

DECRIMINALIZATION OF NARCOTIC SUBSTANCES AS A WAY TO COMBAT IT

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Decriminalization is the action or process of ceasing to treat something as illegal or as a criminal offence. The global non-hidden fight against narcotics is inefficient.

The main thesis of the UN report of global commission on drug policy - the approach to the global fight against drugs, based on the criminalization of the drug business and drug addiction in the spirit of the UN single convention on narcotics of 1961 - became outdated and proved to be ineffective: neither production nor consumption could be reduced [1].

Prohibition of possession, consumption and sell of narcotics does not lead to anything positive inasmuch the society continues to commit same acts but underground.

It is worth noting that drug markets are evolving at unprecedented speed. The range of substances and combinations available to users has never been wider, and the amounts produced have never been greater. Cultivation and manufacturing of heroin and cocaine have reached record highs, synthetic drugs continue to expand [U+0336] a quote that can be found in UN's summary: what we have learned over the last ten years: a summary of knowledge acquired and produced by the un system on drug-related matters [2]. One of the most known synthetic drug among people is spice which leads to such a feature as a paralysis along with other irreversible effects on the physical and mental health of a person.

As in known artificial narcotic substances are more harmful to people than the original options. The percentage of artificial ones being lethal is higher. Talking about harm aspect of the problem it is crucial to mention how narcotics affect a human body compared to tobacco and alcoholic drinks [U+0336] the harm from drugs is remarkably diminished (pic. 1).

Besides it is set that offences carried out due to use of narcotic substances are lower in comparison to those caused by alcohol consumption, which highlights the fact that less damage takes place by drug consumption. It begs questions: Why is alcohol legal and drugs are not? What are the reasons of penalties for drug-related crimes being harsher?

Next reason that cannot be left without mentioning: the amount of money supply it takes to hold in prison all those people charged for drug-related crimes is overwhelmingly high moreover it would be more reasonable to use that money to cure the addicts (pic. 2).

In 2001 Portugal made a decision to decriminalize all narcotics because the country had had hard times that no longer could be tolerated. Back in early 2000th 100 000 people were heroin drug-addicts, 80 people a year would die from narcotics. HIV epidemic was at its highest level - a 1000 people were infected; 14000 criminal cases involving narcotic substances. And then criminal liability was replaced by administrative liability. If the amount of any prohibited substance in your pocket does not exceed a ten-day supply of doses per person, you are simply sent "for commission". The policeman has no right to arrest you, but only writes off your data and sends a notification to the nearest commission, which begins the administrative process. The commission consists of three people: a social worker, a psychologist and a lawyer who analyze the case and can make a decision about the appropriate punishment. By the end of 2012 the

improvements became visible: the total number of heroin drug-addicts amounted to 25 000 people, only 56 cases of having HIV infection, 6000 criminal cases involving narcotic substances and only 16 cases of death occurred [3].

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that having freed drug addicts from the stigma of criminals, the country has increased the percentage of those who voluntarily choose treatment. In addition, by cutting budgets for criminal prosecution, it is possible to successfully redirect money supply to the development of rehabilitation centers. Therefore, decriminalization of narcotics needs to be implemented in as many counties as it is possible since it proved its effectiveness.

References

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- 2) 2. UN system coordination Task Team on the Implementation of the UN System Common Position on drug-related matters. What we have learned over the last ten years: A summary of knowledge acquired and produced by the UN system on drug-related matters: http://fileserv.idpc.net/library/UN_What_we_have_learned.pdf.
- 3) 3. Окончен бой: как Португалия декриминализовала наркотики и к чему это привело: www.furfur.me/furfur/changes/changes/179569-narkotiki-portugalii.

Illustrations

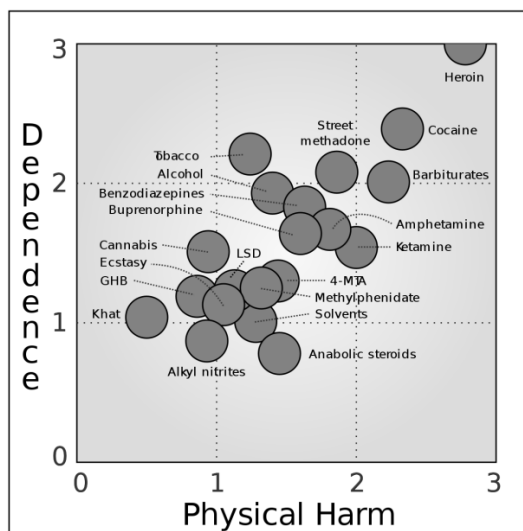


Рис. 1. Picture 1. Table of physical harm and dependence on various narcotic drugs.

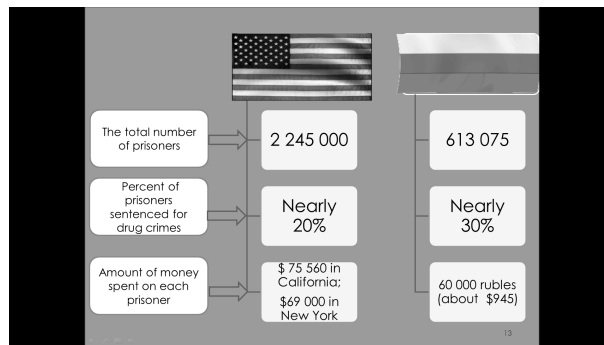


Рис. 2. Picture 2. The amount of money spent for holding in prison criminals charged for drug-related crimes in Russia and in the US.