



Contemplate future addiction governance in Europe. A focus on collective values, long-term planning and restitutive solutions may pave the way for novel policy measures conducive to reframing the challenges of addiction

foresight challenges addiction governance

A group of 17 European and 3 international drug disorder experts met in 2012, to construct a scenario depicting the situation in 2030+, and to indicate elements on the policy road towards that year. In doing so, they included relevant stakeholders and players as part of the descriptions. The two most prominent drivers of change were assumed, firstly to be the decisive values of European citizens -will there be a priority to self or to community?- and secondly, the nature of response from society -will there be a dominance of reactive, short-termist responses or a forethought, long-termist systemic change?-. The experts generated four contrasting scenarios by placing a major factor influencing the future on each of the two axes, which cross to form four quadrants (see figure). As an ideal future image, the «Solidarity prevails» situational scenario attracted undisputed attention, whilst not putting all elements from the remaining images aside when discussing the junctures towards the ultimate goal.

Although belonging to various scientific fields, the experts landed on a *societal* rather than an individual perspective when finalizing the scenario. Recognizing that much (but by far not all) of recent research on addiction and lifestyles is centered on theories in medicine and psychology, the positioning of this expert team is both challenging and interesting when it comes to future European policy and measures to curb addiction.

Both the need for a reframing of policy and a conceivable paradigm shift in the understanding of addiction policy and governance are implications touched upon by this expert assessment. However, European governance of addictions has no “quick fix”, according to this expert panel.

Nature of response

| | | React and mitigate | Anticipate and prepare |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Individual responsibility first | Values | <p>Inequality prevails</p> <p>Intense individualism and short term reactions to addiction</p> | <p>Vocal players' arena</p> <p>Market driven society, prepares for future challenges of addiction</p> |
| | Social responsibility first | <p>Ad hoc treatment society</p> <p>Inclusive debate, challenges of addiction met when they occur</p> | <p>Solidarity prevails</p> <p>Feelings of societal vulnerability engender large scale, long term actions on addiction</p> |

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Karlsen, J.E., Gual, A., & Anderson, P. (2013): *Foresighting addiction and lifestyles in Europe 2030+*. Eur J Futures Res (2013)1:19. DOI 10.1007/s40309-013-0019-0. Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project (ALICE RAP): [Deliverable 20.1](#)