



## Alcohol in the lives of students in Poland and Ukraine – research report†

*Urszula Kempieńska, Mykola Rudenko*

**CONTACT:** *Urszula Kempieńska, PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Kujavian College KSW in Wloclawek, Wloclawek, Poland, E-mail: [ulakem@interia.pl](mailto:ulakem@interia.pl)  
Mykola Rudenko, PhD, Associate Professor, Chair of the Foundations of Vocational Training, Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: [rudnick65@mail.ru](mailto:rudnick65@mail.ru)*

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### Abstract:

Alcoholism is a disease that attacks regardless of age, religion, nationality, sex, level of education, mental health, family situation, socio-economic status or character. Research on students' attitudes towards alcohol was carried out in Poland and Ukraine, in the countries where there is widespread positive feedback on its effects. In wide social circles put to the survey, alcohol consumption is a tradition taking place during different celebrations or almost

every meeting. In addition, the use of alcohol means a quick drink up of large quantities of strong alcoholic drinks. This way of drinking does not function as a symbol of the meeting or its background, but becomes the center and the main reason. Alcohol used by teens generally does not cause surprise or concern. Many communities treat alcohol drunk in childhood, as natural and inevitable. It sometimes happens that young people and even children receive the first can of beer or a glass of champagne from the hands of their own parents. Until recently, public awareness of the phenomenon of using psychoactive substances has related to the margin of society, people from the so-called pathological and criminal environments. A little later there were reports that the alcohol and other drugs are in the range of interests of adolescents, coming from "good homes" and having good future prospects. The aim of the study was to investigate the attitudes of Polish and Ukrainian students towards alcohol. The main problem of the research focused on the question: Is there a difference in the attitudes of young people towards alcohol because of the country of origin? Research shows that among the students there is a problem of alcohol abuse. We must therefore start to implement effectively, not just "on paper", alcohol prevention programs already in primary schools.

## 1. Introduction

Alcoholism is one of the most common and most dangerous diseases that affect the Polish and Ukrainian society. It is also one of the diseases which the statistical inhabitant of these countries do not have too much knowledge about. This disease is chronic, since in some aspects lasts until the end of life (Dziewiecki, 2001, pp. 41-42), it is also progressive, since its symptoms worsen over the course of time. This disease attacks regardless of religious confession, nationality, sex, level of education, mental health, family situation, socio-economic status, personal character and age (Życie w trzeźwości, 2014, pp. 16-17).

Adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood, characterized by strong physical and psychological changes (Dahl, 2004, p. 2). This is the teenage phase of conflicts with teachers, parents, siblings, the time of discretion and questioning of the authority, the time when contacts with peers become very important unless the most important. More and more often the researchers are of the opinion that the length of the "difficult period" depends not only on the gender or individual characteristics of the person, but mainly on the environmental conditions (White, 2003). Just in this period young people usually make a decision whether or not to taste alcohol for the first time. Such a moment is very dangerous as drinking alcohol in large quantities



at a very young age, especially strong alcohol, at once, leads to addiction 3 to 4 times faster than in case of adult people (Skoczylas, & Bińczycka-Anholcer, 2006, p. II).

During the stage of puberty, the brain tissue is sensitive to any toxic agents, among which ethyl alcohol has a special place (Moss, 2008). Drinking alcohol during adolescence can disrupt the process of adaptation and maturation of the part of brain responsible for memory, causing the cognitive deficits and behavioral disorders in adulthood. Some researchers believe that the fact of drinking alcohol excessively by youngsters is caused by constantly developing brain and, by extension, the consequences of their actions cannot be foreseeable (De Pratoncal, 2005). The maturation of the brain causes hormonal changes in the systems of motivation of young people. These changes encourage risk-taking and thrill-seeking activities. Teens love the intensity, emotions and senses. Adolescence is the period in which the alcohol, sex, drugs, speed and loud music are very attractive and provide strong emotions (Dahl, 2004, p. 5).

