

# The Smokefree Class Competition

An Innovative Approach to School-based Smoking Prevention



# **The Smokefree Class Competition**

**An Innovative Approach to School-based Smoking Prevention**

Edited by Sari Savolainen

National Public Health Institute  
Department of Epidemiology and Health Promotion

European Network on Young People and Tobacco

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International prize winner of the Smokefree Class  
Competition 2000/2001

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## FOREWORD

Recent data has shown how global public health is undergoing rapid change. Infectious diseases are increasingly being brought under control and lifestyle related chronic diseases have started to dominate global public health. Tobacco use has clearly been shown to be a major detrimental factor. Current estimates show that tobacco use kills annually about four million people. In 25 years this figure is estimated to reach a staggering 10 million people each year. This will then represent the greatest epidemic of all times.

The enormous health hazards of tobacco use to individuals and populations have been demonstrated beyond any doubt. Why has this not led to a reduction in smoking? On the contrary, in large parts of the world, tobacco use is still increasing – especially among young people.

Tobacco use is obviously deeply enrooted in the society but at individual level, tobacco use is highly addictive. A major factor is the enormous marketing through multiple channels utilized by the tobacco industry. To replace the dying consumers, the industry needs annually millions of new consumers for their deadly product. These are recruited from the child and adolescent populations of the world, and increasingly so in the developing world where health consciousness is not so high and public tobacco control less active. Innovative marketing through global channels with huge resources is used, combined with intensive lobbying of political decision-makers.

Fortunately people and countries are increasingly taking action. In many developed countries smoking rates, espe-

cially among men, are declining. In Europe, the European Union and many of its member countries have taken major steps to promote smokefree developments. Among these actions are efforts to promote a smoke free lifestyle among youth.

The European Network on Young People and Tobacco (ENYPAT) has carried out valuable work in promoting evidence based smoking prevention activities. The Smoke-free Class programme has undoubtedly been a successful innovative initiative to support smoke free school environments in a positive way. This model, which relates to the successful global Quit and Win programme, can be a useful model for broader global smoking prevention activities.

I want to congratulate the ENYPAT team and all of the participating national teams for their excellent work. I hope that this report can be instrumental in disseminating the experiences to a broader audience, both within the EU and outside its boundaries, and in contributing to successful national tobacco control policies.

Geneva, 22 November 2001.

*Pekka Puska*  
*Director, Department of Noncommunicable Disease*  
*Prevention and Health Promotion*  
*World Health Organization, Geneva*

## European Network on Young People and Tobacco (ENYPAT)

The Smokefree Class Competition is one of the five European projects administered by ENYPAT.

The aim of ENYPAT is to contribute to the reduction of tobacco use among young people via European-wide collaboration, information exchange and programme building. The ENYPAT network is made up of about 1500 members working in the fields of youth, tobacco and health. The network is financed by the Europe against Cancer Programme of the European Commission.

ENYPAT started operating in 1993 in Edinburgh, hosted by the ASH Scotland. In 1997, the European Commission services asked the Finnish National Public Health Institute to take over the network to Helsinki.

Since 1999, ENYPAT co-ordinates tobacco-related programmes concerning young people financed by the Europe against Cancer programme. One of these programmes is the Smokefree Class Competition. The other programmes operating during 2001-2002 are Quit and Win – Don't Start and Win Competition, Youth Conference, ENYPAT Spring School and a research project Gender Differences in Smoking in Young People. These programmes together with the ENYPAT Secretariat constitute the ENYPAT Framework Project (see the scheme below).

Each of the programmes is organised in several European countries. All 15 EU Member States, plus Iceland and Norway participate in ENYPAT programmes.

ENYPAT acts as an intermediary between the European Commission services and partners in different countries. Partners carry out the programmes independently, but as the programmes are partially financed by national contribution and partially by the Europe against Cancer Programme, ENYPAT supervises the realisation of programmes and regularly reports to the Commission services about their progress.

The Smokefree Class Competition is the oldest and largest of ENYPAT's programmes. Its huge success at the European level has encouraged the organisation of the other ENYPAT programmes. The Smokefree Class Competition started at the European level at 1997 with only seven countries taking part. Today, only four years later, the competition is organised in 15 European countries. It concretely touches 375,000 pupils from 12 to 14 years old. In addition, the competition is organised in Switzerland, Israel and South Africa. Also, some South American countries have shown interest in the competition.

More information about ENYPAT can be obtained at [www.ktl.fi/enypat](http://www.ktl.fi/enypat)

### ENYPAT Framework Project 2001/2002



# The European Dimension of the Smokefree Class Competition

## 1. Introduction

The Smokefree Class Competition is a school-based smoking prevention programme initiated in co-operation with the European Network on Young People and Tobacco (ENYPAT) within the framework of the Europe against Cancer programme of the European Commission. The competition has been carried out at a European level for the fourth time in the school year 2000/2001.

The main aims of the competition are

- the delay or prevention of the onset of smoking in pupils who do not smoke, and
- the reduction or cessation of smoking in pupils, who already experiment with smoking so that they do not become regular smokers.

Target groups are pupils aged 11–14, since research has reliably shown that this is the age when pupils start to experiment with smoking.

Classes participating in the competition decide not to smoke for a period of six months. Classes that refrain from smoking for that period of time take part in a national prize draw where they can win a number of attractive prizes for the whole class.

In addition to the national prizes, there is an international prize draw that gives one of the classes the chance to win a trip to one of the other European countries. The international prize draw serves to emphasise the European context of the competition and to enhance communication between pupils of various participating countries. In the previous school years, classes from Germany (twice!), Denmark and Finland won trips to Paris, London, Barcelona and Athens.

The competition can be embedded into various subjects in school and is not particularly time-consuming. The countries involved are able to place the addresses of the participating classes on the Internet in order to foster communication between the pupils participating in different countries.

The idea of this competition was first established in Finland, where it has been carried out annually since 1989. In the school-year 1997/1998 the “Smokefree Class Competition” was carried out at a European level for the first time and seven countries participated. Since then, the number of participating countries has increased each year and in the school year 2000/2001 fifteen European coun-

tries have implemented the programme, including a total of 15,021 classes and approximately 375,000 pupils.

In the school-year 2001/2002, the competition is carried out in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Iceland, Luxembourg, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and Wales. Moreover, South Africa and Israel will join the programme.

## 2. Theoretical background

It is well known that smoking is the single most preventable cause of disease morbidity and mortality worldwide. There is a strong correlation between the age of starting to experiment with cigarette smoking and the probability of becoming a regular smoker. The early onset of smoking is one of the most important predictors for later smoking, and it correlates with heavier smoking. The probability of becoming a regular smoker after adolescence is relatively small. Despite the greater negative health effects of regular smoking compared to occasional smoking, daily smokers have more difficulties in quitting and a number of studies have shown a positive correlation between daily smoking and the experimentation with other psychoactive substances.

There is a great variety of smoking prevention programmes that are based on informing about the long-term health risks of smoking. However, it is well understood now that programmes which concentrate solely on information and fear arousal strategies – even though leading to a better knowledge of the harmful effects that smoking has on health – have only limited effects on attitudinal or behavioural changes in youngsters.

The idea of the “Smokefree Class Competition” is different to those traditional approaches, because instead of using fear arousal strategies to hinder pupils from smoking, the desired non-smoking behaviour is reinforced: Non-smokers are rewarded if they stay smoke free. It is well known from learning theory that positive reinforcement enhances the probability of producing a desired behaviour. Non-smoking becomes a popular and worthwhile behaviour, and social norms within the peer groups are influenced in a way that non-smoking remains more common in classes than smoking.

### 3. Implementation of the competition

#### 3.1 Rules of the competition

The basic rules of the competition are the same in each country:

1. Classes decide to be a non-smoking class for a period up to six months.
2. Pupils sign a class contract and an individual contract promising not to smoke during the competition. The contracts serve to underline their commitment.
3. The responsibility of the control of smoking lies mainly with the pupils themselves: pupils monitor their smoking status and report to their teachers regularly, whether they have smoked or not.
4. Classes that refrain from smoking for that period of time are rewarded: They participate in a national as well as a European prize draw, in which they can win a number of attractive prizes. The national prizes vary in the participating countries.
5. The main prize in the European prize draw is a trip to one of the other participating countries.
6. The competition is adapted to suit the needs and circumstances of individual countries.

#### 3.2 Development of the materials

Each of the participating countries develops their own materials for the participating classes (flyer, class contract, pupils' contract, poster etc.).

In most of the participating countries, teachers' brochures are developed to explain the idea of the competition and to advise teachers how to handle problems that could occur during the competition, for instance bullying among pupils, pupils' relapses into smoking or lying pupils. In a few of the involved countries, teachers' manuals or a CD-Rom with health education materials are compiled consisting of teaching units dealing with smoking prevention as well as with personal and social skills. Within the framework of the competition, teachers can use the materials in class and carry out further drug preventive activities.

#### 3.3 Promotion of the European idea of the Smokefree Class Competition

The Internet is used to enhance communication between the pupils from different countries. Every participating school can place their addresses on a special European

Smokefree Class Internet page ([www.smokefreeclass.info](http://www.smokefreeclass.info)). The Internet is a perfect medium for this purpose, as it is becoming increasingly popular among young people and a growing number of schools in Europe have access to the Internet.

At the end of each competition, there is an international prize draw, in which one class can win a trip to one of the participating countries, in order to familiarise pupils with other European cultures.

Moreover, in the year 2000 there was an international youth conference held in Berlin, where classes from all the participating countries were invited to present creative ideas regarding non-smoking and health promotion. See pages 23–25 of this report for more detailed information about the conference.

