To whom it may concern

Date: 24 November 2014

EMCDDA position statement on the value of surveys carried out by the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD)

Data from the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) provide a valuable source of comparable information on alcohol, tobacco and drug use among 15- and 16-year-old students in Europe. The Study has been running since 1996 and now represents a unique, long term ‘window’ on substance use trends which is of particular relevance for informing the development and targeting of prevention and early intervention activities.

The ESPAD data has therefore become an increasingly important resource for reporting on the European drug situation and provides complementary information to the EMCDDA’s key indicator on drug prevalence in the general population. In this context, ESPAD data is useful for trend identification, confirming the analysis from adult samples, and allows patterns of illicit drug, alcohol and tobacco consumption to be compared.

The EMCDDA collects a wide range of drug data through the European information network on drugs and drug addiction (Reitox), reflecting its mandate to provide ‘factual, objective, reliable and comparable information at European level’. ESPAD and the EMCDDA collaborate on technical issues and maintain a close working relationship under a cooperation framework signed in 2008, followed by the ‘Joint statement on scaling up cooperation between ESPAD and the EMCDDA’ from 2011. In recent years, the collaboration between the EMCDDA and ESPAD has increased substantially, reflecting the value ESPAD data brings to the EMCDDA’s mission of reporting on overall patterns of drug use in Europe.

In line with its mandate, the EMCDDA strongly supports the collection of comparable data on school students and views the ESPAD survey and methods as a good model for data collection in this area. We therefore encourage national institutions and other relevant parties in countries participating in ESPAD to provide financial and institutional support to the project where this is possible and to encourage schools and relevant educational bodies to support the data collection exercise.

Wolfgang Götz
Director

Copy: Heads of the Reitox national focal points

See the cooperation framework document and the ‘Joint statement on scaling up cooperation between ESPAD and the EMCDDA’ at [http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners/espad](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners/espad)