

Foreword

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The 2026 North Cyprus Anti Drug Commission ESPAD report achieved two important goals this year, a major advancement in the sophistication of the statistical evaluation of the survey data, and the initiation of comparing substance use and behaviour results across years. These robust improvements increase data reliability and provide a framework for evaluating prevention efforts, a key outcome for improving the lives of North Cypriots. The value of conducting the ESPAD survey and increasing its validity enables focusing substance use prevention efforts on the most valuable targets and maximizing the effectiveness of limited resources.

Substance use and negative behavioural patterns are currently low in North Cyprus adolescents compared to Europe and much of the world. However, it is essential to prevent the prevalence of these adverse activities from increasing and resulting in poorer health outcomes and possible addiction in the children, lower educational achievements, and effects on North Cyprus' economy and future.

The landscape of substance abuse in Northern Cyprus is marked by unique challenges and evolving trends. This ESPAD report aims to shed light on these issues, offering a comprehensive analysis of the patterns, risks, and responses associated with substance use in the region. The collaborative efforts of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers culminated in this extensive volume, which not only highlights the current state of substance abuse but also explores potential strategies for prevention and intervention. We hope that this report serves as a valuable resource for anyone dedicated to addressing the complexities of substance use in Northern Cyprus and beyond.

The report describes the findings of the survey and provides specific guidance on prevention efforts based on North Cyprus data. This guidance and the resources needed to implement the recommendations should reduce expected increases in substance use and negative behaviours. We congratulate

the North Cyprus Anti Drug Commission for all their efforts to treat and prevent substance use.

This report was written and published by a collaboration between the North Cyprus Anti-Drug Commission, and Professor Dr. Dr. (h.c.) Marilyn A. Huestis.

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