## 2. The causes of alcoholism

In Poland and Ukraine the common opinions about alcohol and its effects are positive. Many people are convinced that thanks to the alcohol, you can feel confident, that it facilitates contacts with people you do not know, it helps to sadness, depression, it lets you relax. There is no fun without alcohol. In the community which is dominated by these beliefs, people do not drink alcohol because of its taste, or accompaniment to a meal, but due to its effects (Lindenmeyer, 2010, pp. 31-32).

There is a close relationship between alcohol and emotions occurring in the human psyche. Alcohol has the ability to rapidly and efficiently modify our emotional states without the need for change of the style of living as well as our usual behavior. It is more attractive the harder a person lives in fear, anxiety, insecurity, aggression, hatred, horror, despair, guilt, helplessness, resentment, etc. Alcohol is a threat to the people to whom life situation, school, work, daily responsibilities, and relationships have emerged as an annoying burden and a source of constant stress and worries. Reaching for alcohol in emotionally difficult situations or to give encouragement, improve mood or hide the missing competences, is a clear signal of entering the road of addiction (Dziewiecki, 2001, pp. 32-34.).

The fact of drinking alcoholic beverages by teens generally does not cause surprise or concern. Reaching for alcohol by youngsters in the developing age is treated by many as natural and inevitable. It sometimes happens that young people or even children get the first can of beer or a glass of champagne from the hands of their own parents. Consequently, the high social tolerance for alcohol drinking is noted, even where this is entirely formally banned or harmful (Dziewiecki, 2000, pp. 64-65).

The exact cause of alcohol dependence is not known. Researchers usually indicate the following risk factors:

- Inheritance of behavior – growing up in a family with alcohol problems.
- Sex – men are 3 times more likely addicted to alcohol.
- Age of initiation of alcohol drinking promotes being alcohol addict in adult life.
- Mental health problems. People who have been diagnosed with depression or schizophrenia consume more alcohol to alleviate the symptoms of the disease.
- Character traits such as self-assertion or shyness.
- The use of tobacco, drugs.
- The impact of the neighborhood groups (Mobius, 2009; Zucker et al., 2008).

An international study shows that among young people there are two models of alcohol consumption. The first is the so-called “social drinking” when alcohol is consumed in the group and is a part of socialization. The second is designed as a “drinking problem”. The presence of peers is important, but not necessary (Zucker et al., 2008). This model of drinking may start pretty early (before 15 years of age) as young drinkers may face existential problems and inability to cope with them (Sierosławski, & Zielinski, 1999, pp. 264).

Also, other social factors may affect the amount and frequency of drinking and promote its increased consumption: among them are the physical availability of alcohol (ease of purchase), the affordable accessibility of alcohol (low price relative to income). In Poland, the price of alcohol was:

- 0.5 L of vodka costs 17.84-29.99 PLN.
- 0.75 L of wine costs 19.19-31.00 PLN.
- 0.5 L of beer costs: (a can) 1.38-4.37 PLN, (a bottle) 1.99-3.99 PLN.



The average gross salary in January 2015 was 3942.78 PLN. The lowest salary amounted to 1750 PLN (GUS, 2015).

In Ukraine, the price of alcohol was as follow:

- 0.7 L of vodka costs 80-100 UAH.
- 0.75 L of champagne costs 50-70 UAH.
- 0.75 L wine costs 40-60 UAH.
- 0.5 L of beer costs 8-10 UAH.

The average gross salary in January 2015 was 3455 UAH; a scholarship 650-700 UAH (Srednyaya zarplata po Ukrainy, 2015).

### 3. Possible consequences of alcohol dependence

Alcohol abuse is associated more or less with the adverse social consequences. These consequences include the most important spheres of human life: personal, professional and legal. In the personal sphere, inter alia, one can observe the breakdown of close relationships, the decline in the standard of living often below the minimum subsistence level, loss of friends, missing out on the possibility of achieving important life goals, increased aggressiveness, personality deterioration, loss of health. In the professional sphere such a situation reveals a reduction of competence, loss of credibility, the risk of job loss, as well as reduced opportunities for promotion. In the legal sphere it means a violation of the law and problems with the police (Pospiszyl, 2008, p. 152). Alcohol addiction makes impossible getting by young people good education and good professions. To tell the truth, it excludes an individual from the participation in social or political life.

