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SUCCESS STORIES

Prevention of alcohol and drug abuse – “UPC Adapt”

From the **beginning of 2016 until the end of 2018**, the European commission financed the **UPC-Adapt project**. Hogeschool Gent (HoGent) took the lead in this project with the focus on creating a standardised European prevention curriculum, based on the original international **UPC (Universal Prevention Curriculum)**. The outcome of the project is a standardized five days training for decision-, opinion and policy makers such as local or regional heads of offices for prevention, heads of NGOs and other people who need to have science-based criteria for making decisions about what to fund, where to get the evidence, and what kind of approach to favour over others.

Next to the training, the UPC-Adapt project produced a **handbook which will be published by the EMCDDA in the spring of 2019**. This handbook will be open-source and is the result of an adaptation process based on the original materials owned by the international Universal Prevention Curriculum. The adapted European version focuses on the European reality and context. The handbook is translated in nine languages and created as a collaboration between 11 institutes: Hogeschool Gent (BE), the University of the Balearic Islands (ES), Landespräventionsrat Niedersachsen & Finder Akademie (DE), National Institute for Health and Development (EE), University of Zagreb (HR), ASL2 Savonese and ATS Milano (IT), Charles University Prague (CZ), UTRIP (SI), and PARPA (PL). Further on, the handbook was shaped with the expertise of the EMCDDA, APSI, ISSUP and UNODC in the advisory board.

The handbook consists of the following chapters:

- The introduction gives more information about the importance of prevention, ethics and the role of the prevention professional.
- In the first chapter an overview of the substance use problem in Europe is provided. The link between epidemiology and aetiology theories offer a good understanding of the role prevention can play to address the substance use problem. Further on, the common theories which are being used by prevention scientists are presented.
- The second chapter focuses on the foundations of prevention science and evidence-based prevention interventions.
- Chapter three gives an overview on Evidence-Based Prevention Interventions and Policies explaining the ‘International Standards for Drug Use Prevention’ and ‘The European Drug Prevention Quality Standards’. The discussion between the evidence-based approaches versus a more tailor-made approach of prevention is an important topic in this chapter.

- The following chapters describe the more important features of family-, school-, community-, workplace-, media- and environmental based prevention interventions. A definition (or definitions) of these topics are provided to create a shared understanding of the concepts. For each topic, specific issues or challenges concerning this type of prevention, are discussed.
- The last chapter considers 'advocacy for prevention'.

These chapters are of course the content of the five days training module explained before.

More information on the UPC-Adapt project can be found on the project website (<http://upc-adapt.eu>) or on the website of the EMCDDA (The European Prevention Curriculum Handbook – from spring 2019).