



European Monitoring Centre  
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

**ESPAD**

The European School Survey  
Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs

# The ESPAD validity study in four countries in 2013

Björn Hibell, Sabrina Molinaro, Valeria Siciliano and Ludwig Kraus

In cooperation with  
Arsaell Arnarsson, Olga Balakireva and Tatijana Djurisc

## | Legal notice

This publication of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) is protected by copyright. The EMCDDA accepts no responsibility or liability for any consequences arising from the use of the data contained in this document. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the official opinions of the EMCDDA's partners, any EU Member State or any agency or institution of the European Union.

Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers to your questions about the European Union.

**Freephone number (\*): 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11**

(\* ) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015

ISBN: 978-92-9168-826-5

doi:10.2810/363531

© European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2015

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



European Monitoring Centre  
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

Praça Europa 1, Cais do Sodré, 1249-289 Lisboa, Portugal

Tel. +351 211210200 | Fax +351 218131711

[info@emcdda.europa.eu](mailto:info@emcdda.europa.eu) | [www.emcdda.europa.eu](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu)

[twitter.com/emcdda](https://twitter.com/emcdda) | [facebook.com/emcdda](https://facebook.com/emcdda)

## Contents

Foreword.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Goals and data collection.....	5
Key variables and goals.....	5
Participating countries and schools.....	6
Preparations.....	7
Results.....	8
Interest and possible difficulties.....	8
Students' understanding of some alcohol-related key variables.....	9
Students' understanding of a question about new psychoactive substances.....	10
Testing some new questions.....	11
How honestly the students answered.....	11
The opinions of survey leaders.....	12
Discussion.....	13
Interest and possible difficulties.....	13
Students' understanding of some alcohol-related key variables.....	13
Students' understanding of a question about new psychoactive substances.....	14
Testing some new questions.....	14
How honestly the students answered.....	15
The opinions of survey leaders.....	15
The validity of the ESPAD questionnaire.....	16
Summary and conclusions.....	17
References.....	19
Appendix 1.....	20
Appendix 2.....	24
Appendix 3.....	35

## | Foreword

A basic question in most research projects is whether you really measure what you want to measure — in other words, whether it has sufficient validity. Assessing the validity of the information that has been collected is a relevant issue in any study, especially if data are collected in more than one country. However, it becomes even more important when a project is repeated over time in order to study trends that will give insight into changes, and the eventual relationship of these changes to different factors, including policies. Confirming the validity of data is therefore important not only from a research perspective, but also from the perspective of developing evidence-based policies and interventions.

Validity is a particularly critical question in studies based on self-reports of behaviours that may not be socially acceptable, such as the use of psychoactive substances (drugs, alcohol and others) among young people. The first data collection of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) was conducted in 1995 among 16-year-old students in 26 countries. Since then, data have been gathered every fourth year in an increasing number of countries. The latest ESPAD survey was conducted in 2011 when 39 countries took part. Data were collected for the sixth time in the winter and spring of 2015, and it is anticipated that the report will be published in summer 2016.

With ESPAD data from so many countries collected in repeated surveys, validity is a crucial question. Are data comparable between countries and over time? This question was discussed at an early stage in the development of ESPAD and a validity study was carried out in seven countries in 1998. The conclusion was that reliability and validity seemed to be high in all participating countries, though it was slightly lower in one or two.

Even if this conclusion had been accurate in 1998 the situation might well have changed since then, and when preparing for the 2015 ESPAD survey it was decided to find out whether the survey's validity was still high 15 years later. A new validity study was therefore conducted in the autumn of 2013 in four ESPAD countries, and more than 1 100 students in 52 classes in 38 schools took part.

We are very grateful to all the participating students, teachers and school leaders for taking part in this study and for allowing researchers access to the schools and classes. We also would like to express our appreciation for the work done by the interviewers and responsible researchers in the participating countries, and by the authors of this report.

Lisbon, March 2015

**Wolfgang Götz**  
Director, EMCDDA

**Björn Hibell**  
ESPAD Coordinator 1993–2014

## Introduction

As soon as an European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) report has been published preparations start for the next data collection, and therefore the preparations for the 2015 survey started when the report from the 2011 study was published in 2012. An important part of the preparations was a review of the questionnaire, which was the responsibility of a questionnaire group.

The preparation phase for a new data collection is also a time for reflecting on the ESPAD methodology and whether there are details that can be improved or important aspects that need to be clarified. An aspect that is always important to consider is the validity of the ESPAD questionnaire.

In 1998 a validity study was conducted in seven ESPAD countries in different parts of Europe (Hibell, 1999). Students were first asked to answer a questionnaire that contained core questions from the ESPAD questionnaire, and 3–5 days later they answered a questionnaire that included some of the questions from the first survey, accompanied by questions of a methodological character, including questions about how truthfully they had answered in the first data collection and how truthfully they thought that their classmates had answered. Both surveys were conducted in the classroom. In addition to this, the survey leaders answered some questions about possible disturbances during the data collection, how interested the students were, how seriously they worked and how honestly they thought the students had answered.

The conclusion was that the reliability and validity seemed to be high in all participating countries, although slightly lower in one or two.

By 2013 the 1998 validity study was 15 years old, and the situation may have changed over that time. This indicated the need for a new study that could go into more detail than the 1998 study about how truthful the answers are about the use of different substances.

However, validity is not only about how truthfully the respondents answer, but also about how well they understand the questions. Whether respondents give honest answers becomes irrelevant if they don't understand the question. A new study would provide an opportunity to explore how well students understand the more difficult questions, some of which are considered to be key variables.

## Goals and data collection

### Key variables and goals

This first ESPAD validity study was an attempt to assess the validity of the answers about different substances, without going into details about individual questions. However, some questions might be considered more important than others in the sense that they are often used as key indicators when looking at trends in substance use among European school students. Variables of this kind include the quantity of alcohol consumed during the last drinking day, the frequency of heavy episodic drinking and the use of cannabis, which is by far the most frequently used illegal drug in the ESPAD target group (students who will become 16 years old during the year of the data collection).

The question about alcohol consumption during the last drinking day starts with a sub-question that asks students which beverages they drank during the last day they consumed alcohol. Separate sub-questions then follow for each of the different beverages. There is a risk that a student will forget that the question is about the last drinking day and instead give an answer about the last day on which each of the separate beverages was consumed. Hence there is some uncertainty over whether students have understood and answered the question correctly and, if they haven't, whether the use of the introductory sub-question as a filter question compensated for this in the cleaning process by only accepting the quantities of beverages marked in the first sub-question.

Heavy episodic drinking is measured with a question on how often the respondent had consumed five or more drinks in a row during the last 30 days. The question explains the quantity of liquid that is classed as a 'drink' for each kind of beverage. One difficulty with this question is that a student who has been drinking more than one beverage in a drinking session has to understand the quantity of liquid that is classed as a 'drink' for each kind of beverage they consumed; they then have to calculate how many 'drinks' of each beverage were consumed; and finally they have to add the number of 'drinks' of the different beverages together to obtain one measure. For many students, this will involve calculating the total number of 'drinks' per day for several consumption days during the last 30 days.

An alternative way of measuring heavy episodic drinking is used in the annual Swedish school surveys. The students are asked how often they have been drinking an amount of alcohol equal to at least four cans of beer, 25 cl of spirits or a bottle of wine. Whether a question of this kind is easier for the students to understand than the traditional 'five or more drinks' question has been a matter of debate. The inclusion of this alternative question in the validity study questionnaire did not allow us to

say which question is the best measure of heavy episodic drinking, but it was a chance to find out which of them that is better understood. The outcome of such a comparison was seen as the basis for a discussion about the possibility of including both questions in the 2015 ESPAD questionnaire.

There is a risk that students consciously or unconsciously don't give accurate, honest answers about all substances. In many cases this might be related to what is socially desired/accepted in different cultural contexts, and the direction of these incorrect answers may go both ways, i.e. there may be over-reporting (exaggeration) as well as underreporting.

Answers about the use of illegal drugs are likely to be less reliable than answers about legal substances, since illegal drugs are consumed to a lesser extent than legal substances like alcohol and cigarettes, and because they are illegal. The truthfulness/validity of the answers to the cannabis question is of particular interest, as cannabis is by far the most widely used illegal drug in the ESPAD target population.

The ESPAD questionnaire contains a question about the honesty of the student's answers to the question about lifetime cannabis use. The answers to this validity question indicate, as a whole, that there is an underreporting and that this underreporting/hesitation about giving honest answers probably differs between countries. There are indications that this hesitancy is relatively high in many Balkan countries (Hibell et al., 2012).

When the 2015 ESPAD questionnaire was discussed with the whole group of ESPAD researchers, and also in the questionnaire group, a number of new ideas for questions were suggested. The questionnaire group compiled a priority list of possible new areas and formulated some potential new questions. However, as the questions were untried it would be advantageous to have them tested before they were possibly included in the 2015 ESPAD study, and the validity study offered such an opportunity.

The primary goals of the 2013 validity study were to find out:

- how well the students understand the question about quantities consumed during the last drinking day;
- how well the introductory filter question and its use compensate for possible misunderstandings of how to answer the question about alcohol consumed during the last drinking day;
- how well the students understand the question about heavy episodic drinking;
- how well an alternative question about heavy episodic drinking may function;
- how honestly the students answer the questions about their use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs and their Internet and gambling habits;

- how honestly the students answer the questionnaire as a whole;
- how honestly they think their classmates answer questions about their use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, their Internet and gambling habits and how honest their responses are to the questionnaire as a whole;
- whether the questionnaire includes any questions that are difficult to answer;
- how well the students understand potential new questions that might be used in the 2015 ESPAD questionnaire. This study tested questions about moist snuff, e-cigarettes, water pipe, experience of problems due to others' drinking, new psychoactive substances, Internet use and gambling.

## Participating countries and schools

It was decided that a methodological study should be conducted in five ESPAD countries in different parts of Europe. For various reasons it was not meaningful to draw a random sample and the most pragmatic method was simply to hand-pick the countries, which should be from across Europe and should include countries with different levels of cannabis prevalence. Five countries accepted an invitation to take part (the lifetime cannabis use in 2011 in each country is given in brackets): the Czech Republic (42 %), Italy (21 %), Ukraine (11 %), Iceland (10 %) and Montenegro (5 %).

Unfortunately, it became evident that it was not possible to carry out this research in the Czech Republic, but by the time this was apparent it was too late to include another high-prevalence country in the study.

Since the goal of the study was not to measure the use of different substances in a representative sample of students but to learn about the validity of the answers and to test some questions, the analysis did not need to be carried out on nationally representative samples of schools. It was considered adequate to include students from a number of schools in a geographically limited area, for example in the city in which the responsible researcher lived. However, whenever relevant, different kinds of schools were included.

It was planned that about 200 students would take part in each participating country. It was highly desirable that the participating students should be the same age as the ESPAD target population, which means that they were born in 1997. If this was difficult in practice, it was acceptable for a minority of no more than 20 % born one year earlier or later, i.e. in 1996 or 1998, to be included.

As in the regular ESPAD data collection, no more than two classes were supposed to take part from each school.

