

ESPAD – European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs.

<p>Origin of the study</p>	<p>In the early 1990s, Björn Hibell and Barbro Andersson at the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN) initiated a collaborative project by contacting a number of European researchers to explore the possibilities of doing simultaneously performed school surveys with a common methodology. The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs, the ESPAD project was planned to build on the experiences of the Pompidou school survey group. The Pompidou Group made funds available to support the participation of researchers from the former Eastern Europe countries in a first Project meeting.</p> <p>In March 1994 representatives from 21 countries met at the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, for the first project meeting. Methodological aspects as well as the questionnaire were thoroughly discussed. Questions and details remaining unsolved after the meeting were handled by a working group.</p> <p>So far four data collections and ten Project meetings have been held since the initiation of the project. The first data collection was carried out in 1995, the second in 1999, the third in 2003 and the fourth in 2007.</p>
<p>Management Structure</p>	
<p>Statement of purpose.</p>	<p>The primary purpose of the ESPAD project is to study adolescent substance use in Europe from a comparative and longitudinal perspective. This includes the mapping of differences and monitoring of trends for policy purposes as well as the scientific study of the context, predictors and consequences of adolescent substance use.</p>
<p>Funded by</p>	<p>Data collection in individual countries is funded by national sources of funding (for details see www.espad.org) while the coordination costs have been covered by the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN) via a grant from the Swedish government. Throughout the years support has also been given by the Pompidou Group at the Council of Europe. The Swedish National Institute of Public Health has covered some of the printing costs. During 2006 economical support was received from the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) for a working group and carrying out a methodological test of an improved questionnaire.</p>
<p>Affiliations.</p>	<p>ESPAD has official relations with the Pompidou Group at the Council of Europe and the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).</p>
<p>Consortium?</p>	<p>The ESPAD network includes about 40 researchers (and their institutions). ESPAD is coordinated by the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN) and the University of Akureyri is responsible for the ESPAD data bases.</p>
<p>Government partners?</p>	<p>The coordination of ESPAD is funded by the Swedish Government. The research teams in individual countries each maintain relationships with their respective governments.</p>
<p>Expert panels</p>	<p>All major decisions are taken at the Project meetings, which are open to all ESPAD researchers. They include decisions about the questionnaire, the data collection procedure, Regional seminars, National project plans and reports, as well as about the ESPAD data base. The Project meetings are held once a year.</p> <p>The scientific and practical planning of the ESPAD project is directed by project coordinators Björn Hibell and Ulf Guttormsson and by the steering committee.</p> <p>Steering Committee consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Björn Hibell, Sweden; • Ulf Guttormsson, Sweden; • Salme Ahlström, Finland; • Olga Balakireva, Ukraine; • Thoroddur Bjarnason, Iceland; • Anna Kokkevi, Greece; and • Ludwig Kraus, Germany. <p>Thematic groups</p> <p>At the Project meeting in 2004 four thematic groups were formed to generate academic publications in specific areas within the ESPAD project based on the 2003 dataset. The themes for the groups are: Attitudes, Gender, Risk groups and Trends. The groups have the following members:</p> <p><i>Attitudes:</i> Chair, Patrick Miller, United Kingdom; Barbro Andersson, Sweden; Sharon Arpa, Malta; Francois Beck, France; Anina Chileva, Bulgaria; Zsuzsanna Elekes, Hungary; Pavla Lejckova', Czech Republic; and Eva Stergar, Slovenia.</p> <p><i>Gender:</i> Chair, Salme Ahlström, Finland; Marie Choquet, France; Anastasios Fotiou, Greece; Marina Kuzman, Croatia; Sabrina Molinaro, Italy; Alojz Nociar, the Slovak Republic; and Martin Plant, the United Kingdom.</p>

