

**Acronym: Let it hAPYN!**

**Title: Empowering the Youth Sector with a better overview of evidence-based Alcohol intervention programmes**

### **Problem analysis including evidence base**

Alcohol is a major health determinant in the European Union, responsible for 7.4% of all ill health and premature death and costing the Union some €125bn each year (Anderson & Baumberg 2006). All ages are affected by alcohol's burden, but the young shoulder a disproportionate share, with 27% of all male death and 11% of all female death in the age group 15-29 years being due to alcohol, largely from accidents and injuries. The project aims to build capacity at European and Member State level to reduce the harm done by alcohol through the strengthening of the role of influential European, national and regional youth organizations like political and cultural youth clubs, sport clubs and student organizations. Their role can be multifunctional: (1) they can influence the drinking behavior of their members by installing a concrete internal alcohol prevention policy and as a part of that implementing alcohol prevention programs; (2) by supporting NGOs in conducting research, like mystery-shopping research and monitoring alcohol marketing practices; (3) they can also implement this research on their own and use the results to advocate for effective alcohol policies. In this kind of research the involvement of young people and youth organizations can play a crucial role. There is enough convincing research about what kind of interventions to reduce alcohol related problems are effective (Babor T., et al. Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity—Research and Public Policy. Oxford, UK:2010) and as a result of this youth organizations do have a good compass in order to implement these interventions and to support this in cooperation with NGOs. At least two evidence based interventions are relevant in this context: to reduce the availability of alcohol within youth organizations (and to get support for that by creating awareness of the health risks among their members) and to contribute to a better enforcement of alcohol laws by mystery shops research.

### **Target groups**

The target groups of this project are the associated, collaborating partners, APYN and other NGOs. The associated partners of the project never conducted a similar project identifying best practices on alcohol intervention in the Youth organizations (YO), therefore the results will be beneficial for their and other NGOs' future work on this field. YO are NGOs that work by young people (YP) for YP and more of 70% of their membership and leadership is between 15 and 30 years. The collaborating partners are 15 YO, representing 5 different types of YO: the Youth Associations (YA), the International YO, National Youth Councils (NYC), Youth Clubs (YC) and Student Unions (definition by European Youth Forum). To reach the purpose of the project we have gathered different types of YA, mainly the ones that are active on alcohol field or that have a big potential due to their PH work field. These are: medical YA, other public health YA and YA with the membership that is abstaining from alcohol consumption. With such a wide range of collaborating partners we are covering all possible organizations in the youth sector, apart from the organizations for YP, that don't comply the above-mentioned % criteria. APYN as an international NGO will be positively effected by the project as it will both map its working field and empower its membership. The collaborating partners include 4 international YO covering together ALL European countries, 5 NYC, 3

YA, 1 Student Union and 1 YC federation.

## **Methods and means**

The project implementation will be applied by a multi-method approach while each method used will correspond to scientific standards and is adequate to achieve its specific objective. The activities can be separated in project phases: Step 1: Secondary analyses & identification of good interventions/ practices Published literature and other reviews will be summarized, updated by using a specific search algorithm and result in a report on the currently available evidence of effectiveness of alcohol interventions (good practices). Additionally several databases of alcohol-related interventions will be searched and good practices will be assessed and selected from these sources. Strategies for the implementation of good practices in youth organizations (YO) will be assessed by using certain criteria to identify models of good practices for a successful implementation in YO. Step 2: Toolkits preparation Before Step 3, draft toolkits for different types YO will be prepared. The project team meeting will be used for decision-making purposes, applying adequate methodologies for consensus finding (e.g. Delphi-technique). The draft toolkits will be tested and finalized after Step 3. Step 3: Field studies/ pilot tests Based on the results of Step 1, proposals for alcohol interventions in YO and strategies for their implementation will be made and discussed within project team. On the basis of these proposals and in advance to the field/pilot test preparation, the representatives of YO will be trained on the field studies/ pilot test implementation and evaluation. A minimum of 7 field tests will be conducted in 7 countries by taking into account specific different contexts (identification, demographic characteristics, selected settings). Focus groups will be used to evaluate the field studies/ pilot test implementation and will provide useful information on facilitators and barriers for the implementation of evidence-based alcohol interventions in YO. Step 4: Dissemination The projects results (e.g. proposals, strategies, toolkits) will be disseminated in accordance to a concrete dissemination plan. The close connection of the project to implemented key networks (APYN, Eurocare, Alcohol Policy Network, Alcohol and Health Forum, AMPHORA, Club Health etc.) in the field will ensure the delivery to key experts and YO in all EU member states.