TABLE A

**Methodological aspects**

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
<b>Ethical aspects</b>					
Ethical review necessary	No	No	No	No	
Parental consent	Passive	Passive	No	No	
National ethical rules followed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>Data collection period (2013)</b>	4–13 November	22–30 October	10–22 October	7–22 October	
<b>Participation</b>					
Schools	6	5	6	21 <sup>(1)</sup>	38
Classes	10	10	9	23	52
Students	243	199	266	430	1 138
<b>Refusals</b>					
Schools	0	0	0	0	0
Classes	0	0	0	0	0
Students	1	1	0	3	5
<b>Students' presence rate</b>	96 %	94 %	92 %	82 %	91 %
<b>Average completion time (minutes) <sup>(2)</sup></b>	23	26	28	30	27
<b>Survey leaders in the classrooms</b>	Interviewers <sup>(3)</sup>	Teachers	Interviewers <sup>(4)</sup>	Interviewers	

Notes:

<sup>(1)</sup> In 5 regions in different parts of the country<sup>(2)</sup> Average of reported minimum and maximum<sup>(3)</sup> Teachers were also present, but not responsible for the data collection<sup>(4)</sup> The interviewer responsible in the classroom did not do any interview in that class

A total of 9–10 classes from 5–6 schools in Iceland, Italy and Montenegro took part in the study (Table A). The corresponding numbers were higher in Ukraine, with 23 classes from 21 schools. One reason for this was that the schools were from five regions in different parts of the country. No selected school or class refused to take part in the project.

## Preparations

The student questionnaire contained both new and old questions, and it was important that at least the new questions were translated and back-translated. The same was true for the whole interview questionnaire. A translation–back-translation process was performed in all countries and no significant problems were noted.

Since neither the student questionnaires nor the interview form had been used before it was important that they were tested. In Iceland, Italy and Montenegro this was done with a small number of students in focus groups (between five and 10 in each country), while a traditional classroom data collection with more than 400 students was carried out in Ukraine. The tests went well and no country reported that any important changes were needed.

## Data collection

It was not necessary to carry out an ethical review in any of the countries (Table A), partly due to the nature of the study. Two countries used passive parental consent, while parental consent was not necessary in the two others. All four countries followed their national ethical rules.

Data were collected in October 2013 in Italy, Montenegro and Ukraine, and in the first half of November 2013 in Iceland (Table A). The number of participating students was around 200–270 in Iceland, Italy and Montenegro and 430 in Ukraine, which totals more than 1 100 students (Table A). Only five students refused to take part in the study.

On average, 91 % of the students in participating classes were present at the data collection, with a lower figure in Ukraine (82 %) than in the other three countries (92–96 %) (Table A). The lower figure in Ukraine is about the same as in the 2011 ESPAD data collection (Hibell et al., 2012).

The students in participating classes received a questionnaire with a majority of the ESPAD core questions plus some new questions that were being considered for use in the 2015 ESPAD data collection (Appendix II). The questionnaires were answered in the classrooms in the same way as in the regular ESPAD data collections, i.e. with no communication between the respondents and with the students spread out in the classroom as much as possible, as for a written test.

The average time to answer the questionnaire was 27 minutes, with a range of 23–30 minutes (Table A). This is quicker than in regular ESPAD data collections, and is to be expected since the questionnaire was shorter.

When the questionnaires were answered and put in individual envelopes, the students were individually interviewed for about 25 minutes by an experienced interviewer. A structured interview was performed in order to find out how the questions in the classroom setting were understood, how accurately and honestly they had been answered, and how honestly the students thought that their classmates had answered.

In order to limit the time taken to carry out the research to two lesson hours, it was planned that about five interviewers would work in parallel, which meant that each interviewer should interview about four students from every class.

Participation in the group administrated data collection, and in the individual interview, was of course voluntary. The students were guaranteed complete confidentiality and that no results would be reported for single classes or schools, which meant that data would only be reported at the country level.

Teachers supervised the classroom data collection in Italy, while in the other countries one of the interviewers was responsible (Table A). In Montenegro the interviewer who supervised the classroom data collection did not carry out any interviews with students from the class they had supervised.

ID numbers were required in order to link each student's questionnaire with his/her interview form. For the data collection in the classroom each student received an individual envelope to put his/her form into, but not to seal. They brought the unsealed envelope to the interview and when the interview started they were asked to take out the questionnaire so they could look at and refer to it during the interview. This made it necessary to organise the interview room in such a way that the interviewer could not see any of the answers in the student's questionnaire. The responsible researchers in all countries have confirmed that this was the case and that the students felt comfortable during the interviews.

After the interview, the students put their classroom questionnaire and the interview form in the envelope and sealed it. ID numbers were allocated in the data entry phase when the envelopes were opened.

The interview was structured and the interviewers were asked to follow a questionnaire containing ready-made questions with mainly fixed answering categories (Appendix III). For most questions the interviewer read out the answering categories to the student. However, for the questions about

how the student understood some of the substance use questions (Q7–Q10) the interviewer did not read out the answering categories to the student, but instead interpreted the student's answers by marking a fixed answering category.

In order to standardise the interview situation as much as possible in the participating countries, and also between interviewers, the interviewers were trained and required to follow the standardised interview instructions.

The data collection in the classrooms, and in the interviews, went well in all countries, and no significant problems or disturbances were reported.

## Results

Since the main objectives of the study are of a methodological character and relate to validity, how the students understood some key questions and the testing of possible new questions, this report mainly includes results from the interviews, but some data from the classroom reports that the survey leaders answered are also included. In addition to this, a few findings from the student questionnaire will be presented in the discussion. Most tables are gathered in Appendix I and are numbered 1–25. Some methodological and overview tables are reported in the text and are numbered A–H. A selection of the main results are summarised in three figures, which also are presented in the text.

Data are reported separately for each of the four countries. In addition to this, the result tables and graphs include unweighted averages.

## Interest and possible difficulties

The first question in the interview was about how interesting it was to participate in the classroom data collection. A large majority (on average nearly 80 %) found it very or fairly interesting, while only a few (4 %) answered that it was uninteresting (Table 1). The proportions answering that it was interesting was high in all countries and varied between 61 % in Iceland and 89 % in Italy.

The students were asked separate questions for each habit about whether they found it easy or difficult to answer the questions about their use of cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, the Internet and gambling. For all behaviours, a very large majority answered that they found it very or fairly easy to answer the questions, with averages varying from 89 % to 95 % (Figure 1, Tables B and 2–5). There are no major differences between countries or between substances or Internet/gambling. The most important finding seems to be that slightly more



FIGURE 1

**Students who found it 'very easy' or 'fairly easy' to answer questions on different substances and the Internet/gambling**

Percentages among all students (Tables B, 2–5)

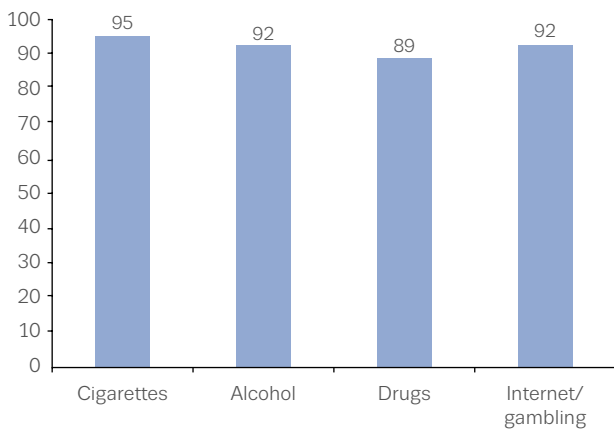


TABLE B

**Whether students found it easy or difficult to understand the questions about different substances, Internet and gambling: proportion of students who answered 'very easy' or 'fairly easy'**

Percentages (Tables 2–5)

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
<b>Cigarettes</b>	99	98	92	95	95
<b>Alcohol</b>	97	89	89	93	92
<b>Drugs</b>	96	89	88	86	89
<b>Internet/gambling</b>	94	94	92	92	92

students in Iceland than in the other countries found it very easy to answer the questions about their use of different substances (with averages of about 86 % and 64–70 % respectively).

Students who responded that it was fairly or very difficult to answer one or more questions in the four different sections were asked why they found it difficult. The answers are summarised in Table 6. The highest figure (6 %) relates to the drugs questions. In about half of these cases the questions were said to be difficult to understand, and when asked to explain this nearly all (29 out of 33) students answered that they were unfamiliar with the terms, i.e. they did not know about the drug(s) mentioned.

In addition to asking the students how easy it was to answer the questions on the different substances and their Internet and gambling habits, they were asked a separate question about whether there were any other questions that were difficult to answer. On average 14 % answered in the affirmative, with a range from 7 % to 21 % in the four countries (Table 7).

The students who mentioned that they found one or more questions difficult to answer were asked which question(s) were difficult. A large number of questions were mentioned, eight of which were mentioned by more than 10 students (Table 8). The question that was mentioned most often was the one about the frequency of using drugs other than cannabis (23 respondents), followed by the question about the number of hours spent online (19). For six of the eight questions that students found difficult, a very large majority of the students were from one or two countries.

It is obvious from the interviews that one reason why some students found the question about the use of drugs other than cannabis difficult to understand was related to the fact that some respondents had never heard of some of the drugs mentioned in the questionnaire.

**Students' understanding of some alcohol-related key variables**

As mentioned above, some variables in the ESPAD questionnaire are often used to describe substance use habits and can be seen as key variables. A few of these questions may be slightly difficult to understand, including the question about the amount of alcohol consumed on the last drinking day (question 10) and the frequency of heavy episodic drinking (five or more drinks) (question 11). In addition to these two questions, an alternative heavy episodic drinking question was tested in which the amounts were described without using the 'drink' concept (question 12).

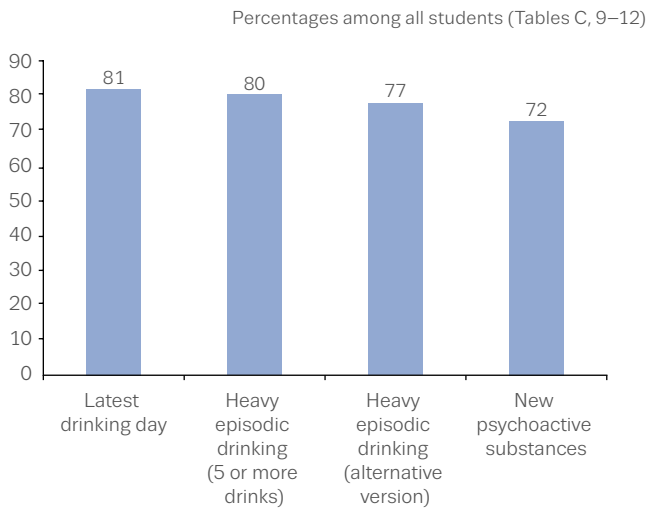
When the students were asked whether they understood these questions they were asked to look at their own questionnaire and explain to the interviewer how they understood it. It was then up to the interviewer to interpret whether this was a correct understanding and mark the relevant answer in the interview questionnaire.

