THE MAIN RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL SURVEY ON TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS CONSUMPTION - ROMANIA 2007 -

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The national survey on tobacco, alcohol and drugs consumption - Romania 2007 is part of "The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs" (ESPAD), which takes place every 4 years in 30 European countries and focuses on 16 years old teenagers who attend institutions of post secondary education.

The European study, conducted at the international level in 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007 was implemented for the third time in Romania in 2007.

The collaboration between the coordinating institution represented by the National School of Public Health and Health Management (NSPHHSM) and the National Anti-Drug Agency (NAA) has received support from the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth (MERY) and the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), running under the coordination of the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and other Drugs, CAN, Stockholm, Sweden.

The survey is representative at national level for the students born in 1991. The research tool was the standardized translated and adapted international questionnaire and the field data collection conducted in May-June 2007.

As basis for sampling were used the high schools during 2006-2007 school year, of which were excluded: the special schools, the theological and military high schools, the high schools having a non Romanian teaching language. 116 schools were selected for participation and a number of two classes from each school.

The field administration of the questionnaires was conducted by NAA through the Centers for Prevention, Evaluation and Anti Drugs Counseling, achieving a sample of 2307 students born in 1991.

Prior to the field collection, the questionnaire was pre-tested being applied to 178 students born in 1991. The pre-testing allowed the adjustment of the questionnaire by cultural adaptation.

RESULTS

In this article will be presented the results of 2007, compared to those of 2003 and 1999. In the cross sectional studies regarding the substance consumption it is common to estimate the lifetime prevalence, the prevalence during the last 12 months and during the last 30 days, expressed as a proportion of those stating the consumption from all the persons investigated.

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Lifetime prevalence of alcohol, tobacco and drugs use

In 2007 the prevalence of cigarettes smoking in Romania is 54%, registering a pronounced decrease from 2003 (63.6%) and more discrete compared to 1999 (57.3%). The European average is 59%, with equal rates for girls and boys. If in 1999 the difference between the two sexes was 16 percentage points, fell to 11 in 2003, and continued to decrease till 8 percentage points in 2007, indicating a trend of smoking behavior towards gender equality.

In 2007, the percentage of 16 years old adolescents who consumed during the lifetime any alcoholic beverage is 81% compared to 88% in 2003 and 85.5% in 1999. The value of Romania is below the European average which is 89%, almost equal for boys and girls (90% versus 89%). In Romania, the boys have drunk any alcoholic beverage more than girls (89% versus 74%). The difference between the two sexes in 2007 is 15 percentage points, more pronounced than in 2003 and 1999 (when it was 8 and 7 percentage points), indicating a widening gender difference regarding the alcohol consumption.

Keywords: Lifetime prevalence, prevalence during the last 12 months, prevalence during the last 30 days, tobacco, alcohol, drugs
In 2007, the state of drunkenness was experienced by 35% of students 16 years old, fewer compared to 2003 (51.8%) and 1999 (43.2%). The European average for drunkenness lifetime is 49%.

Lifetime use of tranquilizers/sedatives with a doctor prescription in 2007 was 5%, a lower value compared to 2003 (11.3%) and 1999 (9.8%).

In Romania, in 2007, 4% of students have consumed tranquilizers/sedatives without a doctor prescription, slightly fewer compared to 2003 (5.5%) and 1999 (5.3%). Value is below the European average of 6%, being noticed the predominance of girls over boys (8% versus 5%). Compared with the European average, the gap between the sexes is more pronounced in Romania (6% girls, 2% boys); the difference of 4 percentage points in 2007 was equal to that of 2003 and approximately the same as that of 1999 (3 percentage points).

The lifetime use of the alcohol associated with pills was met at 4% from respondents, being noticed a slight increase over 2003 (3.2%) and 1999 (3.8%); the gender difference is just one percentage point in favor of the boys (5% versus 4%). The value of Romania is below the European average of 6%, where the consumption of the alcohol associated with pills is more frequent for girls compared to boys (8% versus 5%).

The lifetime use of marijuana/hashish in 2007 is 4%, compared to 2.6% in 2003 and to 1.3% in 1999. The value of Romania is very low compared to European average of 19%, strongly dominated by boys (22% versus 16%). In Romania, the level of consumption is higher for boys (5% versus 2%); the difference of 3 percentage points observed in 2007 raised constantly since 2003 and 1999, when it was 2 respectively one percentage points.