## **Expected Outcomes**

Since APYN is an umbrella network of Youth Organizations (YO) working on alcohol policy and alcohol prevention, this project gives an opportunity to empower its members and other YO in Europe through different pilot-testing projects, field-studies, trainings and advocacy activities. By empowering the youth sector in Europe, the project will contribute to better-informed young people (YP) and YO that will understand that alcohol is not an ordinary commodity to be used during organizations' regular activities (e.g. working team-building weekends, celebration of successes etc.). In other words: they learn to understand the principles of effective alcohol policy and they will support measures to implement this policy, like a reduction of availability of alcohol and a more effective enforcement of laws and regulations in order to reduce drinking of young people. With the overview of evidence-based best practices on alcohol interventions in YO and the adapted methods and tools to the reality of specific YO, the youth and NGO sector will get tools to be used in different youth environments - among organized/ non-organized youth, high-school/ University students, formal/ non-formal structures and different cultural environments and in cases where young people could NGOs or play a role in advocacy processes. By having an overview of the existing alcohol policies in the collaborating partners' countries and by assessing the results of the field-studies that will be carried to evaluate the existing law enforcement, the YO will be able to give suggestions for improvements of national and international regulations in order to reduce alcohol-related harm. With the trained individuals among the collaborating partners, the YO will become key players in establishing better and more comprehensive alcohol policies through a multi-stakeholder approach (excluding the alcohol industry). Moreover by publishing manuals, toolkits and using other dissemination methods, the "Let it

hAPYN!" project will enrich the NGO sector with fresh and evidence-based innovative approaches to support healthy choices and enhance life skills of YP to prevent alcohol-related harm in regular youth activities. To sum-up, the outcomes of the "Let it hAPYN!" project will have a wider outreach than just the APYN membership or the collaborating partners, what will be shown in years to come.

### **External and internal risk analysis and contingency planning**

Overall coordination and management - A difficult risk to assess and manage is the commitment of all associated partners (AsP) to participate fully in this project, given that the project involves 3 AsP (plus 15 collaborating partners). It is expected that the quality of the outcomes of the project, the availability of networking and knowledge exchange and transfer mechanisms, the integration of various stakeholders in events, and the usefulness of the knowledge gained, will motivate all beneficiaries (work package leaders, other partners as well as third parties) to participate in the project to gain synergies for their project activities and to improve the outcomes and the relevance of their activities. The project partners have worked together previously, they have comparable positions in the field and in their positions towards alcohol policy, and it is anticipated that these former working relationships will minimize risks to collaborative work. With regard to the operation of the collaborative mechanisms themselves, as described elsewhere, established tools and techniques will be employed and adapted to specific situations. Furthermore, the establishment of quality assurance mechanisms within the management structure will be an additional measure aimed at reducing potential risks. Poor functioning of the project network - One risk is that the development of the network does not make much progress because of members failing to communicate or participate in project activities. However, this is not anticipated as a major risk. The project team has a vast range of contacts already working in this field across Europe and it is expected that many will relish the opportunity to become part of a project network that provides regular and easy access to experience and resources across Europe. The dissemination activities proposed within the project, such as conference, will raise awareness of the network and offer opportunities for recruitment.