The question about the amounts of alcohol consumed during the last drinking day consists of several sub-questions. The first asks which beverages they consumed that day, and this is followed by specific questions for each beverage. There is a risk that some students, when answering the questions about the consumption of the different beverages, may have forgotten that their answer should be about their last drinking day, and not about the last day when each of these beverages were consumed.

The interviewer was asked to mark in the interview questionnaire whether the student understood the question correctly and, if this was not the case, whether the student misunderstood and did not always think about the last drinking day or whether he/she misunderstood the question in some other way.

FIGURE 2

**Students who correctly understood the questions about last drinking day, heavy episodic drinking (two questions) and new psychoactive substances**



On average, 81 % of the students understood the question correctly, with a range from 70 % in Iceland to 91 % in Ukraine (Figure 2, Table 9). On average, 10 % misunderstood and thought that the sub-questions about the separate beverages were asking about the last day each of them was consumed. Nearly the same average proportion (8 %) misunderstood the question in some other way, with higher figures in Iceland (18 %) and Montenegro (9 %) than in Italy and Ukraine (about 3 %).

ESPAD is using the following question to measure heavy episodic drinking: 'Think back again over the LAST 30 DAYS. How many times (if any) have you had five or more drinks on one occasion? (A 'drink' is [INSERT NATIONALLY RELEVANT EXAMPLES].)' The examples describe how a 'drink' is defined for different beverages using containers, glasses, etc. that are nationally relevant in order to represent a content of about 50 cl of beer, cider or alcopops, 15 cl of wine and 5 cl of spirits.

It is important that students understand that, if they had drunk more than one beverage, they should include all 'drinks', independent of beverage type. However, there is a risk that the question is misunderstood and that some students think that, in order to reach the total of five drinks, they should only include drinks of the same beverage type in their calculation. The question may of course also be misunderstood in some other way, and the interview questionnaire included four alternatives in total.

On average, 80 % of the students understood the question correctly while 11 % misunderstood that all the different kinds of beverages should be added together, and thought that they needed to drink at least five drinks of the same beverage in order to say yes (= answering with a frequency) (Figure 2, Table 10). A total of 8 % misunderstood the question in some

other way. The proportion of students who understood the question correctly varied between countries, from 64 % in Iceland to 91 % in Italy.

The number of students who did not understand that they should add together all drinks, independent of beverage type, was higher in Iceland and Montenegro (about 17 %) than in Italy and Ukraine (about 6 %). There was also a larger proportion in Iceland than in all other countries that misunderstood the question in some other way (14 % and about 4 % respectively).

Since the 'drink' concept is not relevant in all ESPAD countries, an alternative way of measuring heavy episodic drinking was tested by asking the following question: 'Think back again over the LAST 30 DAYS. How many times (if any) have you been drinking alcohol equivalent to at least [INSERT NATIONALLY RELEVANT EXAMPLES]?' The amount described should equal about 9 cl pure alcohol, which in reality means consumption of about the same amount as in the traditional heavy episodic drinking question (i.e. the 'five or more drinks' version). The examples should be nationally adjusted and could, as an example, be something like 'four bottles of beer or a bottle of wine (75 cl) or 25 cl of spirits'.

On average, more than three-quarters of the students (77 %) understood the alternative heavy episodic drinking question correctly, with a range from 58 % in Iceland to 87 % in Ukraine (Figure 2, Table 11). The average proportion of students who misunderstood the question and did not realise that they should add together their consumption of different beverages was 14 %, with higher figures in Iceland and Montenegro (about 20 %) than in Italy and Ukraine (about 9 %). Fewer than one in ten (9 %) misunderstood the question in some other way, and the figure was much higher in Iceland (22 %) than in the other three countries (about 5 %).

### Students' understanding of a question about new psychoactive substances

New synthetic psychoactive substances are now available in many countries as a complement to more traditional drugs. These substances have become available at different times in different countries, and the types of new psychoactive substances have also differed between countries. As this is a fairly recent phenomenon, ESPAD data collections have not yet included questions about these new kinds of substances.

Based on questions developed at the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), four were tested in the validity study (questions 25–28 in the student questionnaire). In the interview the students were asked how they understood the first of these questions, and it was the interviewer's responsibility to interpret whether a student

TABLE C  
Whether students understood or misunderstood an introductory question about new psychoactive substances

Percentages (Tables 12)

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Understood correctly	64	70	78	77	72
Misunderstood	36	30	22	23	28

understood the question correctly and, if they didn't, what it was that the student misunderstood (question 10 in the interview questionnaire).

Slightly more than seven in ten students (72 %) understood the question correctly, which means that 28 % misunderstood it in some way (Figure 2, Tables C and 12). Even though the proportion that misunderstood the question varied between the four countries (with a range of 22–36 %), it is evident that the level of misinterpretation is fairly high in all countries.

### Testing some new questions

As has been the case when preparing for previous ESPAD data collections, the possibility of adding some new questions was discussed. A questionnaire group devised some potential new questions. Some of them had been used in earlier school surveys, while others were more or less new, at least in a school survey setting, which meant they should be tested before they could be used in the 2015 ESPAD data collection. The testing of two of the proposed questions — an alternative version of the heavy episodic drinking question and the introductory question about new psychoactive substances — has been reported in the two previous sections and will not be repeated in this section.

The proposed new questions were spread out in the student questionnaire and were asked in the same sections as other questions about the same substance. One was about the use of moist snuff, e-cigarettes and water pipe (question 7 in the student questionnaire) and the other was about others' alcohol consumption and its possible harm to the respondent (question 16). In addition, five questions were asked about Internet use and gambling (questions 30–34).

The idea behind testing the question about moist snuff, e-cigarettes and water pipe was primarily not to test whether the students were familiar with these substances, but to find out if there were any problems with the answering categories, which have never been used before in the ESPAD questionnaire. When the students in the interview were asked to report any questions that were difficult to answer, only six respondents mentioned this question.

It was thought that some students might find the question about possible harm to the student from others' alcohol consumption a sensitive one. However, when the students in the interview were asked to report any questions that were difficult to answer, only 11 mentioned this question.

As reported above, only 31 respondents (3 %) said in the interview that the questions about the Internet and gambling were difficult to answer (Table 5). Half of these (15) mentioned that they found the initial question about the number of hours they spent online difficult to answer.

### How honestly the students answered

Toward the end of the interview the students were asked how honestly they had answered the questions about their use of different substances, and how much they were on the Internet or gambled. Nearly all of the students declared that they had answered the questions honestly, and this is the case in all countries and also for the different kinds of questions, with proportions varying between 93 % and 100 % (Figure 3, Tables D and 13–16). In the very few cases when they said they had not answered honestly, it was more common for students to underreport than exaggerated the frequencies.

FIGURE 3  
Students who said that they had given an honest answer to questions about different substances and Internet/gambling, and their view on whether all or nearly all their classmates had answered honestly

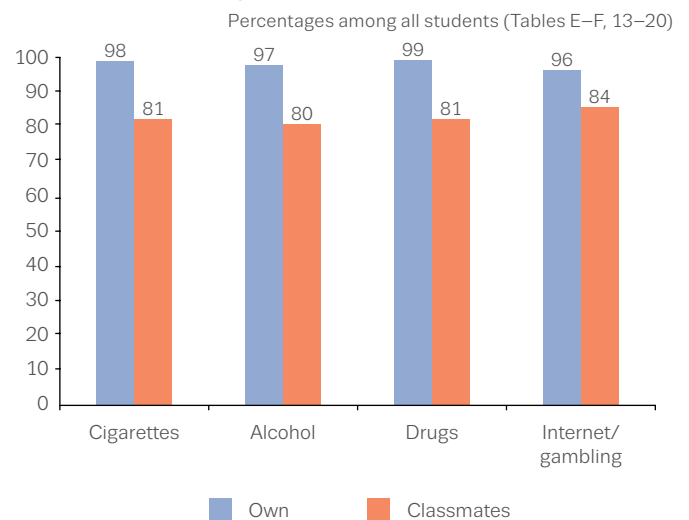


TABLE D  
Students who said that they had given an honest answer to the questions about different substances and Internet/gambling

Percentages (Table 13–16)

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Cigarettes	99	99	98	96	98
Alcohol	99	99	97	95	97
Drugs	99	98	100	98	99
Internet/gambling	98	98	93	97	96

TABLE E  
Students' views on whether all or nearly all of their classmates had given honest answers to the questions about different substances and Internet/gambling

Percentages (Tables 17–20)

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Cigarettes	95	88	66	75	81
Alcohol	94	90	69	69	80
Drugs	94	82	86	75	81
Internet/gambling	84	85	77	92	84

The students were also asked how honestly they thought that their classmates had answered the substance use, Internet and gambling questions. The answers are summarised in Figure 3 and Table E and reported separately for the different sections in Tables 17–20.

On average, a little over 80 % of the students said that they thought that all or nearly all of their classmates had answered the questions honestly, and the figure is about the same for all substances, Internet and gambling. The figures are quite high for all four sections of questions in all countries. However, there are some important differences between countries.

For cigarettes and alcohol, more students thought their classmates had answered honestly in Iceland and Italy than in Montenegro and Ukraine (on average 92 % compared with 70 %). In addition to this, fewer Ukrainian students thought their classmates had answered honestly about drug use, and the same is true about the Internet and gambling figure in Montenegro.

Students who thought that half, most or all of their classmates had not answered honestly were asked whether they thought that they had exaggerated or underreported their use. In a large majority of these cases they thought that their classmates had underreported how often they used different substances or were on the Internet or gambled, with averages between 81 % and 89 % (Tables F and 21–24). Note that the bases for these calculations are small, especially in Iceland, which makes the figures uncertain.

TABLE F  
Proportion of students who thought their classmates had mainly underreported habits

Percentages among students answering that half, most or all classmates had not answered honestly (Tables 21–24)

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Cigarettes	100	77	80	91	87
Alcohol	100	47	83	94	81
Drugs	100	87	71	98	89
Internet/gambling	100	87	92	73	88
N (1)	3–7	17–45	24–49	11–58	69–134

(1) The numbers in each country vary between substances and the ranges are shown in the table. The figures for each substance and country are available in Tables 21–24. Note that the bases for the calculations are very small, especially in Iceland.

The figures are generally high in all countries, with Iceland the highest at 100 %. The most obvious exception is that a small majority (53 %) in Italy thought that their classmates had mainly exaggerated their alcohol consumption. Relatively high figures for exaggeration can also be found in Montenegro about drug use (29 %) and in Ukraine about Internet use and gambling (27 %).

## The opinions of survey leaders

As is the case in the regular ESPAD data collections, the survey leaders were asked to fill out a classroom report with information about present and absent students. The report also included questions on the survey leaders' opinion of the data collection. Information from the classroom reports is presented at class level in Tables G and 25.

