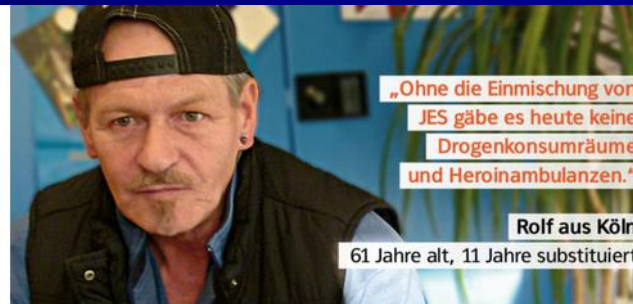


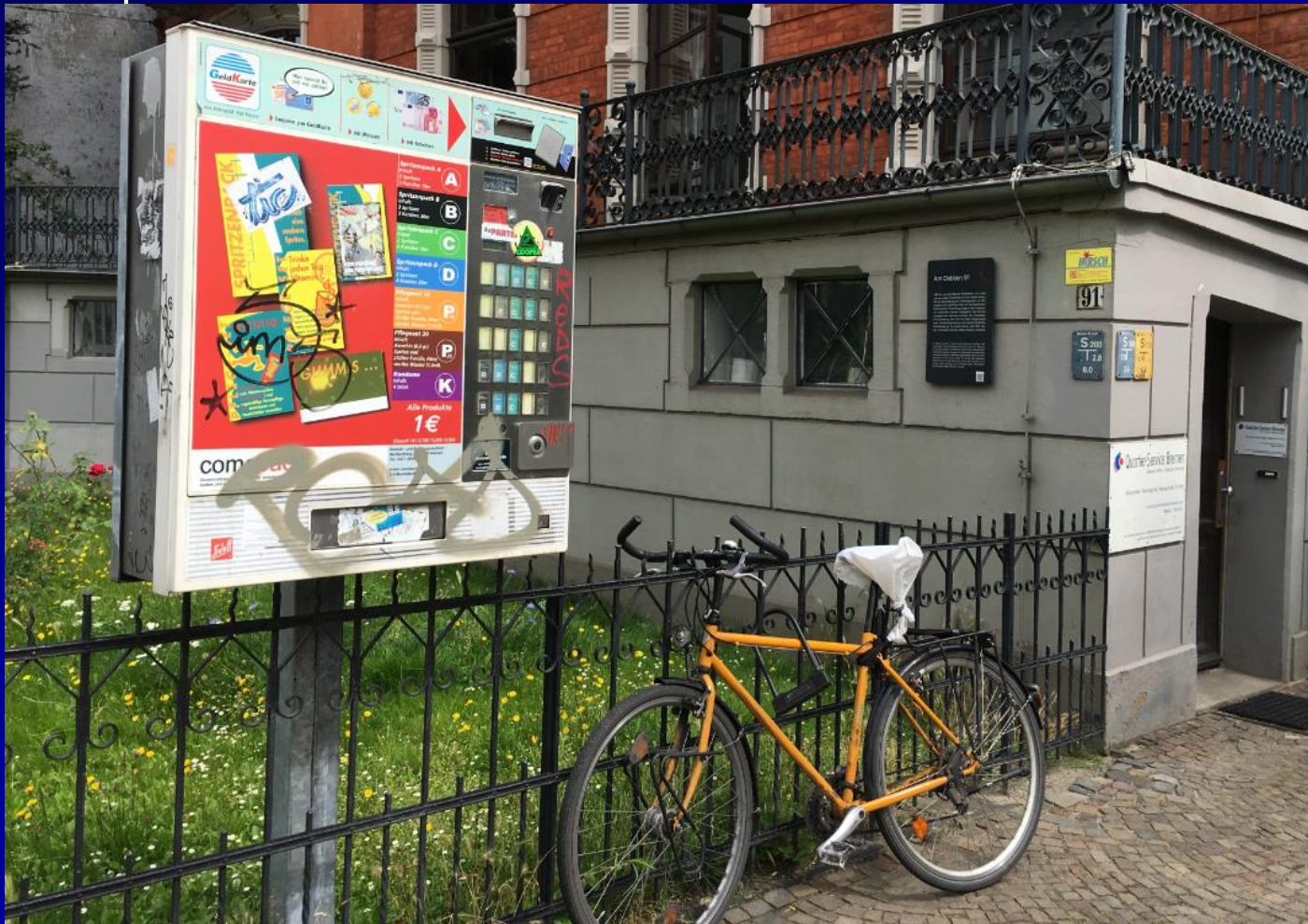
Self help and self organization of drug users as an important sources for solving drug- and drug policy related problems