### **Horizontal Work package - Description of the work**

#### **Work package number 1**

Management of the project - The project is managed by 3 people and a team of volunteers that will be recruited if the project will be accepted. The Associated(AsP)and Collaborating partners(CP) will meet on a "Kick-off meeting" at the beginning of the project. Communication between partners - A regular day-to-day work will consist of telephone, Skype or physical meetings with AsP and CP in charge of specific WPs or other parts of the project. Already on the first day of the project several mailing lists(e.g. associate@apyn.org etc.) will be produced to facilitate the communication between partners. The coordination office will be in Ljubljana (Slovenia), Gregorčičeva ulica 7 from where most of the activities will be coordinated. Moreover a newsletter, a webpage and several social networks' channels will be produced to share the informations of the project. Monitoring the progress - The progress will be monitored with the help of the "Steering Committee"(SC) that will consist of representatives of every AsP (mostly coordinators) and 2 representatives from APYN. The meetings will happen 3 times a year- each time by a different AsP (Belgium, Netherlands, Slovenia). The SC will be in charge of the interim reporting. Resolution of conflicts - A special

Memorandum of Understanding will be signed at the beginning of the project among AsP and CP to agree on the ground rules in the project. All the conflicts will be peacefully resolved by the method of mediation by a third party organization, while we will try to avoid conflicts by 1) common consensus, 2) transparent and democratic decision-making and 3) regular communication and evaluation including regular questionnaires to identify the problems and assure tasks are underway. Scientific background - For the purpose of being in line with scientific background, we will form a "Scientific Committee" that will consist of researchers from every AsP. They will meet once a year together with the SC, but will mostly work online.

## **Work package number 2**

The dissemination of the project will be coordinated and implemented by Eurocare that is an alliance of NGO and public health organizations with 50 members from 21 European countries advocating the prevention and reduction of alcohol related harm. Eurocare has broad experience in dissemination of information, and its website, newsletter and network ensures a broad outreach. The overall aim is to ensure efficient dissemination of project information and the main findings. The dissemination will also target policy and decision makers in the field of youth and health policies both at European and Member States level. A project webpage will be created, which will ensure that the project results will be available and easy to find after the end of the project. Newsletters, press package and a handbook will be produced. The content will be produced by the project partners, and put together and disseminated by Eurocare. All materials will be available online, and printed if budget allows. The project aims to arrange local meetings, arranged by the project partners. Eurocare will seek to contribute to these meetings, as far as the budget allows. These meetings should aim for better collaboration in the alcohol prevention field. The European Youth Conference on best practice in alcohol interventions in YO will be organized in the end of the project. The conference will target YO and their networks in Europe, as well as policy and decision makers at European and Member State level. Further dissemination to stakeholders in the field: Eurocare will disseminate the project results to relevant stakeholders. This will include: • European Institutions - European Parliament, relevant Committees, European Commission (DG SANCO and DG EAC), RAYPRO platform. • Members of the research community in the alcohol field • NGO networks - e.g. Eurocare, Alcohol Policy Network and European Youth Forum. • Eurocare will seek for other relevant stakeholders among the Alcohol and Health Forum

## **Work package number 3**

Every WP will be evaluated in terms of goal-attainment indicated by the pre-defined indicators. A range of data resources will be used and analyzed: documents, deliveries, questionnaires, quantitative and qualitative data. All data will be analyzed in a systematic scientific way: Quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical methods, qualitative data using content analysis, and case studies with case study methodologies. Process (including formative) and outcome evaluation of the project in terms of both procedures and results in the following three domains will be realized: (1) the process of the project; (2) completion and delivery of the project's deliverables; and (3) assessment of the views and involvement of all the associated and collaborating partners. Together with WP leaders, objectives and measurable indicators for every WP will be fixed before WP starts. WP leaders document the progress of their WP and collect relevant data for the evaluation based on the objectives. At the end of every WP the leader and the involved staff will be questioned concerning the objectives and expected results. The analysis of the responses from the involved

staff and of the objective documented results will be summarized in an evaluation report. The project partners will be given the results of the evaluation of WP, which will be discussed together. At the end of the project, they will be asked with a questionnaire to assess the goal attainment and the organization of whole project and own satisfaction with it. A short report will summarize the results. All WP leaders will document all deliverables and results of the internal evaluation in a systematic way throughout the duration of each WP. The WP6 leader will collect all deliverables, results of the internal evaluation and other relevant documents and information, and send the completed documentation to external evaluators, which will be selected on the basis of public competition.

