

September 2010

Overview of the ESPAD Project

Background, Methodology and Organisation

www.espad.org

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Section 2

Overview of the ESPAD Project

1. Background of the ESPAD Project

A need for comparable data on adolescent substance use

In the spring of 1995, the first large-scale European school survey of students' substance use, known as the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD), was conducted in 26 countries. The main reason for initiating the ESPAD Project was the need for comparable data on substance use among young people throughout Europe.

At the beginning of the 1990s only a few European countries regularly carried out national school surveys on substance use. Others had performed single studies at different times, for instance on geographically limited samples, while many other countries had hardly any data at all. Even though the number of studies was growing, it was still difficult to obtain a comprehensive picture and to compare prevalence levels between countries. The main reason for this was that the studies had been performed on different age groups using different questionnaires and at different times. In other words, too many factors influenced the results and made comparisons difficult or impossible.

In the 1980s a subgroup of collaborating investigators was formed within the group of experts on the epidemiology of drug problems at the Pompidou Group (Council of Europe). The aim of this subgroup was to produce, by means of the standardisation of definitions, prevalence measures, etc, a survey instrument which would allow countries to compare substance use in student populations. A questionnaire was tested by eight countries in a pilot study in 1986–1988. Owing to differences in sample sizes, sociocultural background, target age groups and the timing of data collection, the data were still not directly comparable between participating countries. However, the pilot study demonstrated that the questionnaire was reliable and valid for use in Europe. The methodological findings from six of these surveys have been published by the Pompidou Secretariat, Council of Europe (Johnston et al 1994).

ESPAD – a Swedish initiative supported by the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA

Annual school surveys have been conducted among Swedish grade 9 students (15–16 years old) since the early seventies. During the mid-1980s the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN) became responsible for the surveys. It was then noted that it was hard to find comparable data from other countries, not least owing to methodological differences.

In the light of these experiences, Björn Hibell and Barbro Andersson at CAN initiated a collaborative project in the early 1990s by contacting researchers in a number of European countries to explore interest in simultaneous school surveys of substance use. After receiving positive responses, they made contact with the Pompidou Group secretariat to find out if it was possible to obtain some support for the project.

The proposal was submitted to the Permanent Correspondents of the Pompidou Group in December 1993. The Pompidou Group gave its support to the project at an early stage, not only by hosting and

financing meetings but also by suggesting contact persons in a number of countries. The first ESPAD Project Meeting was hosted by the Pompidou Group in Strasbourg in 1994. Support was also given for travel expenses for a small working group (Steering Committee) appointed by the first Project Meeting, as well as for an Editorial Committee for the first International Report. After a thorough planning process, the first data-collection wave took place in March–May 1995, resulting in the first ESPAD International Report (Hibell et al. 1997). The cooperation with the Pompidou Group has continued in many ways also after the initial phase of ESPAD.

Another important collaborating body since it was established in the mid 1990s is the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). The cooperation has included support for data quality development, data analysis and reporting as well as contribution to ESPAD reports and dissemination of ESPAD results.

2. Purpose

The main aim of the ESPAD Project is to collect comparable data on substance use among students of the same age group in as many European countries as possible. The most important objectives in the long run are to monitor trends in substance use among students in European countries and to compare trends between countries and between groups of countries. In order to do so, the surveys are repeated every four years, with 1995 as the starting point.

Since the 2007 data collection, all national datasets are merged into common ESPAD Databases. This allows research teams to go beyond the mere process of monitoring prevalence rates but also to carry out deeper and more statistically advanced analysis in order to increase the knowledge of mechanisms related to substance use among adolescents.

This kind of knowledge is important in the context of the design of new prevention strategies. ESPAD data may also be valuable in the evaluation of policy documents such as the EU Drugs Action Plan, the EU Alcohol Strategy and WHO/Europe's Declaration on Young People and Alcohol.

3. A standardised methodology

To obtain comparable data, it is important to standardise the data-collection process as much as possible. This means that those collecting the data must follow the methodological protocol that has been decided. Information about the protocol is presented in the ESPAD Handbook, which is a necessary tool for conducting ESPAD surveys. Some of the methodological issues are also briefly mentioned below.

Target population

It is important to compare students of the same age since experience of substance use changes considerably with age among adolescents. The (main) target population of the ESPAD Project is students turning sixteen during the year of data collection. This means that students born in 1995 will be surveyed in the 2011 data collection. Since data collection normally takes place during March–April, the students are about 15.8 years old on average.