### 4. Development of the competition from 1997–2001

In the school-year 1997/1998, the "Smokefree Class Competition" was implemented at a European level for the first time and 3,821 classes with approximately 100,000 pupils from seven European countries took part. Since then the number of participating countries has increased each year and in the school-year 2000/2001 fifteen European countries have implemented the programme so it now includes a total of 15,021 classes with approximately 375,000 pupils.

The progress of the competition in the countries can be seen in figure 1 and table 1.

Figure 1: Participation rate of pupils from the school years 1997–2001.

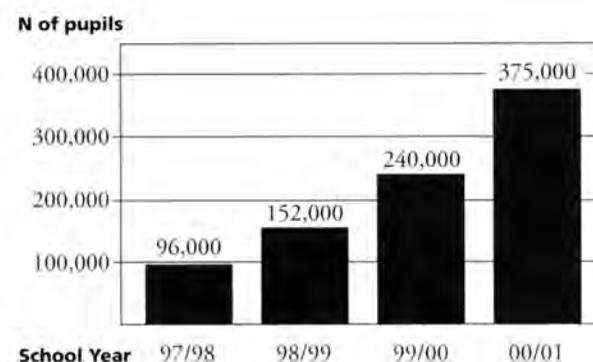


Table 1: Progress of the Smokefree Class Competition from 1997 to 2001.

	School year 1997/1998		School year 1998/1999		School year 1999/2000		School year 2000/2001	
	Schools	Classes	Schools	Classes	Schools	Classes	Schools	Classes
<b>Austria</b>	-	-	352	544	Not available	525	459	1,121
<b>Belgium</b>	-	-	38	216	98	484	191	1,229
<b>Denmark</b>	128	145	433	557	387	518	458	557
<b>Finland</b>	503	2,688	521	2,578	423	2,349	481	2,352
<b>France</b>	31	91	43	147	59	197	31	182
<b>Germany</b>	227	462	420	780	1,017	2,298	2,006	4,354
<b>Greece</b>	-	-	51	135	103	301	50	189
<b>Iceland</b>	-	-	-	-	124	323	143	319
<b>Italy</b>	80	139	157	352	116	317	187	464
<b>Luxembourg</b>	-	-	-	-	24	131	23	165
<b>Netherlands</b>	-	-	14	61	200	791	230	1,832
<b>Portugal</b>	-	-	-	-	12	113	14	107
<b>Spain</b>	25	88	55	147	102	310	101	333
<b>Switzerland</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	619	1,257
<b>Wales</b>	44	208	90	536	92	525	98	560
<b>Σ</b>	1,038	3,821	2,174	6,053	2,757	9,182	5,091	15,021

## 5. Co-operating institutions

Throughout Europe a network of co-operating institutions has been established. The project co-ordinators meet on a regular basis to exchange experiences and prepare the competition in their countries. The co-operation of several countries has proven very successful and is of great

advantage to all involved countries – especially those participating for the first time.

Table 2 shows the contact details of currently involved organisations.

Table 2: Co-operating institutions

Country	Name	Institution	E-mail
<b>Austria</b>	Doris Sommer	Österreichische Krebshilfe,	<i>sommer@krebshilfe.net</i>
<b>Belgium</b>	Marleen Lambert	Vlaams Instituut voor	<i>marleen.lambert@vig.be</i>
	Els Wouters	Gezondheidspromotie (VIG),	<i>els.wouters@vig.be</i>
<b>Belgium</b>	Caroline Rasson	FARES	<i>Caroline.rasson@euronet.be</i>
<b>Denmark</b>	Joergen Falk	National Board of Health	<i>JF@sst.dk</i>
<b>Finland</b>	Mari Piipponen	Finnish Health Association	
<b>France</b>	Dr. Kamel Abdennbi	Association Institut Coeur	
	Dominique Serpaud	et Vaisseaux	<i>Fondacv@club-internet.fr</i>
<b>Germany</b>	Dr. Reiner Hanewinkel	Institute for Therapy and	<i>hanewinkel@ift-nord.de</i>
	Dr. Gudrun Wiborg	Health Research (IFT-Nord)	<i>wiborg@ift-nord.de</i>
<b>Greece</b>	Dr. Maria Pilali	Hellenic Cancer Society	<i>Hellas-cancer@ath.forthnet.gr</i>
	Prof. Kostas Chourdakis		
<b>Iceland</b>	Vidar Jensson	Tobacco Control Task	<i>Reyklaus@reyklaus.is</i>
	Thorgrimur Thrainsson	Force of Iceland	<i>frlsi@reyklaus.is</i>
<b>Italy</b>	Dr. Elizabeth Tamang	Centro Studi e Formazione Sociale Fondazione Emanuela Zancan	<i>cepsalute@fondazionezancan.it</i>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Reneé Lambert	Fondation Luxembourgeoise	<i>ficc@pt.lu</i>
	Marie-Paule	contre le Cancer	
	Prost-Heinisch		

Country	Name	Institution	E-mail
Portugal	Paulo Duarte Vitoria	Conselho de Prevenção do Tabagismo	<i>mop22251@mail.telepac.pt</i>
Spain	Dr. Manel Nebot Manuela Ballestin	Institut Municipal de Salut Publica	<i>Mnebot@imsb.bcn.es</i> <i>Mballest@imsb.bcn.es</i>
South Africa	Theresa van der Merwe	Cancer Association of South Africa	<i>TvdMerwe@Langerug.com</i>
Switzerland	Verena El Fehri	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Tabakprävention Schweiz	<i>Verena.elfehri@at-schweiz.ch</i>
The Netherlands	Renate Spruijt	DEFACTO – for a smokefree future	<i>rspruijt@defacto-rookvrij.nl</i>
The Netherlands	Rudi Loof	Trimbos-Instituut	<i>rloof@trimbos.nl</i>
Wales	Sue Bowker	Health Promotion Division National Assembly for Wales	<i>sue.bowker@wales.gsi.gov.uk</i>

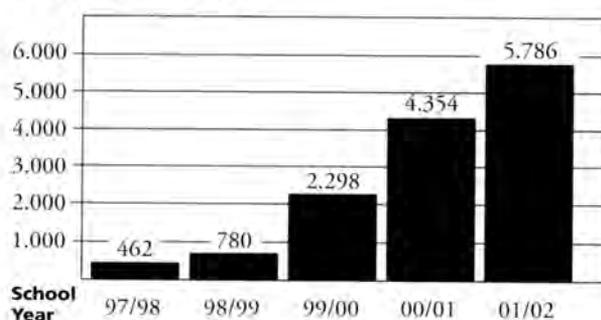
*Gudrun Wiborg  
Reiner Hanewinkel  
IFT-Nord  
Kiel*

## “Be Smart – Don’t Start” The Smokefree Class Competition in Germany

In Germany the competition is carried out under the slogan “Be Smart – Don’t Start”.

The competition was carried out for the first time in Germany in selected Bundesländer during the school-year 1997/1998. Since that time, the number of Bundesländer that have joined the programme has increased each year. Scheme 1 illustrates the development of the competition in Germany.

**N of participating classes**



Scheme 1: Development of the competition in Germany

### 1. Implementation of the competition

Classes are invited to participate via flyers that are sent to all secondary schools.

At least 90% of the class has to decide to carry out the programme. Classes who register will sign a class contract where they promise to remain smoke free for the following six months. On this contract, classes place a sticker for each week that they have stayed smoke free, in order to monitor their progress in the programme.

A class is considered to be “smoke free”, if no more than 10% of the pupils have smoked during the previous week. This 10% threshold was introduced in order to reduce possible lying in pupils who already smoke and also possible negative peer pressure (bullying) carried out by non-smokers on smokers. This ensures that pupils who already smoke do not have to fear that the whole class would have to drop out of the competition because of them.

For each successful month, the classes send a postcard to the organisers of the competition confirming further participation in the programme. If a class drops out of the competition, it fills in a special card indicating the reasons why it had to drop out. This allows to determine, whether classes stopped the programme due to different reasons than too many smokers (e.g. group pressure). At the end of the competition, classes that remained smoke-free receive a certificate, which is signed by a representative of the Ministry of Health of the Federal Republic.

# Be Smart - Don't Start

Nichtrauchen 2001/2002

Der internationale Wettbewerb für smarte Schulklassen  
Gewinnt eine Reise nach Kopenhagen, Geld für Eure Klassenkasse  
und vieles mehr.



## 1.1 The materials

Classes that register for participation receive a folder containing:

1. a brochure for teachers, containing the rules and all important information for the implementation of the programme (e.g. what to do if group pressure occurs, pupils lie, etc.),
2. a class contract (designed as a game with one question for every week during the competition) and individual contract for pupils,
3. a poster,
4. feedback cards for each month,
5. a list of regional contact persons specialising in drug prevention,
6. a drop-out card,
7. a CD-Rom (see also next paragraph).

Moreover, pupils can ask for further material on smoking prevention.

Pupils also receive a brochure for their parents, explaining the idea and the theoretical background of the competition as well as providing some advice on how parents

could support their children in the programme. In addition, parents find addresses and telephone helpline numbers that they can contact if they wish to stop smoking themselves.

A CD-Rom containing health education material is sent to teachers whose classes participate in the competition. Its aim was to provide teachers with some creative ideas for various activities dealing with non-smoking that they can carry out in class during different subjects. In detail the CD-Rom contains:

- the German logo of the competition,
- a certificate that the teachers can give to their classes, when they finish the competition successfully,
- a little quiz regarding smoking,
- several drafts for slides regarding the competition, that teachers can use for presentations,
- lesson instructions for different subjects regarding health education and non-smoking in school,
- advice for the smoking pupil,
- a feedback questionnaire for teachers.

## 1.2 Workshops for teachers and pupils

Every year workshops for teachers (and in some of the Bundesländer for pupils, too) take place in order to provide teachers with the necessary knowledge on the theoretical basis and the rules of the competition. Some emphasis is placed on possible problems that could occur during the competition, such as lying of pupils or negative group pressure.

