

A European Perspective – A summary of VSA Evidence within the ESPAD Database.

Country	Date	Title of Paper	Information
Ireland	2000	National Report on Drug Issues	Among young people in general (ages 9-18) after cannabis, solvents are the most widely used substance. Lifetime use of solvents (13%); and recent use of solvents (7%) – are somewhat higher than results from HBSS (Health Behaviours in Schools Survey).
Czech Republic	2000	Czech Republic National Report on drug situation	<p>The following specifics apply to the Czech Republic in the long-term horizon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significantly high share of drug addicts misusing volatile solvents. <p>The most often drugs of pupils and students are solvents, cannabinoids and hallucinogens. There was a significant drop in the number of solvent users in all Czech regions compared to 1998 but on the other hand the increase in Moravian regions.</p> <p>EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION</p> <p>The use of solvents is relatively widespread in the Czech Republic and it reports several specifics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • users are mostly from the youngest age groups • users are predominantly boys from secondary apprentice training centres • regionally different distribution supported by differences in social and economical situation in regions with higher unemployment rate is significant • it is higher in regions with higher concentration of the Romany population • it is often linked to non-fatal emergencies <p>While the trend of share of problematic solvent users has slightly gone down recently, they registered a small increase in the number of experimenting youth. The reasons of continuously increasing numbers of drug users undoubtedly include the opportunity to get some substances in the sales network (over-the-counter drugs, solvents).</p>
Romania	2000	National Report on drugs problem .	A serious problem of the society is represented by the inhaling of the solvents existing in the composition of many products distributed unrestrictedly in Romania (paints, varnishes) by certain users, mostly underage. These volatile solvents (the major component is toluene) induce after inhaling, reversible psychic addiction. The number of users is increasing continuously without being really known. The highest risk is their possible turning towards certain abuse drugs after the inhaling of solvents, drugs that produce sometimes, irreversible forms of addiction.

Lithuania	2000	National Report on the drug situation in Lithuania 2000	<p>According to ESPAD data usage of inhalants increased in Klaipeda City among schoolchildren of grade 9 (for boys by 20%). The rates of use frequency of inhalants decreased from 15,7% in 1995 to 7,5% in 1999 (country level).The use of inhalants has been observed as very early intoxication among children.</p> <p>Two deaths from intoxication of solvents were registered in the early age (12 years) in Klaipeda in 1996. In 1999, among registered drug addicts solvents these users accounted for 5,2% (161 persons), in 1998, 148 persons were registered. The most popular is glue “Moment”, which according to regulations can not be sold to children.</p>
Luxembourg	2000	Report to the EMCCDA by the Reitox national focal point of Luxembourg, Direction de la Sante Luxembourg drug situation 2000	<p>Data from school and youth surveys suggest solvents use show fairly stable figures since 1992.</p> <p>The HBSC (2000) and Matheis (1992) survey reveal low lifetime prevalence of solvent use in youngsters (16-20 years), which has poorly increased over the last 8 years (1999: 3.8% – 1992: 3.5%). Last 12 months prevalence (HBSC, 2000) figures 1.6 per cent in 12 – 20 year old students. Differences in solvent use according to gender are not significant. A possible explanation of these low figures might be seen in the hale socio-economic situation of the country. Youngsters tend to dispose of financial means that allow them to acquire more expensive or more potential drugs as for instance ecstasy, amphetamines or cocaine.</p>
Slovakia	2000	Phare project-National Central Node of Drug Information System	<p>Volatile inhalants and solvents were the most widely abused substance between youngsters before 1990. Then, as it has been already shown, the shift from these substances to heroin took place and from around 90% in 1992 their frequency against heroin had fallen to around 20% in 1994, and then stabilisation at approximately somewhat above 10% has been noticed among treated drug dependent patients.</p>
Sweden	2000	Reitox report-Folkhalsoinstitutet	<p>Solvents use is not normally a component of multiple use among severe users. In the 1992 case finding study the frequency of sniffing was less than 1% among the severe users. Approximately one percent of all persons undergoing compulsory treatment had volatile solvents as at least one component in their drug use leading to treatment Solvents sniffing are more related to younger teenagers.</p>
Denmark	2000	Reitox report- National Board of Health	<p>In 1995, as many as 6.3% of the 15-16-year-olds had tried sniffing solvents; in 1999 this figure is 7.5%. There is thus a small rise between 1995 and 1999 with a rather equal distribution between boys and girls in 1999.</p> <p>The number of persons admitted for psychiatric treatment after use of centrally stimulating substances, hallucinogens and solvents during the past few years seems</p>

