngsters.

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*

Netstof.dk was externally process evaluated by Centre of Social Science Development (CSU) in 2013-2015.

**The process evaluation's quantitative part monitored site traffic including:**

Number of visitors:

Year	Number of visitors
2013	54.635
2014	87.233
2015	101.373

Visitor traffic increased during the project period and reached over 290.000 in 2018 (the Danish population is 5.7 million).

**What functionalities are especially used?**

*Peer – Peer Debate*

Number of posts and comments:

Year	Number of posts and comments
2013	210
2014	276
2015	192

Number of views of debates:

Year	Number of view of debates
2013	25.028
2014	57.800
2015	69.609

*Letterboxes*

Number of questions:

Year	Number of questions
2013	124
2014	117
2015	94

Number of views of questions:

Year	Number of views of questions
2013	26.029
2014	36.406
2015	45.670

The figures from Debate-forum show us, that more and more people are following the debates. In the Letterboxes the number of questions is slightly decreasing. Therefore, we are now promoting them more on the frontpage. There is a large increase in the number reading the published questions and answers. That is, the advice reaches and benefits even more people. Other data shows that hash has been the dominant drug in conversations and that anxiety and loss of control have been the most frequent issues, in addition to the drug problem itself.

The qualitative part of the process evaluation was supposed to shed light on the contribution to the primary and secondary goals (Box 10) with a pop-up questionnaire twice a year. It was not possible to get data to say anything substantial, as very few chose to fill in the pop-up forms. It is a known problem on internet sites and was interpreted as a reinforced problem in connection with youngsters' wish for strong anonymity, in relation to drug abuse. Instead, CSU chose to analyze target fulfillment based on visitor numbers and content in Debate forums and Letterboxes. It was considered that Netstof.dk contributed to the qualitative goals and is an effective site for the target group.

12. 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

The project is not impact evaluated, but process evaluated. The final process evaluation summarized the process development over the 2012-2015 project period, as reviewed above (box 11).

The project published a magazine for the country's municipalities about the positive experiences of meeting and advising youngsters online when it comes to problems with substance abuse.

The Netstof consortium continuously collects users/visitor patterns, both nationally and for the individual municipalities. In addition, an annual theme day for professionals is held focusing on the dissemination of digital methods in substance abuse work with young people.

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

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

Illegal drug markets are constantly changing. An obvious example is that part of the drug trafficking is moving online. It is imperative that drug abuse prevention that work with youngsters also move online.

The largest number of adolescents find Netstof.dk when they google MDMA or how to stop smoking hash. And Netstof.dk benefit from both utilizing digital

technology and utilizing that young people are digital, also when they search for answers to their questions about drugs and related issues.

Through innovative use of digital media, Netstof.dk is making use of the most recent form of counselling. The site is using digital educational methods and develops relevant methods in counseling the target group - youngsters. No person or organization has previously succeeded in attracting youngsters to a public site on substance abuse counseling. The success is partly because they get answers to exactly what they ask for, in a nonjudgmental manner. And they can discuss with each other, both substance-positive and drug-concerned talk. It has not been seen before on a public site.

The development takes place in a unique innovative collaboration between an NGO and 34 municipalities, bringing the best experience and knowledge together.

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

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

The project represents a unique, cross-sectoral collaboration between various agents in civil society. It is rooted in a legally formalized consortium of the NGO; [Center for Digital Youth Care](#), and the municipal institution; [Drug Addiction Treatment Centre Slagelse](#).

In addition, 34 municipalities are paying members of the project, and part of the professional development of the site and the daily counseling of the youngsters using the site. The Letterbox editors are part of the professional follow-up group of the site, that guarantees quality content and ensures that the site develops as the drug culture of young people is developing.

The project has a well-developed and close collaboration with the National Board of Health, which has financed [educational materials](#) for the country's youth education and upper secondary school. Netstof.dk has also become a regular part of the National Board of Health's annual national campaign leading up to summer's many music festivals, "[Music against Drugs](#)".

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

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

The project has been supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs in the establishment and is today collaborating closely with the National Board of Health, that is supporting the project financially through various foundations.

Today, operations are secured through membership payments from the 34 participating municipalities. Additional funding for, for example, campaigns is provided by private and public funds.

Netstof.dk has continually been process-evaluated, to provide a background for continuous, necessary, adjustments of the offer in order to achieve the project's



goals, as well as a final collection of experience, with inspiration for others who want to establish similar offers for the target group.

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

Establishing the website and the digital-pedagogical method and concept cost over a project period of 4 years approx. 5 million DKK (appr. 670.000 EURO). The cost included the creation of the technical consulting solutions, the platform itself and the cost of a full-time project manager, as well as a part-time pedagogical staff member.

Today, the project is funded by the paying member municipalities, supplemented with ad hoc funding for campaigns and development of the counseling.

21. 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 specific cost-benefit analysis has been prepared, but calculations have been made for an economic support plan for the project, to ensure the sustainability of the project. The project is sustainable with 28 paying municipalities.

The larger Danish municipalities are paying 20.000 DKK (appr. 2.600 EURO) for one year's membership. Smaller municipalities are paying 10.000 DKK (appr. 1.300 EURO) a year.

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

Adjustments are not expected to be necessary. However, the project must of course be adapted to local methods and legislation in the Member State/local area.

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

The project will be very suitable in other Member States. Along with drug trafficking, crime has moved online, and it is important to meet youngsters at eye level online through national, coordinated preventative efforts. This project is easy to replicate and roll out in other countries. The project is built in open source and can quite easily be copied to other countries, where You can roll out a national prevention effort for youngsters and be online with the adolescents.

One of the project's owners, the Center for Digital Youth Care, has since 2009 been named the Danish helpline under the EU's Safer Internet Program, and attention through participation in the European Crime Prevention Award will ensure

an easier dissemination of the project to other advisory organizations and authorities in the EU.

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

[Netstof.dk](http://Netstof.dk)

Substance abuse is one of the biggest societal problems, with major consequences for individuals, families and society. Few youngsters who have an incipient or established substance abuse seek help in traditional counseling.

Netstof.dk is therefore playing a major role in preventing substance abuse problems, such as crime, among youngsters. Netstof.dk is a digital counseling site where youngsters can remain anonymous. As a result, they dare to address their concerns about drugs, which is a highly tabooed topic, both in close relationships and at community level.

On Netstof.dk they find knowledge about the effects and side effects of various substances, and write anonymously to professionals, in different letterboxes. They also write with peers who are giving them both negative and positive perspectives on different drugs, their effects and consequences.

The digital-pedagogical methods of Netstof.dk means early and competent help, and then fewer young people are ending up in a substance abuse, that is expensive for individuals, families and the society.