

Poland's "zero tolerance" drug legislation in 2010 could have been responsible for high police and judiciary sector costs and for high number of recorded drug crimes at that time.

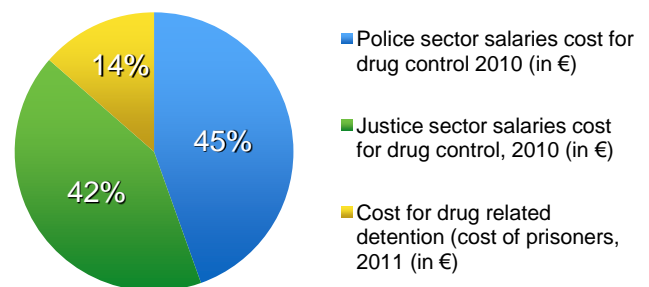
**Criminal justice
 Drug control
 Costs**
 Zero tolerance

A 2010 quantitative estimate of the criminal justice sector costs for drug control in Poland showed an expenditure of 44% for the police sector, 42% for the justice sector, and 14% for detention. Amendments in 2011 introduced more discretionary powers for prosecutors and judges regarding drug possession for personal use. Further research could show whether a different approach to personal drug possession had an effect on the overall allocation of criminal justice resources for drug control and on the practical policy implementation

- **Police Sector:** Police salaries for drug control amounted to 6.3% of the total budget for police salaries - with 1.57€ per capita cost and corresponding to 0.017% of the GDP.
- **Judiciary Sector:** Per capita costs of justice sector gross salaries dedicated to drug control was estimated to be around 1.47€, corresponding to 0.016% of GDP. With a population of 36 million, Poland has a very high density of judges and prosecutors, 3.2 every 10,000 inhabitants. This might partially justify the high costs attributed to this sector.
- **Prison Sector:** The expenditure for prisoners convicted for drug related crimes in Poland is just 0.005 of its GDP, much lower than the average EU expenditure.

These data appear to be consistent with the type of drug legislation enacted in Poland at the time, where a traditional zero tolerance approach was in place. It might be assumed that this approach was likely to be responsible for the high costs of the police and judiciary sector and for the high number of recorded drug crimes.

Qualitative research conducted before 2010 also confirmed the above estimate. A closer look at the actual policy implementation of Poland's "zero tolerance" legislative approach showed that it created in fact a huge burden on the police and judiciary sector and a very minimal repercussion on the prison system, where the most represented population, the active drug users, would be processed on a revolving door system and having little or no access to health and risk reduction opportunities.



Further research would be useful to understand whether the 2011 legislative Amendment, introducing a more relaxed approach to personal use, also brought changes in the allocation of resources for drug control within the criminal justice system and a more public health oriented policy implementation, as well as changes in the overall addiction governance, as outlined in the ALICERAP WP13.1.

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Segura, L., Albareda, A., Ysa, T., Colom, J., Ramon, A., Carrión, M., Fernández, M.: *Governance view*. Addictions and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project (ALICE RAP): [Deliverable 13.1](#)

Council of Europe (2010): [Annual Penal Statistics - SPACE I](#)

Council of Europe (2012): [Scheme for Evaluating Judicial Systems](#)

Eurostat (2013): [Statistical Yearbook](#)

European Prison Observatory: <http://www.prisonobservatory.org/>

Rapid Policy Assessment and Response - RPAR (2006): [Bridging the Gaps Between Needs and Services in the Health and Criminal Justice Systems](#)

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