One reason for choosing students in this particular age group is that they are still enrolled in the compulsory school system in most countries, yet are old enough to have gained some experience of alcohol, tobacco and drug use. The target population is limited to students who are present in class on the day of data collection. This means that data from follow-up studies that may be carried out on

absent students are not included in the ESPAD International Reports. Students who are unable to understand the questionnaire or who for other reasons cannot answer it without assistance, for example students with various disabilities, are also not included in the study.

Nationally representative samples

Even though some exceptions have been made over the years, it is recommended and expected that participating countries draw random samples that are representative of the whole country and not only of regions, cities or the like. These nationally representative samples should be drawn as cluster samples where the sample units are classes, and the net sample (returned questionnaires) must include answers from at least 2,400 students.

Standardised questionnaires and fieldwork

Data collection takes place in a classroom during one classroom hour with group-administered questionnaires, under more or less the same circumstances as a written test. It is made clear that the survey is anonymous, that participation is voluntary and that each student should seal his or her questionnaire in a blank envelope before returning it. A number of countries prefer to use research assistants rather than teachers as survey leaders. A methodological study of different modes of administration suggests that there is no difference in the results obtained between teacher-administered and research-assistant-administered questionnaires, provided that anonymity envelopes are used (Bjarnason, 1995).

For reasons of comparability, most questions in the questionnaire are identical in subsequent data-collection waves. It is a well-established fact that survey questionnaires may be sensitive to changes. Even small changes to the order or wording of questions may affect the results and destroy comparability. However, minor changes are sometimes necessary and the ESPAD questionnaire has in fact been slightly amended before each data-collection wave. A major revision of the ESPAD questionnaire in 2007 resulted in a loss of comparability for certain items, as demonstrated by a split-half study carried out in 2006 (Hibell and Bjarnason, in progress). However, key measures have remained unchanged since the first ESPAD survey in 1995, enabling changes in substance use over time to be tracked.

Databank

Since 2007 it is mandatory for all participating countries to deliver their national datasets centrally, so that they can be merged into joint ESPAD databases. This process was started on a voluntary basis after the 2003 data collection, and most countries delivered data for the first ESPAD database. The 2007 Database, however, covers all participating countries. The databases are stored in the ESPAD Databank, which is maintained by the Databank Manager.

The databases are used to generate results to be included in the International Report. Once that a report has been published, ESPAD researchers may apply for access to the database in order to conduct further research, leading to the publication of books, reports and research articles. Applications to use ESPAD databases are sent to the Application Committee for review (see below). Rules for the use of the databases and information about their application are available in a document entitled "Rules for the use of ESPAD databases".

4. Data-collection waves and International Reports

Data-collection waves are organised every four years. Since the first one was in 1995, the subsequent survey waves took place in 1999, 2003 and 2007, and the fifth data-collection exercise will be conducted in the spring of 2011.

Table A lists participating countries in the various years. As can be seen from the table, a growing number of countries have become involved in the ESPAD Project. In addition, after the 2007 data collection five more countries took part in a supplementary data-collection exercise during the subsequent year. The table also includes information about exceptions made from the requirement for samples to be nationally representative.

Results from all data-collection waves have been published in International Reports (Hibell et al. 1997, Hibell et al. 2000, Hibell et al. 2004 and Hibell et al. 2009). These reports are compiled by the Coordinators at CAN and focus primarily on trends in the prevalence of substance use. However, the common descriptive report is by no means intended to be the only international report. On the contrary, the databases enable the ESPAD researchers to perform a large number of different analyses (for a list of publications, see www.espad.org). Such further work has been conducted at various levels: schools within countries, regional groups of countries and the European level of all participating countries.

Apart from surveying the main target age group (15–16-year-olds), seven countries also surveyed 17–18-year-old students during the 2003 data collection (i.e. students born in 1985). Results concerning these older students are available in a separate report (Andersson et al. 2007).

Most countries produce national reports in order to disseminate their national results. To obtain copies of such national reports, it is advisable to contact the Principal Investigators in each country, who are listed on www.espad.org.

5. Project organisation and governance

The ESPAD Project

ESPAD is an independent research project owned by the ESPAD researchers. This section describes the structure of the project, the decision-making process and the different bodies involved as well as what is expected of the participating countries.

