

Tobacco smoking and binge drinking among university students in three European countries, 2009-2017

Marie-Pierre Tavalacci

M Tavalacci¹, S De Bruyn², C Van der Heijde³, P Vonk³, J Ladner⁴, G Van Hal⁵

¹Clinical Investigation Center 1404 Inserm1073, Rouen University Hospital, Normandie University, Rouen, France

²Department of Sociology, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium

³Student Health Service, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

⁴Dpt of Epidemiology and Public Health, INSERM 1073, Rouen University Hospital, Normandie University, Rouen, France

⁵Social Epidemiology and Health Policy, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium

Contact: Marie-Pierre.Tavalacci@chu-rouen.fr

Background:

Attention is needed on students as high levels of substance use are often part of the university experience. The aim of the study is to identify the trend of tobacco smoking and binge drinking among university students (US) of Belgium, France and the Netherlands over a 9 years period.

Methods:

Three repeated cross-sectional studies in US were performed in 2009-10, 2012-13 and 2016-17 in university of Antwerp (Belgium), Amsterdam (the Netherlands) and Rouen (France). US between 18 and 25 voluntarily filled out a self-administered anonymous questionnaire. The socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, curriculum, job and accommodation) of the US were collected. Tobacco smoking and binge drinking in the previous 12 months were also collected. The trend test of Cochran-Armitage was used for comparisons.

Results:

In 2010, 1388 US were included in Antwerp, 1907 in Amsterdam, and 1137 in Rouen. In 2013, 1665 US were included in Antwerp, 3590 in Amsterdam, and 1488 in Rouen. In 2016, 2347 US were included in Antwerp, 4157 in Amsterdam, and 1011 in Rouen. Female gender was 63.4% in Antwerp, 68.7% in Amsterdam and 65.4% in Rouen. The prevalence of tobacco smoking was respectively in 2010, 2013 and 2016: in Antwerp: 31.0%, 33.5% and 27.6% ($p = 0.008$); in Amsterdam: 13.7%, 16.5% and 17.0% ($p = 0.003$); in Rouen: 21.3%, 23.7% and 23.5% ($p = 0.21$). The prevalence of binge drinking (more than once a month) was respectively in 2010, 2013 and 2016: in Antwerp: 16.2%, 12.3% and 16.7% ($p = 0.30$); in Amsterdam: 26.5%, 27.4% and 26.5% ($p = 0.82$); in Rouen: 8.6%, 16.6% and 7.1% ($p = 0.44$).

Conclusions:

Risk behaviours as tobacco smoking and binge drinking in US show a different prevalence according to country. Tobacco smoking decreases in two countries and frequent binge drinking did not change during the 9 years period. Further analyses need to be conducted taking into account the curriculum and the socio-demographic characteristics.

Key messages:

- Risk behaviours as tobacco smoking and binge drinking in university students show a different prevalence according to the European country.
- Binge drinking does not worsen for 9 years among university students.