

Abstract

This thesis delves into a highly contentious subject that demands acknowledgment. Substance abuse is intricately linked with human existence, necessitating the recognition of this reality and the subsequent addressing of its repercussions.

The topic of Drug Consumption Rooms (DCRs) as a viable harm reduction measure was selected based on both professional expertise and personal insights. The vicinity of the Anděl district in Prague 5, where I am actively involved, serves as a notable hub of drug activity in Prague. This is chiefly attributed to the shifting of the drug scene amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Merely two years ago, Prague 5 hosted two contact centers for drug users, resulting in a heightened concentration of substance users in the area. This surge correlated with an uptick in criminal activity and a decline in cleanliness and hygiene standards in the district. Among the potential remedies, the establishment of DCRs stands out. Despite its contentious nature, which has garnered attention from experts and the public alike, this idea has largely remained theoretical until recently. In September 2023, a pioneering pilot project of a mobile DCR was initiated in Brno, marking a significant breakthrough. It is my hope that this thesis will foster greater awareness of this issue, potentially paving the way for its implementation. Thus, the objective of this thesis is to furnish a comprehensive theoretical-practical framework, drawing upon experiences with DCRs from other countries, to facilitate the introduction of DCRs in the Czech Republic. However, mindful of the controversial nature of the subject and my limited personal experience with DCRs, I refrain from passing judgment on their effectiveness. My sole intention is to present insights gleaned from other cities where such services are operational, based on the narratives of respondents.

The initial segment of the theoretical discussion delves into injectable drug use and the associated risks. It also provides an overview of the drug scene in the Czech Republic and Prague, detailing the demographics of injectable drug users and pertinent legislative frameworks.

The subsequent section delves into the harm reduction approach, offering a concise historical overview on both global and domestic fronts, alongside its integration with

Czech drug policy. Furthermore, it acquaints readers with low-threshold services, particularly outreach programs and contact centers, which could potentially oversee the management of DCRs in the future.

Chapter three serves to introduce DCRs, delineating their various types and profiling established facilities across selected countries worldwide.

The research component will be conducted via structured interviews, employing a blend of open-ended and closed questions within a qualitative research paradigm. Due to language constraints, data collection will be facilitated through questionnaire surveys. The research aims to identify potential hurdles and recommendations for the introduction and operation of DCRs, leveraging insights from personnel involved in established services across diverse global locales and occupational roles.