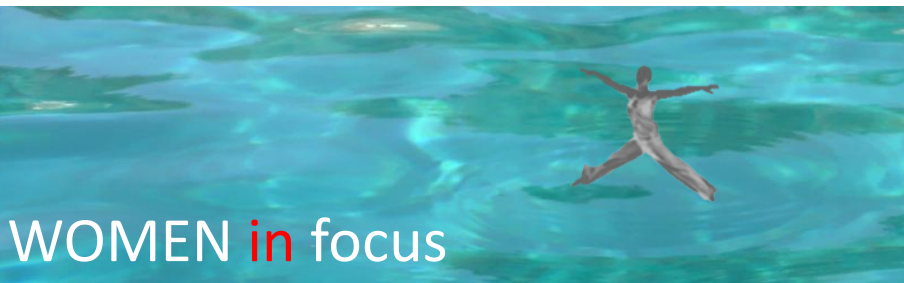




SIDE EVENT



Social Reintegration as a Key to Successful Recovery

Croatian Experience in Social Reintegration of Drug Users - Focus on Women

Jadranka Ivandić Zimić, Ph.D.

Office for Combating Drugs Abuse
of the Government of the Republic of Croatia
jadranka.ivandic@uredzadroge.hr

The Social Reintegration of Drug Addicts

- Drug dependent persons **are often unable to successfully adjust to their social environment**, a large number of them **return to an addict lifestyle**.

- Reasons:



The negative **public opinion** about the addiction problem



Insufficient family and wider social **support**

UNODC publications:
Drug dependence
treatment: sustained
recovery management
(2008, p. 17)

- Physical and mental health
- Family and social support and leisure activities
- Safe housing and a healthy environment
- Support of peer-groups
- Employment and resolution of legal issues
- Integration into the community and cultural support
- Rediscovering the purpose and meaning of life

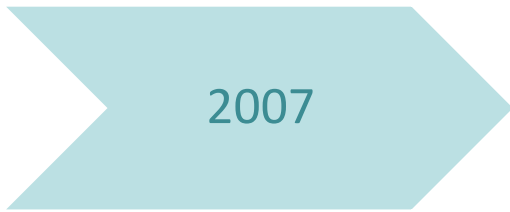
**Social
Reintegration**

— **RECOVERY** —

The Project of Social Reintegration

- **Social reintegration:** following psycho-social rehabilitation and treatment, an important factor in the integral recovery of treated drug dependent persons

The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted:



- **The Project of Social Reintegration of Drug Dependent Persons**
- **The Protocol of Cooperation and Operation** of the relevant national authorities, institutions and civil society organisations for the implementation of the Project of Social Reintegration.

The Project includes two main measures:

1. **Professional retraining and additional training** of drug dependent persons who are in one of the rehabilitation programmes or have completed such a programme
2. **Stimulating employment** of drug dependent persons

The Project of Social Reintegration



The Basic objective of the Project:

- **Creating an adequate social reintegration model for drug dependent persons in the community**

- The Project includes the following **interventions**:
 - ✓ psycho-social support
 - ✓ completion of secondary education
 - ✓ retraining and employment
 - ✓ assistance in finding a place or organized housing for recovering drug users (a residential community)

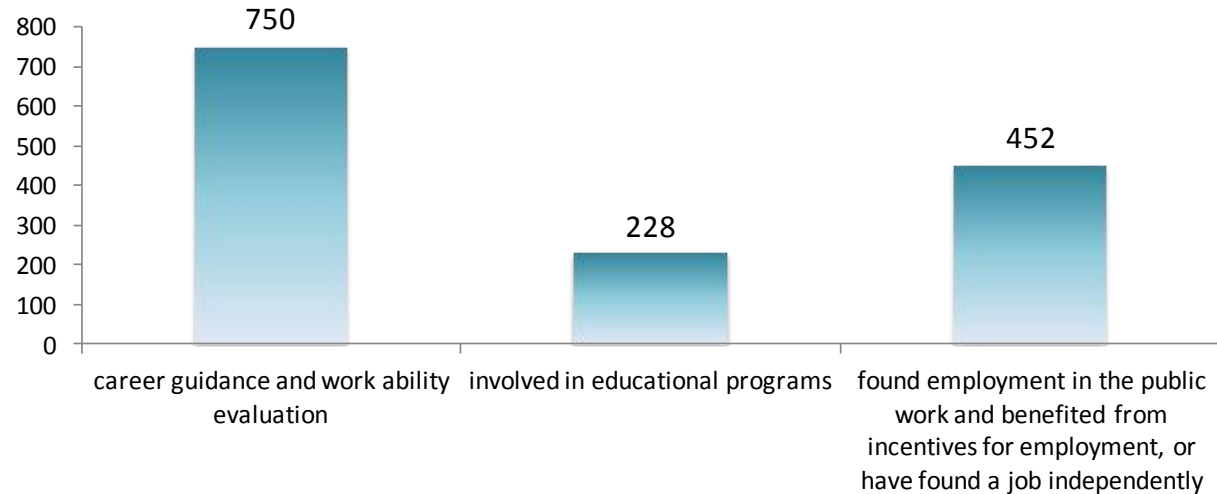
- In Croatia, we are actively working on adapting The Project of Social Reintegration to the specific needs of women and give chances for their successful recovery.