The lifetime consumption of inhalants in 2007 is 4%, equal for girls and boys, compared to 1.7% in 2003 and 1.3% in 1999. In Romania, the consumption is below the European average of 9%, with a slight predominance of the boys (10% versus 8%); in 2007 in Romania there is no gender difference regarding the inhalants consumption and both in 2003 and 1999 was one percentage point.

The lifetime ecstasy consumption is 1%, higher to that in 2003 (0.6%) and 1999 (0.2%). The value of Romania is low compared with the European average which is 3%, with a small difference in favor of the boys (4% versus 3%).

The cocaine consumption was declared by 2% of respondents in 2007 compared to 0.7% in 2003 and 0.8% in 1999.

The inconsistency rate between 2 questions within the same administration was higher for cigarettes (4%) but lower (0-2%) for other substances (cannabis, ecstasy, inhalants and tranquilizers/sedatives). The average non answers rate for all core questions was 1.7%.

The inconsistency rate for the questions about the lifetime, last 12 months, last 30 days use were higher for the consumption of alcohol, drunkenness status (9% and 4% respectively). The inconsistency rates for cannabis, ecstasy and inhalants were 0%.

A percentage of 10% from the students, responded that they would not have admitted the use of cannabis. On the same question, 5% said they had already answered they have consumed cannabis, which is approaching the self declared lifetime prevalence (4%). Very few (0.1%) responded that they have consumed Relevin (a dummy drug).

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The lifetime abstinence from tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs

Among the adolescents of 16 years old, the maximum percentage of abstinence is registered for the inhalants (96%), tranquilizers/sedatives (96%) and illicit drugs (95%).

The percentage of abstinence decreased slightly for the inhalants (96% in 2007 compared to 97.4% in 2003 and 98.7% in 1999). Instead, the abstinence increased slightly for tranquilizers/sedatives (96% in 2007 compared to 94-94.7% in 2003 and 1999) but quite a lot for the illicit drugs (95% in 2007 compared to 90-90.5% in 2003 and 1999).

In Romania the percentage of those who have never smoked is 46%, rising highly enough compared to 36.1% in 2003 and 42.7% in 1999. The European average for the abstinence from cigarettes is 42%, lower than in Romania.

19% of respondents did not ever consume alcohol in 2007, up compared to 11.7% in 2003 and 14.5% in 1999; the European average of alcohol abstinence is lower compared to the percentage of Romania (11% versus 19%).

The European average of abstinence from illicit drugs is 80% versus 95% in Romania. Just for the abstinence from tranquilizers/sedatives, the European average (94%) is close to the rate in Romania (96%).

The simultaneous lifetime abstinence from tobacco, alcohol, inhalants, tranquilizers/sedatives and illicit drugs is 14% higher than 7.7% in 2003 and 10.6% in 1999.

At European level, the average is 9%, equal for girls and boys.

Use of alcohol and drugs during the last 12 months

74% of students stated the use of alcohol during the last 12 months, fewer with 5.5-6 percentage points from 80% in 2003 and 79.5% in 1999.

In Romania, the gender difference is high, given as 17 percentage points in 2007, much higher than in 2003 and 1999 (7 respectively 10 percentage points).

The level of consumption in Romania is lower than the European average of 82%, equal for boys and girls.

In the last 12 months, the drunkenness was experienced by 26% of students, consistently less compared to 35.7% in 2003 and 29.7% in 1999.

The European average of drunkenness during the last 12 months is 40%, 14 percentage points higher than in Romania.
In 2007, in the last year, 2% of the students have consumed marijuana/hashish, slightly up from 1.7% in 2003 and 0.9% in 1999.

For boys were recorded higher values, the difference being 2 percentage points in 2007 and only one percentage point in 2003 and 1999. In Romania, the marijuana/hashish use during the last 12 months is significantly lower compared to the European average which is 14% in 2007, with consistent predominance of the boys (17% versus 12%).

In the last 12 months the use of inhalants was 1%, up from 0.8% in 2003 and 0.5% in 1999.