## 1.3 Co-operating institutions

The competition is supported at a national level by the Federal Centre for Health Education. In the participating Bundesländer, the programme is supported by the Ministries of Education, the Ministries of Social Affairs, several health promotion authorities and organisations, the cancer society and health insurance companies.

Moreover, in most of the federal states, there are several professionals from drug prevention centres that are involved in the competition.

*Gudrun Wiborg  
Reiner Hanewinkel  
IFT-Nord  
Kiel*

## "Reyklaus bekkur" – The Smokefree Class Competition in Iceland

This is the second year Iceland has participated in the Smokefree Class Competition.

All the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes in the country were invited to take part. A total number of 319 classes from 143 schools participated in the competition that was carried out from October 25, 2000 to May 14, 2001. That is about 50% of all invited classes in the country. Fourteen classes dropped out. The main rule was that none in the class was to experience tobacco. As demonstrated in the table below, the drop-out rate was about half compared to previous year. The goal, being a "smokefree class" until spring 2001, was achieved by 305 classes versus 296 classes last year.

### 1. Participation and materials

Year	Classes	Schools	drop out %	drop out
2000–2001	319	143	14	4,4
1999–2000	324	124	28	8,6

Competition material was sent to all classes. An advertising agency made a new concept of the material and the main theme became a skunk.

First all the classes received a registration form and a leaflet introducing the competition. The classes could also register on the web. After registration, the class received a package which contained:

- Class contract
- Poster
- Parent information booklet
- Teachers information booklet.

After the class (every pupil and teacher) had signed the class contract, it was sent to us. We signed it and then sent it back to the class. This year the classes were to confirm 6 times during the competition period that the class was smokefree. This was done by using the Internet. Last year the classes were to send a postcard but this year we found that the Internet is a very good tool for this purpose. The confirmation was done either by a single pupil, all pupils or the teacher.

### 2. The prizes and winners

The following prizes were distributed:

- in five classes every pupil got a T-Shirt
- in five classes every pupil got a CD
- in two classes every pupil got a CD player
- five classes won a day drip (600 EUR)
- two classes won a trip to Denmark as national winners.

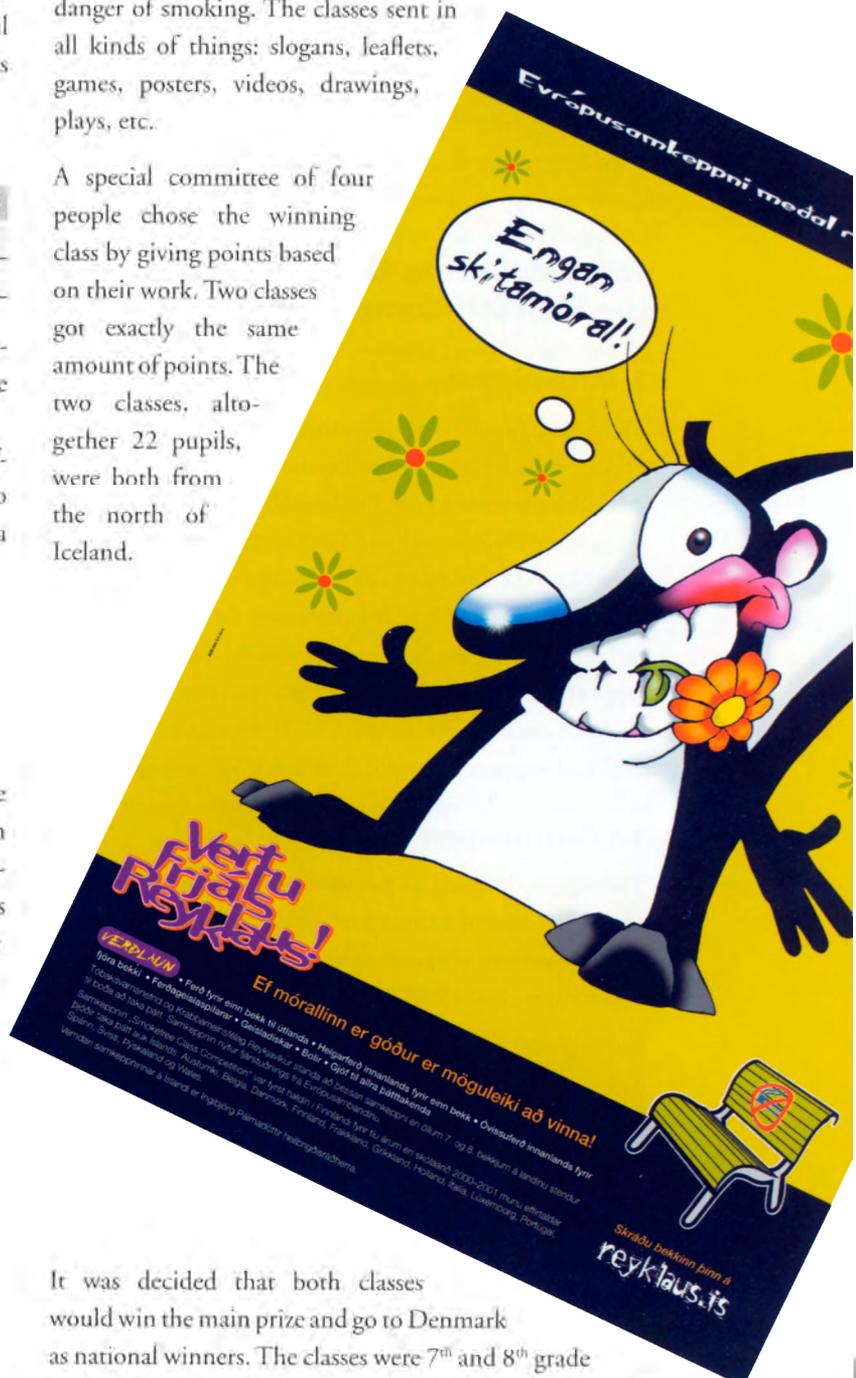
In January, every pupil who participated in the competition received a pocket calculator with the slogan "vertu frjáls - reyklaus" ("be free – smokefree").

The calculator made the kids very happy!

They also received four different stickers with the skunk saying different slogans.

To have a chance of winning the main prize, a trip abroad, the classes had to send in ideas for information material concerning the danger of smoking. The classes sent in all kinds of things: slogans, leaflets, games, posters, videos, drawings, plays, etc.

A special committee of four people chose the winning class by giving points based on their work. Two classes got exactly the same amount of points. The two classes, altogether 22 pupils, were both from the north of Iceland.



It was decided that both classes would win the main prize and go to Denmark as national winners. The classes were 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Grunnskólinn að Hólum í Hjaltadal and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Höfðaskóla, Skagaströnd.

The class at Grunnskólinn að Hólum sent as their project “The smokefree game” and a CD with a song. Höfðaskóli published a newsletter and distributed three editions to every home in their area. They also made a sculpture with the concept “smoking = burning money”.

As a conclusion, I can say that I am very satisfied with this year’s work. I plan to activate the schools better by phoning them after having sent out registration forms to make sure it has reached everyone concerned. I also want to improve the social visibility.

*Viðar Jensson,  
Tobacco Control Task Force of Iceland  
Reykjavik*

## The Smokefree Class Competition in the Flemish Community of Belgium

### 1. Introduction

The Smokefree Class Competition (SFC) was organised in the Flemish Community for the fourth time this year. Since the last school year, the Flemish Institute for Health Promotion (FIHP) and the Flemish regional health networks (26 so called “Logo’s”) have organised the competition together. The FIHP is a partner at the European level and co-ordinates the SFC in the Flemish Community and supports the regional health networks. The health networks co-ordinate the competition at the regional and local level and support the participating schools and classes.

#### 1.1 Participation

The SFC is targeted at pupils who are entering the secondary education (12 and 14 years). Since the start of the competition in Flanders, the numbers of participating schools and classes have increased:

School year	Number of classes starting	Number of classes at the end
1998/1999	216	112
1999/2000	484	232
2000/2001	1.229	832

The Flemish SFC not only aims at increasing the numbers of participating classes, but also wants to ensure the quality of the competition. Extra activities aiming at tobacco prevention are supported in classes and schools. Moreover, the SFC is placed within the framework of the health promoting schools.



#### 1.2 Rules

- The competition aims at supporting pupils to stay smokefree and those who have experimented, to stop smoking.
- It is targeted at pupils in classes of the first grade of secondary education.
- Classes that have occasional smokers can participate if a maximum 10% of the pupils smoke. The smokers do not participate in the competition. It is up to teacher to decide if this additional rule applies in his/her class.
- The competition is a contract that pupils in a school class undertake collectively and by which they decide and promise not to smoke during six months.
- The participating classes register monthly their smoking behaviour. Registration is obligatory. Classes, which do not register, are disqualified from the com-

petition.

- Three newsletters are sent to the classes and extra activities for tobacco prevention are encouraged.
- A draw and a prize-giving day conclude the competition at the Flemish level. The winner of the 1<sup>st</sup> Flemish prize takes part in the European draw.

The Flemish SFC uses the concept of the European project: target group, objectives, method, materials, duration, registration of participation, prizes and draw with prize giving day. During the preparation phase, the rules are defined, the materials designed, the classes recruited and information sessions are organised for teachers of classes taking part in the competition.

The materials consist of a map, a set of postcards, a flyer, an information brochure, a poster, a contract, a certificate, registration forms and newsletters.

### 1.3 Competition phase

The regional health networks recruit the classes by sending a flyer to schools at the end of the previous school year (June) inviting the classes to join the competition. At the beginning of the new school year, the schools are contacted again and subscriptions to the competition are gathered.