The Main Results of the Project - Reports

- Croatian Employment Service involved **750** drug users. **228** of them involved in educational programs, and **452** found employment (public work and other jobs)
- **568** drug dependent persons benefited from education at the expense of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
- Over **6 000** persons received assistance from NGO's.

Croatian Employment Service
(2007 – 2014)



- **3 cooperatives** that develop social cooperative entrepreneurship **have been established**. They employ about 20 people.



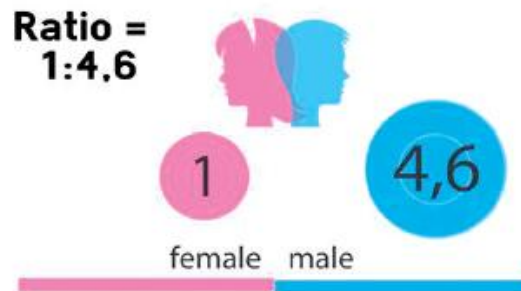
- **Two residential communities** have also been established, offering housing and other social reintegration programmes.

Women in the Project of Social Reintegration

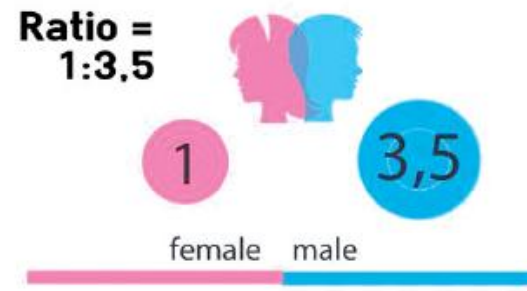
Women make up a significant percentage of clients in the Project.

The ratio of women in the Project is higher than the ratio of treated women by the Healthcare Department.

Treated Drug Dependent Persons by Healthcare Department (2013)



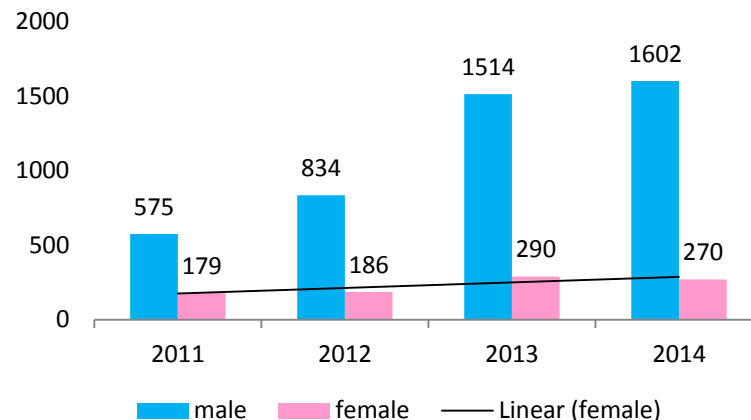
Included in the Project during 2011, 2012 and 2013



*Ratio = 1:3,5, with the exception of the prison system where the ratio of male addicts is significantly higher. This is due to the smaller number of female addicts in prison.

The percentage of drug users in the Project is increasing from year to year.

This is an increase of 3,6% as compared to 2013, when there were 1 840 drug users (290 female), and 83% as compared to 2012.





- ✓ Along with the series of positive results and challenges of implementation, the Office for Combating Drug Abuse conducted a scientific **evaluation** of the Project
- ✓ The aim of the evaluation was to determine how well and according to plan the Project is being carried out

Methods of evaluation

- The Project analysis reports (2007 – 2013), includes **the report from the personal data base** about the Project beneficiaries.
- **7 focus groups as a qualitative research method**, in which the representatives of the implementers at the national level (ministries, institutes), and local level (NGO-s, centers for social work, regional agencies for employment) and beneficiaries
- **On-line questionnaire** was used in order to examine the attitudes of the implementers and beneficiaries.

The Project of Re-Socialization for Drug Addicts – Evaluation Results of the Focus Groups

National and local level - IMPLEMENTERS' point of view:

	
✓ The project has managed to establish a model for specialized access to sensitive groups.	– Lack of information about the Project for supporting agencies on a national and local level
✓ The project has been able to help drug dependent persons to resume a normal life and return to society.	– Long waiting times and complicated procedures for the realization of education or employment.
✓ The project has contributed to raising the awareness of experts and reducing the stigmatization of drug dependent persons in society.	– Insufficient involvement of employers in the implementation of Project activities.