Frequent and long-term alcohol consumption is also the cause of many diseases and can lead to organ damage. Thus far, a causal link has been established between alcohol consumption and more than 230 diseases (Rehm et al., 2009, p. 225). The toxic effects of alcohol and its metabolites on organs and systems, improper nutrition, as well as deficiencies and malabsorption of vitamins cause the occurrence of various kinds of somatic complications, ex. in the peripheral and central nervous system (seizures, alcohol withdrawal epilepsy) or in the gastrointestinal and cardiovascular systems (Lindenmeyer, 2010, pp. 78-79, 84). Research shows that among teenage drinkers appear such side effects as lack of appetite, weight loss, eczema, headaches and sleep disturbances (Newbury-Birch et al., 2009, pp. 20-21).

Many students are not aware of the negative effects of alcohol on the reproductive system. Excessive consumption can cause a decrease in women's fertility, menstrual cycle changes, or premature menopause (Państwowa Agencja Rozwiązywania Problemów Alkoholowych, 1997, p. 60). In case of many people the stronger is alcohol addiction, the bigger aversion to having any sexual relations. About half of addicted women report a decrease of sexual sensitivity. For men, erectile dysfunctions are synonymous with the inability to make sexual contacts (Lindenmeyer, 2010, pp. 175-176). This issue had already been pointed out by Shakespeare "*drinking stimulates lust, but suspends execution*" (Shakespeare, 1964, Act 2, Scene III).

The effect of alcohol consuming manifests itself in a spike in mortality of young people in car accidents. According to the research conducted by the Société de l'Automobile du Québec (SAAQ) a 20-year-old driver or older – with alcohol level of 80 to 100 mg per 100 ml of blood – has 5 times more dangerous behaviour on the road than the driver at the same age, but sober. It is worth underlining that the driver at the age of 16 to 19 is 40 times more dangerous (SAAQ, 2008).

### 4. The scale of the phenomenon

The WHO research shows that the average alcohol consumption in Poland in terms of pure alcohol is 12.5 liters per person over 15 years of age whereas in Ukraine – 15.6 liters. Ukraine is ranked fifth in the world as for the consumption of alcohol. The first place is occupied by Moldovans – 18.2 liters, the second place is taken by the Czech – 16.4 liters, then Hungarians – 16.2 liters and the fourth are Russians – 15.7 liters (Rosiyany za odyn rik proply 61,5 mln dolariv, 2015).

In Poland, the percentage of young people drinking alcohol at least once a week increases with age and is as follows: for the eleven-year-olds 2% and 1% (respectively for boys and girls), among thirteen-year-olds – 8% and 4%, and fifteen-year-olds – 17% and 11% (Wojtyniak et al., 2012, p. 294). In 2015 in Kujawsko-Pomorskie



Voivodship mental health clinics treated 258 people aged up to 29 because of alcohol dependence; addiction treatment clinics cured of alcohol addiction 1251 people, among them 324 women (Biuletyn statystyczny, 2016, pp. 76, 82).

*In Ukraine*, 15% of 10-11 year-olds and 57% of 13 year-olds have already experienced alcohol initiation. 26% of students aged 15-17 drink once or twice a month and 14% of pupils drink alcoholic beverages 3 to 5 times. Every second eighth grade student and over 90% of 15-17 year-olds have already tried all alcoholic beverages. Every tenth elementary school pupil gets drunk once a week (UNICEF Ukraine, 2011, September 23).

The problem of kids and youngsters' drinking is not just a problem of the countries of Central or Eastern Europe.

