

# ANNEX G: Consolidated Ethical Approval and Ethics Statement

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## KUZey KIBRIS TÜRK CUMHURİYETİ BAŞBAKANLIK UYUŞTURUCU İLE MÜCADELE KOMİSYONU

11 March 2026

Ref. No.: 002

To: Dr. Zafer Bekiroğulları, International Cognitive and Behavioural Psychotherapies Society (CBPis), Nicosia, Northern Cyprus

Subject: Ethical Approval and Ethics Statement

This document serves as a consolidated ethical approval confirmation and ethics statement for the research study entitled:

*"Substance Abuse Among Adolescents in Northern Cyprus: Trends, Risks, and Preventive Responses."*

The above-mentioned study has received full ethical approval from the Northern Cyprus Prime Minister's Anti-Drug Commission Ethics Committee following a comprehensive review conducted in accordance with internationally accepted ethical principles governing research involving human participants.

The approved research is based on ESPAD (European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs) 2025 data collected between 3 November 2025 and 29 December 2025. The term 'ESPAD 2025' refers to the standardized survey wave and questionnaire framework, rather than the calendar year of data collection. Prior to the commencement of field implementation, official permissions were obtained from the Ministry of Education and relevant school authorities, and ethical approval was granted by the Prime Minister's Anti-Drug Commission prior to the commencement of data collection.

Dr. Zafer Bekiroğulları serves as the Project Coordinator and Academic Supervisor on behalf of the Northern Cyprus Prime Minister's Anti-Drug Commission and is responsible for ensuring scientific rigor, ethical compliance, and adherence to the approved research protocol throughout all phases of the study.

The Ethics Committee confirms that the study protocol complies with the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and relevant ethical standards applicable to research involving minors. The ethical review and approval process was conducted independently by the Ethics Committee, and the project coordinator was not involved in the ethical decision-making process.

The following ethical safeguards were reviewed and approved within the scope of this project:

- Participation in the study was entirely voluntary.
- Participants and, where applicable, their legal guardians were adequately informed about the purpose, procedures, and intended use of the research outputs.
- Written informed consent was obtained prior to data collection.
- Participants retained the right to withdraw at any stage without consequence.
- Participant anonymity and confidentiality were fully protected.
- Research data were collected, stored, and processed in anonymized form.

### **Ethical Safeguards and Compliance**

The Ethics Committee confirms that the study complies with internationally accepted ethical standards, including the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, and with ethical requirements applicable to research involving minors.

The Committee reviewed and approved the following safeguards:

- Participation in the study is entirely voluntary
- Parents or legal guardians are fully informed and provide written consent prior to participation
- Adolescents provide informed assent before completing the questionnaire
- Participants may withdraw at any time without penalty
- No identifying personal data are collected
- Data are anonymized, securely stored, and used solely for scientific purposes
- Potential psychological, social, or legal risks are minimized
- The ESPAD questionnaire is used in its standardized and approved format

The ethical approval applies to data collection, analysis, reporting, publication, and dissemination of findings.

### **Management Approval**

The study may not commence in any educational institution until all required administrative permissions from the Ministry of Education and relevant school authorities have been obtained, as confirmed in the approved documentation.

### **Independence of Ethical Review**

The ethical review and decision-making process was conducted independently by the Ethics Committee. The Project Coordinator and research team were not involved in the ethical decision process.

### **Statement of Compliance**

The Northern Cyprus Prime Minister's Anti-Drug Commission Ethics Committee operates in accordance with established national governance arrangements and complies fully with standard ethical procedures for research involving human participants.

Please quote the Ethics Committee reference number on all correspondence relating to this study.

Approved and authorized on behalf of the Ethics Committee,

Sincerely,

Reyîfet Abdu  
Ethics Committee Director  
Northern Cyprus Prime Minister's  
Anti-Drug Commission

