Stakeholders' consultation strategy for the mid-term assessment of the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020 and final evaluation of the Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016

1. What is the goal of conducting the consultation?

The EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan touches upon a wide variety of stakeholders. The responsible parties for their implementation are identified in the Action Plan (mainly Member States, EU institutions and bodies, EU agencies, Council, etc.). The direct beneficiaries of the policy initiative are EU citizens that have drug-related issues, as well as society at large. In addition, civil society, researchers, drug experts, are also stakeholders with an interest in drugs policy. The Strategy and Action Plan have both an internal and an external dimension, which leads to the fact that international actors – like selected third countries and relevant international organisations – are also stakeholders.

The goal of the consultation is to provide all these stakeholders with the opportunity of giving their opinion or that of providing data on the implementation and impact of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan.

They will all be consulted for the evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan. Stakeholders will be consulted on the 5 mandatory evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value.

2. Stakeholder mapping

The EU Strategy and Action Plan identify parties responsible for their implementation. In addition, a wide range of stakeholders is concerned by the actions implemented.

Stakeholders list

Member States	• Delegates to the Council's Horizontal Drugs Group • Members of the European information network on drugs and drug addiction (REITOX) • National drugs' coordinators • Representatives of institutions responsible for implementing the drugs policy (Ministry of Health, of Interior, Police, hospitals and/or other treatment centres)
EU agencies	• European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) • Europol • Eurojust • European Police College (CEPOL) • European Medicine Agency (EMA) • European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

EU institutions	• European Commission • European Parliament • Council (including rotating Presidencies) • European External Action Service
Civil society	• Members of the Civil Society Forum on Drugs • Other NGOs with an interest in drugs policy, social policies, health
Research/academia	• Beneficiaries of EU-funded projects • Researchers with an interest in drugs policy, social policies, health
3rd countries	• Candidate and acceding countries • Latin American countries • Central Asia countries • Eastern Partnership countries • Russia • US
Industry[1]	• Chemical industry • Pharmaceutical industry
International organisations	• International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) • United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNOCD) • Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)
EU citizens	• Direct beneficiaries of the drugs policy, especially treatment • EU citizens at large

3. What are stakeholders being consulted on and how?

As per the Better Regulation rules, stakeholders first have the opportunity to provide feedback on the evaluation roadmap. The roadmap is published on the Commission's website. Stakeholders have an opportunity to provide feedback in any of the official languages of the EU[2]. The identity of the stakeholders and their comments is published online. Feedback is assessed and taken into account, as appropriate. There is no need for the Commission to comment on specific feedback received.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the external study are not finalised before the end of the 4 weeks following the publication of the roadmap so that the feedback received could be reflected in the ToR, if needed.

A web-based mandatory public consultation is run. The public consultation includes a questionnaire and background information. It lasts for 12 weeks.

[1] Mainly for drug precursors' policy.

[2] The roadmap does not need to be translated.

The general public is asked for their views on the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan and their implementation. The general public might not be fully aware of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan and the questions for the public consultation are designed accordingly.

The selection of tools and consultation channels should ensure that a wide range of the public is reached. In the case of this particular consultation, an online questionnaire should be sufficient. DG HOME also announces the launch of the consultation to its stakeholders via mailing list and requests the members of the ISG to do the same with their interested stakeholders.

The open public consultation was published on EUROPA[3] until 31.05.2016 and the results will be accessible on DG HOME's website at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/public-consultation/2016/consulting_0032_en.htm.

The results of the public consultation will be reflected in the evaluation report to the necessary extent, as well as in the Staff Working Document, in particular in the synopsis report annexed to it.

While the public consultations is expected to mainly provide views of the general public on the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan, targeted consultations to collect data and facts are also conducted. These consultations provide an opportunity to get quantitative and qualitative data from across the EU on drug-related matters according to the main objectives set out in the EU Drugs Strategy.

Interviews will be conducted with representatives of all 28 Member States in order to collect quantitative and qualitative information and data relevant for the evaluation. The interviews may be accompanied, where necessary, by a written questionnaire to collect quantitative data.

The Commission Expert Group on Drugs (Civil Society Forum) will also have a dedicated discussion on the evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan.

Representatives of selected third countries that the EU currently engages with strategically in the field of drugs (such as officials in charge of projects run in cooperation with the EU, co-chairs of dialogue groups with third countries) and international organisations will also be consulted – for example via online questionnaires or in interviews if they could be arranged online or in Brussels.

Consultations with relevant EU agencies (such as EMCDDA, Europol, Eurojust, CEPOL), European Commission's and other EU institutions' representatives (such as the European External Action Service, the Council of the EU, the rotation Presidencies of the Council, members of the European Parliament) will also be conducted.

An external contractor was hired to support the Commission in conducting the evaluation and will conduct some of the tasks related to stakeholders' consultation.

The results of the consultation process are presented in the so-called synopsis report. It documents each consultation activity, informs which stakeholders participated, describes the results of the consultation activity and it explains how these results were considered in the evaluation in maximum 10 pages.

[3] The consultation was announced on "Your Voice in Europe" website but it is hosted on the website of the relevant DG.

4. Assessment of the effectiveness of the consultation strategy

At the end of the consultation process there will be a quality assessment of it done by DG HOME and discussed in one of the meetings of the Commission's Evaluation Steering Group. This will mainly look at questions such as: did the consultation strategy work? Did the process work? What impact did it have on participants, the outcome and policy makers?