**Alcohol, tobacco and drugs use during the last 30 days**

In 2007, 52% of students have consumed any alcoholic beverage during the last 30 days, decreasing slightly from 53.7% in 2003 and from 55.7% in 1999 (table 1). The consumption of any alcoholic beverages during the last 30 days is below the European average of 62% with little gender difference (64% for boys and 61% for girls).

In Romania, the difference between boys and girls is obvious, the value for boys being 66% versus 40% for girls. The difference of 26 percentage points noticed in 2007 is higher than in 2003 and 1999 (16 respectively 18 percentage points).

Regarding the consumption patterns, depending on the type of beverage, can be noticed: in Romania, the pupils have consumed during the last 30 days especially beer (61%), wine (47%) and less spirits (24%). The value of 61% for beer consumption in the last 30 days has declined from 69% in 2003 but it is up from 55% in 1999. The difference between the 2 sexes for the consumption of beer is pronounced, given the values of 74% for boys and 50% for girls.

The gap of 24 percentage points in 2007 is higher than that noticed in 2003 and 1999 when it was 15 respectively 18 percentage points.

As regards the beer consumption, Romania is above the European average of 49% in 2007, where can be noticed a gap of 17 percentage points between boys and girls (58% versus 41%).

In 2007, 47% have consumed wine, up from 42.5% in 2003 and almost the same with the value of 46.4% in 1999. The wine consumption in the last 30 days is above the European average of 35% with not noticeable gender differences. In Romania, for the recent wine consumption, the gender difference is 23 percentage points, higher than in 2003 and 1999 when it was 12 and 14 percentage points.

In Romania in 2007, 24% of students have consumed spirits during the last 30 days, with a very slight increase compared to 23.5% in 2003 but more consistent compared to 20.4% in 1999. The spirits consumption in Romania is far below the European average value, which is 40% with minor differences between the sexes. In Romania, the gender difference is 12 percentage points, higher than in 2003 and 1999, when it was 8 and 6 percentage points.

As regards the consumption of “five or more drinks on one occasion” in the last 30 days, in Romania can be noticed a pronounced increase, the value being 33% in 2007 compared to 23.2% in 2003 and 26.9% in 1999. The value of 33% is still well below the European average, which is 43% and where can be observed a difference of 8 percentage points between boys and girls (47% versus 39%). In Romania, the gender gap is obvious in 2007, with the predominance of the boys (45% versus 22%); the gap between the sexes in 2007, of 23 percentage points, increased from 19 percentage points noted in 2003 and 1999.

In 2007 said they had reached a state of drunkenness in the last 30 days a proportion of 10%, value lower than in 2003 (15.5%) but almost equal to that of 1999 (10.5%). The value of Romania is 7 percentage points lower than the European average of 17% in 2007.

In the last 30 days, in 2007, the cigarettes smoking is 25%; the percentage decreased from 28.4% in 2003 but slightly increased from 24.4% in 1999. The consumption of cigarettes in the last 30 days in Romania is below the European average in 2007 (29%). The difference between Romania and the European average is noticed not only for the total but for each gender separately, for boys (26% vs. 29%) and even more for girls (23% vs. 30%).

### Table 1 The use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs during the last 30 days, Romania, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The use of:</th>
<th>1999 %</th>
<th>2003 %</th>
<th>2007 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more consecutive drinks on an occasion</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana / hashish</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early onset of tobacco, alcohol and drugs use

In 2007, the percentage of those smoking the first cigarette at 13 years or earlier is 29%, lower then 32.2% in 2003 and stationary compared to 1999.

The European average for the first cigarette smoking at 13 years or earlier is 36%, almost equal for boys and girls.

In 2007 the percentage of those who started the daily smoking before 14 years is 4%, below 5.1% in 2003 and stationary compared to 1999. Regarding the early onset of daily cigarettes use can be observed a gender gap of 4 percentage points (6% to 2% boys versus girls) very little decreased compared to previous years, when it was 5 percentage points. The European average for daily smoking is 7% with equal values for boys and girls.

Until the age of 14 years, 56% of students began to consume beer in 2007, approximately equal to 55.5% in 2003 but much more compared to 28.7% in 1999.

Also in 2007, 49% of students began to consume wine until 14 years old, slightly less compared to 50.1% in 2003 but a little more compared to 46.9% in 1999.