	<p><i>Trends:</i> Chair, Gerhard Gmel, Switzerland; Fernanda Feijao, Portugal; Silvia Florescu, Romania; Karin Monshouwer, the Netherlands; and Marcis Trapencieris, Latvia.</p> <p><i>Risk groups:</i> Chair, Thoroddur Bjarnason, Iceland; Olga Balakireva, Ukraine; Björn Hibell, Sweden; Anna Kokkevi, Greece; Svend Sabroe, Denmark; Andreea Steriu, Isle of Man, and Konstantin Vyshinsky, Russia.</p> <p>New thematic groups will be created to work on the 2007 ESPAD data.</p> <p>Ad hoc groups:</p> <p>Throughout the years several methodological ad hoc groups have been formed to tackle issues such as questionnaire development, sampling procedures, database construction and standardized syntax and data cleaning issues.</p>
Data set basic information.	
Dates.	Data were collected in Spring 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2007
Countries.	<p>A total of 45 countries have participated in the ESPAD project since its inception. Data were collected in 26 countries in 1995, 30 countries in 1999, 35 countries in 2003 and 35 countries in 2007. Nine countries plan to collect data according to the ESPAD protocol in 2008 and join the ESPAD as full members in the next round of the project.</p> <p>Participating countries in 2007: Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom.</p> <p>For details see http://www.espad.org/sa/node.asp?node=623.</p>
Contents.	<p>The questionnaire contains core as well as optional questions. All countries should employ the core questions. They include some <i>background variables, alcohol, tobacco and drug related questions</i> as well as some <i>questions for methodological purposes</i>.</p> <p>There are also optional modules on "Integration", "Mainstream", "Psycho-social measures", "Cannabis" and "Deviance". Countries can also include specific questions of national interest.</p>
Core data includes:	The standard questionnaire contains core questions which include some background variables, alcohol, tobacco and drug related questions as well as some questions for methodological purposes.
Contextual data includes:	The standard questionnaire contains several background variables. Such questions include measures of family background, interpersonal relations, leisure activities and social and psychological well-being.
Requirements of access.	Use of the ESPAD data is currently limited to ESPAD researchers. The 2003 dataset may become available to the scientific community in the near future.
Next wave/project.	
Next date and availability.	The next wave of the ESPAD project is planned for 2011.
<i>New content / questions.</i>	
Countries to be added.	Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, F.Y.R.O.M, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey plan an ESPAD –type data collection in 2008 and plan to join ESPAD in 2011.
Previous waves/projects.	ESPAD 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2007
Previous content / questions and countries.	The original standardized ESPAD questionnaire was adopted by the ESPAD project meeting in Istanbul in 1994. The core of the questionnaire has remained unchanged but various adjustments have been made to secondary questions and the structure of the questionnaire. Such changes have in general been based on the results of rigorous methodological tests. Greenland, FYROM and Turkey have been members of the ESPAD project but did not take part in the 2007 data collection.
Methodology	
Sources and collection methods.	Data is collected through the administration of a standardised school questionnaire.
Unit of analysis.	Students that turn 16 years old during the calendar year of the data collection. Students who are unable to understand or for other reasons cannot answer the questionnaire without assistance - e.g. retarded, mentally disturbed or severely handicapped - are not included in the target population. Several countries also collect data from students turning 18 years old in the data collection year.
What is the sample design?	The ESPAD project is based on a complex sample design that takes into account national and regional differences in participating countries. The school class is the basic sampling unit but individual countries sample classes with simple random sampling, stratified random sampling or population sampling. The minimum sample size is 2.400 students unless the national population in the target age group is lower than 2.400. For details see www.espad.org .

Sample threshold?	The ESPAD project plan demands strict comparability on various dimensions. Comparability is evaluated on various methodological criteria, with response rates being only one of the considerations. Results that are deemed by the steering committee to be of limited comparability are neither included in the ESPAD database nor in the main tables of the ESPAD reports. In the past results from countries that have experienced methodological shortcomings have been reported in a separate section.
Collection window	March/April is the recommended period of data collection.
Planning process	
Who is involved in the planning process?	<p>The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN) is the co-ordinator of the ESPAD-project and publishes the international reports.</p> <p>All major decisions are taken at the Project meetings, which are open to all ESPAD researchers. They include decisions about the questionnaire, the data collection procedure, Regional seminars, National project plans and reports, as well as about the ESPAD data base. The Project meetings are organized once a year.</p> <p>Between the Project meetings all major decisions are taken by the Steering Committee. The committee also functions as an editorial board for the ESPAD reports</p> <p>Ad hoc groups:</p> <p>Throughout the years several methodological ad hoc groups have been formed to tackle issues such as questionnaire development, sampling procedures, database construction and standardized syntax and data cleaning issues.</p> <p>Regional seminars</p> <p>Methodological standardization is ensured through a series of regional seminars where groups of 4-6 countries present their national project plans with other participants and representatives of the steering committee. Regional seminars take place in the year preceding the year of data collection. Following regional seminars countries submit the final version of the national project plan to the coordinators.</p>
When are the questionnaires finalised?	The questionnaires are finalized at the Project meeting preceding each wave of data collection.
What modules are included?	The questionnaire contains core as well as optional questions. All countries should employ the core questions (standard questionnaire). They include some background variables, alcohol, tobacco and drug related questions as well as some questions for methodological purposes. The ESPAD 2007 questionnaire contained 74 questions in total (see http://www.espad.org/sa/node.asp?node=706 for ESPAD 2007 questionnaire). There are also optional modules on "Integration", "Mainstream", "Psycho-social measures", "Cannabis" and "Deviance".
Can countries add their own items?	Yes.
Links	
Home page for the website	http://www.espad.org
To access the data online	A selection of key variables (selected questions) of ESPAD 1995, 1999, 2003 is available online at http://www.espad.org/sa/node.asp?node=730 .
To access the international report	The ESPAD 1995, 1999, and 2003 reports are available online at http://www.espad.org/sa/node.asp?node=641 .
How to access the technical reports	www.espad.org
To access national reports	www.espad.org
To access a list of research that uses the data	Research based on ESPAD data available online at http://www.espad.org/sa/node.asp?node=637
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