Coordination

CAN in Stockholm has functioned as the ESPAD coordinating institution since the project was initiated in the 1990s. The Coordinators at CAN are responsible for planning and initiating Steering Committee meetings, for communicating with the Principal Investigators and other researchers involved, and for producing and publishing the international ESPAD Reports. The Coordinators also communicate with outside partners and stakeholders (such as the Pompidou Group, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the Swedish Government, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health, etc.) and raise funds for the management of the ESPAD Project.

Principal Investigators

Each participating country is responsible both for the project as a whole and for the national part of the ESPAD Project. In each ESPAD member country a Principal Investigator (PI) is therefore appointed to ensure that the country meets its obligations.

Table A. Countries participating in ESPAD, 1995–2007/2008.

Country	1995	1999	2003	2007
Armenia	.	.	.	Yes
Austria	.	.	Yes	Yes
Belgium	.	.	Yes	Flanders ^{a)}
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Fed. of	.	.	.	2008 ^{b)}
Bulgaria	.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Czech Republic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Faroe Islands	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	.	Yes	Yes	Yes
FYR of Macedonia	.	Yes	.	2008 ^{b)}
Germany ^{c)}	.	.	6 Bundesl.	7 Bundesl.
Greece	.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greenland	.	Yes	Yes	.
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Iceland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Isle of Man	.	.	Yes	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malta	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Moldova, Republic of	.	.	.	2008 ^{b)}
Monaco	.	.	.	Yes
Montenegro	.	.	.	2008 ^{b)}
Netherlands	.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Republika Srpska	.	.	.	2008 ^{b)}
Romania	.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Russia ^{d)}	.	Moscow	Moscow	Yes
Serbia	.	.	.	2008 ^{b)}
Slovak Republic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	.	.	Yes	Yes
Turkey	Istanbul ^{e)}	.	6 cities ^{e)}	.
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes ^{f)}	Yes	Yes	Yes

a) Only the Flemish-speaking part of Belgium participated in 2007.

b) Participated in the supplementary study in 2008.

c) Out of sixteen German *Bundesländer* (federal states), six participated in 2003 and seven in 2007.

d) Only Moscow participated in 1999 and 2003.

e) In 1995 only Istanbul was surveyed while another five major cities were added in 2003.

f) UK data for 1995 are available separately for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

PIs are appointed by the ESPAD Steering Committee on the Coordinators' recommendation. It should be stressed that they cannot be appointed by any national bodies such as governments, research institutes or funding agencies. An appointed representative of a candidate country is first referred to as a Contact Person, becoming a full ESPAD PI only once he or she has led a data-collection wave.

The PI has a number of responsibilities: to raise funds for the national data collection, to produce a National Project Plan, to submit the data collected and a Country Report, to communicate with the Coordinators in a timely fashion, and to participate in Regional Seminars and Project Meetings. The PI also has an important role in increasing national awareness of the ESPAD Project. The Steering Committee may suspend a PI who fails to fulfil his or her defined responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. The obligations of a PI are listed and more thoroughly explained in Appendix 1.

Project Meetings

The regular Project Meetings are an important part of the ESPAD working process. The very first Project Meeting was held in March 1994 at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, gathering 26 representatives from 21 countries and 5 representatives of the Pompidou Group. During the period 1994–2002, six meetings were held. Since 2004 Project Meetings have been held annually as the increased availability and use of ESPAD data have led to a need for more frequent sharing of experiences and results as well as formal decision-making. A list of all Project Meetings held up 2010 is provided in Appendix 2.

All major decisions concerning the ESPAD Project are made at Project Meetings. Only the Principal Investigator of each country has voting rights at the meetings, but they are also attended by other national researchers from ESPAD member countries. Representatives of other organisations such as the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA are also invited to the Project Meetings, as are Contact Persons from new ESPAD countries or countries planning to join the ESPAD Project.

The Project Meeting has final authority over all aspects of the ESPAD Project, including the overall Project Plan, the target population, the sample, sampling procedures, the data-collection instrument, field procedures, the content of the International Report, the timetable and other practical issues. The meeting elects the Steering Committee and also decides the time and place of the next Project Meeting.

