

UNODC-WHO Informal Scientific Network (ISN)



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



**World Health
Organization**



“Enhancing the dialogue between scientists and policymakers”

With the generous support of the Russian Federation and conducted within the UNODC-WHO Global Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care (GLOK32)



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The Informal Scientific Network (ISN) is jointly implemented by UNODC and WHO and was established in 2014. The network aims to provide a space for the academic world to be in dialogue with international policy makers on the most urgent and crucial issues with regard to the science of drug prevention, drug use disorder treatment and care as well as co-morbid disorders. It discusses strategies to link science, policy, and clinical practice, and to eliminate stigma, discrimination and marginalization of people who use drugs and with drug use disorders.

In 2015, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) approved resolution 58/7 "Strengthening cooperation with the scientific community, including academia, and promoting scientific research in drug demand and supply reduction policies in order to find effective solutions to various aspects of the world drug problem". The ISN's continuous efforts were also recognized in the CND resolution 59/3 in 2016. In the same year, the Informal Scientific Network met in New York during the UN general Assembly Special Session on Drugs 2016 (UNGASS) and prepared a statement.

The network, currently comprised of more than 30 leading scientists, is completely informal in nature and has had the opportunity to address the UNODC CND numerous times. As the submission of a scientific article after each ISN annual meeting has become a norm, a platform has been created which allows for the exchange of best practices and to further important research. Numerous ISN supported articles have been published over the years, including in *World Psychiatry*, reaching more than 33,000 psychiatrists in 121 countries.

Moreover, the UNODC publication [Treatment of Stimulant Use Disorders: Current Practices and Promising Perspectives](#) and the Universal Treatment Training Curriculum have also benefitted from contributions of ISN members. In 2020, UNODC published the [Booklet 5 of the World Drug Report 2020](#) on the topic of socioeconomic characteristics and drug use disorders. The statement made by the ISN, at 2019 CND Plenary was utilized as an outline for the chapter of this booklet.

The achievements and long-term impact of the ISN, in line with the [UNODC-WHO International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders](#) and the [International Standards for the Prevention of Drug Use](#) are all the more crucial in the follow up on the United Nations Special Session on [World Drug Problem 2016 \(UNGASS\)](#), and to progress [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) 3, 5, 8, 10, 16](#).

Articles published by the ISN include the following:

- Managing dual disorders: a statement by the Informal Scientific Network, UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, *World Psychiatry*, Volume 19, Issue 3, Pages 396-397, October 2020
- Addressing the opioid crisis globally, *World Psychiatry*, Volume 18, Issue 3, Pages: 245-372, October 2019
- Drug use disorders: impact of a public health rather than a criminal justice approach, Volume 16, Issue 2, Pages 213-214, June 2017

ISN Quick facts

- Launched in 2014
- Platform for the academic world to be in dialogue with international policymakers on how to tackle the world drug problem
- Clear mandate from UN Member States reflected in various resolutions
- More than 30 leading scientists from around the globe are members of this network
- Academic recognition with the publication of articles in leading scientific publications