



Country report: SLOVENIA

1. Context information (max. 3 pages)

Short information about the context regarding

- Regulations on the protection of minors

The Act restricting the use of alcohol (ZOPA, 2003)

The Act forbids selling alcohol drinks to the minors under the age of 18 (seller may require identity document to check out the age) and to people, for whom it is justified to assume that they will turn alcohol over to the minors or who are showing signs of intoxication. Act forbids selling alcohol drinks between 21.00 and 7.00 hour, except in pubs, bars and discotheques, where it is forbidden to sale the spirits till 10.00 hour in the morning. The act prohibits the sale of alcohol drinks in institutions and associated places, which implement education and health services and in sports facilities, when sport events take place. The sellers of alcohol drinks must sell at least two different non-alcoholic beverages at the same or lower price than the cheapest alcohol beverage.

The protection of public order act (ZJRM-1, 2006)

The act prohibits entry and presence in pubs, clubs and discotheques and on events, where alcohol drinks are sold between 24.00 and 5.00 hour, to youngsters under the age of 16 without the company of parents, foster parents, guardians. Responsible persons in pubs, clubs, discotheques and other events may request a personal document to check the age.

Road Traffic Safety Act (ZVCP-1, 2004)

The driver is prohibited to drive a vehicle on the road under the influence of alcohol or being drunk and is not allowed to seat next to the driver or the motor vehicle. The act sets the maximum quantity of alcohol in organism of the drivers, which is 0,5 g alcohol/kg blood or 0,24 mg alcohol /l expired air. The act also prohibits some drivers from having any alcohol in blood (drivers who are beginners, professional drivers, drivers who are transporting a group of children, driving instructors, ...)



- Cultural aspects

Slovenia is on top of the world in pure alcohol consumption on a resident and by the percentage of persons, who have alcohol drinking related problems. This is known for permissive - dysfunctional culture of alcohol drinking – so-called “wet culture”, where there is highly positive attitude to alcohol and little related restriction. In our culture cult of wine, vineyards and beer lives well and is maintained. It is normal to drink a cup or two with meals and also it is “normal” to night binge drink in bars and at public events and among young people. Based on analysis of Slovenian drinking behavior Slovenian historian Anton Šepetavc says, that alcohol is a part of national consciousness (Slovenians search in alcohol confirmation of their Slovene identity) and tradition or part of national folklore – even national anthem has drinking tendency.

The majority of pupils get in touch with alcohol in last years of primary school. By the age of 11 one third has already drunk a cup of wine or beer, tenth a cup of spirits, 5.4% has already been drunk. Accessibility of alcohol drinks is high - the easiest is to get “alcopops” drinks (Baccardi Breezer, Smirnoff ice, dreamer, Bandidos). Bad results are also among younger population. Although ZOPA forbids the offer and selling alcohol drinks to minors below 18 years, alcohol consumption increases in this age group. The reason is probably failure to comply with the law by retailers, who aren't willing to lose profit and pure control over the implementation of the law. The results of ESPAD survey, made in year 2007, among Slovenian high school pupils, shows that percent of youngsters that regularly drink is increasing. The results conducted in year 2003 show that in the last year of high school 83% pupils drank, and in year 2007 87% (European average decreased in same year from 83% to 82%).

- Relevant differences in alcohol consumption

High school pupils and students expect many positive effects from alcohol, mostly fun, socializing and forgetting their problems. Good fifth of them think that “binge” drinking (five



or more drinks in a row) has no harm on health. Further on 12.2% of them think that 4-5 drinks per day have no risk.

Although youngsters are bombarded with information concerning harmfulness of drugs, the consciousness about the risk on health is insufficient. The reason is partly because youngsters aren't interested in health problems that develop in a later stage of life. The other reason for unawareness is that the information for young is given inappropriately and in the way that is unkind and it is not interesting.

- Aspects of youth and welfare policy

Youngsters in Slovenia, just like in Europe, are growing up in a world of rapid change, where transition from childhood to adulthood is significantly longer, more complexed and more uncertain as in previous generations, characterized by a late achievement of economic autonomy, longer dependency from adults and earlier achievement of individual freedom.