Steering Committee

Between Project Meetings, the ESPAD Project is governed by a Steering Committee which was established at the first Project Meeting in 1994. The Committee meets at least twice a year. A list of its previous meetings may be found in Appendix 2. The Steering Committee is responsible for preparing documents, proposals, etc., and for drawing up the agenda for the Project Meetings. The Committee is also responsible for summing up the proceedings of Project Meetings and for allocating different tasks stemming from Project Meetings. In between Project Meetings, the Steering Committee may also function as a decision-making body. The current members were elected at different Project Meetings; the present composition of the Steering Committee is presented in Appendix 3.

Regional Seminars

In order to achieve the necessary standardisation in terms of sampling, the survey instrument and data-capture procedures, Regional Seminars are organised before each data-collection wave. They are attended by representatives of geographically closely situated countries, who will discuss their National Project Plans. It is believed that meetings with neighbouring countries have various benefits as such countries have many obstacles and solutions in common. One exception from the organising principle of geographical closeness is made in the form of the group of countries small enough to

survey the whole population without any sampling procedures. In order to stay up to date and to serve as a link between the different groups, one of the Coordinators attends each of these seminars (meeting history is available in Appendix 2).

Each country circulates its National Project Plan prior to the Regional Seminar. Those plans form the basis of the discussions at the seminar. Guidelines on how to prepare a National Project Plan are available in section 3 of the ESPAD Handbook. Depending on the outcome of the meeting, adjustments to the National Project Plan may be necessary before fieldwork begins. When the fieldwork is completed, each country submits its national dataset and a Country Report describing the process. This report is structured in a similar way to the National Project Plan.

Thematic groups

Thematic groups were first formed at the 2004 Project Meeting in order to use the rich collection of ESPAD data more efficiently for research purposes. The objective of each group is to have one or more articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. All PIs are welcome to form and participate in such groups. A list of active and terminated groups may be found in Appendix 4.

Temporary groups

From time to time various temporary working groups have been established to deal with specific technical issues. Examples include the group that prepared a revision to the 2007 questionnaire and the group that suggested a general routine data-cleaning syntax to be applied to the 2007 Database. Members of former temporary working groups are listed in Appendix 4.

Database Application Committee

When a PI or a thematic group wishes to analyse a research question, a form is submitted to the Coordinators for further distribution among the Database Application Committee. This Committee, which is appointed by the Project Meeting, consists of the Coordinators and PIs from three countries. The application form and a document describing the rules for the databases and the application process are available on the ESPAD website. The present composition of the Application Committee is listed in Appendix 3.

Databank management

At the present moment there are four ESPAD databases available in the ESPAD Databank. The 2003 Database covers most of the ESPAD countries, namely those that voluntarily submitted their 2003 ESPAD datasets. The 2007 Database covers all of the ESPAD countries, as data submission had by then become mandatory. In addition, the 2006 Database covers eight countries involved in a split-half methodology study in connection with changes made to the 2007 questionnaire and the 2008 Database includes data from six countries using the 2007 ESPAD questionnaire.

These databases are compiled, maintained and stored by the Databank Manager. This position is presently held by Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), who was elected by the Project Meeting. The Databank Manager is also responsible for delivering databases to researchers whose applications have been approved.

6. The ESPAD Project work cycle

Year 1: Preparations

- Steering Committee Meeting
- Project Meeting (and Steering Committee Meeting)
- National Project Plans prepared and distributed
- Regional Seminars
- Revision of National Project Plans
- Fieldwork preparations, sampling, etc.

Year 2: Data collection

- Steering Committee Meeting
- Fieldwork and data collection
- Data capture
- Submission of datasets and Country Reports
- Communication process between PIs and Databank Manager/Coordinators
- Project Meeting (and Steering Committee Meeting)

Year 3: Reporting

- Steering Committee Meeting
- Release of the International Report, release of the national reports, press conferences
- Database ready for applicants
- Project Meeting (and Steering Committee Meeting)

Year 4: Analyses and methodological development

- Steering Committee Meeting
- Project Meeting – paper presentations (and Steering Committee Meeting)

7. Communication

Much of the routine communication within the ESPAD Project is of course conducted via e-mail, phone or regular mail. The most important formal channel for disseminating information, however, is the ESPAD website:

www.espad.org

A wide range of information is available on the ESPAD website. Much of it is accessible to the public, such as uploaded references and national reports, country contact information, the International Reports, questionnaires and a description of the background to the ESPAD project.

