

ANNEX N: Declaration of Helsinki (2024) and GDPR Compliance Statement

DOI: [10.70020/BI.20260803.A14](https://doi.org/10.70020/BI.20260803.A14)

Declaration of Helsinki (2024) and GDPR Compliance Statement

*Substance Abuse Among Adolescents in Northern Cyprus:
Trends, Risks, and Preventive Responses*
RESEARCH ETHICS DOCUMENTATION

This statement confirms that the study was designed and conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki (2024 revision, adopted 19 October 2024) and with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU Regulation 2016/679, GDPR), as well as the standardised methodological and ethical framework of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD).

The following core principles were upheld:

- Respect for participants: participants were treated with dignity and respect, and their autonomy and right to self-determination were protected throughout.
- Voluntary participation: participation was entirely voluntary, and participants could decline, skip items, or withdraw at any stage without any consequence.
- Informed consent and assent: written informed consent was obtained from parents/legal guardians, and informed assent was obtained from each adolescent participant prior to administration.
- Protection of a vulnerable population: as the study involved minors, additional safeguards appropriate to research with adolescents were applied.
- Confidentiality and data privacy: no identifying personal data were collected; data were anonymous at source, securely stored, processed, and reported in aggregated form only, with no risk of re-identification (consistent with the strengthened data-privacy provisions of the 2024 revision).
- Risk minimisation and beneficence: foreseeable psychological, social, and legal risks were minimised, and the research was designed to serve individual and public health.
- Scientific integrity: the study upheld scientific rigour and integrity, with a zero-tolerance stance toward research misconduct.
- Independent ethical review: the protocol was reviewed and approved independently by the Ethics Committee, which was not involved in the conduct of the research (see Annexes B and E).

Citation note: The current version of the Declaration of Helsinki is the 2024 revision (World Medical Association, 2024). Where the manuscript currently cites the 2013 revision, it is recommended that the reference be updated to the 2024 revision (or both be cited) to reflect the standard in force at the time of submission.


Dr. Zafer Bekirogullari

Principal Investigator and Project Coordinator
On behalf of the Northern Cyprus Prime Minister's Anti-Drug Commission
Date: 03/09/2025