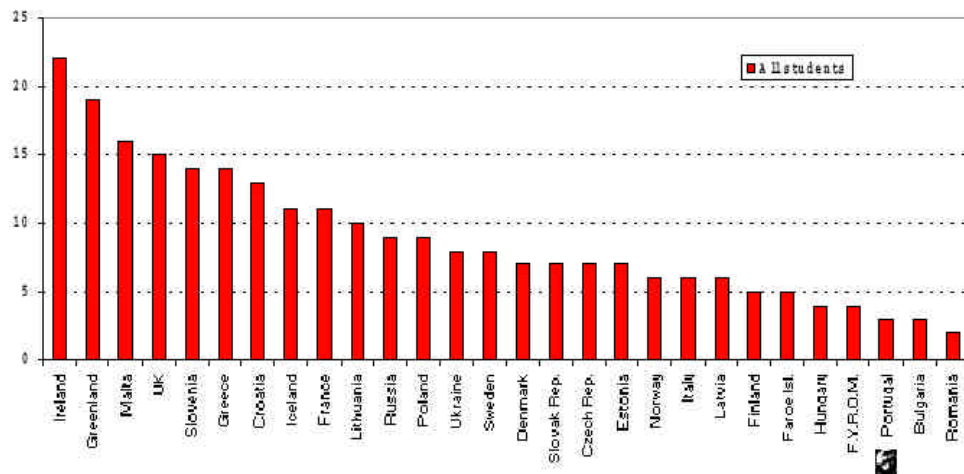
			<p>to have stabilised.</p> <p>From the time at which the first school surveys were conducted at the beginning of the 1990s, it turned out that a considerable number of young people experiment with sniffing solvents. The prevalence of sniffing among the very young in Denmark is high in relation to other illegal substances, even though on average it is lower than in most other European countries. The proportion of young people reporting having experimented with sniffing in Denmark has been between 5-7.5% during the past 10 years. From the regional hearings held in 1999 it is reported by the police and addiction consultants throughout the country that “poppers” in some periods are popular among the very young people aged between 13-14 years.</p>
Belgium	2000	Reitox report-Scientific Institute of Public Health, Unit of Epidemiology	From 15-16 years of age onwards, cannabis derivatives are the products most used; ecstasy is the second product most used ; among younger students, solvents or hypnotics or sedatives are the products most used;
N Ireland	?	Drug Strategy for Northern Ireland	<p>The findings in the surveys conducted during 1995-98 indicated that the most popular drugs used were cannabis, LSD and Ecstasy. Solvents tended to be used by more young people than heroin and cocaine.</p> <p>When asked to select which drug they had used, 10-13 year olds indicated that 93% had never used any drug. For 14-17 year olds the figure was 62%. The two most commonly used drugs were poppers and cannabis. The use of solvents also featured prominently.</p>
Latvia	2000	Phare project- Centre of Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment(Narcology)	<p>The use of solvents has decreased considerably according to all sources of information.</p> <p>According to the data of narcological institutions, the proportion of solvent users was about 4 – 5% of the total number.</p> <p>Causes for the decrease in the number of solvent users are described as follows: Upon the evaluation of the data provided by the ESPAD – 99 survey the decline in the use of inhalants could be explained by the following;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a larger offer of other drugs, in particular heroin, a well – organised market and the decrease in the price; 2. the improvement of the material situation. Results of the analyses show that inhalants are used mostly by the youth who come from poor families and who cannot afford buying more expensive drugs. It can be concluded also from the data showing that the number of inhalant users is higher in rural areas than in cities/towns. Illicit drugs are more often used by those young people who come from affluent families. Children of low – income families have smoked more and at least once in their life have sniffed inhalants.