Key changes are:

- In the *family* field changes lead to weakening of the parents' authority, strengthening youngsters' authority, especially in free time spending, late marriage, and growing number of people living alone, partnership instead of marriage.
- In the *educational* field changes lead to extension of education period, diversification of educational careers and democratization of educational styles.
- In the field of *work* changes lead to flexible employment, changing periods of employment and unemployment, emphasis is placed on individual self-fulfillment in the profession.
- In the *policy* field there is a small participation of youth in shaping the political will.
- In the *everyday life* are prevailing patterns of behavior in fashion, sexuality and communication. Patterns are shown through media and introduced by the relevant individuals and groups.



The use of drugs usually starts in developmental period from early adolescence (12-14 years) to middle adolescence (14-17 years).

The following risk factors that influence youngsters' attitudes towards drugs are:

- Individual characteristics of the youngster: alienation and rebellion, antisocial behavior, impulsiveness, anxiety, depression, greater personal vulnerability, high need for stimulation.
- Family characteristic: vague rules in the family, poor control over children, negative communication, discord in family relationships, low self-image, inability to overcome problems and poor control of internal stress.
- Drugs: effects and the symbolic meaning (courage, rebellion, independence, adulthood).
- Peers: imitation and ticket to belonging to a certain group.
- School: educational failure, the transition from primary to high school and to faculty.
- Environment: availability and supply of drugs, legal restrictions, general attitude, bad local community membership, poor socio-economic status.

The use of alcoholic beverages mostly happens on weekends and it represents the pleasure as an opposite from boredom during school week. In leisure time young people can create their own identity, their own experience, make sense of their lives and separate themselves from the adult world. Young people are thus becoming an important segment of the consumer society and industry's niche in production of alcoholic beverages and night entertainment.

- Already existing offers

(see also sheet „context information“).

Only information which refer to the selected target group(s) and which are relevant for the realization of prevention activities in the project.



In Slovenia we have different organizations and programs, dealing with harmful use of alcohol and its consequences:

- **Slovenian Project of Health School Network** has been running since year 1993, as a part of European network of health schools. Health school is trying to influence on pupils, school workers as families in a healthy way. In primary schools a program called “**Alcohol? Parents can influence**”, is being run as a part of Slovenian Project of Health School Network. Project refers to the pupils, their parents, teachers, school social workers and health workers. The goal is to raise youngsters’ and parents’ awareness about consequences of harmful alcohol use and to influence parent’s awareness and acquisition of parenting skills, dealing with reduction of alcohol consumption among youngsters. Activities are: education for teachers, workshops with pupils based on manuals, and manuals and flyers for parents.
- Next project is **The Massage in a Bottle**, which runs since year 2003 under the implementation of Medical School in Ljubljana, in partnership with Arts Academy and Faculty of Social Work. Purpose of the project is the reduction of alcohol consumption and harm reduction among residents, from young to adults of all social classes. The aim is to inform, educate and raise awareness in people (and professional public) about alcohol, its effects and consequences, about abstinence, about less risky, risky and harmful drinking, about alcohol addiction, promotion of a satisfied life without alcohol and reduction of drinking consumption, where it is important to change the position and attitude toward alcohol, use of alcohol and consequences of drinking.
- Foundation **With Head-on a Party** is running since year 2000, where main goal is the promotion of healthy living and non drinking alcohol. Foundation prepares series of shows, TV ads on national television and primary school events, where they show the youngsters that they can have fun without alcohol and other drugs and warn them not to sit in a car with driver under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. They also prepare family events in all big Shopping Centers with partnership of The Council for prevention and road safety and the police. Especially they prepare public events with preventive entertaining contents in so called “drinking environment”.



- Against alcohol and other addicted drugs, fights **Project Aware, not high**, of Medical school in Ljubljana and Maribor. The project is based on primary prevention of drug use. The main goal is to raise awareness about drug problems and addiction in Slovenia and to raise social participation of young on this area. Activities are: lectures, motivated weekends for volunteers that would participate in a project and fundraising for drug treatments.
- Since January 2009 workshops Fred goes net are being held for youngsters, who are being noticed on account of their alcohol or forbidden drug use. The project has been developed by LWL organization and financially supported by European Commission. Slovenia has cooperated in the project as a pilot county but decided to continue even that the project came to an end. The FreD goes net project is now being run under the Regional Public Health Institute Maribor.