In 40 of the 52 participating classes the survey leaders reported that there were no disturbances during the data collection, 11 that only a few students had been disruptive, and one that more than a few students had been disruptive. In

TABLE G  
The opinions of survey leaders

Absolute numbers at class level (Table 25)

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
No disturbances in the classroom	7	9	9	15	40 (77 %)
All/nearly all answered honestly	10	9	8	21	48 (92 %)
Very/rather easy to answer the questionnaire	7	8	9	22	46 (88 %)
No questions difficult to answer	1	9	3	14	27 (52 %)
Number of classes	10	10	9	23	52

nearly all classes (48 out of 52) it was reported that all or nearly all of the students had worked seriously. In about the same number of classes (46), the survey leader thought that it was very or rather easy for the students to answer the questionnaire.

About half of the survey leaders (27 out of 52) answered that there were no questions that the students had asked about. Nine reported that some students found some questions that were difficult to understand, seven that students did not understand how to answer a question and 15 reported other kinds of difficulties.

There is a difference between countries in the number of survey leaders who reported that students had asked about questions. This only happened in one class in Italy, while it was more common in the other countries.

Survey leaders reporting that one or more questions were difficult to answer were asked which questions the students had mentioned. The examples mentioned are spread out across 29 different questions. Six survey leaders answered that students asked about questions 21 and 29 in the student questionnaire, while four said question 23. All the other questions were mentioned by three or fewer survey leaders.

## Discussion

This section follows the same structure as the results section.

When some of the results from a country differed from the results in the others, the relevant researcher was asked via email to comment on these differences. Some of these comments are presented in this section. It also includes some data from the student questionnaire.

### Interest and possible difficulties

On average, 79 % of the students found it very or fairly interesting to participate in the classroom survey about their substance use, 17 % answered neither/nor and only 4 % that it was very or fairly uninteresting. The figures clearly indicate a high level of interest from students in the ESPAD target population in taking part in school surveys about their use of different substances.

A large majority said in the interviews that the questions on cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, the Internet and gambling were very or fairly easy to answer. The averages were high for all four sections, with a range of 89–95 %, which indicates that the questionnaire as a whole was not difficult to answer.

About one in seven students (14 %) gave examples of questions that they found difficult to answer, which might be seen as quite a high figure. However, only eight questions were mentioned by more than 10 respondents and the highest number of respondents who mentioned a particular question was difficult was 23 (of the 1 138 survey participants). Hence, even though some students gave examples of questions that they found difficult to answer, the questions mentioned were located in different places in the student questionnaire and no single question stood out.

For six of the eight questions mentioned by more than 10 students as difficult to answer, most of these students were from one or two countries, indicating cultural differences in which questions students found difficult to answer.

### Students' understanding of some alcohol-related key variables

On average, 81 % of the students understood the question about the amount of alcohol consumed during the last drinking day; 10 % misunderstood it and thought that the sub-questions about the separate beverages were about the last day each of them had been consumed, while 8 % misunderstood it in some other way. The proportion of students in Iceland in the last category was 18 %, which was higher than the other countries, and the figure was also quite high in Montenegro (9 %).

The Icelandic researcher was asked to comment on this and responded that many students in Iceland don't drink alcohol, and thus they did not always read the alcohol-related questions carefully enough (Arnarsson, 2014). A similar comment was also made by the colleague in Montenegro (Djurisic, 2014).

The proportion of students that misunderstood and thought they their answer should be about the last time they had drunk each of the beverages and not about their last drinking day as such (10 %) is in practice not a relevant methodological problem, since the answers to the first sub-question about which beverages they consumed on the last drinking day is used as a filter question. In other words, the consumption of a beverage in sub-questions (b)–(e) in question 10 that was not mentioned in the initial sub-question is put at zero and is therefore not included in the calculations about the amount of alcohol consumed during the last drinking day.

Hence, the methodologically most important students are those 8 % who misunderstood the question in some other way. A way to understand if this really is an important methodological problem is to examine who these students are. Data from the student questionnaire show that 76 % of these 8 % were non-consumers (Table H). Hence, in reality

TABLE H

**Students who did not drink alcohol or had never used new psychoactive substances**

Percentages among all students who did not understand some questions about their alcohol consumption or the introductory question about new psychoactive substances

	Non-consumers
<b>Last drinking day</b> (misunderstood in some other way than that the consumption of different beverages was related to the last drinking day)	76 %
<b>Heavy episodic drinking, traditional (5 or more drinks)</b>	
Misunderstood that beverages should be added together	100 %
Other reasons	89 %
<b>Heavy episodic drinking, possible alternative question</b>	
Misunderstood that beverages should be added together	96 %
Other reasons	94 %
<b>New psychoactive substances</b>	96 %

only about 2 % of all students (76 % of the 8 %) did not understand the question correctly in a way that might negatively influence the validity, which is quite a low figure and cannot be seen as an important methodological problem.

On average, 80 % of the students correctly understood the 'traditional' question about heavy episodic drinking (five or more drinks), while 11 % misunderstood and thought that they needed to drink at least five drinks of the same beverage in order to say yes (= answering with a frequency). In total, 8 % misunderstood the question in some other way.

All (100 %) of the 11 % of students who did not understand that 'drinks' of different beverages should be added were non-consumers of alcohol, while 89 % of the 8 % who misunderstood the question in some other way were non-consumers (Table H). Hence, nearly all of the students who misunderstood the traditional heavy episodic drinking question did not drink alcohol. Since they answered in the student questionnaire that they didn't drink alcohol, the fact that they did not fully understand the question is not a methodological problem. The explanation is most probably that, since they didn't drink alcohol, they did not (and did not have to) give the question enough attention in order to understand it correctly.

On average, more than three-quarters of the students (77 %) understood the alternative heavy episodic drinking question correctly. The average proportion of students who misunderstood the question and did not comprehend that they should add the possible consumption of different beverages together was 14 %, while fewer than one in ten (9 %) misunderstood the question in some other way.

Of the 23 % who did not understand the alternative question about heavy episodic drinking, 95 % did not drink alcohol, which they stated in the student questionnaire (Table H). Hence, the situation is the same as for the traditional heavy episodic drinking question, i.e. that nearly all of the students who misunderstood the question were non-drinkers, and as long as they state correctly that they are non-drinkers it is not methodologically important that they 'don't bother' to read the question carefully enough to understand it correctly.

As mentioned above, the alternative question about heavy episodic drinking was put in the student questionnaire to test whether it might be easier to answer and understand than the traditional one. The proportion of students who correctly understood the two questions was about the same, indicating that the possible new version was not easier to understand. Hence, since the traditional version has been used in several ESPAD data collections, and since it is a frequently used international measure, there is no reason to change the heavy episodic drinking question in the ESPAD questionnaire.

### Students' understanding of a question about new psychoactive substances

A set of four questions about new psychoactive substances was tested. In the interview the students were asked whether they understood the first of these questions and it was the interviewer's responsibility to interpret whether a student understood the question correctly and, if this was not the case, what it was that the student did not understand.

Slightly more than seven in ten students (72 %) understood the question correctly, while 28 % misunderstood it in some way. Nearly all of the students who did not understand the question correctly (96 %) answered in the student questionnaire that they had never used any of these substances (Table H).

Hence, the situation is the same as for the alcohol-related questions discussed above, i.e. nearly all of the students who did not understand the question were non-consumers, which they had also stated in the questionnaire. Many of them had never heard about the substances mentioned in the question, but as long as they give the answer that they had not used them it is not a methodological problem that they have never heard of them.

### Testing some new questions

In addition to the new questions discussed above, some other possible new questions were tested in the student questionnaire. One was about the use of moist snuff, e-cigarettes and water pipe and another was about the



possible harm to the respondent from others' alcohol consumption. In addition, five new questions were asked about Internet use and gambling.

None of these questions seemed to create any significant problems for the students, and there are no methodological reasons why they should not be used in the 2015 data collection.

## How honestly the students answered

Nearly all of the students in all countries responded that they had given honest answers to the questions about their use of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs, and their Internet and gambling habits. The average figure for the four sections of questions is 98 %, which clearly indicates that, according to the students themselves, they answered the questions in the student questionnaire honestly.

It could be argued that these very high figures about one's own honesty are related to the interview situation and a wish to give a socially desirable answer. However, the figures were equally high in the 1998 ESPAD validity study when the students anonymously answered a self-administered questionnaire in a classroom setting (Hibell, 1999). Hence, it seems reasonable to assume that the students, or at least a very large majority, really did answer honestly.

Several interviewers reported that they thought the students believed the data collection was anonymous and trusted that it was confidential. The importance of this for giving honest answers was also apparent in the 1998 ESPAD validity study (Hibell, 1999). In that study students from two countries (Hungary and Sweden) were interviewed after the second classroom data collection, and students from both countries said that they gave honest answers and that the main reason was that they trusted that they were anonymous.

More than 80 % of all students said they thought that all or nearly all of their classmates had given honest answers to the questions about their use of different substances (cigarettes, alcohol and drugs), the Internet and gambling. However, although more than 80 % is a high figure, it is clear that some students believed that they themselves had answered more honestly than their classmates.

Even though the figures are high in all countries for all four sections of questions, students' belief that their classmates would answer honestly is slightly lower in Montenegro (cigarettes, alcohol and Internet/gambling) and Ukraine (cigarettes, alcohol and drugs) than in Iceland and Italy. The responsible researchers in Ukraine and Montenegro were asked why they thought that this was the case. The Ukrainian researcher commented that this is probably a reflection of the

general mistrust of others in Ukrainian society, and her opinion was that the truth about the honesty of the answers could be found in what the students said about themselves (Balakireva, 2014). The colleague in Montenegro thought that to some extent this was also true for the Montenegrin students (Djurisic, 2014).

Students answering that half, most or all of their classmates had not answered honestly were asked whether they thought that their classmates had exaggerated or underreported their habits. In a large majority of these cases (on average 81–89 %) they thought that classmates had underreported how often they used different substances or were on the Internet or gambled. Even though these figures are based on the answers of a minority of about 20 % of the respondents, and thus should be interpreted with caution, they suggest that students who don't give honest answers can usually be expected to have underreported their habits.

The proportion of students who felt their classmates had underreported their habits was generally high in all countries, with 100 % in Iceland as the highest. The most obvious exception was that a small majority in Italy (53 %) thought that their classmates had primarily exaggerated their alcohol consumption. One of the responsible Italian researchers commented that contrary to other substances, the use of alcohol is not as stigmatised in Italy and drinking is socially accepted, so it seems plausible that some Italian students thought that their classmate might exaggerate when reporting their alcohol consumption (Siciliano, 2015).

Hence, even if the overall conclusion is that students who don't answer honestly tend to underreport their substance use, it is possible that in some particular cases underreporting and exaggerating might differ between substances and countries.

## The opinions of survey leaders

A large majority of the survey leaders reported that there were no disturbances during the data collection, that all or nearly all of the students worked seriously and that they thought it was very or rather easy for the students to answer the questionnaire. This indicates that the students felt comfortable in the classroom situation when answering the student questionnaire.

However, some students asked about particular questions when answering the student questionnaire. This was reported by half of the survey leaders, but to a smaller extent in Italy where it was only mentioned in one in ten classroom reports. This might indicate a cultural difference, but may also mirror that fact that Italy was the only country in which teachers were survey leaders and as such they may be more used to

questions and comments from the students and may not have taken as much notice of them as the research assistants who were responsible in the other countries.

