

**Decriminalization of consumption:
Dissuasion as a non-criminal approach to the consumer and
opportunities for social and labor inclusion.**

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The National Drug Strategy – roots of change

Why was the National Drug Strategy needed?

- Increased use of drugs;
- Increased rates of drug-associated illnesses such as HIV and hepatitis;
- Growing concern over the social exclusion and marginalization of drug users;
- Criminalisation of drug use did not respond satisfactory to the health and social problems.

The National Drug Strategy (1999)

- Humanistic and pragmatic vision: drug use as a public health issue and providing specialized health care for addicted users;
- Decriminalization of consumption as an important new strategy;
- Integrated intervention with action at several levels (prevention, treatment, harm reduction, social reintegration and dissuasion);
- Introduction of labor and social integration programs in collaboration with partners.

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The importance of decriminalization in social inclusion

LAW OF DECRIMINALIZATION

Law no. 2000/30, 11/29

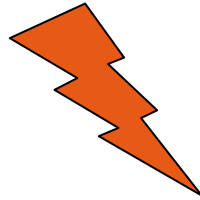
- **The consumption, acquisition and/or possession of drugs for personal consumption is not considered a crime, but it is an administrative offense.** The weight of marginalization on this population is removed.
- **Take consumers away from the courts and bring them closer to health structures, where they can receive adequate help** (treatment, support for labor and social reintegration) - they are referenced to the Commission for de Dissuasion of Drug Addiction)
- **The function of this service is to dissuade consumption and work on important and deficient aspects of the individual** (professional or school integration, general health problems and not just addictions).

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The importance of decriminalization in social inclusion

A more humanist and inclusive approach to drug users, removing them from the criminal sphere and thus bringing them closer to society.

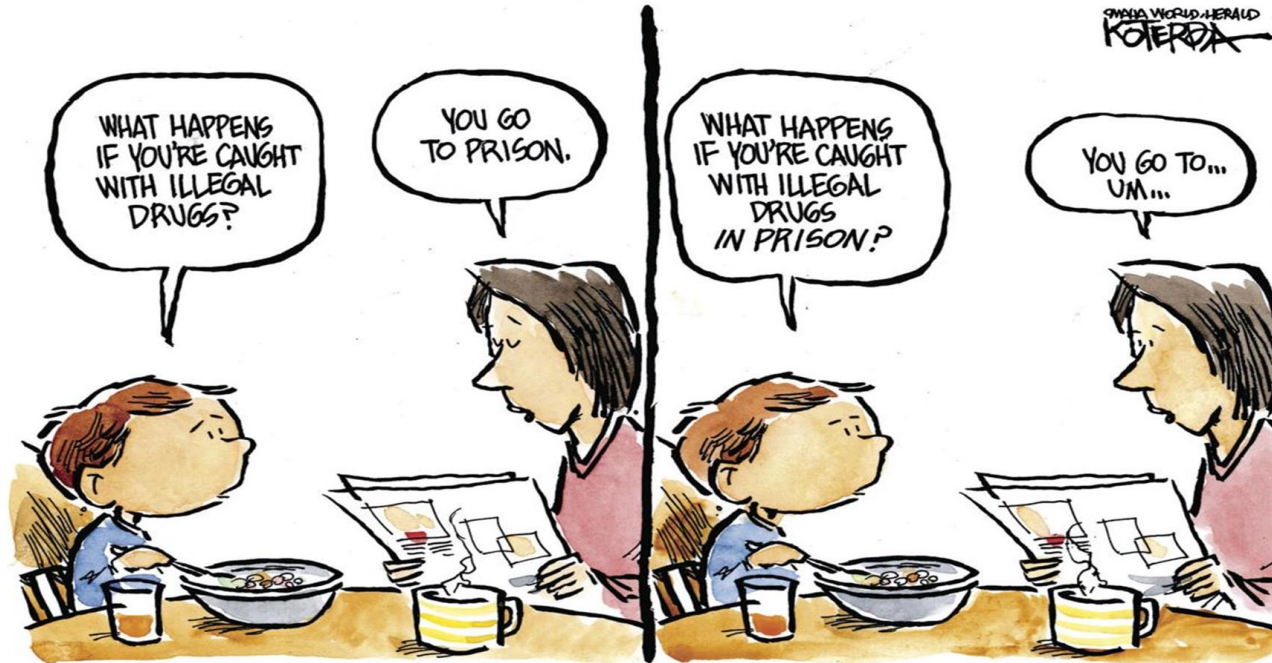
Stigma of
criminality



Social and
business
opportunities

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Decriminalization as a mechanism for social integration



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How does decriminalization work in practice?