2. Key questions

Alcohol consumption (max. 1,5 pages)

1) Have you observed inappropriate drinking of young people (12 to 21 years old) in your local area? If yes, where?

We have observed inappropriate drinking of young people (12 to 21 years old) in our local area – Tabor, that we choose to research. Inappropriate drinking was observed mostly in parks and around schools, pubs, discotheques and other hidden public places.

2) Are there particular groups of young people who attract negative attention due to drinking? If yes, which groups?

Majority of young between 12 and 21 years drink inappropriate, but there are particular groups of young people who especially attract negative attention due to drinking. These are pupils in last year of primary school, high school pupils and students.



3) *Are there any particular times when you notice inappropriate drinking? If yes, when?*

Inappropriate drinking is mostly noticed on weekends - in the evening and nights, some through all day. Inappropriate drinking is observed also on week days- after school and in school time - in different events (school trips, the end of school year).

4) *Who do you think has the biggest influence on young people`s drinking?*

All interviewees answered that friends and peers have the biggest influence on young people`s drinking. They also noticed parents, family and retailers to have influence on their drinking. The society and social problems, different media and advertisement also have influence.

Prevention (max. 3 pages)

5 a) *How can we reach young people to prevent inappropriate drinking?*

We can reach young people to prevent inappropriate drinking through schools, publicity and street work.

5 b) *What should we avoid?*

We mustn't be intrusive, superior, preachy and authoritative.

5 c) *What do you think young people should know / learn to prevent inappropriate drinking?*

They have to understand the consequences of their inappropriate drinking and where their boundary of inappropriate drinking is.

6 a) *How can we reach parents to prevent inappropriate drinking?*



We can reach parents to prevent inappropriate drinking through schools (parent's meetings, workshops, with help of key persons) and publicity through different media (internet, newspapers, post).

6 b) What should we avoid?

We should avoid being intrusive and address ourselves as an institution, which implements the alcohol prevention program.

6 c) What do parents need (information, skills) to support their children to drink responsibly?

Parents have to learn how to communicate with their children, how to recognize the problems and how to react – if necessary with experts help.

7 a) What could motivate key persons (teachers, trainers, street workers, etc) to participate in a program to prevent inappropriate drinking?

We have to approach them with awareness that they are a role model for youngsters and they need extra knowledge and skills to work with them.

7 b) What should we avoid?

We shouldn't be intrusive and prejudge them as those who don't know how to work with youngsters, but tell them that we offer some new approach to all.

7 c) What can key persons do to support the prevention of inappropriate drinking?



Key persons have to realize that they have the opportunity to communicate with youngsters and teach them healthy socialization with promoting and organizing activities for healthy lifestyle.

8 a) What can retail employees do to reduce inappropriate drinking of young people?

The retail employees must comply with the law to reduce the inappropriate drinking of young people - check out the age.

8 b) What should we avoid in order not to lose their support?

In order not to lose their support, we mustn't be intrusive and give them the impression that they would have problems by cooperating in the project (with police, loss of income).

8 c) How can we reach retail employees in order for them to participate in a program to prevent inappropriate drinking?

We can reach retail employees through street work, where we explain the program – how it can help them and what kind of benefits they would have.

3. Half-open/semi-structured interviews (max. 1 pages)

Choice of interviewees (chosen interviewees, reflections concerning the choice of these interviewees)

Summary of results of the key questions of the semi-structured interviews

We chose interviewees based on instructions.

First we made contact with key persons, because we already cooperate well with institutions, where they work (primary school, high school and dormitory) and because these institutions deal with lots of issues related to drug problems.

In the next step key persons made contact with some parents and pupils, who agreed to take part in the interview. Those parents and pupils were selected on the following criteria:



capability of having opinions, ability to think critically, being communicative on the topic of the interview.

