



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

# Implementation Principles

## **Drug Use Disorder Treatment and Other Non-Custodial Alternatives to Conviction or Punishment for People Who Use Drugs and with Drug Use Disorders in Contact with the Criminal Justice System for Offences of a Minor Nature**

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UNODC Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section



**PTRS**  
PREVENTION TREATMENT  
REHABILITATION SECTION

# Increased drug use and continued wide drug treatment gap

People who use drugs,  
2023 (in million)



**316**

million people

People with drug use disorders,  
2023 (in million)

**64**

million people



**1:12**

population in  
treatment



UNODC 2025

# People in the criminal justice system for drug-related offences

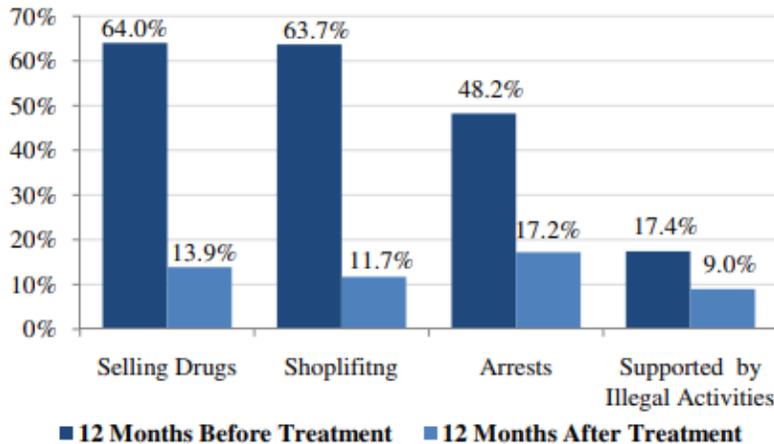


UNODC 2025

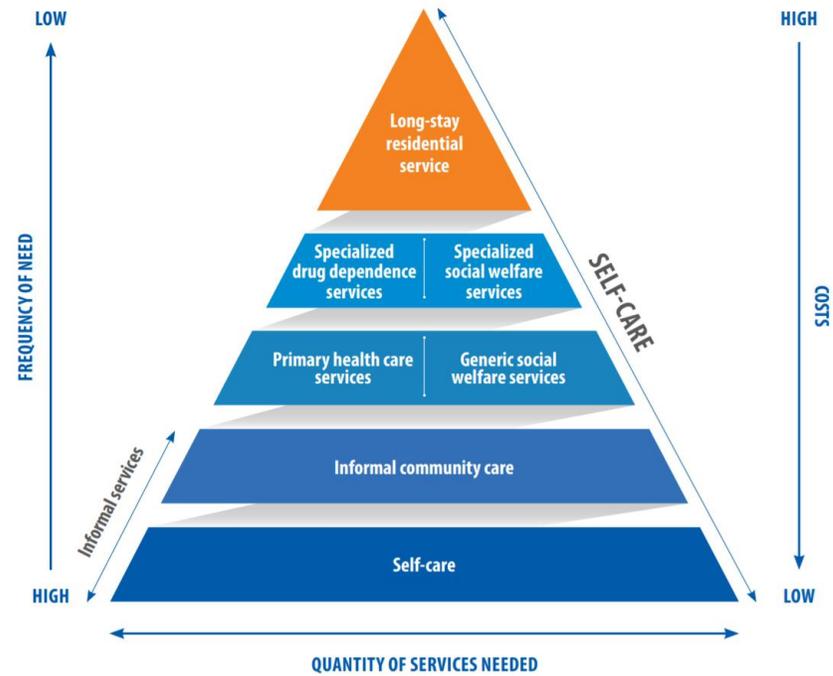
**Drug use disorders are multifactorial health disorders that are best addressed through health responses, including for people in contact with the criminal justice system and in prison settings**

# Treatment as an effective public safety strategy

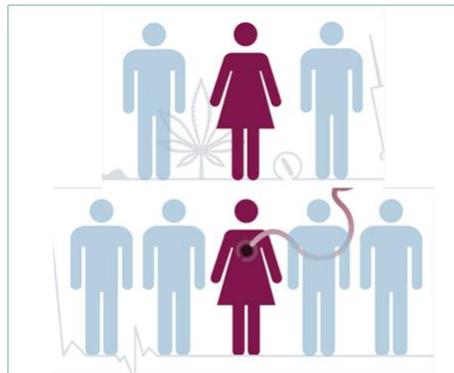
Treatment can reduce the chance that someone will be involved in criminal activity



Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. 1997. *The National Treatment Improvement Evaluation Study: NTIES Highlights*.