However, some of the information on the website is restricted to those actually involved in the ESPAD Project, i.e. Principal Investigators, other national researchers and collaborating partners. A personal password is required to access the restricted parts of the website, which contain documents more closely related to the work process, such as project plans, guidelines, rules, approved applications to use the databases, etc.

Each member is encouraged to upload documents of relevance to ESPAD, references to published articles, etc. All researchers are also expected to keep their contact information on the website up to date. This is the primary source used by the Coordinators to compile updated contact information for

the group, and it is also the most natural source for journalists, politicians, school staff and other people with an interest in finding out more about the project on the national level.

Newsletter

To communicate in between Project Meetings, and to have a channel for summing up information of major importance, a newsletter is produced by the Coordinators. This is distributed by e-mail and also posted on the website, where a newsletter archive is available.

8. Financial conditions of ESPAD

The ESPAD Project does not have a full budget of its own. Each Principal Investigator is expected to raise funds for national data collection and for participation in the annual Project Meetings.

Apart from costs related to national data collection, there are also general overhead costs for the maintenance of the ESPAD Project. Such costs relate to coordination, databank handling, production of International Reports and travel expenses for meetings of the Steering Committee and the various thematic groups as well as Regional Seminars. Over the years, such expenses have to a large extent been covered by the Swedish Government and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health.

The Pompidou Group hosted the first Project Meeting and has ever since made funds available for participation in Project Meetings by researchers primarily from countries in the eastern parts of Europe. In some years the Pompidou Group also supported participation by researchers in Regional Seminars and covered travel expenses for the Steering Committee.

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions (EMCDDA) has also supported ESPAD in many ways. This has included data analysis, the work of thematic groups, a questionnaire test and multilingual dissemination of ESPAD results.

Other organisations that have contributed at some point during the project are the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Social Research Unit for Alcohol Studies (STAKES) in Finland, and the Alcohol Research Council of the Swedish Alcohol Retailing Monopoly (SRA).

And last but not least: several countries have hosted Project Meetings, which means that they have made financial efforts regarding meeting facilities, meals, excursions, etc.

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Rules for the use of ESPAD databases – Including explanatory comments. September 2009.



Adopted at the ESPAD Project Meeting in Warsaw, September 6–8, 2009

ESPAD Principal Investigators – Qualifications and Responsibilities

ESPAD is an independent research project owned by the ESPAD researchers. This means that Principal Investigators are appointed by ESPAD, not by governments, research institutes or funding agencies. The Principal Investigator in each country should nevertheless be an established researcher who has good contacts with those institutions.

Qualifications

The Principal Investigator should have a strong academic background in a relevant field. ESPAD is an interdisciplinary project that builds on many different academic disciplines, including, but not limited to, sociology, epidemiology, psychology, statistics and social medicine. A Ph.D. is a desirable level of education for a Principal Investigator, but a strong publication record in the field of alcohol or drug research is also an important consideration.

Experience of conducting surveys is highly desirable, especially as regards school surveys and surveys about alcohol and drugs. Relevant experience includes experience of planning surveys, sampling, collecting data, processing data and disseminating results among researchers, policymakers and the general public.

It is important that a Principal Investigator either works at an organisation that can give the necessary technical and scientific support or has very close relations to such an organisation. Such organisations are typically universities or institutes engaged in alcohol or drug research, but other institutional arrangements may also be appropriate in a specific national context. Good connections with the central government or other relevant parts of the governmental sector may also be of crucial importance to obtain the political and/or administrative support necessary to carry out an ESPAD survey and to obtain access to relevant sampling frames and sampled schools.

Funding is crucial to the implementation of ESPAD at the national level. The Principal Investigator should therefore ideally have a proven record of obtaining research funds or be able to demonstrate formal relations with governmental or non-governmental agencies that are willing to provide the financial support necessary to conduct ESPAD surveys and attend ESPAD meetings.

Principal Investigators and ESPAD Contact Persons

In countries wishing to carry out their first ESPAD survey it may sometimes be difficult to find a researcher who has experience both of alcohol and drug research and of (school) surveys. In such a case, a first step in establishing close cooperation could be to appoint an ESPAD Contact Person.

Appointment of Principal Investigators

The ESPAD Coordinators are responsible for finding new ESPAD contacts in countries that are not represented in the project, as well as in countries where a Principal Investigator leaves his or her position, and they make recommendations to the ESPAD Steering Committee regarding new members that meet the requirements outlined above. The ESPAD Steering Committee approves new members of the project and reports to the next ESPAD Project Meeting.

