

“Norway’s drug policy reform: What do we know so far?”

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A brief history

- Heated discussion after the 2016 UNGASS process
 - Focus on decriminalization and legalization
 - User organizations got a more prominent voice
- The drug policy reform commission was appointed in March 2018
 - Mandate: Find out «how the responsibility for sanctions against minor drug offences could be transferred from the justice system to the health services»
- Report presented in December 2019
 - Called for decriminalization of relatively large quantities of all illicit drugs
- Heated policy discussion (again)
 - Focus on heavy users and individual rights

...brief history continued



Aftermath

- Even though decriminalization was rejected, the national prosecutor's guidelines were still in effect
 - Police still unsure of their role and mandate
 - Fewer people caught for use or possession
- Police and youth workers across the country reported that young people perceived drugs to be legal/decriminalized
- Courts reduced sentences for people with substance use disorders – in line with the wish of Parliament
- A vacuum after the reform was rejected

Moss Avis

– Vi prater jevnlig med ungdom, og flere uttrykker at de tror det er lov med narkotika

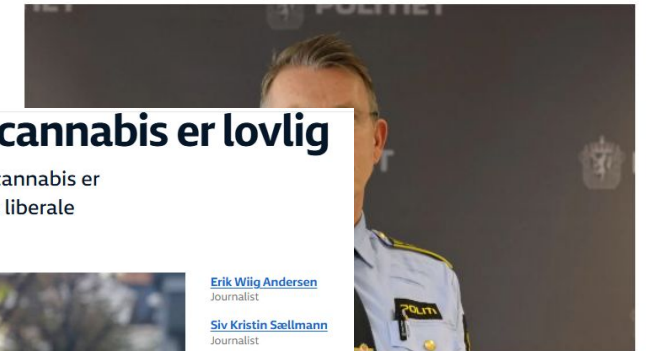
Stadig flere ungdom tester narkotika. Nå venter en hjemmesommer i Norge for mange, og politiet oppfordrer ungdommen til å finne noe annet å...

1. juli 2020



«Vi opplever at ungdom tror at narkotika har blitt lovlig. Og så lenge det er til eget bruk - så skal ikke politiet prioritere dette.»

Rusdebatten, spesielt knyttet til barn og unge er heftet med berøringsangst, og synes totalt fraværende blant våre sentrale folkevalgte.



Politiet: – Ungdom tror cannabis er lovlig

Politiet hører stadig oftere at ungdommer tror cannabis er lovlig. Større aksept av stoffet og påvirkning fra liberale politikere kan være årsaken.



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foto: Politiet

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Lofot-Tidende

[Dop, Rus | Rebekka i politiet: – Mange ungdommer tror det er blitt lov med narkotika](#)

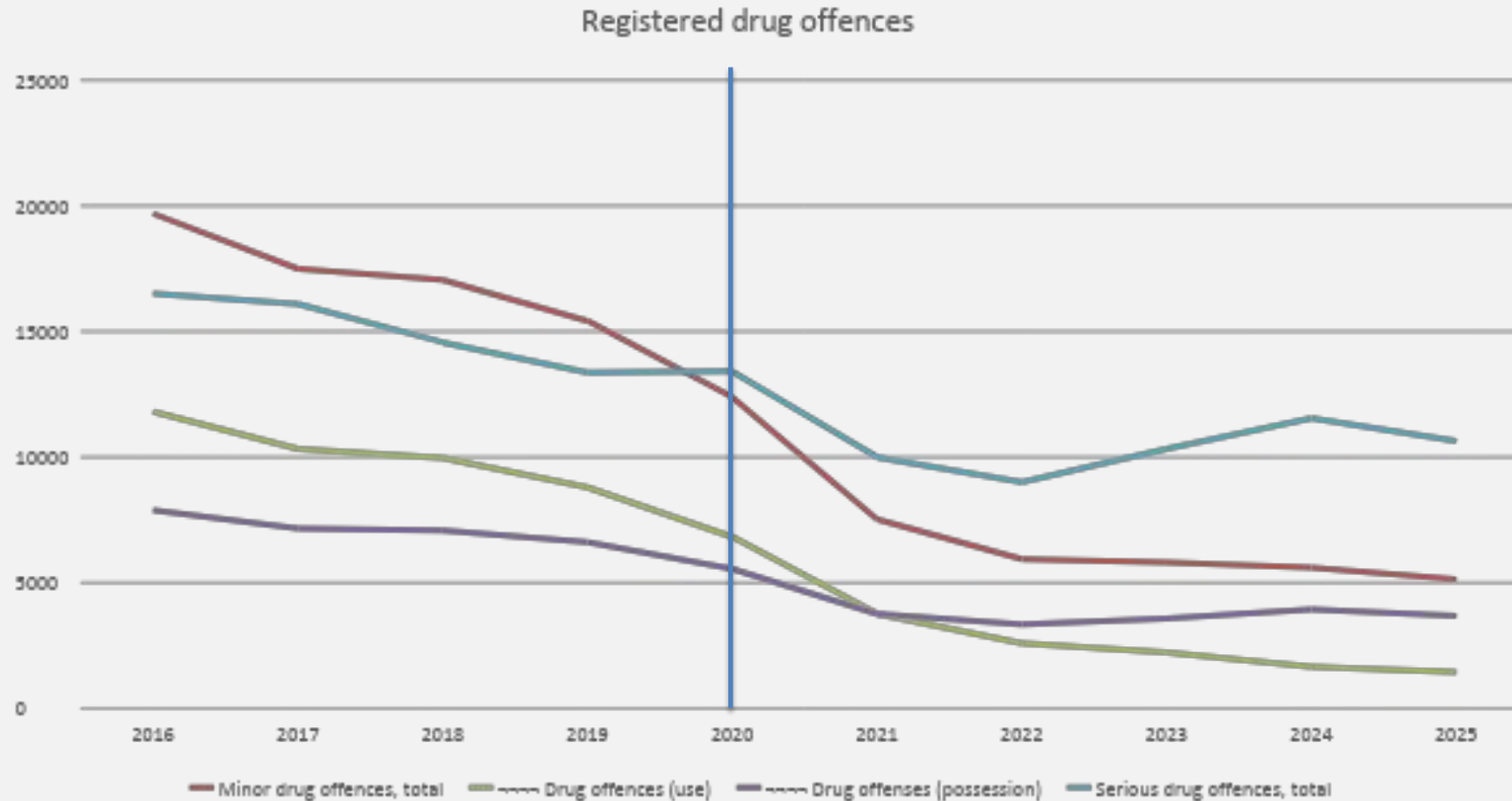
I vinter gjorde politiet beslag av MDMA på Leknes. – Vi har informasjon som tyder på at tablettene ble delt på et rusfritt arrangement på UL...