In 2007, 22% of students started to consume spirits at 13 years old or earlier, in substantial increase compared to 15.4% in 2003 and 14.3% in 1999.

In 2007, the percentage of those who have experienced a state of drunkenness until the age of 14 is 12%, being noticed a slight decline compared to 2003 (15.1%) but a more abrupt decrease to 1999 (21.5%). The difference between boys and girls is pronounced (20% versus 6%).

This difference of 14 percentage points in 2007 is higher than in 2003 (11 percentage points) but lower than that in 1999 (17 percentage points).

The value of Romania is only slightly reduced from that in Europe where is 14% with boys’ predominance (16% versus 12%).

In 2007, 1% of students have consumed alcohol with pills at the age of 13 years or earlier, compared to 1.3% and 0.9% in 2003 respectively in 1999.

In 2007, 1% of the students consumed tranquilizers/ sedatives before 14 years, slightly less than in 2003 (1.1%) but more than in 1999 (0.7%). In 2007 the percentage of those who have used inhalants at 13 years old or earlier is 2%, more than in 2003 (0.5%) or 1999 (0.2%).

The European average, regarding the early onset of marijuana/hashish use is 4% with a discrete predominance for boys (5% versus 4%).

Opinions on the possible "positive" effects associated with the alcohol consumption

Regarding the perception of the "positive" consequences of the alcohol consumption in 2007, 62% of students believed it is "very likely" or "likely" "to have a lot of fun", being noticed an increase from 2003 and 1999 (from 55.2% and respectively 45.3%).

In 2007, 48% of the respondents stated that due to the alcohol use could "forget about the troubles/ the problems", more over compared to 2003 (38.2%) and to 1999 (28.9%). The percentage of those in 2007 being of the view that by the alcohol consumption "would feel more friendly, more outgoing/sociable, more talkative" is 42%, much more compared to 2003 (34.1%) and 1999 (38.9%). 36% of students in 2007 believe that alcohol consumption "would make them to feel relaxed", more compared to 2003 (30.9%) and much more compared to 1999 (23%). 39% of students in 2007 think that by drinking alcohol "would feel happy", many compared to 32.4% in 2003 and 21.3% in 1999.

Generally can be noticed an increase of those who have positive views about the effects of the alcohol consumption.

Opinions on the possible "negative" effects associated with the alcohol consumption

Regarding the "negative" effects of the alcohol consumption, in 2007, 68% believe it is "likely" or "very likely" "to feel sick", being noticed a slight increase compared to 2003 (64.7%) but remaining almost equal to 1999 (68.8%).

In 2007, 54% of adolescents believe that by drinking alcohol "could do something they would regret later", almost the same as in 2003 (54.8%), slightly more than in 1999 (49.3%).

41% of the students think that "would get a hangover", fewer than in 2003 (44.1%) and approximately the same as in 1999 (41.7%).

21% of students in 2007 believe that when drinking alcohol it is "likely" or "very likely" "not be able to stop drinking", fewer compared to 2003 (25.4%) but more than in 1999 (15.6%).

In 2007, 37% of the respondents think that by drinking they "would have trouble with the police", less than in 2003 and 1999.

Problems due to the alcohol use

In 2007, among the problems due to the alcohol consumption during the last 12 months, can be noticed "the poor performance at school" found at 14% of the students, in marked increase over 2003 and 1999 (2.2 -1.7%).

"The problems in the relationships with the friends" were reported by 13% of respondents in 2007, percent in obvious increase compared to 2003 and 1999 (4.7% respectively 3.0%).

"The problems in the relationships with the parents" were reported in 2007 by 11% of the students in constant growth over 2003 and 1999 (4.3% respectively 3.1%).

In 2007, 6%, from the personal problems are met to a lesser extent "the accident or personal injury", slightly up compared to 2003 and 1999 (4.9% respectively 3.8%).

"The hospitalization or the referral to the emergency room" was reported in 2007 by 2%, up from 2003 and 1999 (0.8% respectively 1.1%).
In 2007, 2% of students were "victims of robbery or theft", slightly more compared to 2003 and 1999 (1-1.2%).

Basically, the most common problems due to the alcohol consumption in 2007 are "the poor performance at school" (14%) and "the relationship problems with friends" (13%).