## **Core Work Package - Description of the work**

### **Work package number 4**

This WP aims to develop an inventory of evidence-based alcohol intervention programmes and other practices focusing on young people (YP). A review of international literature (both academic and grey) will be undertaken to identify effective models adopted to prevent and reduce alcohol use among YP. A mapping of youth organizations (YO) in Europe will be undertaken regarding their involvement in evidence-based alcohol practices by type of organization (youth organizations, youth clubs, youth councils, student unions or other organizations for YP) and level of YP participation. Several databases and key websites related to alcohol consumption among YP will be searched. National profile analysis will be carried out mainly on the basis of most recent data and information published in databases of the WHO and the EC. The partners will search for existing studies, research articles, assessments or evaluations of practices in their countries and report to the WP leader. A structured review of the literature and other resources on different practices will also be conducted by all partners involved in this WP. A comprehensive report (including literature review) will be produced by UTRIP. In addition, using information collated through other WP on the current project, key measures of alcohol policies focusing on YP that have been identified will be examined. These will include good and bad (ineffective) practices and the existing knowledge about the possibilities for implementation of best practices in YO. Adequate tools, methods and materials of the selected alcohol interventions among YO will be identified which will allow project partners to produce a toolkit of methods and materials.

### **Work package number 5**

This work package starts with a critical analysis of the main existing alcohol prevention interventions in Europe being implemented within mainstream youth organizations (YO) for their members and conducted by mainstream YO for specific target groups. The main goal is to discover which contributions YO can play in the field of alcohol prevention activities and alcohol prevention policies. The selection of interventions in relation to YO will be based on the existing knowledge and literature about effective alcohol prevention policies which we can find for example in: Tomas Babor: Alcohol no ordinary commodity (2010 in: Addiction). In partnership with representative YO the selected interventions will be adapted more precisely to the principles of effectiveness. The next step is that at least 6 selected interventions will be piloted. Depending the results of the pilot studies (the impact of these interventions in terms of changing attitudes,

changing drinking behaviour and the adaptations of the alcohol policy of the YO) these interventions will be described and promoted. Manuals (toolkits) for YO will be written about how to develop an effective alcohol policy for their own organization, how to implement effective interventions and how to train new members of YO in order to sustain the results on the long run.

#### **Work package number 6**

In this working package the main partner (APYN) will together with Eurocare prepare a strategy how to include collaborating youth organizations (YO) in the literature review of the existing national "alcohol laws" in collaborating partners' countries. This action will result in a better overview for the main partner and the specific collaborating partner about the national alcohol policy reality. The next step will be the assessment of the results produced under the WP7 deliverable "Report of the implementation results of the pilot-testing projects" in YO in order to compare the effectiveness of certain policy regulations. In this way the YO will have an outlook of "what doesn't work" and will therefore during 7 national pilot consultations suggest improvements of existing national regulations and how to improve compliance of these regulations in the future (as "National Youth Manifestos on Alcohol"). Although similar overviews already exist and the national alcohol policies tend to change regularly, the main purpose of this working package is to make YO familiar to national alcohol laws, understand what are the "non-working segments" and suggest improvements. Moreover, an overview of the EU Alcohol Strategy focusing on youth will be carried out by APYN, who will together with the collaborating partners suggest improvements.

#### **Work package number 7**

Youth organizations (YO) can play a main role in promoting the compliance and enforcement of specific alcohol laws. In this work package young people (YP) will be informed systematically about the content and function of existing national alcohol laws and regulations which are specifically aimed at the protection of YP towards the harmful effects of alcohol. Examples of these laws are: age limits for purchasing alcoholic products and or to sell alcohol, laws that forbid over-serving and laws or regulations to protect YP against the negative impact of alcohol marketing. YP will be trained to do field studies if possible in partnership with NGOs to measure the compliance of these laws and regulations based on existing scientifically proven protocols implemented by STAP and other NGOs in Europe. The results of these studies will be analyzed and presented to and discussed with local and national authorities and other stakeholders in the alcohol field. Together with the WP6, recommendations will be formulated in order to improve the rate of compliance and the intensity and effectiveness of the existing enforcement policies and strategies.