The Project of Social Reintegration for Drug Addicts

– Evaluation Results of the Focus Groups

The BENEFICIARIES (drug dependent persons) point of view:

+	-
✓ Providing opportunities for involvement in normal life, especially through access to education and employment	– Insufficeint information about the Project among individual beneficiaries or implementers
✓ Increased motivation of addicts to engage in the activities of the Project	– Insufficient availability of the Project
✓ The Project is an important link in the process of returning to society	– Social exclusion, stigmatization, and distrust among employers

Online questionnaire analysis - Contributions of the Project:

The Results confirm the results from the focus group

Claim	Categories of respondents in the project of re-socialization with respect to the way of involvement			
	Users-treated addicts	Implementers in NGOs	Implementers in public institutions on a local level	Implementers in public institutions on a national level
1. It created a model of resocialization into the community.	63,5%	65,4%	58,1%	53,9%
2. It reduced the stigmatization of addicts in society.	42,6%	50,0%	23,5%	38,5%
3. It encouraged a greater involvement of state institutions and associations working in the field of re-socialization.	57,5%	65,4%	71,6%	69,2%
4. It encouraged former addicts to be involved in the activities of education and employment.	68,3%	77,0%	63,0%	46,2%
5. It helped increase the self-confidence of recovering addicts.	71,6%	53,9%	46,9%	15,4%
6. It helped increase the motivation of recovering addicts for getting education and employment.	73,0%	69,2%	51,9%	23,1%
7. It increased public awareness towards treated addicts.	41,2%	30,7%	23,4%	38,5%
8. It provided psycho-social support to addicts and their families.	60,8%	69,2%	60,5%	38,5%
9. It helped reduce the rate of relapses among recovering addicts	52,1%	53,9%	25,9%	23,1%

Insufficiencies of the Project – the problems drug dependent people face when they return to society

The Results confirm the results from the focus group

Claim	Categories of respondents the project of re-socialization with respect to their way of involvement			
	Users- treated addicts	Implementers in NGOs	Implementers in a public institution on a local level	Implementers in a public institution on a national level
1. Insufficient support of state institutions in providing advisory assistance, finding employment and / or further education	76,4%	73,1%	48,1%	46,2%
2. The negative attitude of the public about the problem of addiction and drug addicts	77,7%	77,0%	79,0%	69,2%
3. Lack of counseling and other psychological help from NGOs	33,8%	26,9%	37,0%	46,2%
4. Social exclusion of addicts	72,3%	69,3%	72,9%	69,3%
5. Lack of information for addicts and their families on how and where to get help regarding re-socialization.	55,4%	57,7%	48,2%	46,2%
6. Lack of family support.	50,0%	61,5%	53,1%	46,2%
7. Lack of self-confidence and motivation for drug addicts.	65,6%	80,8%	71,6%	61,6%

Womens perspectives from the evaluation of the Project



Focus Group: Comments and conclusions of female drug dependent persons



- The project increased their social skills, self-confidence, communication, and their ability to establish relationships with other people.
- The existence of associations which offer psycho-social support is really important in their resocialization

Focus Group: Comments and conclusions of female drug dependent persons

- A lack of support groups in community
- A lack of job offers in professions which are suitable for the psycho-physical abilities of female drug dependent persons



Womens' perspectives from the evaluation of the Project



Online questionnaire analysis (113 M: 34 F)

- The project is **generally positive** for 85 % of the women who are also familiar with the Project in details

Contributions of the Project:



- Increased their motivation for employment and education (73,5%)
- Established a model of social reintegration into the community (67,6%)
- Positively influenced the self-confidence of treated drug dependent persons (76.3%)

Insufficiencies of the Project



- Negative attitudes of the general public about drug problems and drug users (79,4%)
- Insufficient support from state institutions in social reintegration (76,5%)
- Social exclusion of drug dependent persons (76,4%)

Conclusions drawn from the evaluation of the Project

- The general assessment of the Project is positive, and we can say that it achieved satisfactory results.
- The project has contributed to a **better inclusion of drug dependent persons in the community** and provides a **better chance for abstinence**.
- **Stigmatization is still present especially with employers.**
- Considering the specific **needs of drug dependent women**, it is necessary to develop special programmes for the social reintegration of females which have to include:
 - ✓ groups for psycho-social support after they leave the institutions
 - ✓ work with families
 - ✓ transition forms of social reintegration, such as housing groups
 - ✓ vocation and job offers suitable for the psycho-physical abilities of women.

Thank You for Your Attention!

jadranka.ivandic@uredzadroge.hr

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