The questions the survey leaders reported that the students asked about were spread out across 29 different questions, and only three were reported by more than three respondents. Two of them were related to drug use and, as mentioned above, this is probably to a large extent connected to the fact that some students had never heard of one or more of the drugs mentioned in the student questionnaire.

Even though some students asked about particular questions that were difficult to understand or answer, they were spread out in the student questionnaire and no single question appeared to be difficult for more than a few students.

### **| The validity of the ESPAD questionnaire**

At least three conditions need to be fulfilled in order to have a high validity in surveys, which in the case of ESPAD means to correctly measure substance use habits among European school students who will become 16 years of age during the year of the data collection. First, the respondents must be willing to answer the questions; second, they must understand the questions; and third, they must be willing to answer honestly.

In the validity study, and also in regular ESPAD data collections, very few students refused to take part. Hence, student unwillingness to participate is not a methodological problem.

A very large majority found it interesting to answer the student questionnaire. Feedback from the survey leaders also supported this, since most answered that there were no disturbances in the classroom and that all or nearly all students worked seriously.

Only a few students mentioned in the interview that one or more questions were difficult to answer. These questions were spread out in the questionnaire and no one question was mentioned by more than 2 % of the respondents. In addition, the survey leaders reported that the students asked about a variety of questions, which clearly indicates that no single question stands out as difficult to answer.

It can therefore be concluded that the questionnaire as a whole was not difficult to answer, and this is also supported by the survey leaders, with 46 of 52 reporting that the student questionnaire seemed to be very or rather easy to answer.

Some possible new questions to be used in the 2015 ESPAD data collection were tested and none of them was found to be difficult to answer.

In the interviews it was found that some students did not correctly understand the questions about the last drinking day and heavy episodic drinking, which have been used in several ESPAD data collections. This was the case for about 20 % of the students. However, nearly all of these answered in the student questionnaire that they did not drink alcohol. Since they were non-consumers it seems likely that they looked for the answer category that they did not drink alcohol (which was easy to find since it was the first answering category) rather than trying to understand the questions about their last drinking day and possible heavy episodic drinking. As long as a respondent answers that he/she does not drink alcohol, it is not a methodological problem if a student does not (try to) understand a question about alcohol consumption. As long as respondents answer that they do not drink alcohol, the validity is not negatively influenced.

Quite a few students (28 %) did not correctly understand a question about new psychoactive substances. In many of these cases the students simply had not heard about one or more of the substances mentioned. Even more important is that nearly all of them (99 %) answered in the student questionnaire that they had never used any of these substances, which leads to the same conclusion as mentioned above with regard to drinking alcohol, i.e. that as long as a student answers that he/she has not used any of these substances, it is not a methodological problem if the question is not correctly understood.

Nearly all of the students (on average 98 % for the different substances) stated in the interview that they had given honest answers in the student questionnaire. As mentioned above, one might argue that this high figure might to some extent be explained by a wish to give a social desirable answer. However, the corresponding figure was equally high (96 %) in the 1998 ESPAD validity study when the students anonymously answered a paper-and-pencil questionnaire in a classroom setting (Hibell, 1999). Considering the anonymous nature of a classroom data collection it seems reasonable to assume that the students gave honest answers to questions about their substance use habits.

Even though more than 80 % of the students believed that all or nearly all of their classmates had answered the student questionnaire honestly, it is obvious that some respondents trust themselves more than their classmates. In Ukraine, and maybe also in Montenegro, this might to some extent reflect a general mistrust of others, which might mean that they overestimate their classmates' unwillingness to answer truthfully.

It should also be noted that students are only guessing about their classmates' honesty, and these guesses may not be correct. The students cannot really know unless they have



discussed it with their classmates, and there was no time for this before the interview.

Due to the anonymous nature of answering the student questionnaire in the classrooms, it seems reasonable to assume that a very large majority of the students answered honestly. However, it is certainly possible that some students did not give honest answers and that when this happened most of them probably underreported.

To conclude, there is reason to assume that the validity is high when using the ESPAD questionnaire in an anonymous classroom setting, since:

- all but five students were willing to answer the questionnaire;
- only a few found any of the questions difficult to answer;
- nearly all of the students who did not understand questions about the last drinking day, heavy episodic drinking and the possible use of new psychoactive substances were non-consumers (which they stated in the student questionnaire);
- there is reason to believe that a very large majority answered honestly.

## Summary and conclusions

The second ESPAD methodology study was carried out in 2013 in four countries (Iceland, Italy, Moldova and Ukraine), following a first study carried out in seven countries in 1998. The goal was to study the validity of the ESPAD questionnaire and to test some possible new questions for the 2015 ESPAD data collection. Since this was a methodological study, and there was no intention to measure substance use habits in a geographically defined area, participating classes were not randomly sampled.

A total of 1 138 students took part — 243 in Iceland, 199 in Italy, 266 in Montenegro and 430 in Ukraine. Nine in ten students in sampled classes were present and participated in the data collection. Only five students refused to take part. The average time students took to answer the questionnaire was 27 minutes.

In a first stage the students answered a questionnaire that included many of the ESPAD core questions and also the possible new questions that were being tested. This was done in the classrooms in the same way as for regular ESPAD data collections. Each student placed the answered questionnaire in an individual envelope that he/she brought unsealed to an individual interview directly following the session in the classroom. The reason it was unsealed was that the students needed to consult the questionnaire during the interview,

which made it necessary to organise the interview room in such a way that the interviewer could not see what the students had answered.

In the interview the students were asked which questions, if any, they found difficult to answer, how some key variable questions were understood, how honestly they had answered the questions and how honestly they thought that their classmates had answered.

No problems were reported from the data collection in the classroom session or during the interviews in any of the countries.

The main results are as follows:

- About 80 % of the students found it very or fairly interesting to participate in the classroom survey.
- A large majority of the survey leaders mentioned that there were no disturbances during the data collection and that all or nearly all students worked seriously.
- A very large majority (around 90 %) of the students stated that the questions in the student questionnaire were easy to answer.
- A large majority of the survey leaders reported that they thought the students found the questionnaire very or fairly easy to answer.
- When students were asked to mention questions that were difficult to answer, various questions were stated. The highest number of students who mentioned one particular question was 23, which corresponds to 2 % of all students.
- The survey leaders reported from the classroom data collection that the questions the students asked about were varied, and the highest number for single questions were six (two questions) and four (one question).
- Among students who mentioned problems in answering questions about drugs, the main reason was that they had not heard about the drug(s) in question.
- Around 80 % of the students correctly understood the question about the last drinking day and also the two questions about heavy episodic drinking. In nearly all cases when a question was not understood the respondent did not drink alcohol.
- Close to three in ten students (28 %) misunderstood a question about new psychoactive substances. Nearly all of these (96 %) had never used these substances.
- A possible new question about moist snuff, e-cigarettes and water pipe was tested, as was one about the potential harm to the respondent from others' alcohol consumption. Five new questions were also asked about Internet use and gambling. None of them were difficult for the students to understand.
- Nearly all students (on average 98 %) declared that they had answered the questions in the student questionnaire honestly.

- More than 80 % of all students thought that all or nearly all of their classmates had answered the questions in the student questionnaire honestly.
- Most of the students thought that any classmate who had not answered honestly would generally underreport their habits.
- The trust in classmates giving honest answers was slightly lower in Montenegro and Ukraine, which to some extent might reflect a general mistrust of others in these countries.

The main conclusions are as follows:

- Students generally found the ESPAD questionnaire interesting to answer, an opinion that is supported by information from the survey leaders.
- With only a few exceptions, the students mentioned that they did not have problems in answering the questions, a view that also was reported by the survey leaders.
- Questions that students and survey leaders mentioned were difficult to answer were spread out across the student questionnaire and no single question stands out.
- There were some cultural differences in which questions were difficult to answer.
- Nearly all of the students who did not correctly understand a question about the last drinking day and two questions about heavy episodic drinking did not drink alcohol, which means that this is not a methodologically important issue that would influence the quality of the data to any important extent.
- Since an alternative way of asking about heavy episodic drinking was no better understood by the students than the traditional question (five or more drinks), there is no reason to change the traditional version, which has already been used in several ESPAD data collections.
- Nearly all of the 28 % of students who misunderstood a question about new psychoactive substances had never used these drugs, which means that this is not a methodologically important issue that would influence the quality of the data to any important extent.
- With very few exceptions, students had no problems in answering the possible new questions that were tested.
- It can be expected that to a very large extent students give honest answers when answering the ESPAD questionnaire.
- When students do not answer honestly, they probably underreport in most cases.
- The possibility that students might also exaggerate their habits was indicated with respect to alcohol consumption among Italian students, which suggests that exaggeration will sometimes occur, and that under- and over-reporting might differ between substances and countries.
- Nearly all students said that they had answered the questions in the student questionnaire honestly, while just over 80 % thought their classmates had also answered honestly. One important reason for giving honest answers seems to be that the students trusted that the study was anonymous. This indicates that there are more reasons to believe what the students say about themselves than their assumptions with regard to their classmates.
- The validity is high when the ESPAD questionnaire is used in school surveys under conditions in which the students trust the anonymity, as demonstrated by the students' willingness to give honest answers, combined with a very high willingness to answer the student questionnaire, the fact that few students found questions difficult to answer, and when they did not correctly understand the questions about the last drinking day, heavy episodic drinking and new psychoactive substances they answered that they were non-consumers.

## References

- | Arnarsson, A. (2014), Personal email conversation.
- | Balakireva, O. (2014), Personal email conversation.
- | Djurisc, T. (2014), Personal email conversation.
- | Hibell, B. (1999), 'Do they tell the truth? A methodological study in seven countries about the validity in school surveys.' Paper presented at the 38<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Alcohol, Drugs and other Dependencies, Vienna, Austria, 16–20 August 1999, The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN), Stockholm, Sweden.
- | Hibell, B., Guttormsson, U., Ahlström, S., et al. (2012), *The 2011 ESPAD Report: substance use among students in 36 European countries*, The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN), Stockholm, Sweden.
- | Siciliano, V. (2015), Personal email conversation.