- Decriminalization is operationalized through a well-defined and structured strategy, focusing on:
 - 1) dissuasion of consumption and risky behavior;
 - 2) assessment/intervention at the level of the individual's areas of fragility.
- This strategy is operationalized by the commissions for the dissuasion of drug addiction and their mission area is the dissuasion.

How does decriminalization work in practice?

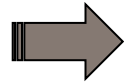
When the police identify an individual consuming, possessing or buying...



Forward them to the Commission for the Dissuasion of Drug Addiction (CDT)

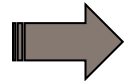
2 approaches

Offender's Hearing
(Analysis and decision
of administrative
offense)



Decisions: (referral to other services, brief and motivational interventions, fines...).

Technical assessment
and follow-up of the
individual



It assumes a central role as the emphasis is placed on the individual and their needs.

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The Dissuasion Approach: Three-Phase Intervention

1. Assessment

- **Interview:** psychosocial and developmental life issues, mental health history and deviant behavior, pattern and history of drug use, economic conditions and school and professional integration.
- **Risk and motivation to change assesment**
- **Detection of needs and potentialities;**
- **Intervention goals**

2. Brief and Motivacional Intervention

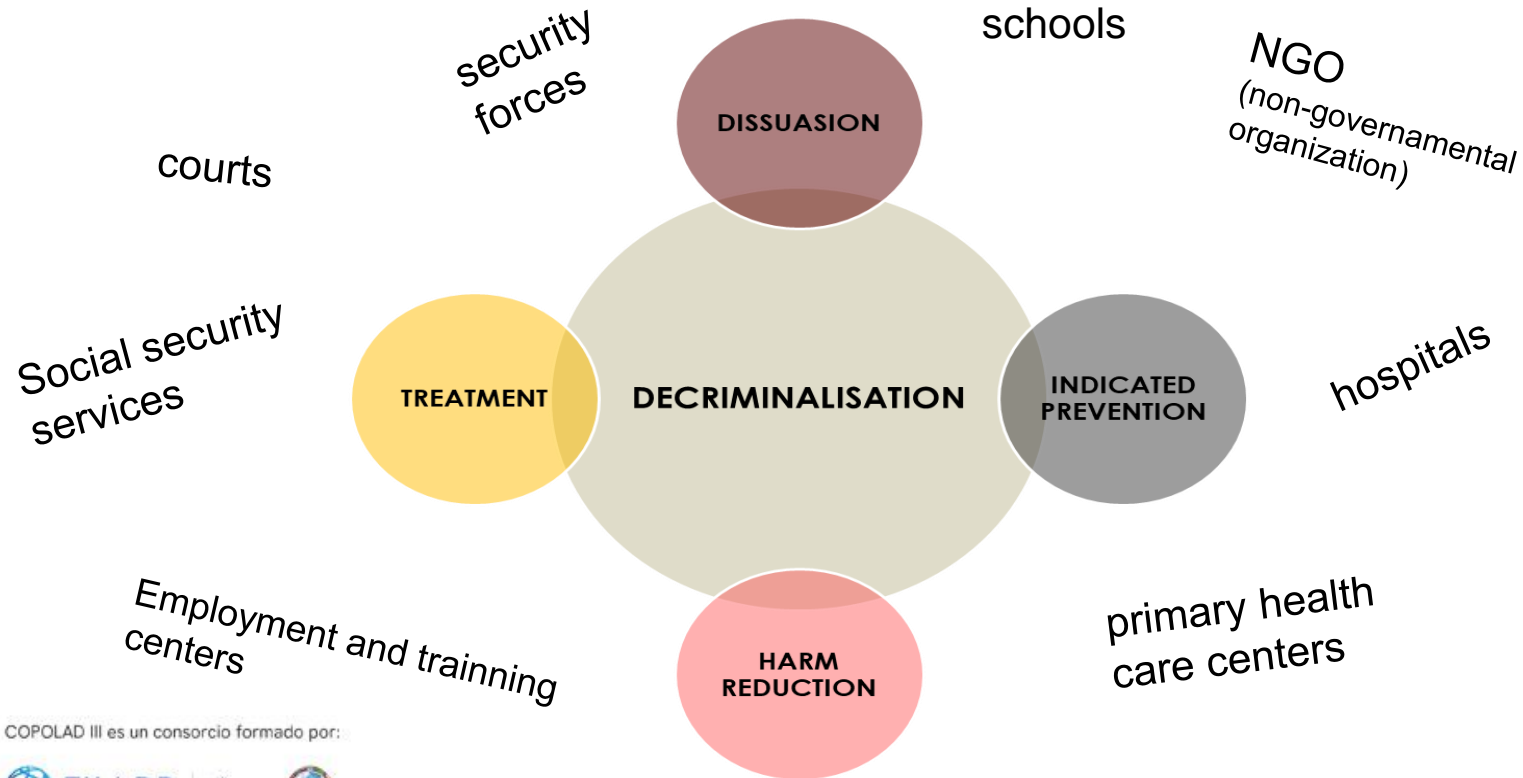
- **Specific approach** according to the:
 - **Individual characteristics and needs;**
 - **Level of risk:** low, moderate or high risk use;
 - **Stage of change** (Prochaska and Diclement, 1984).
- **Motivational Interview** (Miller and Rollnick, 1991).