*In Belgium*, 2/3 of young people aged 10-17 years have already drunk alcohol. The average age of alcoholic initiation is 11 years and 5 months. More often, it is the boys and students of vocational schools who consume alcoholic beverages. 37% of respondents declared that they got the alcohol for the first time from the hands of their fathers (CRIOC, 2010, pp. 5-8, 30).

*In Canada*, in the province of Québec 50% of boys and 35% of girls under 12 have already tasted alcohol. The average age of initiation in alcohol drinking is 12.7 years for girls and 12.4 for boys. 30% of young people drink on average 2 times a week. (Cotton & Laventure, 2009, pp. 6-9).

*In Switzerland*, 8.1% of boys and 4.5% of girls aged 13 drink alcohol on average once a week. In a group of 15 year olds the figures are respectively 26.5% and 13%. It is noted that 6 teens daily go to hospital due to alcohol poisoning (Addiction Suisse, 2012, pp. 3, 6-8).

*In France*, 59% of pupils aged 11 have already drunk alcohol, 72% of the 13-year-olds, 84% of those at the age of 15. The average age of alcohol initiation is 13.3 for boys and 13.5 for girls. 7% of young people at the age of 16 and 12% of 17-year olds own up to regular alcohol consuming. Most often young people drink alcohol at the weekends during meetings with peers at discos or ... at home (Guillemont & Beck, 2008).

## 5. Help and Support for Alcohols Addicts

The best-known self-help groups of people associated with alcohol problems are Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Al-Anon Family Groups, Alateen Groups and Clubs of Teetotalers. Support systems play an extremely important role in maintaining both physical and psychological integrity of the individual. The results of such positive assistance turn into stronger self-confidence and self-esteem, which in turn allows better functioning in life and better cope with difficult life situations. The main principle governing the self-help groups is that the participants are inspired by his own experiences, rather than on knowledge from the outside, from the professional persons. The participation in the group is entirely voluntary AA is a community of people who share the same addiction, and the only requirement for participation in community is a desire to stop drinking. The AA program, which was created in 1935 by two recovering alcoholics is based on the Twelve Steps, the implementation of which leads to recovery. In Bydgoszcz there are 21 AA groups, in Torun and Włocławek – 9 AA groups in each city (Regiony AA, 2015), whereas in Kiev (Ukraine) – 10 groups (Yandeks. Karty-detalna karta Ukrainy ta svitu, 2015).

Until recently, public awareness related the phenomenon of psychoactive substances effects to the margin of society, people living in or coming from so-called pathological, criminal milieus. Some reports prepared a little later stated that the alcohol and other drugs are in the range of interests of very young generation coming from “good homes” with life prospects for future. This information distracts attention from the phenomenon of psychoactive substances experienced by higher school students, that is by people who, on the one hand are adults, but on the other hand are still young and vulnerable to all sorts of risky behaviors. The basic problem of implementation of the common model of prevention is the lack of adequate financing these programs. The difficulty also consists in sharing the relevant information among the academic staff so as they could assume this addiction as a disease. The creation of adequate programs must be based on a sound diagnosis of the phenomenon both on the epidemiological level and regarding the needs reported by the individual student communities In Ukraine also one pays more and more attention to the problem of different addictions among students. On 25-26 March 2015 at the site of the Kiev State University of Civil Engineering and Architecture an event under the name of “*Candy instead of a cigarette*” took place (Students KNUBA exchanged cigarettes for candy – Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture, 2015).





The health of young generation is characterized by a lot of dynamism and diversity and is subject to change, regardless of socio-economic factors, health policy, progress in the diagnosis and in treatment of diseases as well as regarding the virtual state of public health awareness. In Poland, a wide range of documents, programs, and legal regulations that relate to activities in the field of protection and promotion of the health of children and young people have been created and they all define the proper courses of these activities. However, their implementation is unsatisfactory as many provisions remain “on paper” (Woynarowska & Oblacińska, 2014, p. 64).