## Appendix 1

TABLE 1  
How interesting or uninteresting it was to participate in the study

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Very interesting	11	27	29	46	28
Fairly interesting	50	62	57	36	51
Neither interesting nor uninteresting	33	9	12	12	17
Fairly uninteresting	5	3	1	6	4
Very uninteresting	1	0	0	0	0

TABLE 2  
How easy or difficult it was to answer the questions about tobacco

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Very easy	88	79	62	67	74
Fairly easy	11	19	30	28	22
Neither easy nor difficult	2	0	6	4	3
Fairly difficult	0	2	2	1	1
Very difficult	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 3  
How easy or difficult it was to answer the questions about alcohol

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine (¹)	Average
Very easy	83	67	58	62	68
Fairly easy	14	22	31	31	25
Neither easy nor difficult	2	4	8	6	5
Fairly difficult	1	8	2	2	3
Very difficult	0	1	1	0	1

(¹) 19% of the Ukrainian students did not answer the question

TABLE 4  
How easy or difficult it was to answer the questions about drugs

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Very easy	88	63	71	63	71
Fairly easy	8	26	17	23	19
Neither easy nor difficult	2	2	4	7	7
Fairly difficult	2	9	7	5	5
Very difficult	0	0	2	0	0

TABLE 5  
How easy or difficult it was to answer the questions about Internet use and gambling

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Very easy	65	71	59	64	65
Fairly easy	29	23	33	28	28
Neither easy nor difficult	4	1	6	6	4
Fairly difficult	2	5	3	1	3
Very difficult	0	0	2	0	0

TABLE 6  
Reasons why questions in different sections were difficult to answer

	Absolute numbers out of all 1 138 students				
	Question difficult to understand	Answering categories did not fit	Other	All (number)	All (percent)
Cigarettes	2	0	11	13	1%
Alcohol	7	8	21	36 (10 <sup>1</sup> )	3%
Drugs	33	9	27	69 (29 <sup>2</sup> )	6%
Internet/gambling	8	10	13	31	3%

(<sup>1</sup>) Difficult to remember

(<sup>2</sup>) Not familiar with the terms

TABLE 7  
Whether any questions were difficult to answer

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
No	80	87	85	92	86
Yes	21	13	15	7	14

TABLE 8  
The questions students mentioned as difficult to answer

	Absolute numbers out of all 1 138 students	
Question number	Content of the question	Number of students mentioning this question
23	Frequency of drugs other than cannabis	23 ( <sup>1</sup> )
30	Hours spent online	19 ( <sup>2</sup> )
36	Family well off (relative to others)	16
35	Father's schooling	15 ( <sup>3</sup> )
29	Possible harm of substance use	15
16	Harm due to others' drinking	14 ( <sup>4</sup> )
13	Consumption of a large amount of alcohol	13 ( <sup>5</sup> )
21	Difficult to get drugs other than cannabis	11 ( <sup>6</sup> )

(<sup>1</sup>) 20 of the 23 are from Italy and Montenegro

(<sup>2</sup>) 16 of the 19 are from Iceland and Italy

(<sup>3</sup>) 14 of the 15 are from Iceland

(<sup>4</sup>) 12 of the 14 are from Italy and Montenegro

(<sup>5</sup>) 11 of the 13 are from Italy

(<sup>6</sup>) All 11 are from Montenegro

TABLE 9  
How the question about the last drinking day was understood

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Correctly understood	70	81	83	91	81
Misunderstood about which day	12	16	7	6	10
Misunderstood in some other way	18	4	9	2	8

TABLE 10  
How the regular question about heavy episodic drinking (5 or more drinks) was understood

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Correctly understood	64	91	80	86	80
Misunderstood beverage mixture	18	4	15	7	11
Misunderstood examples	1	0	2	1	1
Misunderstood the drink concept	1	0	1	1	1
Misunderstood in some other way	14	5	3	4	6

TABLE 11  
How the question about an alternative way of measuring heavy episodic drinking (9 cl of pure alcohol) was understood

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Correctly understood	58	86	76	87	77
Misunderstood beverage mixture	20	9	19	8	14
Misunderstood in some other way	22	5	5	4	9

TABLE 12  
How the question about new psychoactive substances was understood

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Correctly understood	64	70	78	77	72
Misunderstood examples in first bracket	2	3	2	6	3
Misunderstood examples in second bracket	5	15	6	11	9
Misunderstood what the question was about	20	1	13	4	9
Misunderstood in some other way	6	12	1	0	5

TABLE 13  
Whether student had given honest answers to questions about cigarette habits

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Honest answers <sup>(1)</sup>	99	99	98	96	98
Exaggerated	0	0	0	2	0
Underrated	1	1	2	2	1

<sup>(1)</sup> Including the answering category 'Don't smoke, which I also answered.'

TABLE 14  
Whether student had given honest answers to questions about alcohol habits

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Honest answers <sup>(1)</sup>	99	98	97	95	98
Exaggerated	0	1	1	1	1
Underrated	0	1	2	3	1

<sup>(1)</sup> Including the answering category 'Don't use alcohol, which I also answered.'

TABLE 15  
Whether student had given honest answers to questions about drug habits

Percentages

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Honest answers <sup>(1)</sup>	99	98	100	98	99
Exaggerated	0	1	0	0	0
Underrated	0	1	0	1	1

<sup>(1)</sup> Including the answering category 'Don't use drugs, which I also answered.'

TABLE 16  
Whether student had given honest answers to questions about Internet and gambling habits

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Honest answers (1)	98	98	93	97	96
Exaggerated	0	2	2	1	1
Underreported	2	1	5	3	3

(1) Including the answering category 'Never use the Internet or gamble, which I also answered.'

TABLE 17  
Student's view on whether classmates had given honest answers about their tobacco habits

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
All or nearly all were honest	35	53	24	35	37
Most were honest	60	35	42	40	44
About half were honest	2	10	16	15	11
Most were not honest	2	3	18	9	8
All or nearly all were not honest	0	0	0	1	0

TABLE 18  
Student's view on whether their classmates had given honest answers about their alcohol habits

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
All or nearly all were honest	34	54	24	29	35
Most were honest	60	36	45	40	45
About half were honest	5	7	17	19	12
Most were not honest	1	3	15	11	7
All or nearly all were not honest	0	0	0	1	0

TABLE 19  
Student's view on whether their classmates had given honest answers about drug habits

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
All or nearly all were honest	51	41	58	43	48
Most were honest	43	31	28	32	33
About half were honest	3	18	6	12	10
Most were not honest	3	8	8	11	7
All or nearly all were not honest	0	1	1	2	1

TABLE 20  
Student's view on whether their classmates had given honest answers about Internet use and gambling habits

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
All or nearly all were honest	44	56	44	57	50
Most were honest	40	29	33	35	34
About half were honest	13	13	14	6	11
Most were not honest	1	2	9	3	3
All or nearly all were not honest	0	0	1	0	0

TABLE 21  
Student's view on whether their classmates exaggerated or underreported tobacco habits

Percentages among students who thought that half or less of classmates had answered honestly

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Mainly exaggerated	0	23	20	9	13
Mainly underreported	100	77	80	91	87
N (1)	5	22	49	43	119

(1) Please observe that that bases for the calculations are small, especially in Iceland

TABLE 22  
Student's view on whether their classmates had exaggerated or underreported alcohol habits

Percentages among students who thought that half or less of the classmates answered honestly

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Mainly exaggerated	0	53	18	6	19
Mainly underreported	100	47	83	94	81
N (1)	3	17	40	51	111

(1) Please observe that that bases for the calculations are small, especially in Iceland

TABLE 23  
Student's view on whether their classmates had exaggerated or underreported drug habits

	Percentages				
	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
Mainly exaggerated	0	13	29	2	11
Mainly underreported	100	87	71	98	89
N (1)	7	45	24	58	134

(1) Please observe that that bases for the calculations are small, especially in Iceland

TABLE 24

**Student's view on whether their classmates had exaggerated or underreported Internet use and gambling habits**

Percentages among students who thought that half or less of classmates had answered honestly

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
<b>Mainly exaggerated</b>	0	13	8	27	12
<b>Mainly underreported</b>	100	87	92	73	88
<b>N (†)</b>	3	30	25	11	69

(†) Please observe that that bases for the calculations are small, especially in Iceland

TABLE 25

**The opinions of survey leaders**

Absolute numbers at class level

	Iceland	Italy	Montenegro	Ukraine	Average
<b>Reported disturbances in the classroom</b>					
No disturbances	7	9	9	15	40 (77 %)
From a few students	3	1	0	7	11 (21 %)
More than a few students	0	0	0	1	1 (2 %)
<b>Students working seriously</b>					
All/nearly all	10	9	8	21	48 (92 %)
A majority	0	1	1	1	3 (6 %)
Half or less	0	0	0	1	1 (2 %)
<b>Easy or difficult to answer the questionnaire</b>					
Very easy	1	2	0	1	4 (8 %)
Rather easy	6	6	9	21	42 (81 %)
Neither easy nor difficult	3	2	0	1	6 (12 %)
Rather/very difficult	0	0	0	0	0 (0 %)
<b>Questions that students asked about</b>					
None	1	9	3	14	27 (52 %)
Question difficult to understand	5	0	3	1	9 (17 %)
Did not understand how to answer	4	1	1	1	7 (13 %)
Difficult for other reasons	4	0	4	7	15 (29 %)
<b>Number of classes</b>	10	10	9	23	52

## Appendix 2



### Questionnaire on substance use

#### Read this first please!

This questionnaire is part of an international study on substance use among European students. It will be answered by students in five countries in different parts of Europe. The study is called ESPAD.

This is a totally anonymous questionnaire. You should not state your name or any other information which identifies you. You should place your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope but not seal it until later. After completion you will be asked to take part in a short interview to which you should bring your envelope.

Your class has been randomly selected to take part in this study. The survey is carried out by [ORGANISATION]. It is voluntary to take part. If there is any question you find objectionable for any reason, just leave it blank. It is important that you answer as thoughtfully and frankly as possible. The results will not be presented by single classes or schools and remember your answers are totally anonymous.

If you do not find an answer that fits exactly, indicate the one that comes closest. Please mark the appropriate answer to each question by making an 'X' in the box. If you have a question, please raise your hand and your survey leader will assist you.

**Thank you in advance for your participation! Please begin.**



The first questions ask for some background information about yourself and the kinds of things you might do

**C01 What is your sex?**

- 1  Male  
 2  Female

**C02 When were you born?**

Year 19 

--	--

**C03 How often (if at all) do you do each of the following?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Never	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	At least once a week	Almost every day
a) Play computer games.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Actively participate in sports, athletics or exercising .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Read books for enjoyment (do not count schoolbooks) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Go out in the evening (to a disco, cafe, party etc).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Other hobbies (play an instrument, sing, draw, write).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Go around with friends to shopping centres, streets, parks, etc. just for fun.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Use the Internet for leisure activities (chats, music, games, etc.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Play on slot machines (the kind in which you may win money).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5

**C04 During the LAST 30 DAYS on how many days have you missed one or more lessons?**

Mark one box for each line.

	None	1 day	2 days	3-4 days	5-6 days	7 days or more
a) Because of illness .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Because you skipped or 'cut' .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For other reasons .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6

The following questions are about cigarette smoking

**C05 On how many occasions (if any) during your lifetime have you smoked cigarettes?**

Number of occasions

0	1-2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40 or more
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**C06 When (if ever) did you FIRST do each of the following things?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Never	9 years old or less	10 years old	11 years old	12 years old	13 years old	14 years old	15 years old	16 years or older
a) Smoke your first cigarette.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Smoke cigarettes on a daily basis.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

**C07 Have you ever used moist snuff (snus), e-cigarettes or water pipe?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Yes, in the last 30 days	Yes, in the last 12 months	Yes, but more than 12 months ago	Never
a) Moist snuff (snus).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) E-cigarettes .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Water pipe .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4

The next questions are about alcoholic beverages – including beer, cider, alcopops (premixed drinks), wine and spirits

**C08 On how many occasions (if any) have you had any alcoholic beverage to drink?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1–2	3–5	6–9	10–19	20–39	40 or more
a) In your lifetime.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) During the last 12 months .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) During the last 30 days.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**C09 Think back over the LAST 30 DAYS. On how many occasions (if any) have you had any of the following to drink?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1–2	3–5	6–9	10–19	20–39	40 or more
a) Beer.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cider* .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Alcopops* .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Wine .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Spirits .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

\* Optional

The following questions are about the last day you drank alcohol

**C10** Think of the **LAST DAY** that you drank any alcohol. Which of the following beverages did you drink on that day?

