

POSITION PAPER



Country: Portugal

Committee: UNODC

Topic: 1-Effects of Drug Decriminalization on Drug Abuse
2-Assessing the Current Situation of Modern Human Trafficking in Arabian and African Regions

Portugal, officially The Portuguese Republic, is a country in southern Europe, occupying a total area of 92,212 km². The mainland is located on the southwest of the Iberian Peninsula, bordering Spain to the north and east, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west and south. One of the oldest countries in Europe, its territory has been continuously settled, invaded and fought over since prehistoric times. The territory was first inhabited by the Celtic peoples with pre-Romans soon after. It was later ruled by the Romans, followed by the invasions of Germanic peoples together with the Alans, and later the Moors, who were eventually expelled during the Reconquista. Founded first as a county within the Kingdom of León in 868, the country officially gained its independence as the Kingdom of Portugal with the Treaty of Zamora in 1143.

Slavery was a major economic and social institution in Europe during the classical era and a great deal is known about the ancient Greeks and Romans in relation to the topic. In comparison to the north, classical-style slavery continued for a longer period of time in southern Europe, and trade between Christian Europe, across the Mediterranean, with Islamic North Africa meant that Slavic and Christian Iberian enslaved people appeared in Italy, Spain, Southern France, and Portugal; in the 8th century, the Islamic conquest in Portugal and Spain changed this pattern.

Crime rates in Portugal are generally low, and most crimes are non-violent. Portugal's security and peace indicators compare favourably to those of other countries; According to the Institute for Economics and Peace's 2022 Global Peace Index report, Portugal ranks as the 6th most peaceful country in the world.

Between 2008 and 2020, the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings from the Ministry of Home Affairs, received 2 458 valid registers regarding presumed victims of trafficking. Out of these, and up to the last data update (October 2019), 775 persons were identified as Confirmed Victims of Trafficking by the competent authorities. Portugal is mainly a destination country for trafficking in human beings (66.8%), followed by the country of origin (23.1% transnational and 9.4% domestic trafficking). As a precautionary measure The Portuguese Government stepped up its anti-trafficking training for law enforcement and labor inspectors, improved collection of comprehensive national data on trafficking, and provided shelter and assistance to an increased number of trafficking victims.

The drug policy of Portugal, informally called the "drug strategy", was put in place in 2000, and came into effect in July 2001. Its purpose was to reduce the number of new HIV/AIDS cases in the country, as it was estimated around half of new cases came from injection drug use. The policy consists of multiple methods to reduce the spread of HIV, among which were harm reduction efforts, information to the public and in particular to populations most at risk about how HIV is spread, establishing treatment facilities and easier access to substitution treatment for drug addicts, establishing so-called dissuasion commissions to persuade drug addicts to go into treatment, and all drug treatment and control units were reorganized into one comprehensive unit. The first penal offenses for drug use were enacted in Portugal in 1970 by the Estado Novo dictatorial regime. The criminalization of drug use was enacted to ensure legislation was in compliance with the three major United Nations treaties on drugs. In Portugal, recreational use of cannabis is forbidden by law. In July 2018, legislation was signed into law to allow for the medical use of cannabis in Portugal and its dispensation at pharmacies. Portugal signed all the UN conventions on narcotics and psychotropic to date. With the 2001 decriminalization bill, the consumer is now regarded as a patient and not as a criminal but repression persists. One can be sent to a dissuasion committee and have a talk or must pay a fee. According to the libertarian think tank Cato Institute, illegal drug use among Portuguese teenagers declined after 2001, and 45 percent of the country's heroin addicts sought medical treatment.

Solutions

1-Crime is creating major problems in many countries and many governments are ignoring it in order to solve these problems. The supervision of the crime office by many government agencies shows an important solution.

2-Minimizing the causes of abuse by raising awareness of the society in order to minimize drug addiction. Drug abuse also causes many economic problems for the country and for individuals. People who do not have enough drugs resort to drug trafficking and this leads to many crimes. People's search for more drugs also causes moral distress. The stress and anger that comes when drugs are not available is detrimental to both the individual's health and people around them. Meanwhile, the fact that drug use is a crime is particularly attractive to young people and they want to feel the satisfaction of committing a crime. This makes young people more likely to commit crimes in the future. Portugal believes that other countries should apply the same drug policy that we have started to apply. This policy contributes to a different way of looking at drug use. It is necessary to look at it as a disease and not as a crime. If drug use is looked at as a disease, we have data that shows that drug use is falling among the young people we are talking about. it will also contribute to countries focusing on different and truly criminalized issues. Health departments will do more work on drug treatment and there will be a major advance in medicine.

3-Taking insufficient measures related to security in cities increases human trafficking. The necessary security measures should be taken in the UN area.

4- Modern slavery is one of the biggest problem in the whole world. Modern slavery caused by economic desperation affects many people negatively today. It is necessary to evaluate this situation within the framework of the laws of the United Nations.

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