A percentage 10-11% met "problems in the relationship with the parents" (11%), and "physical fight" (10%).

About 5-7% of the students were engaged in "unprotected sexual relationship" (7%), "accident or personal injury" and "problems with the police" (6% each), or were "engaged into a sexual relationship that they have regretted it the next day" (5%). In last place, at a frequency of 2% can be noticed "the hospitalization or the referral to emergency room", the fact of being "a victim of robbery or theft".

A proportion of 7% of students in 2007 said that because the alcohol consumption were engaged in "unprotected sexual relationship", value highly rising compared to those of 2.5% in 2003 and 1.8% in 1999.

We were involved because the consumption of alcohol into "sexual relations that they regretted the next day", 5% of students in 2007, up from 2003 (2.3%) and 1.2% in 1999.

Problems due to drugs use

As regards to consequences due to the drug use in the last 12 months, reported in 2007, first are "the relationship problems with friends" and "physical fight" (seen in 2% of students); followed by "the accident or personal injury", "the poor performance at school", "the relationship problems with parents", the fact of "being engaged into a sexual relationship that they have regretted it the next day", "being engaged in unprotected sexual relationship", "the problems with police" (each met by 1% of the respondents in 2007).

"The hospitalization or referral to the emergency room" decreased to 0% (compared to 0.3-0.4% in 2003 and 1999) and also the fact of being "victims of robbery or theft" (from 0.3-0.1% in 2003 and 1999).

"The problems in the relationships with the friends" due to drug use were recognized in 2007 by 2% of the students, 4 times more than in 2003 (0.5%) and 10 times more than in 1999 (0.2%).

A consistent increase was reported for the problems as "physical fight" met at 2% in 2007, a rate 10 times greater than in 2003 and about 7 times greater than in 1999.

"The accident or personal injury" due to drug use was reported by 1%, a percent 3.3 times higher than in 2003 and 1999 (each 0.3%).

"The poor performance at school" in the last 12 months was met by 1%, 3.3 times more in 2007 compared to 2003 (0.3%) and 10 times more than 0.1% in 1999.

"The problems in the relationship with their parents" due to drug use in the last 12 months have doubled in 2007 compared to 2003 (1% versus 0.5%) and were reported by a proportion 5 times greater than 1999 (1% versus 0.2%).

"To be engaged in sexual relationship that they have regretted it the next day" was met by 1% of students in 2007, 5 times more compared to 2003 (0.2%) and 10 times more than those of 1999 (0.1%).

"To be engaged in unprotected sexual relationship" because of drug use in the last 12 months was reported by 1% of students in 2007, 10 times more compared to 2003 and 1999 when were 0.1% each.

"The problems with the police" due to drug use in the last 12 months have been recognized by 1% of students in 2007, twice many as compared to 2003 (0.5%) and 3.3 times more compared to 1999 (0.3%).

In 2007 were not recognised either the "hospitalization or referral to the emergency room" compared to 0.3-0.4% in 2003 and 1999, nor the fact of being "a victim of robbery or theft" (0.3-0.1% in 2003 and 1999).

Perception of the availability of alcohol, tobacco and drugs

In 2007, 63-65% of pupils are of the opinion that beer, wine can be bought "very easy" or "fairly easy"; 53% considers it easy to purchase cigarettes and 42% find easy the purchase of spirits. (table 2)

The evolution of such perceptions is similar for beer, wine, spirits and cigarettes, decreasing in 2007 from 2003, when in 2003 it was recorded an increase compared to 1999.

In 2007, the percentage of those who believe that the inhalants can be "easily purchased" is 37%, a high increase over 2003 (12.9%) and especially over 1999 (5.3%).

The percentage of those who believe that tranquillizers/sedatives can be "easily purchased" is 14% in 2007, showing a discrete increase compared to 2003 (12.4%) and more pronounced as compared to 1999 (8.5%).

The percentage of those perceiving the amphetamines as easy to get is 6% in 2007, unchanged to 2003 (6.1%) and in slight increase from 1999 (4.3%).

In 2007 8% of students think that ecstasy purchase is easy, value slightly increased over 2003 (7%) and more pronounced from 1999 (3.1%).

