

Abstract

This paper focuses on the topic of low-threshold centers for drug users in the context of NIMBY attitudes, which refers to the resistance of local communities to the placement of these centers in their neighborhoods. Prague is currently struggling with a lack of these services, which despite the urgency of the situation, remains unresolved. This paper seeks to understand the relations between NIMBY attitudes and such centers and the impact these attitudes have. It also reveals other factors that influence their operations. Finally, the paper defines the main issues of these centers and proposes possible solutions. These goals were achieved through a multiple-case study of the Drop In and Progressive centers, which involved interviews with their managers. Media research was conducted to gain insight into the situation from other parties involved. It was found that the Drop In center does not face any disturbances, while the other was closed due to disturbances by its residents that reached the political level. The main factor causing troubles was the volume of clients in the area, which disrupted peace and safety. The large volume of clients is caused by a lack of such centers and other addiction services in Prague. If the load was spread across more locations, services and their clients would not be as visible to residents. However, the creation of new centers is difficult to implement, as city districts are showing significant NIMBY attitudes towards these services. No one wants to attract this type of people to their territory and face disgruntled residents. The construction of new services (or just finding a new space for the Progressive center) has stagnated for a long time. This creates a vicious cycle where a lack of services creates dissatisfaction, and dissatisfaction creates a lack of services. Furthermore, this situation is not very safe because monitoring drug users and ensuring they use sterile injection material is in the interest of public health. In the case of an uncontrolled drug scene, there could be for example an increased incidence of infectious diseases. Based on the situation, this paper suggests the use of certain alternative services.