

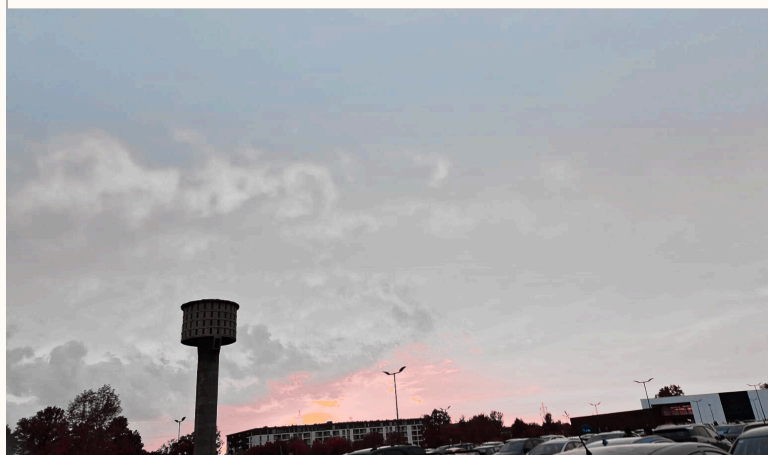
CALL FOR PAPERS
CRITICAL DRUG STUDIES SEMINAR

OCTOBER 17, 2025
KRAKÓW, POLAND

Drugged Sociology in the Semi-Periphery: Psychoactive Substances, Governance, and Resistance in Central and Eastern Europe

This seminar launches a new initiative to strengthen critical drug studies in Poland and the CEE region. Organized by the Critical Drug Studies Group (an interdisciplinary research network), the Institute of Sociology at Jagiellonian University, and the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Opole, this event responds to the persistent gap in social science research on drugs in semi-peripheral contexts.

We invite scholars from sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, media studies, criminology and related fields, as well as activists and practitioners, to submit reflections that challenge prohibitionist narratives and center marginalized perspectives.



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Thematic Focus

The seminar aims to foster discussion on drugs as a lens to analyze power, citizenship, and social control in the CEE's semi-peripheral context. Central and Eastern Europe is conceived here twofold: either as a historically and geographically specific context of drug supply, use, governance and societal reception - or as a model semi-periphery in between conservative regulations and cultural framings and liberalizing paradigm shift. We welcome contributions that explore:

1. Lived Experiences: Resistance, Pleasure, and Marginalization

How do people who use drugs navigate stigma, criminalization, and social exclusion in CEE? We welcome ethnographic, narrative, or intersectional analyses of drug use as:

- Everyday resistance (e.g., identity management, informal harm reduction, survival strategies).
- Embodied practices (e.g., pleasure, self-medication, or rituals).
- Collective identity-building (e.g., subcultures, activist movements).
- Intersections of stigma: gendered use, migrant use, socio-economic status and drug use, queer drug use.

Key questions: How do CEE-specific contexts (e.g., post-socialist healthcare systems, conservative politics) shape these experiences? How do users reclaim agency under prohibition?

2. Policy and Discourse: The "Addiction Imaginary" in CEE

Critically examine how drugs are governed, represented, and moralized in the region:

- Criminalization vs. "controlled decontrol" (e.g., medical cannabis laws in Poland, harm reduction's uneven adoption).
- Institutional actors: How do policymakers, police, media, and healthcare systems construct the "drug problem"?
- Discursive framings: Abstinence rhetoric, "junkie" stereotypes, or the rise of "pharmaceutical" vs. "illicit" binaries.

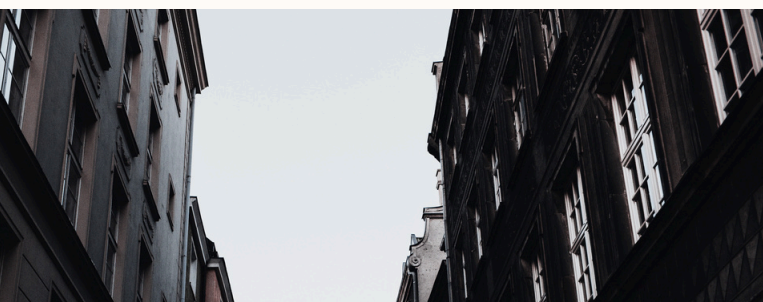
Key questions: How do CEE drug policies reflect global trends or local moral panics? Whose voices are silenced in these debates?

3. Global Contradictions: CEE in the Twilight of Prohibition

Explore tensions and contradictions between CEE's restrictive policies and carceral modes of governance, and transnational shifts and new trends in drug cultures:

- Historical dependencies and the coloniality of drug policies (e.g., the region's double peripherality - caught between Western European models and post-Soviet legacies)
- Policy diffusion: How do Western harm reduction models or cannabis legalization impact CEE?
- Migration and drug cultures: Social remittances from CEE migrants in liberal regimes (e.g., Polish workers in Dutch coffee shops).
- Transnational crime vs. local realities: How do global illicit markets interact with CEE's policing strategies?

Key questions: Is CEE a "policy desert" or a site of quiet resistance? How do global trends amplify local inequalities?



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Methodologies:

We invite studies of different critical methodologies; both qualitative and quantitative contributions are welcome as well as conceptual papers.

Format:

The seminar will feature two parallel tracks of sessions:

- **Traditional Presentation Sessions** – For participants who wish to present their research in a standard format followed by discussion. These sessions are open to all topics within the seminar's scope.
- **Special Issue Draft Workshops** – Dedicated to articles intended for submission to the upcoming **Polish Sociological Review Special Issue**.

Researchers interested in contributing to the Special Issue should notify the organizers by submitting an abstract. This declaration of interest also entails submitting an **extended draft (5-6 pages) by September 15, 2025**. During the draft workshops, authors will present their article proposals and receive feedback from the lead editors and fellow authors. Participation in either format is welcome—please indicate your preference when submitting.

Submission guidelines and timeline:

- **Abstracts** (250 words; title and up to 5 keywords) + brief bios by **4 July 4, 2025** to criticaldrugstudiesgroup@gmail.com (for those interested in contributing to the special issue, please indicate that in your email)
- Notification of acceptance by **July 31, 2025**.
- Extended abstract deadline for those interested in the special issue - **September, 15 2025** (more information on the special issue: <https://polish-sociological-review.eu/>).

This seminar seeks to decentralize drug studies, challenging the Western-centric focus and amplifying CEE perspectives. Join us to rethink prohibition, pleasure, and policy in the region!



Organizers:

Critical Drug Studies Group,
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No fees apply: participation in the seminar is completely free of charge. The organizers provide refreshments and a tea or coffee break is included in the program.

Venue: Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University,
Grodzka 52, Kraków Poland



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