The regional health networks organise one or more information sessions in their region to teachers. The method of the SFC is explained, a model letter to the parents is presented, experiences are exchanged and educational materials for tobacco prevention are presented.

The competition is organised on the basis of strict timing and planning based on a manual where the method and a monthly overview on actions to be undertaken (when, how and by whom) are explained. Regular meetings are organised between the FIHP and the regional health networks.

Timing of the competition is as follows:

- The organisation of the competition covers 13 months (April - June).
- The preparations start in April of the previous school year.
- The SFC itself starts on the second Monday of October and lasts until the second Friday of April.
- The smoking behaviour is registered every second Friday of each month between November and April.

- The prize-giving day is organised on the last Wednesday afternoon prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, the World No Tobacco Day.
- The three newsletters are distributed during December, February and April.

The press is contacted at the start and at the end (the prize giving day) of the competition. The FIHP contacts the Flemish press and the regional health networks can contact their regional press.

### 1.4 Rewards for the smoke free classes

Classes that remain smoke free receive rewards. In December, those classes that are still smoke free receive a set of postcards for each pupil. The classes that have remained smoke free for the whole competition period receive a certificate and take part in a Flemish draw. One class is drawn from each of the 26 health regions and on the prize giving day, three Flemish prizes are drawn. The Flemish winner takes part in the European prize draw.

## 2. Evaluation

The first Flemish SFC in 1998-1999 has been evaluated by written questionnaires to pupils and to teachers at the beginning and at the end of the competition. The registrations of the extra activities that were carried out in the classes were also used.

### 2.1 Pupils' process evaluation

A total number of 721 of the 773 participating pupils filled in the questionnaire. The pupils evaluated the method of the SFC in general as being quite positive. As to whether the competition had an influence on their smoking behaviour, the pupils responded very positively with 59% replying "yes". Some of the materials were not known by all the pupils (the information brochure, the newsletters and the registration forms), which raises the question if the competition had been carried out in all the classes as originally intended.

### 2.2 Teachers' process evaluation

A total number of 26 questionnaires were filled in and returned. Most of the teachers (70%) proposed themselves that their classes should take part in the competition. A majority of the schools and teachers informed the parents about the competition using the model letter of the FIHP. The teachers evaluated the SFC in general as "good" and considered the suggestion to organise extra activities for

tobacco prevention as "good" and "very good". The vast majority (>90%) replied that the competition should be continued in the future and that they had every intention of participating.

More than 75% of the teachers were familiar with the different materials. Most teachers agreed totally or almost totally that the competition made it easier to work on tobacco prevention (73%) and that it enhanced and made it easier to talk about tobacco in the class (80%). 60% of them said that the SFC did not require too much of their time. The method and the materials were regarded as special strengths. On the other hand, they stated that the "missing" (biochemical) validation of the smoking behaviour was a weak point. Only social pressure and the honesty of the pupils were required.

### 2.3 Outcome evaluation

The outcome evaluation was carried out by means of a quasi-experimental pre-post design with control group. The effects were identified based on the ASE-model. Determinants were measured by means of a validated self-reported questionnaire for pupils and teachers at the beginning and the end of the competition.

Results strongly suggest that the competition in itself had no positive main effect on any of the dependent variables on the individual level. However, in schools where the project was used as a stepping stone to organise other tobacco prevention activities, there were some significant effects. There even was a significant correlation ( $r=.35$ ,  $p=.017$ ) between the number of prevention activities held and the smoking behaviour. At the school level also, the competition did make a difference. Several of the variables measured at the teacher level showed an increase towards the Smokefree School.

### 3. Conclusion

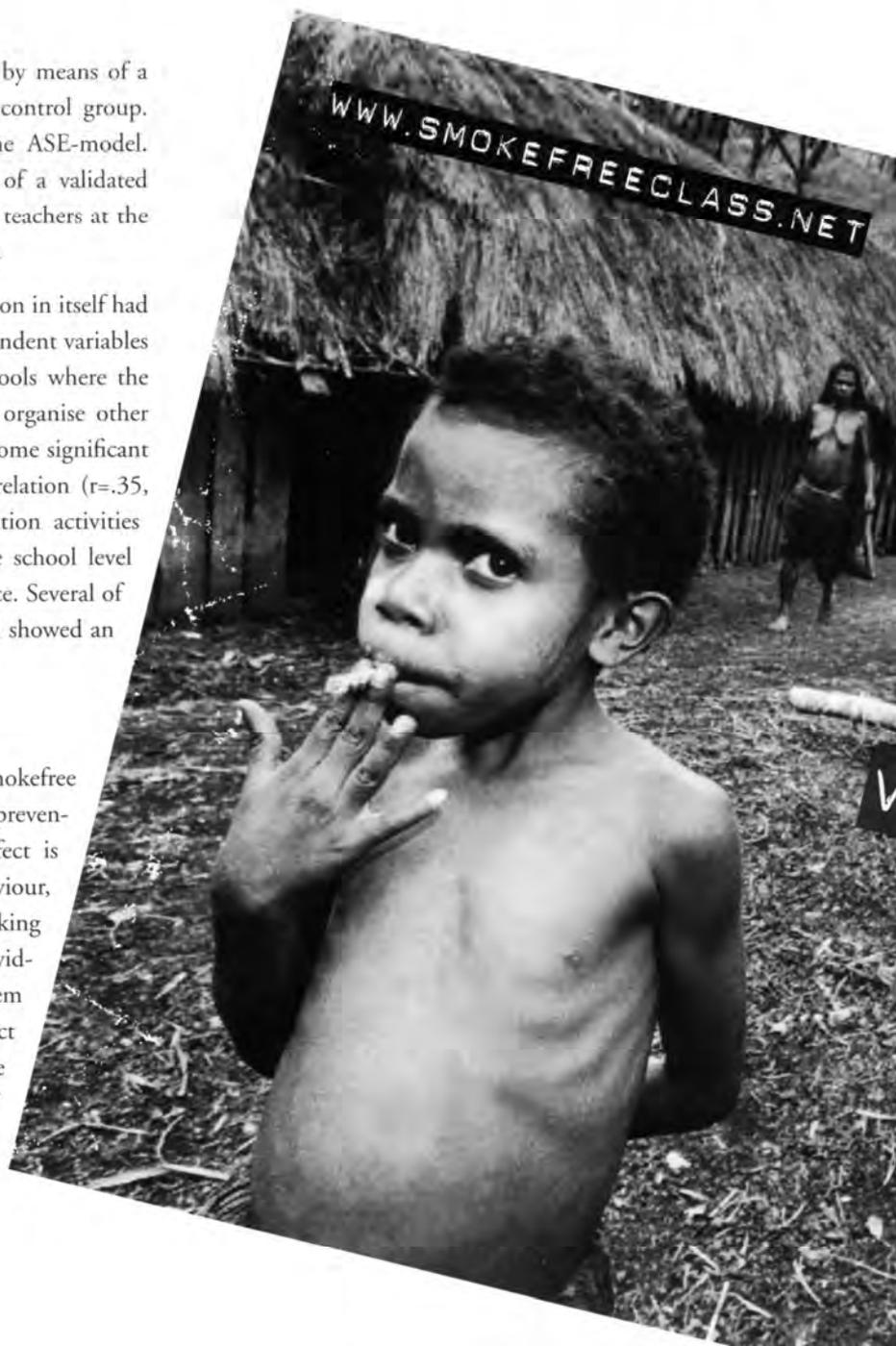
The evaluation study revealed that the Smokefree Class Competition, a relatively simple prevention programme in which the main effect is expected from rewarding the healthy behaviour, is not effective if the goal is to change smoking behaviour or its determinants at the individual level. Some of the "side effects" do seem to make a difference. Therefore the effect of the competition has to be found in the long term. Schools, which organise a lot of

educational activities on smoking prevention, can have an impact on the behaviour of their pupils.

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*Marleen Lambert and Els Wouters  
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## The Smokefree Class Competition – Experiences from Finland

The Smokefree Class competition was organised for the 12<sup>th</sup> time in Finland this year. The focus of the competition is tobacco use prevention and cessation. There were two categories in the competition: to continue smoke free living and activity competition. It was forbidden to smoke during the competition.

If someone of the class smoked, they had a chance to take part in the activity competition that was organised for the third time. The participating classes planned and implemented activities to prevent smoking in their school or in their surroundings.

The Finnish competition started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2000 and it ended on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2001. There were nearly 500 Finnish schools involved. Altogether 44,944 pupils from 2,351 classes (of which 1,672 were 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 679 were 8<sup>th</sup> grade students) participated. In the activity competition, 27 classes returned a report of their activities.

The Finnish competition material for the school year 2000 – 2001 included a poster, teacher's guide and commitment forms (one personal and one for whole class).

The idea of the material was the same as last year:

personal choice. The text on the material meant something "perfect but stinks". The materials were sent for all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in Finland. During the competition we posted also four editions of Smokefree Class News for all the participating classes containing information about the competition and smoking, etc. The competition was also advertised in magazines and regional secretaries of Finnish Health Association publicised the competition in their areas.

The winners had the opportunity to win money prizes. There was also a chance for one class to win an international prize. The regional secretaries of Finnish Health Association presented the prizes for the winners. This year Pohjois-Tapiola's international school (class 7FE) from Finland won the international prize. The prize was a trip for the whole class to Athens. They were in Athens in November 2001. The trip was a great success.

On November 2000 we arranged pilot training courses for teachers concerning the competition. Training was arranged in northern parts of the country.

The competition was found to be absolutely important and necessary. We received feedback from some teachers and pupils who stated that the competition is an effective way to prevent smoking. The numbers of the participants were quite high, so we can draw the conclusion that the popularity of the competition is stable.