Responsibilities of Principal Investigators

The Principal Investigator is responsible for planning, conducting and reporting ESPAD surveys in each country. Since ESPAD is a project that is owned by the ESPAD researchers it is also important that each Principal Investigator takes on a responsible and active role when it comes to communications and decision-making.

The responsibilities of the Principal Investigator include:

- Promoting ESPAD and disseminating ESPAD results at the national level;
- Preparing for each ESPAD data collection in a timely fashion;
- Securing financial and other resources necessary to conduct an ESPAD survey;
- Carefully preparing and monitoring the data-collection process in order to attain the highest possible level of quality in accordance with legal and ethical standards in each country;
- Adhering to all dates and deadlines for submitting information, documents and data to the ESPAD Coordinators, the Databank Manager and ESPAD colleagues;
- Taking part in different kinds of ESPAD meetings, including Regional Seminars and Project Meetings.

Failure to fulfil responsibilities

If a Principal Investigator is unable to fulfil his or her responsibilities as listed above, it is the responsibility of the ESPAD Coordinators to find a solution. In such a case, the following steps should be taken:

1. The ESPAD Coordinators should first alert the Principal Investigator to the problem and seek a durable solution to it;
2. If the problem persists, the Coordinators should refer the problem to the ESPAD Steering Committee. The Steering Committee may demand specific improvements from the Principal Investigator and may suspend the Principal Investigator if those demands are not met.



ESPAD Meetings and Seminars

ESPAD Project Meetings

- 1994 Strasbourg (France): 26 representatives from 21 countries and the Pompidou Group
- 1994 Istanbul (Turkey): 29 participants from 22 countries and the Pompidou Group
- 1997 Lisbon (Portugal): 39 participants from 29 countries, the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA
- 1998 Larnaca (Cyprus): 39 participants from 31 countries
- 2001 Valletta (Malta): 47 participants from 30 countries, the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA
- 2002 Prague (Czech Republic): 43 participants from 33 countries, the EMCDDA and UNODC
- 2004 Vienna (Austria): 43 participants from 31 countries, the Pompidou Group, the EMCDDA and UNODC
- 2005 Torshavn (Faroe Islands): 39 participants from 30 countries, the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA
- 2006 Helsinki (Finland): 39 participants from 31 countries and the EMCDDA
- 2007 Pisa (Italy): 47 participants from 36 countries, the Pompidou Group, the EMCDDA and HBSC
- 2008 Riga (Lithuania): 42 participants from 32 countries and the EMCDDA
- 2009 Warsaw (Poland): 41 participants from 31 countries, the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA
- 2010 Akureyri (Iceland): 37 participants from 32 countries and the EMCDDA

ESPAD Steering Committee Meetings

- 1994 Strasbourg (France) and Stockholm (Sweden)
- 1994 Utrecht (Netherlands) and Istanbul (Turkey)
- 1995 Athens (Greece)
- 1996 Dublin (Ireland)
- 1997 Lisbon (Portugal) and Athens (Greece)
- 1998 Athens (Greece) and Larnaca (Cyprus)
- 1999 Amsterdam (Netherlands)
- 2000 Kiev (Ukraine)
- 2001 Valletta (Malta)
- 2002 Athens (Greece) and Prague (Czech Republic)
- 2004 Stockholm (Sweden) and Vienna (Austria)
- 2005 Stockholm (Sweden) and Torshavn (Faroe Islands)
- 2006 Stockholm (Sweden) and Helsinki (Finland)

- 2007 Stockholm (Sweden) and Pisa (Italy)
- 2008 Stockholm (Sweden) and Riga (Lithuania)
- 2009 Kiev (Ukraine) and Warsaw (Poland)
- 2010 Athens (Greece) and Akureyri (Iceland)

ESPAD Regional Seminars

- 1994 Athens (Greece), Helsinki (Finland), Kiev (Ukraine) and Ljubljana (Slovenia)
- 1998 Edinburgh (United Kingdom), Kiev (Ukraine), Prague (Czech Republic), Rome (Italy) and Stockholm (Sweden)
- 2002 Athens (Greece), Moscow (Russia), Reykjavik (Iceland), Stockholm (Sweden) and Zagreb (Croatia)
- 2006 Budapest (Hungary), Larnaca (Cyprus), Munich (Germany), Paris (France), Riga (Latvia) and Warsaw (Poland)
- 2010 Chişinău (Republic of Moldova), Podgorica (Montenegro), Porto (Portugal), Prague (Czech Republic), Tallinn (Estonia), Utrecht (the Netherlands) and Valetta (Malta)



