

# New project on mortality cohorts

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EMCDDA–Meeting on Drug Related Deaths  
Online 13–14 October 2020

## 4 core questions which can be answered by mortality cohort studies.....

- » Measure **mortality rates for people using drugs** in Europe (incl. showing differences in the overall and cause specific mortality rates across countries, settings, and populations) – sustainable development goal 3.4
- » **Compare** (cause specific) mortality rates of people using drugs with mortality rates in the general population
- » **Assess changes in mortality** (incl. monitoring the changes in HCV related deaths – a WHO indicator for the monitoring of the elimination of viral hepatitis; and in the future, COVID-19 related mortality rates)
- » **Identify new risks**, patterns of use (incl. in cohorts of cocaine of stimulants users)

## Additional questions which can be answered by mortality cohort studies.....

- » Help to assess **good practices** (incl. the effect of good quality OST)
- » Identify **risky situations in the process of treatment** (e. g. short after beginning and termination of OST)
- » **Assess the ICD coding of the causes of deaths in GMR** to estimate whether and to which extent unspecific coding can lead to an underestimation of overdose deaths
- » Being part of **cross indicator analysis** as an important part in the puzzle of epidemiology

## Another aspect on European level

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Make mortality cohort studies more comparable  
(pilot non mandatory)

## Work packages

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1. **Identification** of planned and ongoing mortality cohort studies in EU 29
2. Collection of **variables and codebooks** of the studies identified (as an aid for any future work on cohorts and combined analysis). **Contact list of resource persons** (FPs, experts, authors) involved in cohorts and interested in further collaboration with the FPs and EMCDDA
3. Short top level **European overview** focusing on the 4 core questions for Europe 29
4. Detailed **country breakdown** linked to the European overview (detailed country by country core information (setting, inclusion criteria, dates, size of the cohorts identified...), findings of the cohorts, where available; and how the 4 core questions listed above are addressed and answered by each country.
5. **Revision of ST18**
6. **Support** to planning and setting up new cohorts based on the Austrian experiences.

## Deliverables of the project

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1. Short top level **European overview** focusing on the 4 core questions for Europe 29
2. Detailed **country breakdown** linked to the European overview
3. **Revised ST1 8**
4. Short **technical report** including lists of variables, codebooks, lists of experts, possibilities of further co-operation (e. g. pooled analysis)

## Mortality Cohorts in EU 29 – status quo

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		On-going work. Developments	References
<sup>1</sup>	ITALY	CNR is developing a cohort study among patients of a sample of public services for addictions that will collect information about drug related mortality. The study is currently waiting for the Ethic Committee.	
<sup>2</sup>	NORWAY	On-going work	<p><a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.15211">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.15211</a></p> <p>(PM toxicology in OD cases)</p> <p><a href="https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-019-4382-9">https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-019-4382-9</a></p> <p>(prospective longitudinale cohort)</p>
<sup>3</sup>	SPAIN		Molist G, Brugal MT, Barrio G, Mesías B, Bosque-Prous M, Parés-Badell O, et al. Effect of ageing and time since first heroin and cocaine use on mortality from external and natural causes in a Spanish cohort of drug users. Int J Drug Policy. 2018;53:8-16.
<sup>4</sup>	CYPRUS	Plans for new cohorts YES	

## Mortality Cohorts in EU 29 – status quo

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5	FINLAND		Pitkänen, T., Kaskela, T., & Levola, J. (2020). Mortality of treatment-seeking men and women with alcohol, opioid or other substance use disorders—A register-based follow-up study. <i>Addictive Behaviors</i> , 105, 106330.
6	CROATIA	Training with FP and other on 3 and 4/12. Martin and EMCDDA contributing. Cohort experts from SK SI and HU will attend the event	
7	BULGARIA	New cohorts have been set up: YES	
8	LITHUANIA	There is on-going mortality cohort study, but in relation to COVID-19 the term of study was extended until the end of 2020.	
9	AUSTRIA	On-going work	Busch, Martin; Anzenberger, Judith; Uhl, Alfred (2019): Mortalität von Menschen mit Opioidabhängigkeit. <i>Suchtmedizin</i> , 21 (6). ISSN 2198-3798



## Mortality Cohorts in EU 29 – status quo

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<sup>10</sup> IRELAND		Grainne, 2020. Do interruptions to the continuity of methadone maintenance treatment in specialist addiction settings increase the risk of drug-related poisoning deaths? A retrospective-cohort study. Cousins Grainne (Orcid ID: 0000-0003-2985-7668
SLOVENIA	Participate in the Croatian meeting – plans tbd	
SLOVAKIA	Participate in the Croatian meeting – plans tbd	
HUNGARY	Participate in the Croatian meeting – plans tbd	

## Next steps

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- » List of contact persons for the cohort studies
- » Q4/2020 Mapping–Questionnaire, literature review (grey literature)
- » Inclusion criteria for the European overview
- » Q1/2021 Standard form based on ST18 for studies included

## Tour de table

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1. What do you think about the project?
2. What can we do to increase motivation to participate?
3. Are you willing to participate in the project (sharing information, sharing codebooks, answering questions, giving feedback)
4. Do you know about other planned recent mortality cohorts?

Thank you for your attention