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Summer School, SOLID, October 2020



1. Early responses to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Germany



Early response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Germany

- the epidemiological situation showed an increasing trend in the percentage of drug users among the total registered HIV and AIDS cases
- Regarding the prevalence of HIV infection among drug users, studies showed a range from 20 to 60%

Early response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Germany

- AIDS service organisations built up a network of structural prevention and health policy initiatives
- The effectiveness of a purely rational approach is limited. Safer sex is not a moral question. Fear, shock, and isolation do not increase risk awareness and change in behaviour
- Acceptance of certain life-styles, knowledge of and empathy with one's own social, cultural and sexual identity is needed

Implementation of Harm Reduction

- Medication-Assisted Treatment (Opioid Substitution Treatment/OST) with different medications (methadone, buprenorphine, morphine and heroin) introduced since 1987
- Now approx. 80,000 patients in OST (50%)
- In 1992 the German Narcotic Law was changed in order to allow for the regular supply of sterile equipment as a HIV/AIDS preventive measure

Implementation of Harm Reduction

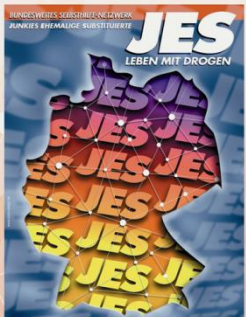
- Needle and syringe exchange in 1 out of 180 prisons
- In 2000 Drug Consumption Rooms have been legalized (now 24 rooms)
- The philosophy of "harm reduction" has been implemented in Germany since the early 1980s

2. Self help and self organization of drug users in Germany

Self help and self organization of drug users

- Since 1989 the German AIDS-Help supported the process of self organization of drug users by financing meetings of drug users in methadone treatment
- JES (Junkies, Ex-User, Substitutees) has been founded

- a nationwide network of JES groups has been established as part of the AIDS service organisations
- the own identity was based on the self-perception of being an advocacy association for fighting for the human rights of drug users



JES-Netzwerk
– Potenziale –

JES founding declaration, June 1989

„Drug users like all other men and women have a right of human dignity. They don't need to obtain this right through an abstinent and conformist behaviour“



<https://www.jes-bundesverband.de/>

The importance of self help/organization of PWID

- ❑ highly accepted within the scenes of PWIDs
- ❑ paves the way to professional facilities of drug services
- ❑ increase the sense of responsibility for one's own health and life and for the health and life of other drug users
- ❑ increase risk awareness and the ability to prevent health damages such as infections with HIV, hepatitis or Covid-19

The typology of self-help

- Self-help offers more opportunities for participation than the official health services
- Self-help means active involvement in the overall process of subcultural social structures, accepting other life-styles and giving a non-moralising message aimed at prevention of infectious diseases (e.g. safer use, safer sex, safer work)
- Self-help means helping each other to maintain an independent identity,
- Self-help means respecting human dignity

The typology of self-help

- **drug users can speak and act on their own behalf**
- **the professional drug help system can involve drug users in order to promote self help resources (e.g. naloxone) and to jointly enhance drug policy (new regulatin models).**

Services and activities

- ❑ information about the prevention of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis
- ❑ needle and syringe exchange
- ❑ telephone and face to face counseling
- ❑ safer use and safer sex trainings
- ❑ Provision of take-home-naloxone
- ❑ information about Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST)
- ❑ public relation and lobbying
- ❑ Changes in health and drug policy