ESPAD Committees

Steering Committee

Chair: Björn Hibell (CAN – Coordinator), Ulf Guttormsson (CAN – Coordinator), Salme Ahlström (Finland), Olga Balakireva (Ukraine), Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Anna Kokkevi (Greece) and Ludwig Kraus (Germany)

Database Application Committee

Chair: Björn Hibell (CAN – Coordinator), Ulf Guttormsson (CAN – Coordinator), Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Gerhard Gmel (Switzerland), Marina Kuzman (Croatia)



ESPAD Groups

1. Thematic Groups

Active thematic groups

Antisocial Behaviour: Chair Patrick Miller (United Kingdom), Alojz Nociar (Slovakia), Katerina Skarupova (Czech Republic) and Sabrina Molinaro (Italy).

Former Soviet Union Countries: Chair Olga Balakireva (Ukraine), Artak Musheghyan (Armenia), Airi-Alina Allaste (Estonia), Marcis Trapencieris (Latvia), Irena Štutiniene (Lithuania), Otilia Scutelnicu (Moldova) and Konstantin Vyshinsky (Russia).

Polydrug Use: Chair Salme Ahlström (Finland), Natasa Dernovscek Hafner (Slovenia), Zsuzsanna Elekes (Hungary), Björn Hibell (Sweden), Anna Kokkevi (Greece), Joao Matias (EMCDDA), Karin Monshouwer (Netherlands), Deborah Olszewski (EMCDDA), Valeria Siciliano (Italy) and Konstantin Vyshinsky (Russia).

Risk Group: Chair Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Olga Balakireva (Ukraine), Anna Kokkevi (Greece), Svend Sabroe (Denmark), Andreea Steriu (Isle of Man) and Konstantin Vyshinsky (Russia).

Risky Drinking Habits: Chair Ludwig Kraus (Germany), Janusz Sieroslawski (Poland), Anina Chileva (Bulgaria), Fernanda Feijão (Portugal), Marcis Trapencieris (Latvia), Marina Kuzman (Croatia) and Patrick Lambrecht (Belgium).

Substance Use in Small Islands: Chair Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Andreas Pavlakis (Cyprus), Andreea Steriu (Isle of Man), Pál Weihe (Faroe Islands) and Sharon Arpa (Malta).

Multilevel Analysis: Chair Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Ludwig Kraus (Germany), Salme Ahlström (Finland), Sharon Arpa (Malta), Ladislav Czemy (Czech Republic), Fernanda Feijão (Portugal), Anna Kokkevi (Greece), Patrick Lambrecht (Belgium), Patrick Miller (UK), Sabrina Molinaro (Italy), Karin Monshouwer (Netherlands), Silvana Onceva (FYR of Macedonia), Valeria Siciliano (Italy) and Katerina Skarupova (Czech Republic).

Terminated thematic groups

Attitudes: Chair Patrick Miller (United Kingdom), Barbro Andersson (Sweden), Sharon Arpa (Malta), François Beck (France), Anina Chileva (Bulgaria), Zsuzsanna Elekes (Hungary), Pavla Lejcková (Czech Republic) and Eva Stergar (Slovenia).

Gender: Chair Salme Ahlström (Finland), Marie Choquet (France), Anastasios Fotiou (Greece), Marina Kuzman (Croatia), Sabrina Molinaro (Italy) and Alojz Nociar (Slovak Republic).

Trends: Chair Gerhard Gmel (Switzerland), Fernanda Feijão (Portugal), Silvia Florescu (Romania), Karin Monshouwer (Netherlands) and Marcis Trapencieris (Latvia).

2. Temporary ESPAD Working Groups

Terminated ESPAD working groups

2007 Questionnaire Group: Chair Björn Hibell (CAN – Coordinator), Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Ludwig Kraus (Germany), Patrick Lambrecht (Belgium), Leena Metso (Finland) and Alfred Uhl (Austria).

2007 Data Cleaning Group: Chair Thoroddur Bjarnason (Iceland), Ulf Guttormsson (CAN – Coordinator), Ludwig Kraus (Germany) and Patrick Miller (United Kingdom).