## 6. Material and Method

Research studies as a part of the international research project *Health attitudes of students in Poland and Ukraine -Analysis comparative* was implemented from November 2013 to January 2015. For the sake of the above studies, a diagnostic procedure was used, constructed on the basis of multilateral exploration of the relevant literature and research of the area in question. The analyzes carried out consist the prelude to a fuller development of the issues discussing the health attitudes. Due to the limited selection of the samples they cannot be generalized to the entire population of Polish and Ukrainian students. For the needs of the research studies, a questionnaire was designed in order to examine attitudes towards health and selected socio-demographic variables. The questions related to risky behaviors among students in terms of addiction to nicotine, alcohol, drugs and sexual health. In Poland, the study was conducted at the higher colleges of Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship (the departments of education, IT, economics, administration, physiotherapy,) and in Ukraine, at the Universities of Kyiv (departments of psychology and law). In this paper were presented the partial results concerning only alcohol consumption. The sample was analyzed because of the four variables: the country of origin of the students, gender, place of residence and age.

The aim of the study was to investigate the attitudes of Polish and Ukrainian students towards alcohol.

Research questions focused on the following questions: (1) Are there differences in the attitudes of young people towards alcohol because of the country of origin? (2) What was the age of alcohol initiation in the study groups? (3) How often do students consume alcohol and what are the most popular types of alcohol among them? (4) What are their causes of alcohol drinking? (5) Who in the family of a control group drinks alcohol? (6) What is the relationship between the gender and the place of residence and the age of the first contact with alcohol and frequency of consumption?

### Participated in the study

In Poland: 150 students: 85 women and 65 men, aged 18-30. Women- 64 respondents are full-time students, others study in extramural mode. 40 respondents live in cities: Torun, Plock, Wloclawek, Inowroclaw, Gostynin, 45 – in surrounding villages and little towns. 12 respondents are married, 25 are in a close relationship but without being married, and 48 do not have a partner. Men – 34 study in full-time, stationary mode. 28 live in town, 37.13 respondents have a wife, 19 live in a relationship without being married, and 33 do not have a partner.

In Ukraine: 166 people: 64 women and 102 men. All study full time and are 17-26 years old. Women – 46 respondents live in cities, mainly in Kiev, 22 are in a relationship without marriage, 38 have no partner, 4 respondents did not reply. Men – 78 live in cities, 24 in the neighboring villages, 50 are in a stable relationship without marriage, 48 do not have a partner, 4 respondents did not answer.

## 7. Conclusions from the study

(1) In Poland and Ukraine there are more and more supporters of a **healthy lifestyle**, which unfortunately treat this concept very selectively. The fact of drinking only mineral water or observing a diet full of fruit and vegetables or occasional running is not everything. The healthy lifestyle is based on several key factors: proper diet, physical activity, avoidance of harmful factors (drugs, casual sex), effective relaxation techniques. The students were asked about what they understand by the term “healthy lifestyle”. From all Polish-Ukrainian students, 72 Polish students and 118 Ukrainian chose the answer “I do not drink, smoke