Finland	2000	Reitox report-Stakes, sosiaali-ja teveysalan tutkimus-ja kehittamiskeskus	Based on 1998 information, 2.6 per cent of men and 1.4 per cent of women had inhaled solvents for intoxication purposes during lifetime, while the 1992 data showed that 1.0 per cent of men and 0.2 per cent of women had done so. Some 2.0 per cent of the Finnish population had experimented with inhaling solvents or glues during lifetime, but only 0.2 per cent had done so during the previous year.
France	2000	Reitox report- l'Observatoire francais des drogues et des toxicomanies	The most recent data is that obtained from a school environment, ESPAD (European School Survey on Alcohol and Other Drugs), performed in 1999 by INSERM, in partnership with OFDT and the national education ministry. The results are set out here in respect of 14 –18 year olds. For the other illicit products mentioned in the questionnaire, the levels of experimentation are low: they are still less than 5% apart from inhaled products (glues, solvents...) experimentation in these substances tend to take place more before the age of 14 years, such that its prevalence hardly develops any further during one's lifetime. For girls and for boys, three quarters of experimental users took an inhaled product for the first time before the age of 15. No of deaths by overdose as follows: 1990=12,91=6,92=6,93=1,94=6,95=4,96-98=1,99=0.
Germany	2000	Reitox report- Institut for Therapieforchung	In Germany volatile inhalants are not used very frequently. The representative population survey of 1997 (Kraus & Bauernfeind 1998) shows, that 0.7% of the West German adult population used volatile inhalants at least once in their life, during the last year only 0.2% did so. Most experiences with volatile inhalants are reported by the group of 21-24 years old persons. Among this group 2.4% used the substances at least once in their life, 1.1% did so during the last 12 months. In out-patient counselling or treatment centres solvents do nearly not exist as main diagnosis as single diagnosis they are prevalent among 0,3% of all treated men and women (Türk & Welsch 2000a).
Netherlands	2000	Reitox report-Trimbos-institut	Only mention is ICD-10 code from 1996 to present is F11-F16 and F18-F19 for Mental and behavioural disorders – cannabis, sedatives and hypnotics, cocaine, other stimulants, hallucinogens, volatile solvents, multiple drugs, other psychoactive substances
Italy	2000	Reitox report- OI DT	Multiple use (including alcohol, pharmaceutical products, solvents) There is relatively little information available about multiple drug use at the national level. However, some data from different sources suggests that this is a developing issue.
Greece	2000	Reitox report- University of Mental Health Research Institute	The ESPAD study in Greece was conducted by the University Mental Health Research Institute (UMHRI) in Autumn 1999. The ESPAD protocol was used and the Greek version of the ESPAD questionnaire. Main trends: the increasing trend in

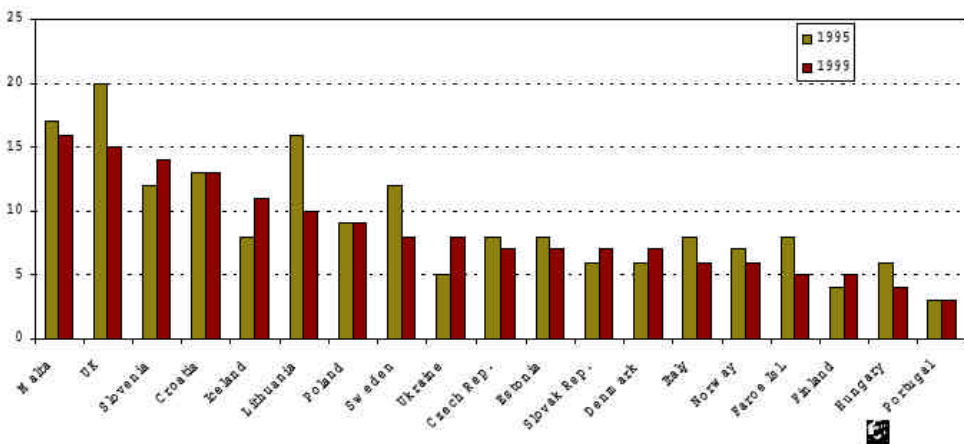
			overall illicit drug use obvious in 1993, compared to 1984, resulted in a sharp increase after 1993, where the percentage of students reporting drug experimentation or use doubled (from 6% in 1993 to 13.7% in 1998. Cannabis, and solvents presented the highest prevalence
Macedonia	2000	Phare project- Health Protection Institute,	Solvents are present with 5,26% males and 3,8% females (lifetime prevalence).
Bulgaria	2000	Bulgarian National Report	Solvents: small decrease (no further detail)
Spain	1987	The epidemiology of the illicit drug trade in Spain	<p>In 1984, it was estimated that approximately 3 per cent of the population less than 18 years old had tried inhalants, while the results of the 1985 national survey showed that 2 per cent of the population older than 12 years had used these products at some time in their lives, 0.7 per cent in the six months before the survey and 0.4 per cent in the month before the survey. A small percentage (0.07 per cent) of the population were regular users. The average age of inhalant users at first use was 16.3 years.</p> <p>The proportion of high school students in Valencia having ever tried inhalants was 5.3 per cent. A survey conducted at several universities revealed that 1.5 per cent of the students had ever used inhalants. In general, inhalant users are mainly males between 10 and 20 years of age, although it is not unusual to find eight-year-old users. The users usually come from lower socio-economic strata of the population who live in poor settlements outside big cities. Their home environment is often unstable. The users of inhalants usually present difficulties for adaptation at school resulting in major learning problems.</p>

European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs

Inhalants - Lifetime prevalence (%)



Inhalants – Lifetime prevalence (%), comparison between 1995 and 1999



Inhalants – Lifetime prevalence (%), comparison between male and female

