

BADD Bucharest, Romania

Our group is called BADD, The Brigade of Activists in the Drug Domain.

We are an informal group of users and ex-users, currently under the umbrella of the NGO Carusel. Upon being created, there are 10 members in the group, former and active drug users, including specialists working with drug users.

This initiative came to existence by observing the need for a voice that is representative for drug users in our city Bucharest. We felt the need to create a group that can speak on behalf of the drug users, and provide correct information including an inside look and information about drug users' life. This is extremely important, especially in our country where we are witnessing a recent outbreak of HIV among injecting drug users. The national reports show that, only in Bucharest, in 2011 there were almost 20.000 injecting drug users and a recent study showed that 52.4% of the injectors that participated at this study are HIV positive. Also, more than 82% of the injection drug users (IDU's) have hepatitis C (HCV), and more than 25% of them have hepatitis B (HBV). Although the latest reports show a reduction of the estimated group of injectors in Bucharest, the situation is still very critical.



Some members of BADD are in charge for Carusel's Association, Caracuda-Ferentari (the needle exchange & drop-in center). This is the first drop-in center that is coordinated by a former drug user and also has peer educators working or volunteering in this center, most are being former or active users of heroin or substances like 'legal highs'.

BADD members who are helping with Carusel Association, are also participating in different trainings for police officers, students, volunteers and other NGOs. With topics such as: stigma and discrimination that drug users are facing, HIV and harm reduction services addressed to drug users.

The Brigade of Activists
in the Drug Domain

'We felt the need to create a group that
can speak on our behalf.'



Right now, we are gathering members to our group from all around Bucharest, in order to have a better understanding of the situation throughout our city, including the trends regarding drug use and to be able to provide better responses to the needs of injecting drug users. In order to have a better recognition and to be able to fully represent the needs and the voice of drug users, BADD, needs to become a legal entity, and creating BADD as an NGO will be the first step in this direction.

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