The gender difference of perception is small, the advantage of the boys being only one percentage point in 2007 and 2003. The value of Romania is far below the European average (18%).

In the opinion of students in 2007, the most accessible drugs are the inhalants, following the tranquillizers/sedatives, ecstasy and amphetamines.

Compared to 2003, in the students view, the drugs availability has largely extended for inhalants (an increase of 24.9 percentage points), but to a lesser extent for tranquillizers/sedatives (1.6 percentage points), ecstasy (1 percentage point), remaining unchanged for amphetamines.

If in the area of alcohol and tobacco consumption, it seems that the carried out interventions had certain effectiveness, instead for drugs, the affordability becomes alarming.
Perception of the risk associated with tobacco, alcohol and drugs use

As regards the cigarettes smoking, the teenagers perceive the risk associated with the smoking more in terms of the quantity than in terms of the consumption itself. (table 3 and table 4).

In 2007, 71% believe that there is a high risk associated with the behavior of "smoking of 1-2 packages per day", fewer compared to 2003 (77.1%) and 1999 (81.5%).

Only 14% of students in 2007 believe that smoking "occasionally" is harmful, a little more compared to 2003 (12.8%) and approximately the same as in 1999 (14.2%).

In 2007 a proportion of 67% think that consuming "4-5 drinks nearly every day" is risky, slightly less than in 2003 (69.3%) but slightly more than in 1999 (63.3%).

The consumption of "1-2 drinks nearly every day" is perceived as harmful by 36% in 2007, being noticed a very slight decrease from 2003 (37.5%) but a more consistent one compared to 1999 (31.3%). In 2007 think that is harmful the consumption of "5 or more drinks every weekend" 44%, the percentage being bigger than that of 2003 (38.4%) and 1999 (33.6%).

The "regular" use of amphetamines is perceived as risky behavior by 63% of students in 2007, more compared to 57.5% in 2003 but less compared to 72.1% in 1999. Instead, only 44% of pupils think that the use of amphetamines "once or twice" is harmful, more compared to 2003 (39.1%) but consistently less from 1999 (58.4%).

The "regular" use of ecstasy is seen as harmful by 71% of students in 2007, more than 64.2% in 2003 and approximately equal to 1999 (71.9%).

The use of ecstasy "once or twice" is perceived as harmful for health by 45% of the students in 2007, percentage only slightly higher compared to 2003 (43.3%) but much lower compared to 1999 (60.5%).

In general, the Romanian students perceive especially the risk related to "regular" use of substances such as cannabis (72%) ecstasy (71%), amphetamines (63%) and related to "smoking one or more packages per day" (71%), the consumption of "4-5 drinks almost every day" (67%).

Only 44-52% think that is harmful the use of cannabis "once or twice" (52%) or "occasionally" (49%), of ecstasy or amphetamines "once or twice" (45-44%).

44% think that it is "highly risky" to consume "5 or more drinks each weekend". The consumption of "1-2 drinks nearly every day" is seen as risky by 36% of the students but the "occasional" smoking of cigarettes only by 14%.

In Romania the percentage of students who perceive a "high risk" associated with the drugs use is generally above the European average.

Compared to the European average, the Romanian pupils have a stronger perception about the "great risk" associated with cannabis use, especially for "occasionally" (11 percentage points), "once or twice" (18 percentage points) but less for the "regular" use of cannabis (4 percentage points).

The positive gap between Romania and Europe can be noticed especially for the alcohol consumption: "1-2 drinks nearly every day" (9 percentage points), "4-5 drinks nearly every day" or "5 or more drinks every weekend" (6 percentage points for each). For the cigarettes smoking of "one or more packages per day" the gap is 7 percentage points, but much smaller for that "occasional" (one percentage point).