Schools and classes were somewhat disappointed to material support, because only the winners received something. Next year all participants are going to receive a package of chewing gum.

The competition is very important to the schools. It is quite easy to arrange. Through the competition we are able to reach a lot of young people and encourage them to quit smoking or stay smoke free. Schools are bombarded with circulars during the school terms so the material we send has to be good and conspicuous.

*Mari Piipponen*  
Finnish Health Association  
Helsinki



## Action Antidote The Smokefree Class Competition in the Netherlands

### 1. Introduction

In 1998, Stivoro (The Dutch Foundation on Smoking and Health) and the Trimbos-institute (Institute for Mental Health and Addiction) started a co-operation in the project Smokefree Class Competition, in the Netherlands better known as Action Antidote (Actie Tegengif).

An agreement between these institutes was essential, as all smoking prevention activities in schools have to be linked to each other. Non-smoking is Stivoro's core activity and the focus of smoking prevention in education was growing. Education materials for secondary schools were developed within the framework Smoke Free Schools. The Trimbos-institute has a long tradition in providing secondary schools with education material on tobacco, alcohol, other stimulants and gambling. These materials are part of a comprehensive project called "The healthy schools and stimulants".

### 2. The competition in 2000-2001

The competition rules

1. The class makes together the decision not to smoke for six months.
2. 90% of the class is non-smoking from November 1<sup>st</sup> until May 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. On November 1<sup>st</sup> all pupils from the class put their names on a poster and on their individual contract.
4. A classmate is witness and also signs the individual contract.
5. Social control is a basic assumption (there are no blood or urine-tests).
6. The class teacher is coaching the pupils.
7. Three forms have to be filled in and sent to the organisation Action Antidote.
8. Classes have to send in an original photo, which shows that the class is smoke-free.

The competition was offered to all 7th and 8th grade classes in the country. We also strengthened participation of regional Health Services. These organisations have a very important task in implementing, consulting, motivating and conducting the schools in the field of health promotion.

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, when the competition started with 1,832 classes, Stivoro and the Trimbos-institute organised a national ceremony in one of the competing schools. It was organised at the Northsea College, a technical school

in IJmuiden. National and regional press were present, for example Children's News, SBS6-News, Radio North-Holland and various newspapers. As a result, a great deal of publicity was generated for the national and European competition.

The competition was running from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>. During the six month period pupils were not allowed to smoke. To confirm that they had to sign a contract three times. Two newsletters for teachers were developed to motivate them and to give examples of other activities in schools.



*National winner of school year  
2000-2001, class 1E2N from  
'Het Assink' in Nede.*

#### 2.1 Prizes and winners

We had a one national prize and 11 regional prizes; one for every district of the country except for the district of the national winner. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 517 classes had succeeded to stay smoke free during the competition. A total number of 420 classes actually did send a photo, which showed clearly that the class was smoke free.

A regional jury, consisting of municipal health services and other regional health organisations, selected the best photo in every district. That class won the regional prize and competed for the national prize. The national jury selected the national winner. That jury comprised representatives from Stivoro, the Trimbos-institute, Study Centre of the Netherlands and a famous DJ.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, World No Smoking Day, the winners were announced. The regional health services organised prize-giving ceremonies in schools of regional winners. The national prize-giving ceremony was organised in a discotheque close to the winning school and was hosted by the famous DJ Jeroen Kijk in de Vegte. After the official part, where the jury quoted from the jury's report, the class received their prize of €1000 and a certificate. All pupils in the class also received personal prizes (a CD and a T-shirt with their own winning photo on it). When this

part was over, the pupils were surprised with a performance of the popular Dutch boy-band Di-rect.

## 2.2 Feedback from a teacher

Ruurt van der Sluis, teacher of the Bisschoppelijk College Broekhin in Roermond said: "In our school, all classes in the age-group of twelve-thirteen years participated. It went very well. At the start in November I knew from some pupils that they were experimenting with smoking. With this competition they had to think very seriously about their smoking behaviour. I told them: If you smoke that rarely, why don't you stop altogether and join this class competition?"

"To emphasize the non-smoking theme, I have a discussion with the pupils now and then. I ask who is smoking, and note that some are hesitating about this. I can derive a lot from reactions of other pupils. If they see a fellow student smoking, they know it's not wrong to tell me. What I do is ask the smoking person if it is true. Together we will have a discussion whether he or she has to be excluded or not. You see it is easy to cheat. But that is not how it works. This social control is a very important element in this competition."

*Renate Spruijt  
DEFACTO voor een rookvrije toekomst  
The Hague*

## Smokefree Class Competition in Italy

### 1. Introduction

Italy has participated in the Smokefree Class Competition from the beginning of the international competition in 1997 with six other countries (Finland, Spain, Germany, Denmark, UK and France). At first, it was carried out only in one region: the Veneto in the North East of Italy.

SFC Competition has evolved well during the years. The national level co-ordination is arranged by an NGO, Foundation of Padova. Just as it has progressed at the European level, there has been a slow but sure growth in the participation also at the national level. From one region in 1997, it first expanded to five regions and this year there will be even more. The aim is of course to spread the initiative to the whole country.

### 2. Description of the competition

Italy follows most of the general rules of the competition. We have a period of five to six months in which the students after signing a contract promise not to smoke. Generally, the competition starts in November and ends in April and the prize giving ceremony takes place on World No Tobacco Day. The classes are also asked to create slogans with smoke free messages. The best slogan of the year is used for the materials produced for the successive year. In some regions, some classes are asked to produce posters or TV spots with smoke free messages and a local judging committee gives prizes to the best entries.

Last year, an exhibition was held in a villa with the posters produced by classes of the Veneto region together with an exhibition dedicated to Pinocchio. The exhibition was open for several months. Classes who visited it were involved in interactive activities and games that had smoke free themes and messages.

The national co-ordinator works at the country level and organises the production and distribution of materials and procuring the national prizes. In addition, each participating region has a regional co-ordinator who is responsible for the competition and monitors the project as well as organises local prize giving ceremonies.

We have adopted the policy of not giving money prizes to classes. A small survey was conducted among the students to ask them what they preferred as prizes. The most popular items they wanted were Swatch watches, CD players and Nike shoes. The prizes have ranged from the most "in" Swatch watches to portable CD players or hi-fis for each student of the winning classes.



On World No Tobacco Day, each region organises conferences and press releases and procures regional prizes. Local prize giving parties are held in discotheques or other

such venues to encourage students who have completed the competition. In some regions, the winning classes are taken for a pizza with their companions and teachers.

Table 1: SFC participation in 2000-2001  
SMOKEFREE CLASS COMPETITION 2000-2001

Regions	Participated			Completed		
	Schools	Classes	Pupils	Schools	Classes	Pupils
<b>Veneto</b>	69	177	3,661	53	136	2,840
<b>Emilia Romagna</b>	48	117	2,350	29	54	1,350
<b>Friuli Venezia Giulia</b>	6	23	478	6	23	478
<b>Trentino Alto Adige</b>	47	99	1,831	35	58	1,077
<b>Toscana</b>	2	6	120	1	3	65
<b>Campania</b>	15	42	978	13	33	781
<b>Total</b>	187	464	9,418	137	307	6,591

*Elizabeth Tamang  
Azienda ULSS 15 "Alta Padovana"  
Camposampiero (PD)*

## The Smokefree Class Competition in Wales

### 1. Introduction

Wales has participated in the Smokefree Class competition since 1997-78. Each year the competition has been modified in light of comments from participants.

In UK, the competition is run at regional level in Wales. Support is received from local partners in education and health promotion services. The first stage each year is to secure the support of these partners by writing to the Directors of Education and the Directors of Public Health in each local area. Schools are only contacted once this support is confirmed.

The competition is open to all classes in Years 7 and 8 of our schools. These are the first two years of secondary schooling, and include pupils aged between 11 and 13. The competition is aimed at pupils in their registration classes, but may also have relevance to Personal and Social Education (PSE) in the school. For this reason initial contact with the schools is by flyers sent to the Heads of Year 7 and Year 8, i.e. teachers with a pastoral responsibility for the target pupils; and the Head of PSE. Each of these teachers is sent a bundle of 10 flyers during October and is

asked to suggest to the form teachers and pupils that they send off for an entry pack. One copy of the flyer is sent for information to the Headteacher and the school nurse.

The entry pack is sent out in the first week of November, and contains details of the competition rules, and relevant dates. Pupils are asked to sign an entry form, indicating that they do not smoke, and wish to enter the competition. As long as 90% of the class agree to sign, then the class is eligible to enter the competition and the entry form is returned to the organisers.

The competition starts on the first Monday of December, and ends on the last Friday of April. An acknowledgement of the entry is then sent, usually in the form of a Christmas card. This is followed by a small memento for each pupil entering.

At the end of every month classes are required to return a commitment form, signed by the pupils to indicate that

they continue not to smoke, and that they still wish to participate. As long as 80% of the pupils sign, then the class stays in the competition.

Table 1: Changes over time: Entry to the competition

Year	Areas targeted	School years targeted	Entry levels		
			Schools	Classes	Pupils (to nearest thousand)
1997-98	15 of the 22 Local authorities	Year 8	44	208	5,000
1998-99	All 22 Local Authority areas	Years 7 and 8	90	536	13,000
1999-2000 (Millennium competition)	All 22 Local Authority areas	Years 7 and 8	92	525	13,000
2000-2001	All 22 Local Authority areas	Years 7 and 8	98	560	14,000

The entry levels for 2000–2001 mean that 17.7% of the eligible age group have entered the competition.

## 2. Prizes

At the end of the third month all eligible classes are entered into a prize draw, and 5 classes, one from each Health Authority area, are selected to win £200 for their school. The prize money is for the school, but there is a strong recommendation that pupils from the winning class are involved in the decision as to how it is spent.

