

Authors: Elfriede Steffan, Tzvetina Arsova Netzelmann, Dr. Joyce Dreezens-Fuhrke, SPI Forschung gGmbH, Berlin

## Background & Objectives

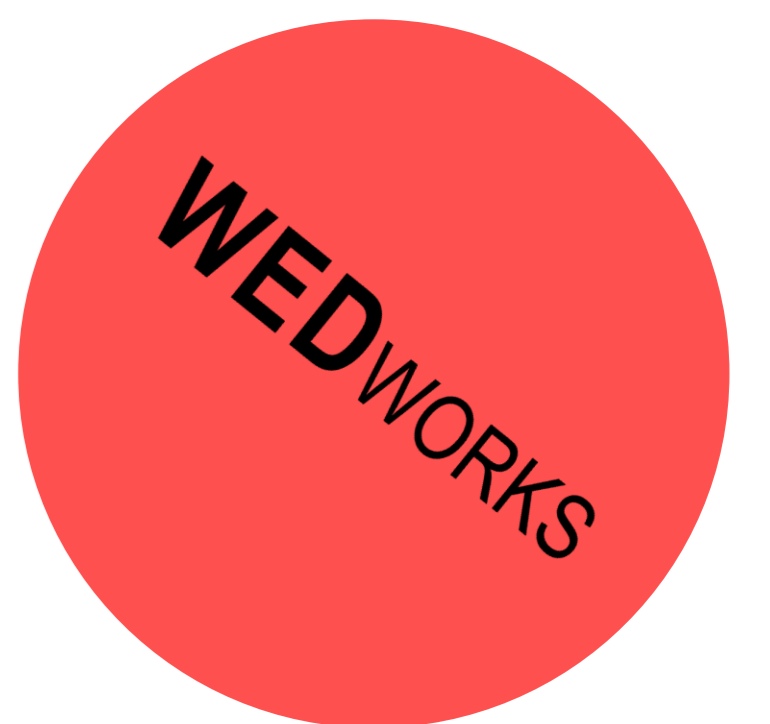
- › Builds on the multiple results of the former EU-project BORDERNETwork (2010-2012)
- › Connects civil society organisations from Germany and five Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Romania and Slovak Republic
- › Aims to advance the practical implementation of gender-sensitive research and response through:
  1. Enhancement of the gender and equity focus in the overlaps between drug prevention, treatment and care for female drug users
  2. Participatory primary drug prevention for vulnerable young people from ethnic minority communities (Roma and Russian speaking)

## Target groups

- › Women using drugs eg, pregnant women, mothers, sex workers, HIV-positive women, adolescents and young people from ethnic minority communities, their family and social networks
- › Multipliers: Drug-help and further health/social service providers, prevention actors, social/health workers, physicians, nurses, psychologists, community-based health educators, child protection officers

## Methods

- › Desk/literature reviews on country situations
- › Qualitative needs assessment research (Rapid Assessment and Response, RAR)
- › Networking and intervision (intercollegial learning)
- › Method competence trainings, capacity buildings and study visits
- › Pilot diagnostic services, case management offers
- › Community-based participatory prevention actions



	Interventions	Selected findings	Lessons and outlook
Women using drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› 40 semi-structured interviews (31 analysed to date)</li> <li>› 6 focus groups with 55 participants</li> <li>› 23 expert interviews</li> <li>› 16 participant observations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Great similarities and overlaps in the vulnerability of both women and sex workers using drugs observed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Median age: 29 years/women and 27 years/SWs</li> <li>› Most of the women are mothers: N=20/women, N=24/SWs</li> <li>› Median of sex work experience: 5 years (3 months - 20 years)/SWs</li> <li>› Long-term drug use experience, median: 9 years (2-22 years)/women and years/SWs</li> <li>› Most of the respondents are currently active drug users: opioids being consumed most often (IDU)</li> <li>› Indicative is poly-drug use pattern of opioids combined with stimulants</li> <li>› Significant experience with drug substitution treatment (OST): N=23/women, N=25/SWs</li> <li>› High drug problem awareness and help seeking attempts, but high treatment drop-outs as well</li> <li>› IDU patterns linked to higher rates of HIV/HCV</li> </ul> <p><b>5 Roma neighborhoods and a Russian speaking community reached</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› 12 young Roma drug/ex-users interviewed</li> <li>› High school drop-out rate, unemployment</li> <li>› Very early start with smoking (7-8 years)</li> <li>› Marijuana use is very common and starts early (10-12)</li> <li>› Low level of knowledge about drugs</li> <li>› Competence in Peer Drama and life-skills training built</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Drug using women and sex workers <u>are particularly vulnerable groups</u> regarding socio-economic, health conditions and stigmatisation, rendered to further risks and marginalisation;</li> <li>› <u>Adequate gender-responsive focus</u> to their situation and needs lacks at both policy and service response (including sexual health and child care) levels in all five CEE countries;</li> <li>› Specialised drug prevention programmes for young people from ethnic minority communities consider <u>insufficiently needs, resources and participatory involvement</u>;</li> <li>› The gaps and weaknesses identified along with the lessons learned are <u>systematically addressed</u> in the projects implementation phase.</li> </ul>
Sex workers (SW) using drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› 47 semi-structured interviews (38 analysed to date)</li> <li>› 31 expert interviews</li> <li>› 21 participant observations</li> </ul>		
Ethnic minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› 9 individual interviews</li> <li>› 17 focus groups with youngsters, parents, experts</li> <li>› 2 international capacity building workshops in participatory primary prevention</li> </ul>		