Mark all that apply.

- 1  I never drink alcohol
- 1  Beer
- 1  Cider\*
- 1  Alcopops\*
- 1  Wine
- 1  Spirits

\* Optional

**C10a** If you drank beer that last day you drank any alcohol, how much did you drink?

- 1  I never drink beer
- 2  I did not drink beer on the last day that I drank alcohol
- 3  <50 cl
- 4  50–100 cl
- 5  101–200 cl
- 6  >200 cl

**C10d** If you drank wine that last day you drank any alcohol, how much did you drink?

- 1  I never drink wine
- 2  I did not drink wine on the last day that I drank alcohol
- 3  <20 cl
- 4  20–40 cl
- 5  41–74 cl
- 6  >74 cl

**OC10b** If you drank cider that last day you drank any alcohol, how much did you drink? \*

- 1  I never drink cider
- 2  I did not drink cider on the last day that I drank alcohol
- 3  <50 cl
- 4  50–100 cl
- 5  101–200 cl
- 6  >200 cl

\* Optional

**C10e** If you drank spirits that last day you drank any alcohol, how much did you drink?

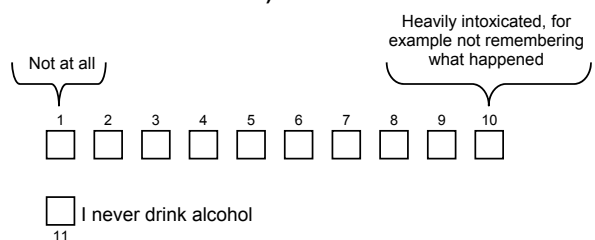
- 1  I never drink spirits
- 2  I did not drink spirits on the last day that I drank alcohol
- 3  <8 cl
- 4  8–15 cl
- 5  16–24 cl
- 6  >24 cl

**OC10c** If you drank alcopops that last day you drank any alcohol, how much did you drink? \*

- 1  I never drink alcopops
- 2  I did not drink alcopops on the last day that I drank alcohol
- 3  <50 cl
- 4  50–100 cl
- 5  101–200 cl
- 6  >200 cl

\* Optional

**C10f** Please indicate on this scale from 1 to 10 how drunk you would say you were that last day you drank alcohol. (If you felt no effect at all you should mark '1'.)



The next couple of questions are also about alcohol

**C11** Think back again over the **LAST 30 DAYS**. How many times (if any) have you had five or more drinks on one occasion? (A 'drink' is **[INSERT NATIONALLY RELEVANT EXAMPLES]**.)

- 1  None
- 2  1
- 3  2
- 4  3-5
- 5  6-9
- 6  10 or more times

**C12** On how many occasions (if any) have you been intoxicated from drinking alcoholic beverages, for example staggered when walking, not being able to speak properly, throwing up or not remembering what happened?

Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1-2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40 or more
a) In your lifetime .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) During the last 12 months .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) During the last 30 days .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**C13** Think back again over the **LAST 30 DAYS**. How many times (if any) have you been drinking alcohol equivalent to at least **[INSERT NATIONALLY RELEVANT EXAMPLES]**.

- 1  None
- 2  1
- 3  2
- 4  3-5
- 5  6-9
- 6  10 or more times

**C14** When (if ever) did you **FIRST** do each of the following things?

Mark one box for each line.

	Never	9 years old or less	10 years old	11 years old	12 years old	13 years old	14 years old	15 years old	16 years or older
a) Drink beer (at least one glass) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Drink cider (at least one glass)* .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Drink alcopops (at least one glass)* .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Drink wine (at least one glass) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Drink spirits (at least one glass) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Get drunk on alcohol .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

\* Optional

**C15 BECAUSE OF YOUR OWN ALCOHOL USE, how often during the LAST 12 MONTHS have you experienced the following?**

**If you haven't used alcohol the last 12 months, please mark zero occasions on all questions.**  
Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1-2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40 or more
a) Physical fight .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Accident or injury .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Serious problems with your parents .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Serious problems with your friends .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Performed poorly at school or work.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Victimised by robbery or theft.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Trouble with police .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Hospitalised or admitted to an emergency room.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Engaged in sexual intercourse without a condom.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Engaged in sexual intercourse you regretted the next day .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**C16 Have you experienced problems during the LAST 12 MONTHS that occurred because of someone else's drinking?**

Mark one or more boxes for each line

	No	Yes, a friend or acquaintance	Yes, a stranger	Yes somebody else
a) Has someone who had been drinking called you names or otherwise insulted you? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Has someone who had been drinking harmed you physically? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Has someone who had been drinking ruined your clothes or other belongings? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Has someone who had been drinking been responsible for a traffic accident you were involved in? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have you been a passenger with a driver who had had too much to drink? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Has someone who had been drinking harassed or bothered you at a party or some other private setting? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Has someone who had been drinking harassed or bothered you on the street or in some public place? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Has someone who had been drinking made you afraid when you encountered them on the street? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Has someone kept you awake at night with drunken noise? .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4

Tranquillisers and sedatives, like [INSERT NATIONALLY RELEVANT EXAMPLES], are sometimes prescribed by doctors to help people to calm down, get to sleep or to relax. Pharmacies are not supposed to sell them without a prescription

**C17 Have you ever taken tranquillisers or sedatives because a doctor told you to take them?**

- 1  No, never
- 2  Yes, but for less than 3 weeks
- 3  Yes, for 3 weeks or more

The next questions ask about marijuana or hashish (cannabis)

**C18 On how many occasions (if any) have you used marijuana or hashish (cannabis)?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1-2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40 or more
a) In your lifetime .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) During the last 12 months .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) During the last 30 days.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**C19** When (if ever) did you FIRST try marijuana or hashish (cannabis)?

- 1  Never
- 2  9 years old or less
- 3  10 years old
- 4  11 years old
- 5  12 years old
- 6  13 years old
- 7  14 years old
- 8  15 years old
- 9  16 years or older

**C20** Have you ever had the possibility to try marijuana or hashish (cannabis) without trying it?

- 1  No
- 2  Yes → **How many times has this happened in your life?**
  - 1  1–2
  - 2  3–5
  - 3  6–9
  - 4  10–19
  - 5  20–39
  - 6  40 or more

The next questions ask about some other drugs

**C21** How difficult do you think it would be for you to get each of the following, if you wanted?

Mark one box for each line.

	Impossible	Very difficult	Fairly difficult	Fairly easy	Very easy	Don't know
a) Amphetamines .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Tranquillisers or sedatives.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Ecstasy .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6

**C22** On how many occasions (if any) have you used inhalants **EXAMPLES]** to get high?

Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1–2	3–5	6–9	10–19	20–39	40 or more
a) In your lifetime .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) During the last 12 months .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) During the last 30 days .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**C23 On how many occasions in your lifetime (if any) have you used any of the following drugs?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Number of occasions						
	0	1-2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40 or more
a) Tranquillisers or sedatives (without a doctor's prescription) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Amphetamines .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) LSD or some other hallucinogens .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Crack .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Cocaine .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Relevin .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Heroin .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) 'Magic mushrooms' .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) GHB .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Anabolic steroids .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Drugs by injection with a needle (like heroin, cocaine, amphetamine).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Alcohol together with pills (medicaments) in order to get high.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) <b>Optional drug*</b> .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

\* Optional

**C24 When (if ever) did you FIRST do each of the following things?**

Mark one box for each line.

	Never	9 years old or less	10 years old	11 years old	12 years old	13 years old	14 years old	15 years old	16 years or older
a) Try tranquillisers or sedatives (without a doctor's prescription) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Try amphetamines.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Try ecstasy .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Try inhalants <b>[INSERT NATIONALLY RELEVANT EXAMPLES]</b> in order to get high .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Try alcohol together with pills (medicaments) in order to get high.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

**C25 New substances that imitate the effects of illicit drugs [such as cannabis or ecstasy] may now sometimes be available. They are sometimes called ['legal highs', 'ethno botanicals', 'research chemicals'] and can come in different forms, for example herbal mixtures, powders, crystals or tablets.**

**Have you ever used such substances?**

- 1  Yes, I have used such substances
- 2  No, I never used such substances
- 3  Don't know/Not sure

**C26 Have you used such substances in the LAST 12 MONTHS?**

- 1  Yes, I have
- 2  No I haven't
- 3  Don't know/Not sure

**C27 What was the appearance/form of the new substance you used in the LAST 12 MONTHS?**

Mark one or more boxes

- 1  I have not used such substances in the last 12 months
- 2  Herbal smoking mixtures with drug-like effects
- 3  Powders, crystals or tablets with drug-like effects
- 4  Liquids with drug-like effects
- 5  Other: .....

**C28 Thinking about your use of new substances in the LAST 12 MONTHS, how did you get them?**

Mark one or more boxes

- 1  I have not used such substances in the last 12 months
- 2  Been given or bought from a friend
- 3  Bought them from specialised shop
- 4  Bought them from the Internet
- 5  Bought them from a drug dealer
- 6  Other: .....

The next question asks about various substances

**C29 How much do you think PEOPLE RISK harming themselves (physically or in other ways), if they ...**

Mark one box for each line.

	No risk	Slight risk	Moderate risk	Great risk	Don't know
a) Smoke cigarettes occasionally .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have one or two drinks on one occasion nearly every day .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have four or five drinks on one occasion nearly every day .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have five or more drinks each weekend .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Try marijuana or hashish (cannabis) once or twice .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Smoke marijuana or hashish (cannabis) occasionally .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Smoke marijuana or hashish (cannabis) regularly .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Try ecstasy once or twice .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Take ecstasy regularly .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Try an amphetamine (uppers, pep pills, bennie, speed) once or twice .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Take amphetamines regularly .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5

The next questions are about the Internet, gaming and gambling

**C30 How many hours do you spend online on an AVERAGE WEEKDAY?**

Mark one box for each line.

	None	Half an hour or less	About 1–2 hours	About 3–4 hours	5 hours or more
a) In chat rooms, sending messages or using social networks (email, MSN, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Reading, surfing, searching for information, etc. ....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Downloading music, videos, films, etc. ....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Visiting adults' websites .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Playing skill game (sudoku, billiard, solitaire, etc.) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Playing games in which you may win money (poker, scratch, dice, new slot, etc.) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Participating in Internet games [EXAMPLES] .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5



**C31 How often (if ever) did the following happen to you when you were online in the LAST 12 MONTHS? (If you haven't been online the last 12 months, please mark 'Never' on all questions.)**

Mark one box for each line.