At the end of the fourth month all eligible classes are entered into a prize draw in which 5 classes win £300 for their school.

At the end of the fifth month all eligible classes are entered into a final prize draw. Five classes are selected to win £750 for their school, and a further 30 win £100. At this stage small mementoes are sent to the pupils in all classes which have participated for the full 5 months of the competition. A database is used to record the return of the commitment forms, and the number of pupils signing them. Classes are allowed to miss returning one form, to allow for contingencies such as teacher illness, but are disqualified if two are missing.

## 3. Materials

Year	Style of material	Mementoes	
		First	Final
1997-98	Celebrities on poster and pack. Teachers booklet gives background information. Commitment forms included in entry pack.	Smokefree Class pin badge	none
1998-99	Celebrities on poster and pack. Teachers booklet gives background information. Commitment forms included in entry pack. Postcards sent each month to remind classes to return commitment form, and to acknowledge their return – contained discussion statements from the Tobacco White Paper in Wales; or a short quiz.	Smokefree Class pin badge	none
1999-2000 (Millennium competition)	Pack and poster showed flags and pictures from around Europe. Teachers' booklet gave background information. Commitment forms included in entry pack. Postcards sent each month to remind classes to return commitment form, and to acknowledge their return – contained information about tobacco policy in 8 of the participating countries	Mechanical pencil	Biro for pupils. Clock for form room wall
2000-2001	Celebrities on poster and pack. Teachers' sheets gave background information. Commitment forms not included in entry pack, but sent out monthly with short lesson ideas for use in the classroom. Acknowledgement postcards gave photos and quotes from Welsh celebrities.	Smokefree Class pin badge	Pencil case and ruler for pupils. Clock for form room wall.

#### 4. Running the competition

For the first two years Health Promotion Wales (HPW) – the then national health promotion agency, ran the competition.

In 1999 HPW became part of the National Assembly for Wales, and is now part of the Chief Medical Officer's Health Protection and Improvement Directorate. This change resulted in the next two competitions being commissioned out to a national youth organisation, the Wales Youth Agency, although HPD retained editorial control of materials and contact with Europe.

##### 4.1 Prize draw

In the first year, all eligible classes were entered into the same draw. This resulted in an uneven distribution of winners across Wales. Following discussion with local supporters, it was decided to divide the entries into five, each representing a geographical area of Wales, based on health authority boundaries. Winners were then drawn from each area.

##### 4.2 Press releases

Press releases were issued to announce the prize winners, as well as informing classes individually. In the second and subsequent years, press releases were tailored for the local press in each area of Wales.

##### 4.3 Celebrity endorsement

In the first two years of the competition celebrity support was limited to the provision of photographs to include on the materials. In the fourth year celebrities were asked to provide quotes; and members of the Welsh football team made the final prize draw.

Photographs of the players were circulated with press releases.

#### 5. The 2001-2002 competition

The contract to run the fifth competition has been awarded to a PR company. They have been successful in gaining celebrity support, including quotes, and offers of personal appearances. A press release to announce the start of the competi-

tion was accompanied by photographs of the Welsh football team with pupils from a participating school.

The Chief Medical Officer has demonstrated her support by writing a covering letter to schools encouraging them to participate in the 2001-02 competition.

Feedback from teachers has meant that the format of the materials will be the same as in the fourth year, with teacher materials being sent out with the commitment forms. The first memento for each entrant will be a calendar with celebrity pictures and quotes about the benefits of staying smoke free. This is a significant change, as it will act as a reminder to pupils for the whole year, not just the five months of the competition period.

The Smokefree Class competition does not stand alone; it is part of a co-ordinated strategy in Wales to look at smoking prevention from the ages of 3-16, and smoking cessation from 15 onwards.

*Sue Bowker  
Health Promotion Division  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff*

**Be smart - Don't start!**  
2000 - 2001

The class of .....  
Have entered the Smokefree Class Competition.

**We could win:**  
£200 for our school on 21 March 2001  
£300 for our school on 18 April 2001  
£750 for our school on 25 May 2001

**Due dates -**  
We will complete monthly  
commitment forms on:  
26 January 2001  
2 March 2001  
30 March 2001  
4 May 2001

**SMOKEFREE CLASS**

## The Smokefree Class Competition in Greece

The Competition has been organised since 1998. It takes place in the Attica region (Athens is included), Ahaia, Crete, Thessalia, Thrace, and Corfu. Information is sent to 850 schools explaining the rules of the competition.

At least 80% of the pupils in a class have to remain smoke free for a 4-month competition period. It is up to teacher to decide whether her class should be 100% smoke free but according to general rules, smoking up to 20% of the pupils is accepted. The classes have to send their monthly reports to enter the final draw.

The prizes were :

A prize: One day cruise

B prize: A computer

C prize: A stereo

All classes that fulfill the rules receive a certificate, and each student receives a personal certificate of success. Also small gifts are sent to the students.

During the school year 189 classes joined the competition. A total number of 39 classes dropped out so we had 150 classes from 50 schools for the final draw, a total of 4,600 students.

The winners the school year 2000-2001 were the B1 class of the 30<sup>th</sup> Gymnasium of Athens, the A5 class of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Gymnasium of Xanthi and the B1 class of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gymnasium of Kalabaka.

*Maria Pilali  
Hellenic Cancer Society  
Athens*

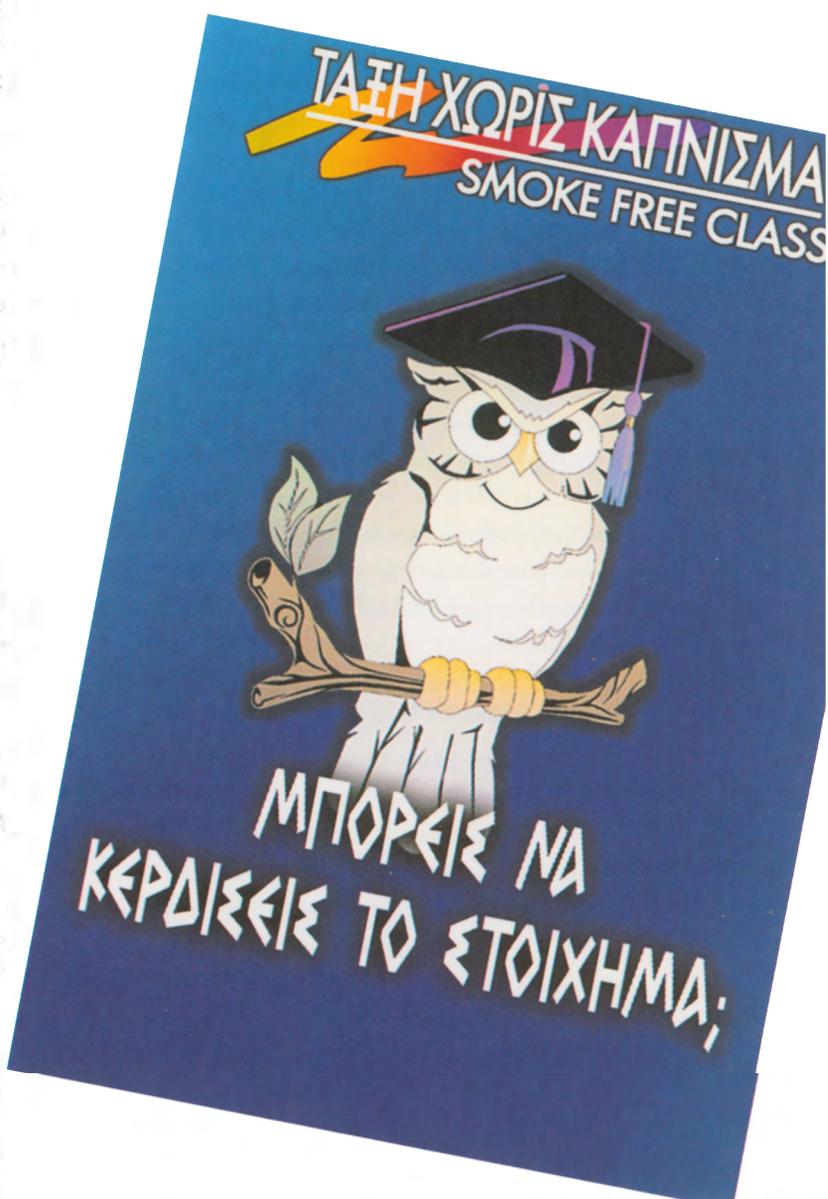
## European Youth Conference in Berlin

The European Youth Conference took place in Berlin on 15-18 June 2000 targeting pupils aged 11 - 15 from various European countries.

The conference was carried out within the framework of the Smokefree Class Competition and intended to engage young people from all over Europe in smoking prevention issues and to encourage them to decide on or to continue with a smoke free life by the reinforcement of non-smoking intentions.

Pupils presented creative smoke free activities, which they had developed in class, to other young people from Europe. Moreover, workshops for the pupils with regard to health promotion and smoke free lifestyle were arranged. The conference served as a brilliant platform for young people to get together, to deal with health promotion and to learn about other cultures.

At the conference, classes from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxem-



bourg, Spain and The United Kingdom presented their projects that they had been undertaken in class during the competition. More than 240 pupils aged 11-15 with their teachers and national co-ordinators attended this very special event. The trip to Berlin was an unforgettable experience for the classes. Unfortunately the class from the Netherlands could not attend the conference due to the demise of one of the pupils.

At arrival all classes received a programme of the conference, the address of the hotel, a rucksack, a badge with their name and a cotton scarf. On the first evening, the group was taken to the Wannsee, a famous lake in the North of Berlin to go on a boat trip over the river Havel with dinner onboard. This was the first "warming-up" for the pupils, to get into contact with pupils from the other countries.