Drug treatment is cost-effective compared with untreated drug problems



# Multiple international policy agreements support treatment as an alternative to conviction or punishment

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, 1988

UNITED NATIONS

SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS, 1961

As amended by the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1953.

CONVENTION ON PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, 1971

UNITED NATIONS

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OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE 2016 UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPECIAL SESSION ON THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM

OUR JOINT COMMITMENT TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING AND COUNTERING THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM

INBASIS SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM 2016

The 66th Special Session General Assembly New York, 10-21 April 2016

**United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (The Tokyo Rules)**

Adopted by General Assembly resolution 45/110 of 14 December 1990

**I. General principles**

**1. Fundamental aims**

1.1 The present Standard Minimum Rules provide a set of basic principles to promote the use of non-custodial measures, as well as minimum safeguards for persons subject to alternatives to imprisonment.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

World Health Organization

**The Right to Health**

**THE BANGKOK RULES**

UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders with their Commentary

**CND** UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

POLICYMAKING BODY OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM WITH PRIME RESPONSIBILITY FOR DRUG-RELATED MATTERS

**CCPCJ** COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

PRINCIPAL POLICYMAKING BODY OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE FIELD OF CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**PTRS**

PREVENTION TREATMENT REHABILITATION SECTION

# Policy note



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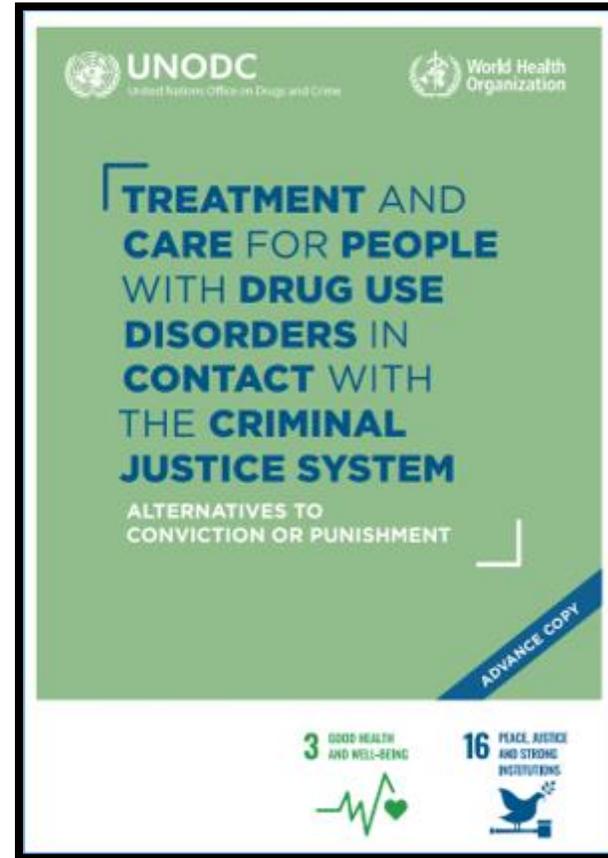
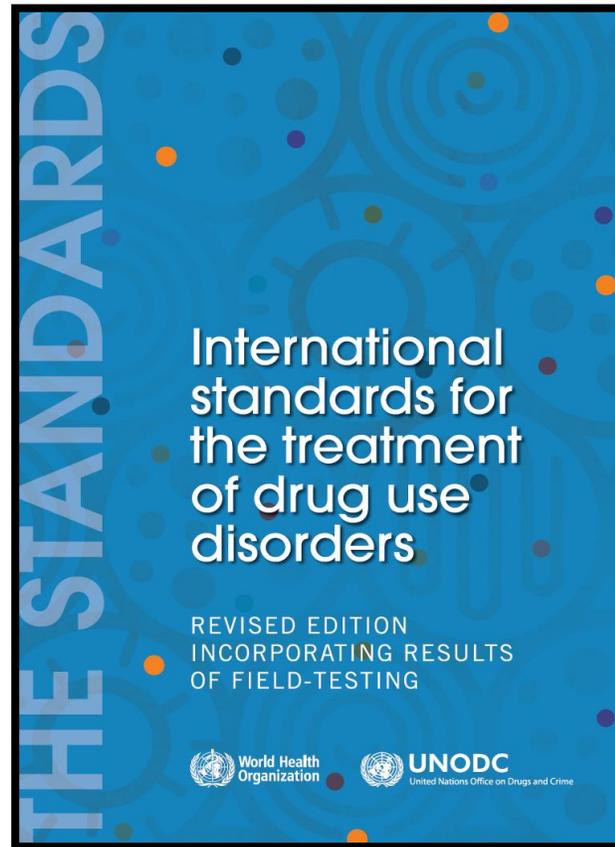
## Alternative measures to conviction or punishment in drug-related cases

