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Changing Control of the Open Drug Scenes in Oslo— Crime, Welfare, Immigration Control, or a Combination?

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Abstract

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association of foreign actors in the drug scene with organized crime, and a stricter

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Norwegian legislation and approach to immigration questions, with a tendency toward a conflation of immigration and criminal law.

Keywords: Crimmigration Drug addicts Drugs Open drug scenes Organized crime Oslo Police control Social control Undocumented migrants

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Notes

¹ Uteseksjonen is organized under the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Service in Oslo municipality, and provides social outreach services in downtown Oslo among children and young people under 25 years old, in addition to outreach work among adults with drug problems (Uteseksjonen [2011](#)).

² The Church City Mission is a Christian charity organization working with vulnerable populations and individuals, such as drug addicts. Møtestedet is a place where drug

users can be followed up by the employment office. (Uteseksjonen [2011](#), Møtestedet [2011](#))

³ In the past, these people were often followed up by the employment office through tabloid newspapers.

⁴ Sandbakk, Akerselev, and youth, but the majority of the population is an minority dependency.

⁵ Drug laws, § 162b, 317, parts 4 and 5, and the Act relating to medicines etc. (see § 31, part 2).

⁶ All translations are by my translator, with the exception of published translations of law.

⁷ The source for the number of reports concerning violations of the Penal code § 162, parts 1, 2 and 3, is the police's criminal case figures, which are somewhat less reliable than Statistics Norway's ('SSB') figures. The SSB does not publish figures distinguishing between the number of reports for the Penal code's § 162, parts 1, 2 and 3. There are, however, no major variations between the general police report numbers from the SSB and those directly from the criminal case registry STRASAK.

⁸ Færre tyveri og flere narkotikalovbrudd, SSB ([2010](#)).

⁹ SSB does not publish tables clarifying both geographic areas and reported crime which distinguish between different types of drug law violations. Report numbers published by police are close to those published by SSB and in most cases only deviate with single digits below the SSB numbers.

¹⁰ The statistics only show an increase in police reports for the last two years. This could indicate a shorter-term increase based on a special focus on these cases over the last few years. I will argue rather that this is part of a trend that needs to be explained. The investigation and penalty numbers for drug crimes are decreasing. Statistics Norway has yet to publish statistics for these areas for 2010. Because it takes time before a reported crime reaches the court room, there will always be a lag in penalty statistics compared to reports statistics. The decrease in penalties could also indicate that the reported drug crimes are so insignificant that they never reach the court room.

¹¹ The D × first safe
country n Norway
has appl dence
permit in arbeidet
[2011](#)).

¹² W  migrants
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¹³ Appro

¹⁴ Eighty percent of all users of Møtstedet are men.

¹⁵ Their material is from 2007. Perhaps more such sentences are handed down now.

¹⁶ Between 2002 and 2010 unemployment in Norway was between 2.5% and 4.5% ([Yrkesdeltakingstatistikk](#), SSB: Table 18, 2002–2010). By comparison, unemployment in Spain in 2010 was at 20.1%, while it was 8.4% in Italy and 12.6% in Greece (Eurostat [2011](#)).

¹⁷ There are some exceptions to this rule, such as for visiting lecturers, professional athletes, internships with international firms, and the like (Utlendingsdirektoratet [2010](#)).

¹⁸ Area close to Oslo Central Station, perhaps the most infamous open drug scene in Norway.

¹⁹ Some of the news articles before 2009 that mention foreign citizens in the drug scenes give us personal stories about the foreigners as well.

²⁰ This will be documented further in my forthcoming PhD dissertation.

²¹ The return directive concerns common standards and procedures in the EU states for the return of third-country citizens (non-Schengen citizens) residing illegally (Den europæiske unions tidende [2008](#)).

²² Drug crimes, aggravated drug crimes, and crimes against the Act relating to medicines, etc. have been combined.

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