### Table 2. The perception regarding the drug availability, Romania, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Can be purchased &quot;very easy&quot; or &quot;fairly easy&quot;</th>
<th>1999 %</th>
<th>2003 %</th>
<th>2007 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tranquilizers / sedatives</td>
<td>8,5</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>5,3</td>
<td>12,9</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>6,1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>7,0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. The perception of "high risk" associated with the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, Romania, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The perception of &quot;high risk&quot; associated with:</th>
<th>1999 %</th>
<th>2003 %</th>
<th>2007 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smoking cigarettes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- one or more packages per day</td>
<td>81,5</td>
<td>77,1</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- occasionally</td>
<td>14,2</td>
<td>12,8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consumption of alcohol</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 4-5 drinks nearly every day</td>
<td>63,3</td>
<td>69,3</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 1-2 drinks nearly every day</td>
<td>31,3</td>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 5 or more drinks each weekend</td>
<td>33,6</td>
<td>38,4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of other drugs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- amphetamine regularly</td>
<td>72,1</td>
<td>57,5</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- amphetamines once or twice</td>
<td>58,4</td>
<td>39,1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ecstasy regularly</td>
<td>71,9</td>
<td>64,2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ecstasy once or twice</td>
<td>60,5</td>
<td>43,3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compared to the European average, the students from Romania perceive more "the great risk" associated with the use "once or twice" of amphetamine and ecstasy (5-6 percentage points). In contrast, in Romania, the percentages of pupils perceiving a "great risk" associated with the "regular" use of ecstasy and amphetamines are below the European average (3 to 9 percentage points respectively).

Generally speaking, Romania is a country with low prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, drugs use.

Compared to all 34 countries participating in the study, in Romania was encountered a low prevalence for the following variables: the alcohol consumption and the drunkenness state in the last 12 months, the cigarettes smoking in the last 30 days, the use of cannabis, of any drug except cannabis, of the inhalants, of tranquilizers/sedatives without a prescription, of the alcohol associated with pills, of alcohol at last occasion.

While most students in the study (74%) said they had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months, this proportion is clearly below average. Only a quarter (26%) of pupils has experienced a state of drunkenness in the last 12 months.

In addition, the cigarettes smoking is lower than the ESPAD even if one of four students has smoked in the last 30 days. Very few students in Romania have reported the use of cannabis (4%), any other drug different from cannabis (3%), inhalants (4%), tranquilizers/sedatives without a prescription (4%) alcohol associated with pills (4%).

The prevalence increased slightly for inhalants, marijuana/hashish, 2% for cocaine, 1% for any injecting drug, 0.4-0.8 percentage points for magic mushrooms.

In Romania the prevalence use increased in 2007 compared to 2003 by 1.3-2.3 percentage points for cocaine, marijuana/hashish, inhalants; with 0.4-0.8 percentage points for ecstasy, anabolic steroids, amphetamines, LSD / other hallucinogens, any injecting drug, alcohol associated with pills.

The prevalence decreased by 0.2 percentage points for magic mushrooms, by 1.5 percentage points for tranquilizers/sedatives without a medical prescription, by 6-17 percentage points for tranquilizers/sedatives with a medical prescription (6.3 percentage points), any alcoholic beverage (8 percentage points), tobacco (9.6 percentage points), drunkenness (16.8 percentage points).

Concerning the lifetime prevalence, Romania in 2007 is under the European average by: 2 percentage points for tranquilizers/sedatives without a prescription, 3% for marihuana/hashish, 2% for cocaine, 8 percentage points for any alcoholic beverage; 14-15 percentage points for drunkenness and marijuana/hashish.

The lifetime abstinence has increased by 6.3-9.9 percentage points for alcohol and cigarettes as follows: by 6.3 percentage points for the combination of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal drugs, tranquilizers/sedatives, inhalants; by 5 percentage points for illicit drugs and only by 2 percentage points for tranquilizers and sedatives. The abstinence decreased by 1.4 percentage points for the inhalants.

Regarding the abstinence lifetime, Romania is above the EU average, especially for the illicit drugs (15 percentage points), alcohol (8 percentage points). Romania is above the European average with 5 percentage points regarding the abstinence from the inhalants considered separately or in combination of cigarette, alcohol, illegal drugs, tranquilizers/sedatives, inhalants. The positive gap between Romania and Europe is smaller as regards the abstinence from cigarettes (4 percentage points) and tranquilizers/sedatives (2 percentage points).