Policy Note

January 2025



# International recommendations and guidance available



# How?



United Nations  
Office on Drugs and Crime

## IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES:

Drug Use Disorder Treatment and Other Non-Custodial  
Alternatives to Conviction or Punishment for  
People Who Use Drugs and with Drug Use Disorders in  
Contact with the Criminal Justice System  
for Offences of a Minor Nature



PRE-PUBLICATION DRAFT

# Very wide consultations (160+ participants from 75+ countries)

- Treatment and Care for People with Drug Use Disorders in Contact with the Criminal Justice System: Non-custodial alternative measures at **pre-arrest stage** – the role of law enforcement (23 March 2021)
- Treatment and Care for People with Drug Use Disorders in Contact with the Criminal Justice System: Non-custodial alternative measures at **pre-trial stage** – the role of judicial, health and related professionals (13 October 2021)
- Treatment and Care for People with Drug Use Disorders in Contact with the Criminal Justice System: Non-custodial alternative measures at **trial stage** – the role of legal, health and related professionals (25 May 2022)
- Treatment and Care for People with Drug Use Disorders in Contact with the Criminal Justice System: Non-custodial alternative measures at **post-trial stage** – the role of legal, health and related professionals (26 September 2022)

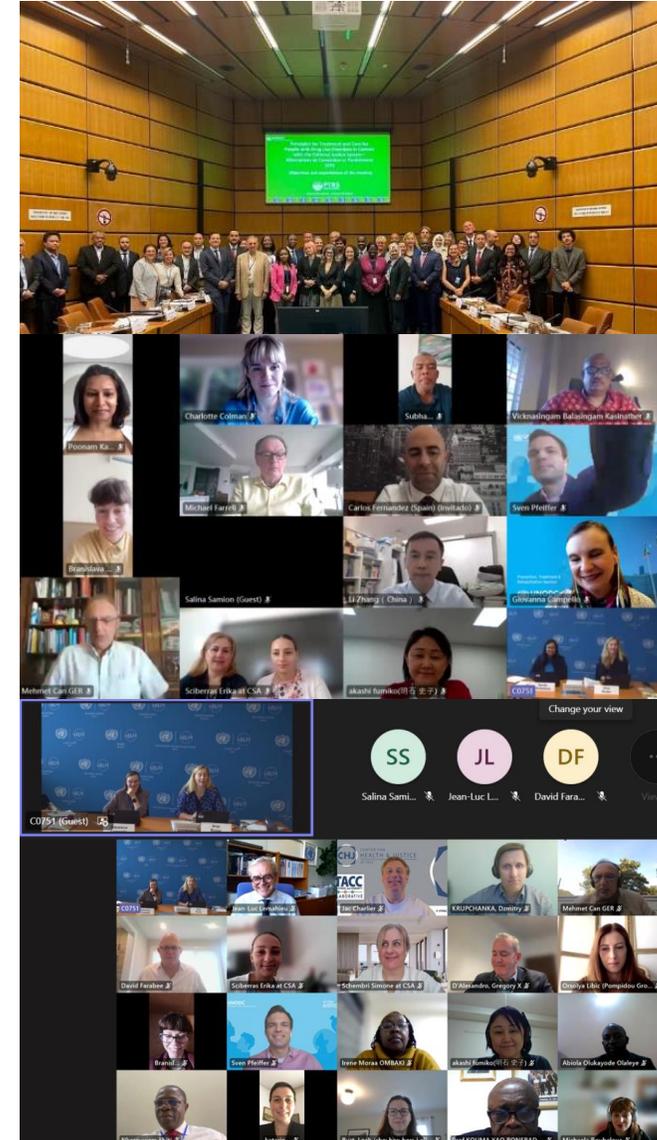


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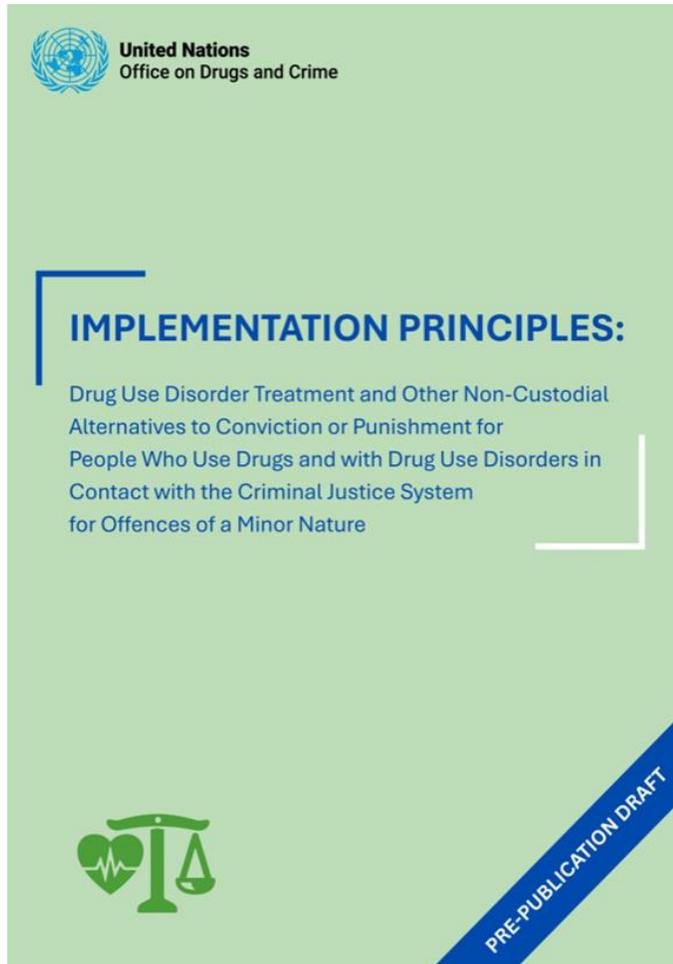
# Hybrid technical consultation

- Hybrid informal technical consultation (2-4 October 2023)
- Online informal technical consultation (5-6 October 2023)
- Present draft report from previous online preparatory consultations
- Discuss emerging principles through group discussions with different focus:
  - Health sector
  - Justice sector
  - Different criminal justice proceeding stages
  - Sharing good practices