### Programme of the conference

#### Friday, 16. 06. 2000, Conference day

The conference was opened by

*Dr. Reiner Hanewinkel*, Institute for Therapy and Health Research, Kiel, Germany

*Prof. Pekka Puska*, European Network Young People and Tobacco, Helsinki, Finland

*Dr. Ingo Michels*, Ministry of Health of the Federal Republic of Germany, Berlin

*Mr. Ebel*, Ministry of Education of the Land Berlin, Germany

Morning programme: Presentations of the activities by classes

Wales, Merthyr Tydfil: Afon Taf High School, Class 7G. The Welsh class made a video that looked at smoking. Apart from various activities, the video included a quiz show based on the television quiz 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire?'. At the conference the pupils presented different questions on smoking and involved the audience in answering the questions. They also showed slides of Wales.

Germany, Berlin: Paul-Löbe-Oberschule, Class 8/5. The German class created a Be Smart – Don't Start - non-smoking- game. The class reported on the development and building of the dice game, which is located in the cafeteria of their school now.

Belgium, Hasselt: Technisch Instituut Heilig Hart, Class 2AIWI. The Belgium class set up a presentation in chronological order to give a survey on the five steps they had organised during the Smokefree Class Campaign in their school. They presented these five steps by slides and gave a clear review about the actions that took place in their school. The class also made non-smoking key-rings as a gift for the other pupils at the conference. Moreover each of the classes received a book about their school.

Greece, Athens: 3<sup>rd</sup> Gymnasium of Kamatero, Class A4. The Greek class presented three activities: first they sang a song called "Something". Then they presented a poem called "A young smoker confesses". The final presentation was a pantomime "Don't try to convince me to smoke".

Spain, Peñarroya: Cordoba: I.E.S. (Instituto de Enseñanza Secundaria) Alto Guadiato, Class 7. The Spanish class began its presentation with choreography. Then a sketch followed on the way smokers urge and induce non-smokers to start smoking. Throughout the sketch, they presented different posters on the pernicious effects of smoking.

Denmark, Jylland: Virklund Skole, Class 7. The Danish class did various impersonations of famous Danish people who present slogans about non-smoking.

France, Pre Saint Gervais: College J.J. Rousseau, Class 5<sup>e</sup>. The class presented an adaptation of the Moliere theatre play "Le malade imaginaire", Scene 10, Act 3: "The lung". The scene was accompanied occasionally by the song "J'ai du bon tabac" in a style of Greek theatre.

Iceland, Aðaldalur: Hafralækjar School, Class 7 and 8. The Icelandic class carried out a project in school that combined teaching about the harm-



## Evaluation of the competition in Germany

ful effects of smoking with creative use of the expressive arts to get the message across to students of their own age and hopefully to other young people. They composed songs and lyrics and arranged one of these songs for the whole class to perform. The pupils also had a special gift for each of the classes: A piece of volcanic lava.

Afternoon and evening programme: Workshops

In the afternoon the pupils were taken to a youth centres, where they could take part in numerous workshops: Body percussion, Chinese dancing, funk aerobic, creating non-smoking postcards to send home, body painting, creating non-smoking key-rings, learning to express emotions with body language and multi-cultural perpetuum mobile. In the evening, a disco was arranged for the pupils.

### Saturday, 17. 06. 2000

The second day served to give the pupils the opportunity to get to know a little bit of Berlin and also to promote the contact among the different European pupils. The classes spent the day taking part in activities of their own choice. Many classes went to visit their embassy and took part in sightseeing tours.

In the early evening, the whole group met in the Tiergarten to have a joint picnic and play football, badminton or just sit together and practise different languages.

Overall, the conference was a great success for the pupils as well as for the carers and teachers.

A photographic report on the conference can be obtained at ENYPAT or IFT-Nord.

The next youth conference will take place in Munich on May 29 – June 02, 2002.

*Gudrun Wiborg  
Reiner Hanewinkel  
IFT-Nord, Kiel*

In 1998/1999 in Germany, a control group study with repeated measurement was carried out in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the competition with regard to the main target: the prevention of the onset of smoking in non-smokers.

All classes from the Bundesländer Hamburg and Berlin that had registered for the competition were invited to participate in the survey and served as the experimental group. A random sample of classes from the city of Hanover (Lower Saxony), in which the competition was not carried out, served as the control group.

A total number of 2,142 pupils from 131 classes participated in the study at pre-, post-test and follow-up measurements and were included in the final sample. Data collection was carried out in Germany in October/November 1998 (pre-test), May 1999 (post-test) and November 1999 (follow-up).

During the competition, up to 10% of the pupils in a class were allowed to smoke. If more than 10% of the pupils smoked, the class dropped out of the competition. Therefore, during the competition, a subgroup was derived from the original experimental group, consisting of the classes that dropped out of the competition and did not finish the intervention.

The pupils were sub-divided as follows:

- Pupils in classes, that successfully completed the competition and the pupils from classes that dropped out were called "experimental group all" (EGa)
- Pupils in the classes that successfully completed the competition termed "experimental group successful" (EGs)
- the pupils from the classes that dropped out of the competition were termed "experimental group drop-out" (EGd),

In the final analyses, the EGa consisted of 89 classes (N of the pupils=1,495); the EGd of 25 classes (N of the pupils=419); the EGs of 64 classes (N of the pupils=1,076) and the control group (CG) of 42 classes (N of the pupils=647).

The mean age of the pupils in the EGa was 12.94 (SD = 1.03) and 12.89 (SD = 0.87) in the CG. In the EGa



there were slightly more girls (53.4%) than boys, while in the CG there were slightly less girls (49.6%). These differences were not significant.

Self-reported smoking-status was assessed by the following questions:

- 1) "Have you smoked during the last four weeks?" and
  - 2) "Have you smoked daily during the last seven days?"
- with the response choices "Yes" or "No".

Moreover, pupils were asked to indicate, which of the following statements would suit them best:

1. I have never smoked
2. I have smoked a few times
3. I am a smoker
4. I have smoked regularly, but I have quit.

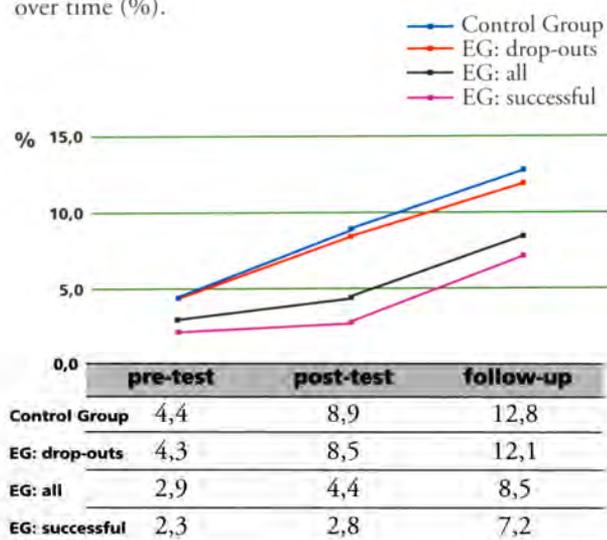
The analyses were carried out in two different ways:

- 1) as an overall analysis testing the general effect on the whole sample, and
- 2) as subgroup analyses, in order to allow an examination of the differential effect of the intervention on non-smokers.

Non-smokers were defined as those who reported having never tried smoking or having tried smoking a few times, but who had not smoked during the last four weeks.

Figures 1 and 2 show the main results of the study.

Figure 1: Daily smoking prevalence for the groups over time (%).



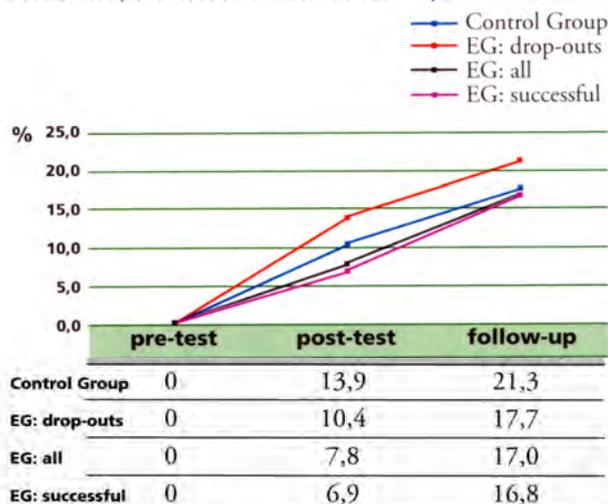
Logistic regression analyses for the *whole sample* show significant odds ratios for the following comparisons for the

four-week smoking prevalence:

Experimental group vs. control group (\*\*\* T2 vs. T1; \* T3 vs. T1)

Experimental group + drop-out group vs. control group (\*\* T2 vs. T1; \* T3 vs. T1)

Figure 2: Four-week smoking prevalence for the groups over time (non-smokers at baseline in %).



Analyses of the development of the non-smokers at T1 shows significant odds ratios for the following comparisons for the four-week prevalence:

Experimental group vs. control group (\*\*\* T2 vs. T1; \* T3 vs. T1)

Experimental group + drop-out group vs. control group (\*\* T2 vs. T1; \* T3 vs. T1)

The results of the present study show significantly and clinically relevant differences among the pupils from classes that participated in comparison to those who did not participate.

The study clearly indicates that the Smokefree Class Competition is an effective tool in delaying the onset of smoking.

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# "No Smoking Class" Competitions in Finland: Their Value in Delaying the Onset of Smoking in Adolescence\*

## Evaluation

The evaluation of the program was carried out in the school year 1991-1992. In total, 1160 classes (23 012) pupils entered the competition, which is about one-third of the age cohort. Out of these, 65 classes were randomly selected for the study. The control group was selected randomly from the classes that did not enter the competition. Pupils in these classes filled in anonymous forms before the competition, and one-month and one year after the competition.