	Never	Rarely	From time to time	Quite often	Very often
a) Stayed online longer than you intended.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Neglected homework because you were spending time online .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Been reprimanded by your parents or friends about how much time you spent online .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Lost sleep due to being online late at night .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Felt nervous when you were offline and that feeling was relieved when you went back online .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Chosen to spend more time online rather than going out with your friends .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1	2	3	4	5

**C32 How often (if ever) did you gamble money in the LAST 12 MONTHS?**

- 1  I have not gambled money during the last 12 months
- 2  Monthly or less
- 3  2-4 times a month
- 4  2-3 times a week
- 5  4-5 times a week
- 6  6 or more times a week

**C33 How much time (if any) did you spend gambling money on a typical day in the LAST 12 MONTHS?**

- 1  I have not gambled money during the last 12 months
- 2  Less than 30 minutes
- 3  Between 30 minutes and 1 hour
- 4  Between 1 and 2 hours
- 5  Between 2 and 3 hours
- 6  3 hours or more

**C34 How often (if ever) did you gamble money for more than 2 hours (on a single occasion) in the LAST 12 MONTHS?**

- 1  I have not gambled money during the last 12 months
- 2  Never
- 3  Less than monthly
- 4  Monthly
- 5  Weekly
- 6  Daily or almost daily

The next questions ask about your family and parents. If mostly foster parents, step-parents or others brought you up answer for them. For example, if you have both a stepfather and a natural father, answer for the one that is the most important in bringing you up.

**C35 What is the highest level of schooling your father completed?**

- 1  Completed primary school or less
- 2  Some secondary school
- 3  Completed secondary school
- 4  Some college or university
- 5  Completed college or university
- 6  Don't know
- 7  Does not apply

**C36** How well off is your family compared to other families in your country?

- 1  Very much better off
- 2  Much better off
- 3  Better off
- 4  About the same
- 5  Less well off
- 6  Much less well off
- 7  Very much less well off

**C37** If you had ever used marijuana or hashish (cannabis), do you think that you would have said so in this questionnaire?

- 1  I already said that I have used it
- 2  Definitely yes
- 3  Probably yes
- 4  Probably not
- 5  Definitely not

## Appendix 3



The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs  
[www.espad.org](http://www.espad.org)



### ESPAD Validity Study 2013

# Interview questionnaire

#### Explain the following to the students

This interview is an important part of our desire to learn more about how European students answer our questions about substance use. It is essential for us to know how easy or difficult it is for students who are your age to answer the questions. By taking part in this short interview about the questionnaire you have just answered you can help us to develop a better understanding of how our questionnaires are answered.

The interview is totally anonymous. I don't want you to tell me your name. When we are finished we will put the questionnaire I am using in an envelope that I will ask you to seal.

It is voluntary to take part in this interview. It is important that you answer as thoughtfully and frankly as possible. The substance use questionnaire and the results of this interview will not be presented by single classes or schools, and **remember your answers are totally anonymous.**

#### To the interviewer

Read all questions and answering categories. The only exceptions are 7–10 on which you should read the questions but not the answering categories. On these questions you should interpret the answers.

On some questions you should ask the student to explain the answer. Please write the answers on the dotted line/open space. If necessary, continue on the back of the same page.

LOGO  
FIELD WORK  
ORGANISATION

Contact info of the organisation responsible for the field work/national survey.

I will first ask you how difficult it was to answer the questions, but before that I wonder whether it was interesting

**Q01 Did you find it interesting or uninteresting to participate in the study?**

- 1  Very interesting
- 2  Fairly interesting
- 3  Neither interesting nor uninteresting
- 4  Fairly uninteresting
- 5  Very uninteresting

**Q02 Did you find it easy or difficult to answer questions 5–7 about your tobacco habits?**

- 1  Very easy
- 2  Fairly easy
- 3  Neither easy nor difficult
- 4  Fairly difficult
- 5  Very difficult

**If so, why was this?**

- 1  Questions .....were difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories in questions ..... did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely

Please explain ....

**Q03 Did you find it easy or difficult to answer questions 8–16 about your alcohol habits?**

- 1  Very easy
- 2  Fairly easy
- 3  Neither easy nor difficult
- 4  Fairly difficult
- 5  Very difficult

**If so, why was this?**

- 1  Questions .....were difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories in questions ..... did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely

Please explain ....

**Q04 Did you find it easy or difficult to answer questions 18–28 about your drug habits?**

- 1  Very easy
- 2  Fairly easy
- 3  Neither easy nor difficult
- 4  Fairly difficult
- 5  Very difficult

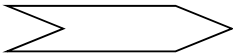
**If so, why was this?**

- 1  Questions .....were difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories in questions ..... did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely

Please explain ....

**Q05 Did you find it easy or difficult to answer questions 30–34 about the Internet and gambling?**

- 1  Very easy
- 2  Fairly easy
- 3  Neither easy nor difficult
- 4  Fairly difficult
- 5  Very difficult



**If so, why was this?**

- 1  Questions .....were difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories in questions ..... did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely



Please explain ....

.....

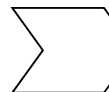
.....

**Q06 Where there any other questions you found difficult to answer?**

1  No

2  Yes, question ..... Why?

- 1  The question was difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely

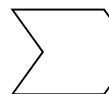


Please explain .....

.....

3  Yes, question ..... Why?

- 1  The question was difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely

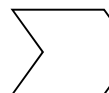


Please explain .....

.....

4  Yes, question ..... Why?

- 1  The question was difficult to understand
- 2  The answering categories did not fit
- 3  Other reasons, namely

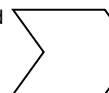


Please explain .....

.....

5  Yes, question .....

- Why
- 1  The question was difficult to understand
  - 2  The answering categories did not fit
  - 3  Other reasons, namely



Please explain .....

.....

.....

I will now ask you to explain how you understood some of the questions

Don't read the answering categories on these 4 questions. Instead, you have to interpret the answers from the student. If an answer is unclear, ask for clarifications until you are sure of what he/she means.

**Q07 Please explain how you understood question 10 about the last day you drunk alcohol**

- 1  Correctly understood, i.e. that all sub-questions were about one and the same day
- 2  Misunderstood and thought that the quantities were related to the last day each of them were drunk
- 3  Misunderstood in some other way. Please explain:

**Q08 Please explain how you understood question 11 about how often you have drunk five or more drinks in a row**

- 1  Correctly understood, i.e. that drinks from different beverages should be added up
- 2  Misunderstood and thought that each beverage should be added up separately
- 3  Misunderstood: Did not understand the given examples of what a drink is
- 4  Misunderstood: Did not understand the concept 'drink'
- 5  Misunderstood in some other way. Please explain:

**Q09 Please explain how you understood question 13 about drinking an amount equivalent to ..... (use the wording in Q13 in the student questionnaire)**

- 1  Correctly understood, i.e. that the consumption of possible different beverages should be added up and together reach an amount equal to or above one of the examples
- 2  Misunderstood and did not understand that possible consumption of different beverages should be added up
- 3  Misunderstood in some other way. Please explain:

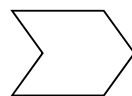
**Q10 Please explain how you understood question 25 about new psychoactive substances**

- 1  Correctly understood, including understanding the examples in the two brackets
- 2  Misunderstood: Did not understand the examples in the first bracket
- 3  Misunderstood: Did not understand the examples in the second bracket
- 4  Did not understand what the question was about
- 5  Misunderstood in some other way. Please explain:

The next questions are about how honestly you think that your classmates answered

**Q11 Do you think that your classmates gave honest answers to questions 6–8 about their tobacco habits?**

- 1  All or nearly all were honest
- 2  Most of were honest
- 3  About half were honest
- 4  Most were not honest
- 5  All or nearly all were not honest

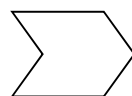


**Do you think that they mainly exaggerated or underreported?**

- 1  Mainly exaggerated
- 2  Mainly underreported

**Q12 Do you think that your classmates gave honest answers to questions 9–17 about their alcohol habits?**

- 1  All or nearly all were honest
- 2  Most were honest
- 3  About half were honest
- 4  Most were not honest
- 5  All or nearly all were not honest

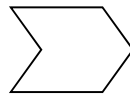


**Do you think that they mainly exaggerated or underreported?**

- 1  Mainly exaggerated
- 2  Mainly underreported

**Q13** Do you think that your classmates gave honest answers to questions 19–29 about their drug habits?

- 1  All or nearly all were honest
- 2  Most were honest
- 3  About half were honest
- 4  Most were not honest
- 5  All or nearly all were not honest

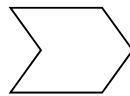


Do you think that they mainly exaggerated or underreported?

- 1  Mainly exaggerated
- 2  Mainly underreported

**Q14** Do you think that your classmates gave honest answers to questions 31–35 about their Internet and gambling habits?

- 1  All or nearly all were honest
- 2  Most were honest
- 3  About half were honest
- 4  Most were not honest
- 5  All or nearly all were not honest



Do you think that they mainly exaggerated or underreported?

- 1  Mainly exaggerated
- 2  Mainly underreported

I will now ask some questions about how honestly you answered  
Please observe that I don't have any opinion about your possible exaggeration or underreporting. What is important for me is to know how you actually answered. It is only from that that we can learn how our questionnaires are answered.

**Q15** Did you answer the questions about your cigarette habits honestly (Q 6–8)?

- 1  Exaggerated a lot
- 2  Exaggerated a little
- 3  Answered honestly
- 4  Did not admit everything
- 5  Did not admit at all
- 6  Don't smoke which I also answered

**Q16** Did you answer the questions about your alcohol habits honestly (Q 9–7)?

- 1  Exaggerated a lot
- 2  Exaggerated a little
- 3  Answered honestly
- 4  Did not admit everything
- 5  Did not admit at all
- 6  Don't use alcohol, which I also answered

**Q17** Did you answer the questions about your drug habits honestly (Q 19–29)?

- 1  Exaggerated a lot
- 2  Exaggerated a little
- 3  Answered honestly
- 4  Did not admit everything
- 5  Did not admit at all
- 6  Don't use drugs, which I also answered

**Q18** Did you answer the questions about your Internet and gambling habits honestly (Q 31–35)?

- 1  Exaggerated a lot
- 2  Exaggerated a little
- 3  Answered honestly
- 4  Did not admit everything
- 5  Did not admit at all
- 6  I never use the Internet or gamble, which I also answered

We have now reached the final question

**Q19** Now at the very end you are welcome to add any comments you may have about the study and the questionnaire (ask the student to glance through the questionnaire)

**Thank you very much for your time and assistance**



## About the EMCDDA

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) is the central source and confirmed authority on drug-related issues in Europe. For over 20 years, it has been collecting, analysing and disseminating scientifically sound information on drugs and drug addiction and their consequences, providing its audiences with an evidence-based picture of the drug phenomenon at European level.

The EMCDDA's publications are a prime source of information for a wide range of audiences including: policymakers and their advisors; professionals and researchers working in the drugs field; and, more broadly, the media and general public. Based in Lisbon, the EMCDDA is one of the decentralised agencies of the European Union.

## About ESPAD

The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) is a collaborative effort of independent research teams in more than 40 European countries, making it the largest cross-national research project on adolescent substance use in the world. ESPAD was founded in 1993 on the initiative of the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN) and with the support of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe.

