

Preliminary Data on the Prevalence of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use in High School Students in Galati

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Abstract: The study presents preliminary data on the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco and drug use among young people in the city of Galati, which can be the basis for adapting local awareness, prevention and treatment strategies

Keywords: drug use; alcohol; tobacco; strategies; prevention; school

Drinking alcohol, tobacco and drugs is a major risk factor for teenagers in Romania, given the rise in consumption among both school and adult populations.

Scope

The purpose of this study is to obtain preliminary data on the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco and drug use among young people in the city of Galati, which can be the basis for adapting local strategies for awareness, prevention and treatment

Material and Method

The study included 317 high school students from Galati who participated in the workshop “Drug use among young people” organized by the Association “It can be otherwise” through the program of prevention and psychological and social assistance of the addictions PROSALVITA. In the activity, the subjects completed anonymous questionnaires aimed at identifying the consumption of alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

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Results and Discussions

The study group included pupils aged between 14 and 20 years of age (Figure 1), of which 23% in the 9th grade, 30% in the 10th grade, 28% in the 11th grade and 19% in the class XII

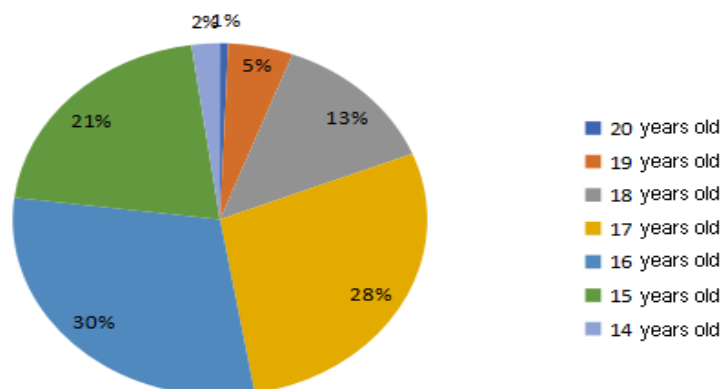


Figure 1. Batch distribution by age

Within the studied group, 88.96% of the subjects stated that they had consumed at least once alcohol, 63.40% tobacco and 27.13% consumed illicit drugs. The highest share is alcohol consumption, followed by tobacco, the lowest value being attributed to drug use, observed hierarchy in other studies conducted in other studies

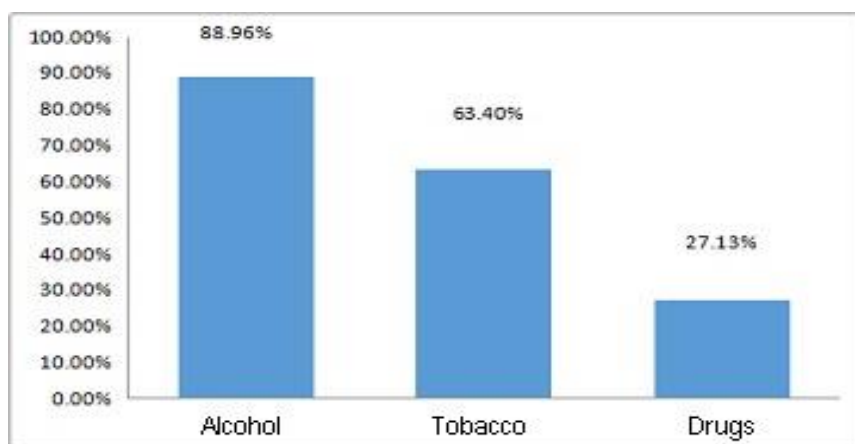


Figure 2. Percentage representation for each substance category within the studied lot

Specialty literature shows that alcohol consumption starts at the age of 13-14 years, the most common types of alcohol consumed by teenagers are beer and wine, the most common determinant for consumption is social adhesion. The alarmingly high incidence - 88.96% is similar to the level reported by the National Anti-drug Agency in 2017 for the general population 86.1%.

Identifying age-based behavioral patterns has shown that all subjects aged 19 and 20 have consumed alcohol at least once. Alcohol consumption is encountered in 90.48% of 18-year-olds, and 85.71-88.89% of juvenile subjects (14-17 years) reported having drunk alcohol.

Regarding tobacco consumption, 57.14 - 72.22% of the minors participating in the study smoked at least once, with the highest incidence in 17-year-olds - 72.22%.

The National Anti-drug Agency shows that smoking of tobacco cigarettes registers the second level of prevalence of drug use in the Romanian population, 62.1% of those interviewed have smoked at least once in their life, similar to the one observed in the lot we studied. The Agency's report indicates a worrying percentage of this behavior before the age of 14 (16.4%).

In our study, the level is much higher, 14-year-olds who had smoked at least once at 57.14%. According to the latest survey of the general population - GPS 2016, the general population has a lifetime prevalence of the use of any illicit drug of 7.6% and cannabis continues to be the most drug consumed in Romania, followed of new psychoactive substances (NSP).

The same study reports that consumption is predominantly among young people, one out of 10 subjects aged 15-34 years has tried to smoke cannabis over the course of their lives and 91% of ethnobotanic consumers started at the age of 15-24 years.

Drug use experimentation in our study was met in all 20-year-old students, 68.75% of those aged 19, 28.75% of 18-year-olds, 36.67% of 17-year-olds at age 16 the incidence was 20.21%, at the age of 15 years it was 13.64%. None of the 14-year-olds said they ever consumed drugs.

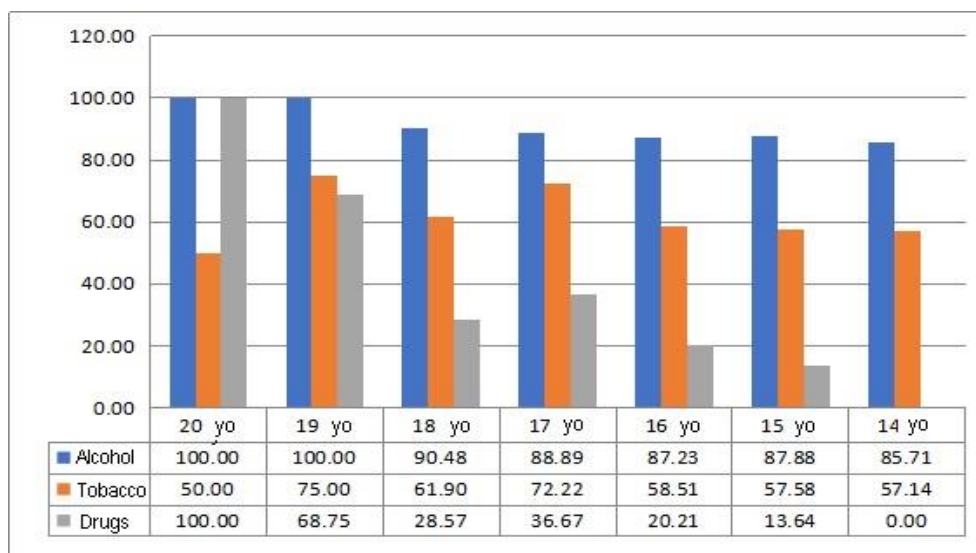


Figure 3. Percentage distribution of consumption by age (yo - years old)

Against the background of the need for social inclusion and adherence to the group, one in four adolescents is consuming substances. This is alarming in the context of the continuous increase in substance use over the last few years.

In the maladaptive part of integration into a group, we can see that alcohol is the main catalyst in the malfunctioning of social acceptance.

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