- or take drugs and I practice safe sex” (Ukrainian students indicated more than one answer). For the 75 subjects from Poland and 83 from Ukraine a healthy lifestyle is associated with sporting activities. Only one respondent from Poland (male) and 28 from Ukraine believe that being healthy means “to have a rich inner life”, and two Poles (man and woman) declared that being healthy is tantamount to having regular sexual activity. Statistically, the importance of practicing different sports was indicated by men (76.9% Poles and 56.8% Ukrainians), Poles living in rural areas (54.9%) and Ukrainians from cities (52.4%).
- (2) Only 7 (8.2%) Polish students – women – said they never drank alcohol. 4 respondents drank alcoholic drinks for the first time at the age of 13-14 years (only residents of cities), 30 respondents – started at the age of 15-16 years, 57 respondents – at the age of 15-17, 16 respondents drank their first drink at the age of 18. The average age of first contact with alcohol was 16.55 years. Early contact with alcohol was mentioned by city residents and female students up to 19 years of age. Among students from Ukraine only one 18 year-old female resident of a village had no contact with alcohol; 1 (female resident of Kyiv) drank beer for the first time at her friends’ instigation when she was only 8 years old (!); 2 women (also residents of the capital) tasted alcohol at the age of 12. 10 respondents had contact with alcohol at the age of 13-14, 43 respondents at the age of 15-17, 2 women – at the age of 18. The average age of alcohol exposure amounted to 15.27 years. The early contact with alcohol was indicated by female students from the cities. As for the Polish students 5 of them (7.7%) have never drank alcohol, one (a villager) had his first contact with alcohol at the age of 12, 7 respondents – at the age of 13-14, 46 respondents – at the age of 15-17 and 8 students – at the age of 18. The average age of alcohol use initiation for this group of participants was 15.85 years. In the group of Ukrainian students 7 (6.9%) did never consumed alcohol, 8 respondents drank alcohol for the first time when aged 9-10, 37 – at the age of 11-14, 43 respondents were at the age of 15 – 17, and 4 students – when they came of age. 2 men did not respond. The average age of alcohol initiation was 14.49 years.
  - (3) The test results among female students show that they rather drink wine, however the male students drink beer. While choosing a kind of alcohol men were guided mainly by price and fad.
  - (4) However, the conclusions of the research carried out on Polish students are not optimistic either. Everyday drinking is declared by 23 female respondents (27.1%) and 26 men (40.0%). At the weekends, 30 women drink alcoholic beverages (35.3%) and respectively 25 male students (38.5%). The answer “I drink every day,” was chosen by urban dwellers. Although the results of the WHO tests indicate that in Ukraine alcohol consumption per capita – a person over 15 of age – is 15.6 liters, students regardless of gender declare rare consuming this type of beverages. 50 women (78.12%) and 54 men (52.9%) drink only at Christmas. Low levels of alcohol-related declarations by Ukrainian students can be explained by several factors: 80% of students live in the student dorms, where rigorously enforced is a total ban on the use of alcohol and drugs. Student “caught” on breaking the rules is removed from the dormitory. The prices of renting an apartment in Kiev exceed the financial capacity of many people. Approximately 70% of the students have temporary work after lectures, so they do not drink alcohol because they do not want to lose their job.
  - (5) Polish women indicated the relaxing effects of alcohol, and it was thus the main reason for its consumption as well as its health benefits: *beer cleanses, wine gives rise to red blood cells.*  
 Ukrainian women drink mostly during the celebrations to uphold the tradition – “one glass at least”. Students in Poland drink alcohol for rest and relaxation and they declare drinking due to health reasons as well: *hot beer, hot wine acts like the best antibiotic, there is nothing better when you have a cold; wine stimulates digestion and thus you will not gain weight.* They also reach for alcohol while watching sporting events on television: *there is no game without beer; you cannot watch our players when sober, a true fan would die without drinks.* Students from Ukraine drink to maintain the tradition, 21 respondents (20.6%) – to improve mood and relaxation.
  - (6) The vast majority of Polish students (72.9% of women and 73.8% of men) drank alcohol for the first time at school. It was their schoolmates who forced them to drink “for the company,” so as not to stand out from the group. However, in the case of respondents from Ukraine could be observed family determinants of alcohol consumption. As many as 33 women (51.6%) and 46 men (45.1%) received the first glass of alcohol from the hands of their parents. One of the factors affecting the consumption of alcohol by adolescents may be the alcohol dependence among the members of the immediate family. 38 female students declared that in their families the person addicted to alcohol drinking is father, 4 indicated their brother, 1 woman (an 18 year-old resident of the village) said that her whole family, for



generations, has been addicted to alcohol (she has been drinking beer every day and smoking cigarettes, since she was 15 and during the end-of-term examinations she takes drugs). In the families of the tested students 29 fathers frequently or habitually drink alcohol, 3 people said that not only their both parents are addicted but also brother and grandfather (the villagers). In Ukrainian female students' families the members addicted to alcohol are: 11 grandfathers, 9 parents, 4 fathers, 1 brother. The problem of addiction, especially among the generation of grandparents was more often observed in the villages. 18 Ukrainians pointed to their fathers who were alcohol addicted, 16 tested mentioned both parents, 4 said that the problem relates to their grandparents, 1 person indicated mother.