Aspects of success

- a broad variety of autonomous groups with common aims
- cooperation between active drug users, ex-users and people in OST
- a partner organisation who supports JES without monopolising
- meetings for the exchange of experiences and knowledge between drug users
- activities on all levels (local, state, federal)

Promoting the self help of drug users

- material and ideational support.
- based on equal partnerships. A “helper-client” relationship would be counterproductive.
- bring people together who are interested in self-help/organization.
- support in matters of public relation & lobbying
- involvement in professional and political working groups.

JES - Forms of financing

- 98% of all JES members are volunteers
- full time job for germanwide coordination (1990-2001)
- German wide workshops, regional meetings
- financed by ministry of health
- cooperation on local level with aids helps/drug services (office, telephone, fax, computer)
- JES offices in several cities financed by the cities

Assistance for self-help groups

- In Germany, the statutory health insurance funds are obliged to provide financial assistance for self-help groups, but necessary is
 - the inclusion of self-help activities in the planning of addict support measures at federal, State and municipal level,
 - provision of qualification opportunities for self-help groups,
 - provision of venues for meetings free of charge

Self-help groups (including parental self-help groups) should be included to a greater degree in the co-ordination and planning activities surrounding measures to reduce drug-related problems

HIV Prevention leaflets



Promotion of JES

Wir sind dabei. Und du?



Weil mir meine Gesundheit wichtig ist: jes.

Weil ich bei jes nicht „clean“ sein muss.

Weil jes einfach klasse ist.

Weil ich bei jes nette Menschen kennen gelernt habe.

Weil jes sich für meine Rechte als Drogengebraucher einsetzt.

JUNKIES • EHEMALIGE • SUBSTITUIERTE

jes
LEBEN MIT DROGEN



Mach mit!

Informationen zum bundesweiten Drogenselbsthilfenetzwerk unter 030/ 69 00 87 56 oder jes-sprechern@yahlogroups.de oder via

Junkie



Bund



VISIONe.v.

Verein für innovative Drogenselbsthilfe

Aktionsbündnis Hepatitis und Drogengebrauch



Bundesverband der Eltern und Angehörigen für akzeptierende Drogenarbeit



akzept e.v.

Bundesverband für akzeptierende Drogenarbeit und humane Drogenpolitik

Magazine of JES:

DROGENKURIER

MAGAZIN DES BUNDESWEITEN JES-NETZWERKS

APR. 2007
NR. 69

DER SPIEGEL
Polizeipräsident fordert
Heroin vom Staat

**Heroinbehandlung –
wie gehts weiter?**

**Substitution –
die Situation in Deutschland**

**AntiStigma –
gegen Diskriminierung**

DROGENKURIER

RUNDBRIEF DES BUNDESWEITEN JES-NETZWERKS

SEP. 2007
NR. 71



**Gedenktag für verstorbene
Drogengebraucher**

DROGENKURIER

MAGAZIN DES JES-BUNDESVERBANDS

SEP. 2019
NR. 119



**Gesundheit
und Überleben
gibt es nicht
zum Nulltarif**

**21. JAHRE
NATIONALES
GEDENKTAG FÜR
VERSTORBENE
DROGENGEBRAUCHER**

DRO

MAGAZIN

MÄRZ 2008
NR. 73

DROGENKURIER

MAGAZIN DES JES-BUNDESVERBANDS

DEZ. 2018
NR. 116



NASENSPRAY ALS LEBENSRETTENDER

§
Substitution:
Neue Richtlinien
müssen gelebt
werden

Substitution im Bann Strafrechts

ergabe – ein schleichender Abgang?
in Deutschland
rviewt die Bundesdrogenbeauftragte

International Magazines of Drug User Organisations



National Memorial Day for people with drug related deaths: 21st July



2019: 30 years of JES and network



The paradigm of JES: Junkies, Ex-Users, Substitutees

- "It is necessary for those affected to organize themselves! In spite of all difficulties associated with the AIDS crisis amongst intravenous drug users, despite all the suffering, illness and death, what is the central consequence in the field of health policies? I think that it is the opening up of the health services to self-help, and to the competence of those affected, to a degree which is unprecedented in medical history here, and therefore also offers great opportunities for a re-orientation of this somatically-oriented medical system towards an holistic health policy recognizing the competence of those involved. The process of self-organization of those affected is a change on the drugs' field."