3. Referral and Follow-up

- No futher Intervention (if not necessary).
- Maintain intervention in the CDT.
- Referral to stakeholders with follow-up

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Stakeholders



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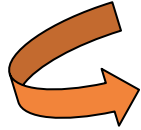
Opportunities for Social and Labor Inclusion: general procedures

When social and labor weaknesses are detected:

1. **Introduction of Simple, guiding and motivating mediation measures that encourage the individual's own action in resolving issues** (the individual does it himself with supervision and support from the CDT technical team –e.g: deal with a subsidy).
2. **Referral to partner services, which can help resolve the issue** (for e.g: Employment and training centers Training, Social Security...).

Opportunities for Social and Labor Inclusion: general procedures

There are protocols with some partners, which allows joint and articulated work between institutions and services.



- facilitate the referral
- facilitate joint monitoring

Training and awareness of human resources of partner services in matters of dependencies and drug users.



- to combat stigmatization and social exclusion that may exist in services

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Opportunities for Social and Labor Inclusion: educational and employment programs

- ✓ **There are many training and employment support programs and specific programs for people in vulnerable situations.**
- ✓ **Our users can be integrated into any of these programs, and in situations of greater vulnerability, the option of protected employment programs turns out to be one of the most frequent possibilities, due to the need for continuous monitoring of the situation.**

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Opportunities for Social and Labor Inclusion: educational and employment programs

- ✓ **Training programs** (trainees receive a support subsidy for food and transport)
 - ✓ To acquire or complete basic school training;
 - ✓ To acquire basic school training and professional qualification simultaneously;
 - ✓ To acquire or improve professional skills in a given professional domain.
- ✓ **Employment support programs** (with incentives for employers such as subsidies, exemptions and tax reductions...)
 - ✓ Support programs for hiring the unemployed;
 - ✓ Protected Employment;
 - ✓ Entrepreneurship support programs.

Opportunities for Social and Labor Inclusion: social protection

✓ **The State also has some mechanisms to economically subsidize people in situations of greater economic vulnerability:**

- ✓ **Unemployment subsidies;**
- ✓ **Social Assistance for Inclusion (subsidies for people with disabilities or chronic diseases);**
- ✓ **Social Insertion Income (instrument for reducing extreme poverty.**
- ✓ **...**



Some difficulties of Employment Programs

- **The maintenance of jobs after the end of the measure** (without subsidies, many employers do not maintain jobs);
- Find companies available to join the programs.

Difficulties of Social Protection

Subsidies values are low and people in poverty, continue to be in a situation of economic difficulty.



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Thank you for your attention!

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