## 8. Summary

The presented research shows that among the respondents there is a problem of alcohol abuse, greater in Poland than in Ukraine. Ukrainian students are prevented from excessive alcohol drinking mainly for the fear of being thrown out of a dorm or loss of part-time work. Polish students feel more at ease, often come to class after all-nighters. Academics cannot do much, because in an era of demographic decline each student is a treasure.

In the frame of the anti-alcohol prevention a priority task should be taken in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of health education from the level of primary school. Such a scheme will create an opportunity to reach not only the students, but indirectly their parents. Prevention efforts should begin as soon as possible. The first can of beer or a first glass of vodka are often given into the hands of young people by their mates, even at the age of 10. The implementation of anti-drug programs for youth only in higher education institutions is no longer prevention, but the presentation of a real problem. Many university teachers emphasize that such meetings are usually implemented occasionally and are interesting for hardly small group of students. Healthy lifestyle must be promoted regularly, from an early age.

In the 70's the famous French psychiatrist Claude Olivenstein issues of psychoactive substances compiled a triangle of psychoactive substance consumption, namely "person – product – environment". He defined addiction as an individual "meeting" with the product in a given context. Therefore, in the education of young people it is not sufficient to provide only information about drugs and the consequences of their use. In prophylactic there appears the need to teach the young generation how to build their emotional and interpersonal skills. To this end, the family should cooperate closely with the school.

Swiss experience has shown that a well-funded school project implemented with the involvement of parents, local authorities and the media bring the expected results. An effective way is to join the educational institutions to the Swiss Network of Healthy Schools, which offers, among others, financial support for health-related activities. In the process of implementation of anti-addiction prevention project also the municipalities become involved; they mobilize youth organizations, liquor stores, sports groups, official authorities in the fight against the sale of alcohol to minors. Through a participatory approach schools implement a series of preventive measures and information. The evaluation of these activities shows that the number of students consuming alcohol has already reduced (Baume-Schneider, 2011, pp. 123-133).

Many countries trying to prevent addiction of alcohol among the youth introduces a continuous increase in the price of alcohol. The analysis of the experience of Western countries shows that reducing the attractiveness of alcohol by raising prices is not appropriate. E.g. in Switzerland, introduction of a special tax on imported foreign alcoholic beverages, resulted only in a conflict Swiss federation – alcohol importers.

The youngsters began there and then consuming important quantities hitherto almost unknown alcopops (fruit drinks mixed with alcohol) (Gmel, & Wicki, 2010, p. 29). The same situation was observed in Canada (Sacy, 2011, pp. 91, 97). Also the research conducted among the 15-16 years old adolescents by the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs shows that within 30 days of the study alcohol was drunk by 68% of Austrians and "only" 39% of the population of Ukraine (where the price of alcohol is relatively low in relation to earnings) (ESPAD Report, 2016, p. 38).

The problem of excessive consumption of alcohol by minors is not so stuck in its price, but above all in the absence of proper shaping of their pro-health attitudes and willingness to adjust to the peer group.

Measures for the prevention of addiction must begin from the primary education. These actions should include among others: (1) Distribution of information brochures, posters, visual materials at all levels of



education. (2) Inviting former alcoholics in order to raise the youth awareness as for the effects of consumption of alcohol. (3) Staging performing arts and creative arts with students. (4) Broadcast video for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle that you can post on the official websites of the institutions. (5) Training of specialists for prevention work with young people.

The involvement of countries in the prevention of addiction reflects not only the socio-economic situation of society, but also its culture.

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