Table 1: Levels of participation in the "No Smoking Class" competition in different school years

School year	Grade	Schools	Classes	Pupils
1989-1990	8 <sup>th</sup>	259	738	14 765
1990-1991	8 <sup>th</sup>	368	1219	23 012
1991-1992	8 <sup>th</sup>	381	1160	20 084
1992-1993	8 <sup>th</sup>	439	1329	26 084
1993-1994	7 <sup>th</sup>	458	1540	30 747
	8 <sup>th</sup>	426	1181	23 325

All the analyses utilized the following groups:

- those who participated in the competition to the end of the program (28 classes in the sample);
- those who dropped out from the competition (37 classes); and
- the control group of those who did not participate in the competition at all (30 classes).

The effect of the program was analysed between the group that originally decided to participate in the competition (participants and drop-outs pooled) and the control group. The analyses were made in four ways:

1. individual analyses of those who had participated in all three surveys;
2. individual analyses including all the pupils in each survey; and,
3. using the class as an analysis unit, using all the classes or using only the classes which participated in all the surveys.

The conclusions were the same from the different types of analysis. Statistical analyses were made by logistic regression analysis. In testing the effects of the competition on smoking, post-test smoking status was the dependent variable and participation in the program and smoking status before the program were independent variables.

Smoking was assessed by the question:

Do you now smoke?

- not at all;
- less than once a month;
- 1-2 times a month;
- 1-2 times a week;
- daily.

In the analyses, those who smoked daily were regarded as smokers.

## Results

The onset of smoking was lower in those classes which participated in the competition. Daily smoking increased from pre-test to one month post-test by 2.3% percentage points among those pupils who participated in the competition, 3.9% percentage points in the group which dropped out from the competition and 5.1% percentage points in the control group.

Among those pupils who originally decided to participate in the competition (participants and drop-outs), smoking increased 3.1% percentage points. Tested by logistic regression analyses, the odds ratio between this group and control group was 1.55 ( $p=0.0268$ ) using smoking at pre-test as a covariate. This indicates that the onset of smoking was statistically significantly higher in the control group. From the pre-test to the second post-test, the increase in smoking was similar in both groups. The odds ratio of 1.25 between the groups was not statistically significant ( $p=0.15$ ).

Before the program, smoking was more common in the control classes than in the classes participating in the competition, and smoking was almost as common in the classes which dropped out during the program as in the control classes (Table 3).

## Discussion

The "No Smoking Class" competition has created much publicity in the media. It has reached about half of the birth cohort. The main weakness is the large drop-out rate from the competition. Only 1/3 of the classes has been able to remain non-smokers for the duration of the competition. Over the period evaluated, the best predictor of drop-out was a high smoking rate at the beginning of the competition. The programme is therefore not feasible in classes where smoking is common prior to the competition. Because of this, the competition has been enlarged

Table 2: Participation in the evaluation

	Pupils/Classes	Pupils/Classes	Pupils/Classes	Pupils/Classes
	Participation	Drop-outs	Controls	All
<b>Pre-test</b>	580/28	704/37	551/29	1835/94
<b>1<sup>st</sup> post-test</b>	549/28	613/33	531/28	1693/89
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> post-test</b>	557/28	677/37	519/28	1753/93
<b>Participated</b>				
<b>in all 3 surveys</b>	489/28	487/31	443/27	1419/86

Table 3: Percentage of daily smokers in the pre-test, and in the first and second post-test, and increase of smoking between the tests

	Participants	Drop-outs	Participants+drop-outs	Controls
<b>Pre-test (a)</b>	5.2	10.8	8.0	11.3
<b>1<sup>st</sup> post-test (b)</b>	7.5	14.7	11.1	16.4
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> post-test (c)</b>	16.1	21.2	18.8	22.5
<b>n</b>	489	487	976	443
<b>Increase (%-points)</b>				
<b>b-a</b>	2.3	3.9	3.1	5.1
<b>c-b</b>	8.6	6.5	7.7	6.1
<b>c-a</b>	10.9	10.4	10.8	11.2

to include the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, where regular smoking is less common than in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The competition was innovative in two ways: the control of the competition was in the hands of the classes and one of the aims was to create a continuous discussion on smoking among pupils. The decision making process involved in dropping out also allows discussion in class.

*\*This text is based on Vartiainen E., Saukko A., Paavola M., Vertio H.: Health Promotion International, Vol. 11, No. 3, 1996.*

*In Finland the Smokefree Class Competition was previously called No Smoking Class Competition.*

## Evaluation of the Smokefree Class Competition in the Netherlands

Smoking is a major cause of health problems in the Netherlands. There are large differences in smoking behaviour according to socio-economic status (SES). The majority of smoking adults started smoking when they were young. The objective of this intervention study is to reduce smoking initiation in teenagers with a low SES.

This was reviewed according to two questions:

- What are the constraints of the application of an intervention aiming to reduce smoking initiation at individual vocational education (ivbo), vocational education (vbo) and intermediate secondary preparatory education (mavo)?
- What is the effect of such an intervention in reducing smoking initiation?

Stivoro developed the intervention in co-operation with the Trimbos Institute. The intervention was conducted as follows:

November 1998

Three lessons about smoking using the booklet 'What you can expect from smoking' from the Trimbos Institute.

January 1999 – June 1999

Class and individual non-smoking agreements during five months (from January 1999 until June 1999) under the name Operation Antidote (Smokefree Class Competition) linked to national and international competition. Classes who successfully completed this period and submitted a creative photograph of the non-smoking class were eligible for one of the six prizes of EUR 227 and the national first

prize of EUR 453. In addition, the winning class had the chance to win a trip to London.

February 1999- April 1999

Optional: practice of social skills during the non-smoking period using the educational material 'The vague truth'.

### **Structure of the study**

To measure the effect of the intervention, an effect and process evaluation was conducted. A questionnaire was used at two different time points for the process evaluation: one month after the start of the intervention and at the end of the intervention (in May/June 1999). Three class questionnaires were used for the effect evaluation among students in the observation years of the ivbo, vbo and mavo schools. The zero measurement was taken just before the intervention, the first re-measurement just after the intervention and the second re-measurement one year after the intervention.

### **Sample population**

The focus groups for the process evaluation consisted of all people involved in implementing the intervention: the teachers and the students.

The focus group for the effect evaluation consisted of students from schools with ivbo, vbo and mavo classes. The intervention was conducted in the first classes of these schools (the observation classes). The current intervention group was taken from 1500 students in the control group and 1500 students in the intervention group ( $\alpha=0.05$ ;  $\beta=0.20$ ). It was assumed that there could be a difference of 5% between the control and intervention groups, and that 7% of 12-year-olds smoke, and that 25% of 13-to-14-year-olds smoke (Stivoro, 1996). In calculating the sample size, the interclass correlation was taken into account. In the size of the study group, possible non-response and losing track of the children because of follow-up was also taken into account.

### **Information collection**

In the process evaluation, the people involved in the intervention (teachers, ambulance personnel and some students) were asked by a questionnaire about the progress of implementing the intervention: the difficulties they faced and the usability of the intervention material.

Information for the effect evaluation was collected from a class questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of ques-

tions about the smoking behaviour of teenagers, attitude, social influences, personal effectiveness and the intention to start smoking. This information was analysed using multilevel regression techniques.

Twenty-six schools took part in the study. These schools were randomly allocated to the control and intervention groups. The randomisation was conducted in blocks according to the following procedure: first, the classes were formed according to whether or not they used the Healthy Schools and Natural Stimulants information program, secondly they were arranged by numbers of students. The schools were then selectively allocated in pairs to control and intervention groups.

### **Results**

At the zero measurement, 2,562 adolescents from 26 schools and 154 classes completed a questionnaire. During the first re-measurement, 1,723 adolescents (67%) of those who had also completed the first questionnaire, filled in also the second one. In the second re-measurement 1,607 students completed the questionnaire; of these 1,197 children (47%) had completed the zero measurement.

The effect evaluation for this intervention shows that within a short timeframe an obvious effect has occurred. Significantly less of the students in the intervention group started smoking. There was a 5% difference between the control and intervention groups in the numbers starting to smoke and when girls were evaluated separately, the difference in the onset of smoking was 7%. One year after the intervention (the long-term effect) the difference between the intervention and the control group was no longer significant. Almost no determinant of smoking behaviour had been changed by the intervention. The social pressures from the family did decrease more than in the control group, but this did not achieve statistical significance. Only when the social norm of the classmates was reviewed separately was a significant difference found. This corresponds to the expectation that for a class agreement with a reward, the social norm of not starting to smoke is higher among students in these classes.

### **Recommendations**

A class intervention in its current form seems to have some effect in the short term. More general implementation of such an intervention against starting smoking at ivbo, vbo, and mavo schools does seem to be justified. It

can be assumed that in the following school years, more attention should be paid to non-smoking, than was the case in this project. Possibly the effect found in the first year can be maintained, or even enlarged. This is also confirmed in the 1999 study by M. Dijkstra<sup>1</sup>. This study showed that boosters can make an important contribution to the effect. The way in which attention should be focussed on smoking after the first year should be further reviewed. Schools could play an important role, but in addition, the social environment of the adolescent could be more involved in awareness elevation.

<sup>1</sup>*Dijkstra M, Mesters I, de Vries, van Breukelen G, Parcel GS. Effectiveness of a social influence approach and boosters to smoking prevention.*

*Health Educ. Res. 1999; 14: 791-802.*

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Appendix: Competition materials produced in different countries

European Network on Young People and Tobacco  
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