

1 Evaluation of Drugs National Strategies

1.1 Existence of evaluation

Attempts for the evaluation of national policy

Evaluation in its classical sense is carried out also in Germany by different working groups accompanying the activities of the ministries with comments and advice. Thus the Commission for Drugs and Addiction of the Federal Ministry for Health and Social Security, consisting of 12 scientists of different subject areas, issued a final report on the improvement of prevention in June 2002. They had investigated the existing strategies and worked out recommendations for their further development.

For the realization of the "National Plan to fight Narcotics" resulting from 1990, an evaluation of the Federal Government was carried out. The measures available for the Federal Government in this area are related basically to legislative actions, activities of the Federal Centre for Health Education (FCHE) and the Federal Criminal Investigation Office, the promotion of model programmes and international cooperation including support of the work of the EBDD. The remaining areas of work are under the responsibility of the Federal Laender.

The above mentioned evaluation is listing a number of legislative amendments and the herewith intended targets. For instance the possibilities for treatment instead of punishment have been enlarged for consumers and measures for survival aid as well as substitution have been legally secured. Moreover, efficiency of prosecution, especially towards drug trafficking, was increased by an improvement of structure and cooperation between Federal Criminal Investigation Office and customs. The legal framework for substitution and consumption rooms is also legally securing a number of quality standards. Model projects for the testing of new attempts in prevention and therapy (e.g. the prescription of heroin, use of the internet for primary and secondary prevention) have been promoted and afterwards partly financed by the Federal Laender. The FCHE was active throughout Germany within the framework of various campaigns. Concerning international cooperation, collaboration with the UNDCP and the EC is very important, measures in relation to the alternative development of producing countries are strongly supported.

Up till now the following further procedures for evaluation have also been used and their results influenced national or also regional strategies:

- Within the context of model programmes regularly new methods of prevention, consultation or treatment as well as new forms of organisation (e.g. Case management") were tested and evaluated.
- Experts' reports were used to gain an overview about the state of research respectively current developments (example: experts' report on primary prevention).

- Different innovative projects were accompanied by scientists recording procedure and results and carrying out evaluations. In recent times the study about consumption rooms (ZEUS 2002) is an example for this procedure.

The part of evaluation in the Action Plan Drug and Addiction

Strategies showing from the beginning operational target settings and criteria assigned to them from which success or failure can be revealed, have not been used in Germany in national drug policy up till now. The Action Plan Drug and Addiction of the year 2002 takes up this attempt for the first time. For a number of exemplary measures provided for this, indicators and assessment instruments have been nominated for the purpose of indicating their success. However, a fine-tuning as announced in the text is necessary, as up till now only very general target quantities were used, not being connected very close with the objective. Thus an increased health awareness in population is used as a target measure for the quality of action concerning actualisation of training material, the carrying out of exhibitions and the continuation of a national campaign for primary prevention.

The plan emphasizes that success requires furthermore “coordinated activities of the Federal authorities, the Laender and municipalities, responsible and producing bodies of performance as well as free responsible bodies and initiatives”. The conference of the Ministers for Health of the Federal Laender has for the most part taken notice of the Action Plan for Drug and Addiction and agreed to it, in some cases, however, rejected some special offers (consumption rooms, prescription of heroin) respectively announced more extensive initiatives (e.g. concerning advertising bans). Moreover, it should be mentioned that the Federal Laender spend considerable financial means in order to maintain and improve measures for addiction aid.

1.2 Methodology of evaluation

As no determined planning for an evaluation of national drug strategies is available up till now, it is too early to ask for a suitable methodology. According to the attempt of evaluation and depth of analysis, different methods can be chosen. In particular there has to be made a decision up to which extent structure, process and/or result of the drug strategy should be object of the evaluation. Depending on this decision the objects of observation as well as the regarded aspects are different. The procedures used up till now raised mainly the question if the planned activities had been realized. The complex question, if for instance desired targets were reached by legislative amendments, could also not be investigated systematically in the field of drug policy.