

DrogArt's Activities on International Drug Checking Day



When DrogArt got the invitation to join the global campaign called International Drug Checking Day, we were happy to collaborate. In the scope of the EU project B.A.O.N.P.S. we are working on the development and upgrade of the drug checking service in Slovenia and we saw the International Drug Checking Day as a great opportunity to promote the service among partygoers, raise awareness and also give them the chance to express their support for the action by taking pictures with our "I support drug checking in Slovenia" board.

We decided to organize two workshops on drug checking for partygoers or others interested in learning what drug checking is, what the possibilities are in Slovenia and how the methods of checking with color reagents works.

The first workshop took place in Pekarna Gustaf, Maribor on 29.3.2017. The lecture was led by Simona Šabić from DrogArt. She presented the history and origins of testing in Slovenia. She also talked about drug checking as a harm reduction strategy. By raising awareness and sharing knowledge we want to encourage people to bring substances to be tested before they take drugs and thereby avoid or reduce the risks. Špela Dovžan presented the BAONPS project and its aim to further improve the drug checking service in Slovenia. We then watched a couple of short movies of drug checking in other countries and presentation of TLC method. Following the lecture was the practical part where employees from DrogArt and Bunk Police demonstrated drug checking with color reagents. We tested some medicine, sugar and 5-HTP to show how the methods works. At the very end we gave out some free sample color reagents. 8 people attended the event. The feedback was good, they said that the workshop was very interesting and educational.





The second workshop was held in Socialni center Rog, Ljubljana, on 4.4.2017. The program of the workshop was the same as in Maribor – a theoretical overview of drug checking followed by a practical demonstration of drug checking with color reagents. Due to a higher number of attendees (16), we performed the practical demonstration in two groups. Participants were interested in the method, asked questions and one even brought with him a substance (food supplement) to check, which we did. We gave away free reagent kits (Marquis and Erlich) and promotional stickers for Bunk Police. At the end, we invited the participants

to take pictures with the “I support drug checking in Slovenia” poster. So far, we collected around 30 photos in all the activities, but we will continue with this initiative for support also on our regular outreach interventions at various parties.



Apart from the reagents kits that the participants got at the workshops, we also decided to give out 20 free give-away reagents kits at our info point in Ljubljana.

We believe that initiatives like the International Drug Checking Day play a very important role not only in raising awareness among users about the service and the importance to check their drugs but also in influencing the general opinion of the society towards a better understanding of the concept of harm reduction.