# **Implementation Principles**

# Implementation principles



**Health responses**

**Assessment & pilot**

**Sensitization of leadership and public**

**Throughout criminal justice proceedings**

**Quality, monitoring & evaluation**

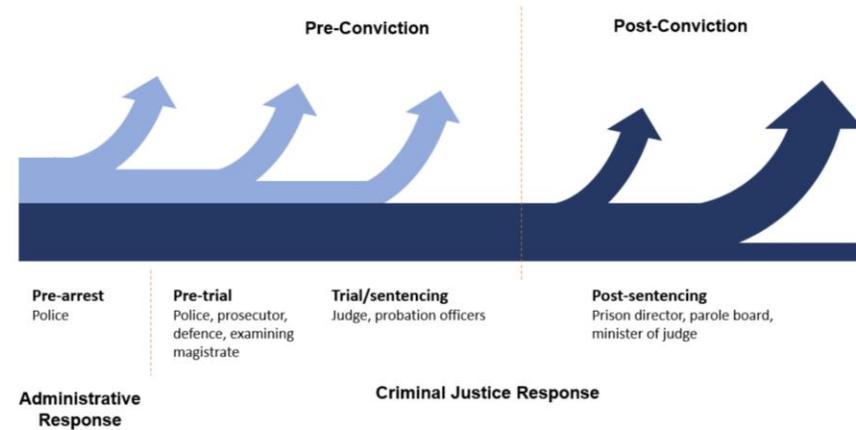
**Multisectoral partnerships**

# Implementation framework

Phases of the  
criminal justice  
process

Phases of  
implementation of  
the initiative  
(APRIL)

# Phases of the criminal justice process



**Actors**

**Participants**

**Health/ social intervention**

**Justice intervention**

**Policy requirements**

**Considerations**

# APRIL checklists

## Systematic and practical

# Assessment

# Preparation

# Implementation

# Learning

### Assessment Stage (Assess)

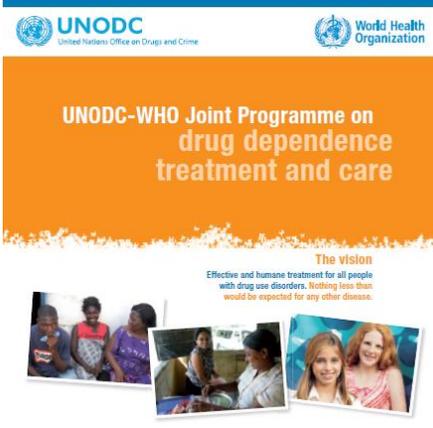
- A situational assessment of different prevalence rates and drug use-related situations and needs
- Assess different prevalence rates for the number of people with drug use disorders
- Assess the number of people with drug use disorders in contact with the criminal justice system
- Review the existing national drug use disorder treatment system, services and interventions in line with *the Standards*
- Review the quality of the existing national drug use disorder treatment system and services, in line with UNODC's Quality Assurance Mechanisms for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders<sup>118</sup>
- Review existing health, justice and social sector collaborations and common diversion routes relevant to each sector
- Review available entry points for treatment and care as alternative and existing practices for people with drug use disorders in contact with the criminal justice system in appropriate criminal cases of a minor nature, in line with the

# Available tools

**THE STANDARDS**

## International standards for the treatment of drug use disorders

REVISED EDITION  
INCORPORATING RESULTS OF FIELD-TESTING

**UNODC-WHO Joint Programme on drug dependence treatment and care**

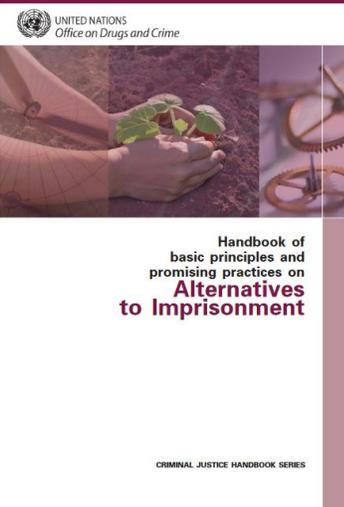
**The vision**  
Effective and humane treatment for all people with drug use disorders. Nothing less than would be expected for any other disease.