The use in the last 12 months increased slightly for inhalants, mari-

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**Table 4. The perception of the risk associated with the substances use, Romanian versus European average, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of a &quot;great risk&quot; associated with</th>
<th>Romania (%)</th>
<th>The European average (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoking cigarettes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-one or more packages per day</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-occasionally</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption of alcohol:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4-5 glasses almost every day</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1-2 glasses almost every day</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-5 or more drinks every weekend</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of other drugs:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-amphetamines regularly</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-amphetamines once or twice</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ecstasy regularly</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ecstasy once or twice</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-cannabis regularly</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-cannabis once or twice</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-cannabis occasionally</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**CONCLUSIONS**

The lifetime prevalence is 81% for any alcoholic beverage, 54% for tobacco, 35% for drunkenness, 5% for tranquilizers/sedatives with a medical prescription, 4% for each inhalants, alcohol with pills, tranquilizers/sedatives without prescription, 3% for marihuana/hashish, 2% for cocaine, 1% for any injecting drug, LSD/other hallucinogens, amphetamines, anabolic steroids, ecstasy, and 0% for magic mushrooms.

The lifetime abstinence has increased slightly for inhalants, marijuana/hashish, 2% for cocaine, 1% for any injecting drug, 0.4-0.8 percentage points for magic mushrooms.

In Romania the prevalence use increased in 2007 compared to 2003 by 1.3-2.3 percentage points for cocaine, marijuana/hashish, inhalants; with 0.4-0.8 percentage points for ecstasy, anabolic steroids, amphetamines, LSD / other hallucinogens, any injecting drug, alcohol associated with pills.

The prevalence decreased by 0.2 percentage points for magic mushrooms, by 1.5 percentage points for tranquilizers/sedatives without a medical prescription, by 6-17 percentage points for tranquilizers/sedatives with a medical prescription (6.3 percentage points), any alcoholic beverage (8 percentage points), tobacco (9.6 percentage points), drunkenness (16.8 percentage points).

Concerning the lifetime prevalence, Romania in 2007 is under the European average by: 2 percentage points for alcohol associated with pills, ecstasy, tranquilizers/sedatives without a medical prescription; 5 percentage points for inhalants and tobacco; 8 percentage points for any alcoholic beverage; 14-15 percentage points for drunkenness and marijuana/hashish.

The lifetime abstinence has increased by 6.3-9.9 percentage points for alcohol and cigarettes as follows: by 6.3 percentage points for the combination of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal drugs, tranquilizers/sedatives, inhalants; by 5 percentage points for illicit drugs and only by 2 percentage points for tranquilizers and sedatives. The abstinence decreased by 1.4 percentage points for the inhalants.

Regarding the abstinence lifetime, Romania is above the EU average, especially for the illicit drugs (15 percentage points), alcohol (8 percentage points). Romania is above the European average with 5 percentage points regarding the abstinence from the inhalants considered separately or in combination of cigarette, alcohol, illegal drugs, tranquilizers/sedatives, inhalants. The positive gap between Romania and Europe is smaller as regards the abstinence from cigarettes (4 percentage points) and tranquilizers/sedatives (2 percentage points).
The 2007 ESPAD report

The 2007 ESPAD survey on alcohol and other drugs

The collecting data process of ESPAD study was included more than 100 000 students in the following countries: Armenia, Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany (7 Länder), Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands / Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Institutions implementing the study in Romania ESPAD 2007

1 NSPHHSM - National Institute of Public Health and Health Management
2 NAA - National Anti-Drug Agency
3 MERY - Ministry of Education, Research and Youth
4 NIS - National Institute of Statistics

People involved: Silvia Florescu (coordinator), Daniel Mihai, Marius Ciutan, Mihaela Gâlna, Raluca Iupceanu, Vasilica Costanescu, Daniela Vâlceanu, Eugen Hrișcă, Mona Moldovan, Paul Radu, Marius Mârginean, Ruxanda Iliescu, Madi Surugiu, Lucian Suditu, Cătălina Chendea, Ştefan Elena, România Lupaşcu, Filofteia Panduru, Vergil Voineagu

International institutions implementing the ESPAD study:

- The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN)
- The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)
- Council of Europe, Coöperation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group)

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Note: “Any illicit drug” includes cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, LSD or other hallucinogens, cocaine, crack and heroin.

References:

Regarding to early onset of drug use, Romania equals the European average level for alcohol associated with pills but is under the European average with 1 percentage point for amphetamines, tranquilizers/sedatives, ecstasy, inhalants and by 4 percentage points for marijuana/hashish early onset.