We chose retail employees based on location (near schools) and where youngsters often spend free time or can buy alcohol.

The choice of interviewees was adequate. All of them had their own opinion about the matter and their answers were clear. The analysis also showed that their answers were very similar and there were no important differences among them. Our expectations about drug related problems in this local area have also been confirmed.

4. Preliminary conclusions regarding the key questions up to this stage (max. 1 page)
which are important for implementing the project and open questions and differences, which need to be discussed with the focus group.

Our conclusions are that in our local area youngsters, mostly pupils in last year of primary school, high school pupils and students, aged 12 to 21 years, drink inappropriate.

They especially drink on weekends in pubs, discotheques and public places such as parks and other hidden places. They get alcohol easily as a result of the child protected law, concerning alcohol consumption, not being properly considered. That is why retailers have big influence on youngsters' drinking. To reduce inappropriate drinking of young people retailers have to comply with the law - check out the age. On the other hand peers and friends have the biggest influence among youngsters' drinking (in sense of imitation), as well as parents and family, because they don't see alcohol as such a problem. Parents believe that all youngsters drink and that it is quite normal, as they also drank when they were younger and don't have any problems/consequences now. In our culture alcohol is well accepted. Parents have to learn how to communicate with their children, how to recognize the problems and how to react – if necessary with experts' help.

Key persons are important for our implementation, because they have contacts with youngsters and their parents. Thus they are the one, who can notice inappropriate drinking and direct both to appropriate program. Key persons have to realize that they have the opportunity to communicate with youngsters and teach them healthy socialization with



promoting and organizing activities for healthy lifestyle. Youngsters have to understand the consequences of their inappropriate drinking and where their boundaries of inappropriate drinking.

5. Focus group (max. 2 pages)

Choice of interviewees (chosen interviewees, reflections concerning the choice of these interviewees)

Summary of results of the key questions of the focus group

We didn't have focus group, because it wasn't necessary. Answers were clear, without major differences. We made conclusions without any problems.

6. Final conclusions (max. 3 pages)

Important points which must be considered for the implementation of the project

Important points, which must be considered for the implementation of the project, are to know which groups of youngsters have problems with alcohol inappropriate drinking, where they mostly hang out and who has important influence on alcohol drinking prevention and reduction. It is important to know, who can help us to access youngsters who drink inappropriate and other target groups who have influence on young people's drinking. For the implementation of workshops and education it is also important to know which information or skills target groups need and how to approach them.

According to the assessment of the situation in Slovenia, chosen local area (Tabor) and questionnaires we made the following findings:

In our local area youngsters, mostly pupils in last year of primary school, high school pupils and students, aged 12 to 21 years, drink inappropriate. They especially drink on weekends in pubs, discotheques and public places such as parks and other hidden places.



They get alcohol easily, because the child protection law concerning alcohol consumption is not properly considered. Retailers therefore have the big influence on youngsters' drinking. To reduce inappropriate drinking of young people retailers have to comply with the law. On the other hand youngsters' peers and friends have the biggest influence on drinking, especially in the sense of imitation and belonging to a certain group.

Further on youngsters can also be influenced by parents and family members through their attitudes toward alcohol (they don't see alcohol as such a problem). Parents believe that all youngsters drink and that it is quite normal, as they also drank when they were younger and don't have any problems/consequences now. In our culture alcohol is well accepted. Parents have to learn how to communicate with their children, how to recognize the problems and how to react – if necessary with expert's help.

For our implementation key persons are important, because they have contacts with youngsters and their parents. Thus they are the one, who can notice inappropriate drinking and direct both to appropriate program. Key persons have to realize that they have the opportunity to communicate with youngsters and teach them healthy socialization with promoting and organizing activities for healthy lifestyle. Youngsters have to understand the consequences of their inappropriate drinking and learn to recognize their boundaries of inappropriate drinking.

To approach all target groups we mustn't be intrusive, the participation must be voluntary, workshops and lectures have to be indirectly related to alcohol consumption. In the case of retailers, special approach is needed, because they mustn't feel supervised in the sense of complying with the law. Their participation must bring them some benefits or at least mustn't reduce their profit.