5. mai 2022

Torbjørn Trommestad i politiet forteller ungdom som har fått problemer med di



Fewer people caught for drug offences



«Dissuasion commissions»

- 83 % of municipalities have established these advisory units
 - Exception: mostly small municipalities
- But very few clients:
 - 72 percent of the municipalities had no cases – and another 13 percent had 1 case
 - A total of 181 cases in the whole country in 2024
- The municipal advisory units appear to take on other tasks
- Integrated into other services

(SINTEF 2025)

Aftenposten

Hun skulle ta imot personer som ruser seg. Men politiet har ikke sendt noen dit.

Stortinget brukte 100 millioner for at rusbrukere kunne pålegges å møte opp til rådgivende enheter. Oslo kommune vil slutte å kaste bort...

24. apr. 2023



Nidaros

Narkotika, Trondheim kommune | Har fått 3,4 millioner kroner i år til drift – «ingen» sendes til tilbudet

I år er Trondheim kommune tildelt 3,4 millioner kroner i statlige tilskudd for å kunne tilby ungdom og voksne med et gryende rusproblem,...

13. mai 2023



New government, new reform

- New Labour government in September 2021
 - Promised a new «prevention and treatment reform»
- New expert commission appointed in May 2023 to look into various legal aspects of the reform, presented their report in June 2024
- Government presented their reform in October 2024 and April 2025
 - Drug use should be criminalized with a possibility of prison sentences
 - Adults with serious drug problems should normally avoid punishment
 - Young people should meet before the «drug dissuasion commissions»
 - Adults without established drug use problems should receive a fine
 - Established limits for drug possession for own use
 - Police can use saliva tests to prove drug use



Meld. St. 5

(2024–2025)

Melding til Stortinget

Trygghet, fellesskap og verdighet

Forebyggings- og behandlingsreformen for rusfeltet Del I
– en ny politikk for forebygging, skadereduksjon
og behandling



Prop. 112 L

(2024–2025)

Proposisjon til Stortinget (forslag til lovvedtak)

Endringer i straffeloven og
legemiddelloven mv. (befatning med mindre
mengder narkotika til egen bruk)



NOU

Norges offentlige utredninger 2024: 12

Håndheving av mindre
narkotikaovertrедelser

New compromise

In June 2025 Labour party (new drug policy reform) and Conservative party (old drug policy reform) reached a drug policy compromise:

- Young people who are caught by the police for drug use or possession, will be referred to the «drug dissuasion commissions»
- People with problematic drug use will normally be let off with an offer of treatment
- Adults without problematic drug use will get a on-the-spot ticket; if they refuse, they may be forced to take a saliva test

An end to the heated debates - though some issues remain

Status today -5 years after decriminalization was rejected

- None of the new laws have entered into force
- 'Dissuasion commissions' largely inactive
- Role of police is still unclear
- Number of minor drug crimes still sinking
- Ongoing hearing about the on-the-spot tickets
 - Limits for possession
 - Criminal records
 - Size of fine





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