



Welcome to the first newsletter on the Smokefree Class Competition in the school-year 2007/2008.

Idea

The Smokefree Class Competition is a school-based smoking prevention project being conducted for the 11th time on a European level in the school-year 2007/2008.

Classes participating in the competition decide not to smoke for a period of up to 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.

The targets 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 have already experimented with smoking. The core target groups are pupils aged 11-14.

In most of the countries a creative component was integrated in the competition aiming at encouraging the pupils to deal on a more profound level with the subject "non-smoking".

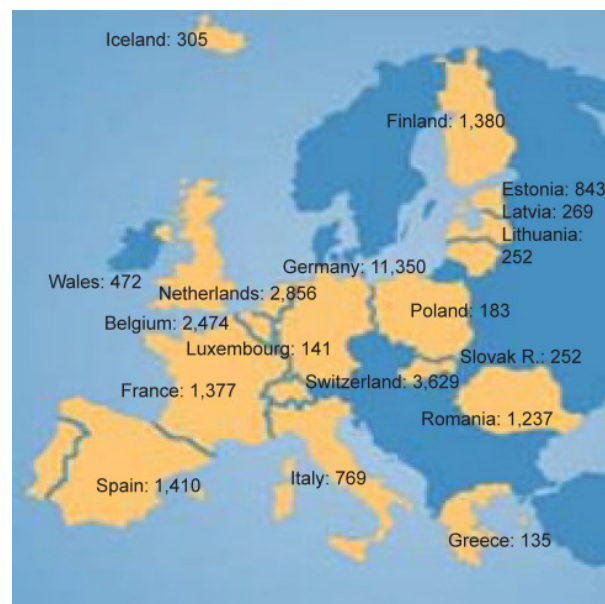
In which countries is the competition being implemented?

In the school-year 2007/2008 the programme is being delivered to schools in Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and Wales.

In some countries, the competition is offered to all schools in the countries, in others only in some regions. Therefore, the participation rate varies not only according to the size of the country, but also with regard to the regions included.

Figure 1 shows the participation rates for the school-year 2007/2008. In most the countries the numbers are more or less the same, in some countries there are slight drops and in five countries (Belgium, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, and Slovakia) the participation rates are higher than in the school-year 2006/2007.

Figure 1. Registered classes for the school-year 07/08.



Polish evaluation study in progress

In Poland a randomised control group study started and the first data assessment was carried out prior to the beginning of the competition in December 2007/January 2008. Next data assessment will be conducted in May/June 2008.



The study is registered under the trial number **ISRCTN39902015**.



With the beginning of the school year 2007/08, the Polish partners invited all primary schools in the region Wielkopolskie to participate in the trial. For this purpose a letter was sent to all school directors, explaining the study design (including the randomization).

From the schools that agreed to participate, the 4th grade classes were selected.

This list of schools was sent to IFT-Nord. IFT-Nord randomized the schools (and classes) to the conditions.

Schools were informed on their condition and appointments for the data assessments were made.

143 classes decided to participate in the study and were randomised on school level to control and intervention group.

Training for data conductors and supervision of questionnaire coding. Workshop held 16 – 19 October 2007 in Poznan, Poland.

Preparation of the workshop: Guideline for data assessment and coding of questionnaires were prepared by IFT-Nord and translated into Polish. The guidelines served as the basis for the workshop.

Content of the workshop were information on the study, demonstration and explanation of the essential documents needed for the data assessment, explanation of the coding system and of the preparation of questionnaire packages for the data assessment in the schools.

Evaluation on project implementation in six countries

In Poland, Slovak Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Romania teachers will be assessed after the end of the competition and asked about project implementation, their satisfaction and problems.

In Romania this study will not be conducted before end of June due to late start of beginning the competition.

The report of the study will be finalised by end of September.

Information

On the website (www.smokefreeclass.info) interested specialists, pupils and teachers can find information about the competition in English language and the addresses of the participating classes in the European countries.



Smokefree Class Competition



Publications

Isensee, B. & Hanewinkel, R. (2007). Effects of repeated participation in the non-smoking competition "Be Smart - Don't Start" [German]. *Sucht*, 53, 328-334.

Hoeflmayr, D. & Hanewinkel, R. (2008). Do school-based tobacco prevention programmes pay off? The cost-effectiveness of the 'Smoke-free Class Competition'. *Public Health*, 122, 34-41.



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