

AKADEMISCHES
FORUM FÜR
AUßEN-
POLITIK -
ÖSTERREICH

UNION
ACADEMIQUE
DES AFFAIRES
ÉTRANGÈRES -
AUTRICHE



ACADEMIC FORUM FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS - AUSTRIA

UNITED NATIONS YOUTH AND STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRIA

EISENSTADT - GRAZ - INNSBRUCK - KLAGENFURT - LINZ - SALZBURG - VIENNA



VIENNA INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS
11 - 15 August 2013

Abstract:

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

“Prevalence of the Use of Alcohol”

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a member of the United Nations Development Group in which UNODC acts as a global leader in the fight against illicit drugs and international crime. Moreover, UNODC is the United Nations lead entity for legal and technical assistance to prevent terrorism. The Office was established through the unification of the United Nations Drug Control Program and the Centre for International Crime Prevention in 1997, and operates nowadays from its headquarters at the UN office in Vienna. UNODC further functions through an extensive network of field offices as well as a liaison office in New York and a permanent presence in Brussels. UNODC's funding relies on voluntary donations, predominantly from governments, that account for 90 per cent of its budget.

The UNODC's primary aim is to mobilize and promote regional and transnational cooperation to facilitate an improved environment for the UN in addressing a coordinated, comprehensive response to the convergent issues of organized crime, drug trafficking, corruption and terrorism. This response is pursued through three key functions: research, guidance and support to governments in the adoption and implementation of various crime-, and drug-related conventions, treaties and protocols. One of the main functions of UNODC is to educate people throughout the world about the dangers of drug abuse and to strengthen international action against drug production, trafficking and drug-related crime. In order to achieve these aims, UNODC works to establish adequate legal and institutional frameworks for drug control through effective implementation of international drug control conventions and has further launched a broad range of initiatives, including alternative development projects, in the area of illicit drug crop cultivation and monitoring and the implementation of anti-money laundering programs. One of these UNODC initiatives is the yearly World Drug Report that provides one of the most comprehensive global overviews of illicit drug trends.

The latest World Drug Report 2012 finds that about 230 million people (5 per cent of the global adult population) are estimated to have used an illicit drug at least once in 2010. Problem drug users number about 27 million and approximately 1 in every 100 deaths among adults is attributed to illicit drug use. Such excessive illicit drug consumption undermines economic and social development and contributes to crime, instability, insecurity and the spread of HIV world-wide since drug trafficking flows have global dimensions. UNODC's research and trend analysis is designed to improve understanding of those correlating issues. Nevertheless, while illicit drugs remain issue of concern, the consumption of illegal drugs appears to be below the levels reported for legal psychoactive substances. Global estimates suggest that prevalence of tobacco use is 10 times higher than prevalence of illicit drug use and the prevalence of the use of alcohol is eight times higher than the prevalence of illicit drug use. Heavy episodic weekly drinking is eight times more prevalent than problem drug use and authorities, most notably in developed countries, are concerned that alcohol use by young people is becoming increasingly harmful.

Although Member States are to be commended for their hard work in dealing with these drug and alcohol problems, the figures indicate the scope of the challenge. The response by UNODC has been twofold: first, to develop an integrated approach; and second, to focus on prevention, treatment, alternative development and the promotion of fundamental human rights. UNODC will continue to build international cooperation to help Member States respond to these threats. To confront these challenges, however, both supply and demand need to be reduced.