E/CN.7/2023/CRP.10

6 March 2023  
English only

**Commission on Narcotic Drugs**  
Sixty-sixth session  
Vienna, 13–17 March 2023  
Item 6 of the provisional agenda  
**Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional, and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem**

**Review of interventions to treat drug use disorders among girls and women in the criminal justice system in low- and middle-income countries\***



**Handbook of basic principles and promising practices on Alternatives to Imprisonment**

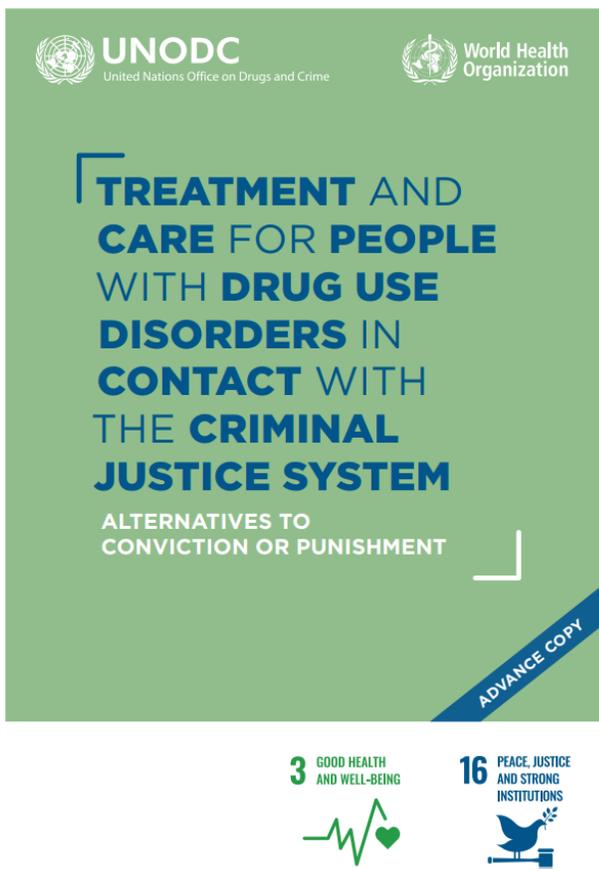
CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES



**Treatment and Care as Alternatives to Conviction or Punishment for People with Drug Use Disorders in Contact with the Criminal Justice System**

Course 1  
Alternatives to Incarceration

Module 6: A Systemic Approach: Models of Alternatives to Incarceration Across the Justice System

**TREATMENT AND CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DRUG USE DISORDERS IN CONTACT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

ALTERNATIVES TO CONVICTION OR PUNISHMENT

**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**16** PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

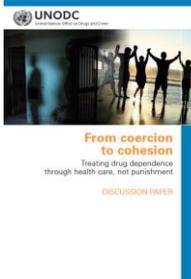
ADVANCE COPY



**Drug Use Disorder Treatment Services Quality Assurance Toolkit**

A quality assurance tool based on the International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders (UNODC/WHO 2020)

Pre-publication draft



**From coercion to cohesion**  
Treating drug dependence through health care, not punishment

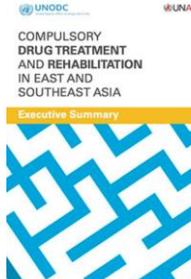
DISCUSSION PAPER



**ALTERNATIVES TO CONVICTION OR PUNISHMENT AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS AND WITH DRUG USE DISORDERS IN CONTACT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Draft summary report on available measures based on an analysis of Note Verbale responses by UN Member States to UNODC

This document has not been formally edited.



**COMPULSORY DRUG TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Executive Summary

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE	CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE		
Pre-arrest	Pretrial	Trial/sentencing	Post-sentencing
Police	Police, prosecutor, defence, examining magistrate	Judge, probation officers	Prison director, parole board, minister of justice
Administrative response with information/referral to treatment	Caution with a diversion to education/treatment	Postponement of the sentence with a treatment element	Early release/parola/pardon with a treatment element
	Conditional dismissal/conditional suspension of the prosecution	Deferring the execution of the sentence with a treatment element	
	Conditional bail (alternative to pretrial detention)	Probation/judicial supervision	
		Special courts/docks (e.g., the Drug Treatment Court)	



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PREVENTION TREATMENT  
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# Thank you!

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