*Werner Hermann,
JES Coordinator 1991*



The paradigm of JES: Junkies, Ex-Users, Substitutees

- “(...) The establishment of the network of JES will lead, in my opinion, to an inter-disciplinary change of paradigm in the awareness and actions of professional AIDS- and drug help services, in which the paradigm of freedom from drugs is on an equal footing with social integration and health care, with drug use accepted as a life-style.”

Werner Hermann,

JES Coordinator 1991



The supra-regional network of JES groups

- A speakers' council with representatives from all regions in Germany meets once a month to discuss current problems and future activities



The supra-regional network of JES groups

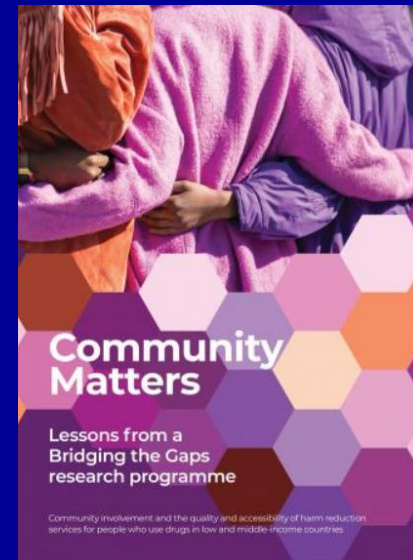
- A programme of seminars/workshops is offered on a variety of topics related to HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, overdose etc. to set up a network of self-help



Self-Organization of drug users: not without contradictions and failures

- inadequate representation of former drug users within the German AIDS-Help
- support often fails to go beyond lip-service
- long years of illegality
- weakened in the motivation towards self-determination
- difficulties to bring themselves in line with the norms of the society

3. International self help groups and self organization of people who use drugs



INPUD – International Network of people who use drugs

- INPUD is a global peer based network that promotes the health and defends the rights of people who use drugs
<http://www.inpud.net>
- INPUD will expose and challenge stigma, discrimination, and the criminalisation of people who use drugs and its impact on the drug-using community's health and rights.

INPUD – International Network of people who use drugs

- INPUD will achieve this through processes of empowerment and advocacy at the international level, while supporting empowerment and advocacy at community, national and regional levels.
- INPUD is a movement of people who use drugs (current and former) who support the Vancouver Declaration. The Vancouver Declaration sets out the demands of people who use drugs, emphasising that their human rights must be respected and their health and wellbeing prioritised.

INPUD's principles

- Pro drug user rights
- Pro self-determination
- Pro harm reduction and safer drug use
- Respecting the right of people to use drugs or not
- Anti-prohibitionist
- Pro equality

INPUD's aims

- To advocate and lobby at the international level for the rights of people who use drugs.
- To maintain an organization that is effective, transparent and accountable to its membership.
- To promote effective prevention, treatment, care and support for people who use drugs who are living with and affected by HIV, Hepatitis, TB and other relevant health issues.

INPUD's aims (cont.)

- To advocate for intermediate reforms to drug laws in order to reduce the criminalization and stigmatization of people who use drugs while striving in the longer term to an end to prohibition.
- To support and seed the development of self-determining networks of drug users that advocate for the health, citizenship and human rights of people who use drugs.
- To promote and advocate for harm reduction as a means of supporting safer drug use and reducing drug related harm among people who use drugs.
- To build alliances with like-minded organizations and broader civil society to further the aims of INPUD.

International Co-operation and Action for drug user's rights



Thank you very much for your attention!



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