



# „PEER-Drive Clean!“

## Handbook

for planning, realising and conducting a peer education project for the prevention of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs



# CONTENT

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>The Peer-to-Peer Approach</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	Support from Equals	8
2.2	Peer Education in the Field	9
<b>3.</b>	<b>The PEER-Drive Clean! Project</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1	The Plan and the Target: a Prevention Approach for Europe	11
3.2	Targets of the PEER-Drive Clean! Project	12
<b>4.</b>	<b>Concept of the PEER-Project (in Driving Schools)</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1	Background	13
4.2	Preliminary Considerations	14
4.3	Project Description	14
4.4	Task of the Peers - The Peer Unit in the Driving School	15
4.5	Targets of the Peer Units	15
<b>5.</b>	<b>Assessment of the initial Situation</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Preparation of the Action Field</b>	<b>17</b>
6.1	Identification of the Region and of Partners	17
6.2	Partner Recruiting	18
<b>7.</b>	<b>Implementing Phase</b>	<b>19</b>
7.1	Partner Driving Schools Recruiting	19
7.2	Peer Recruiting	20
7.3	Prerequisites for a Sustained Implementation	20
<b>8.</b>	<b>Framework Conditions for the Peer Training</b>	<b>23</b>
8.1	Group Composition	23
8.2	The Project Room	24
8.3	Targets of the Peer Training	24
8.4	Collateral Training or Compact Training?	24
8.5	Peer Training Phases	25
<b>9.</b>	<b>Methods and Contents of the Peer Educator Training</b>	<b>27</b>
9.1	Dissemination of Factual Knowledge	27
9.2	Reflection of the Own Experiences	28
9.3	Training Techniques	28
9.4	Seminar Scheme in Saxony-Anhalt	28
<b>10.</b>	<b>Framework Conditions for the Peer Educators Training</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Peer Training and Peer Units</b>	<b>35</b>
11.1	Belgium (BE)	36
11.2	Estonia (EE)	37
11.3	Italy (IT)	38
11.4	The Netherlands (NL)	39
11.5	Austria (AT)	40
11.6	Portugal (PT)	41
11.7	Romania (RO)	42
11.8	Slovenia (SL)	43
11.9	Spanien (ES)	45
11.10	Summary	46
<b>12.</b>	<b>Best Practise for the Peer Educator Training</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>49</b>
	Bibliography	50
	Publications in the context of „PEER-Drive Clean!“	51



# 1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to be a guideline for practitioners. The peer education model has become quite popular; however, it is of great importance to follow detailed rules implementing it. During the last few years, the experience in the field of traffic safety education (especially in driving schools) gained through this method found a positive echo during conferences and meetings throughout Europe. The PEER-Drive Clean! handbook is meant to supply hands-on instruction for the implementation of the method. It is based on three years of peer education in the field of the prevention of driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, targeted specifically at new drivers. The PEER-Drive Clean! project was supported by the European Commission between 2006 and 2008 and implemented in ten European countries: Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain.

Especially for young people and young adults, alcohol and narcotics consumption represents a clear and, in many European countries, an increasing health hazard. Driving under the influence in this context is a problem which not only concerns those involved directly but society on the whole. The target group of young people and young adults is the focus of both addiction prevention and traffic safety. Unfortunately, especially the 15 to 24-year-olds are difficult to reach with prevention messages. PEER-Drive Clean! recognised this problem and brought the peer project, implemented in driving schools in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany, in 2000, to other European regions. The reasoning behind it is the fact that this can be easily achieved in spite of varying situations and conditions in these regions: the project is based on a rather straightforward idea which can be realised with a minimum of didactic effort. The approach has proved successful in areas considered difficult such as drugs or AIDS prevention and has been successfully introduced to traffic safety education.

This guideline offers all stakeholders a documentation of the required steps towards an implementation of the project in other regions. These include instructions for assembling support groups, finding

driving schools (the main partners of the project), and finding committed young people willing to work as peer educators. The main body of this guideline is devoted to the education of peers, and it is the result of the contributions of all partner institutions involved in the project. The outcome is a best practice approach to peer education: training for the work in driving schools is optimised, and information transfer with view to the core messages of the peer session (namely preventing driving under influence of alcohol or illegal substances) is ensured.

A description of several approaches falling into the Peer Involvement category is used to introduce the subject. Emphasis here lies on the fact that prevention messages delivered by members of the same age group are much more effective than those that come from older persons.

Following the introduction, the presentation of the PEER-Drive Clean! project focuses on the goals and tasks of the Europe-wide project. All tools necessary for the implementation are made available.

A further step shows how to create favourable conditions for peer education, much along the lines which other handbooks for peer education have recommended, too. It deals with local and time conditions and also methods that are used in peer education situations: making meeting new people easy, absorbing new information, identifying personal and common goals, developing didactic principles, viewing materials, and, finally, testing a peer unit.

The practical education in all participating countries is based on the guideline for the peer education in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany. However, this standard had to prove itself in each participating region. For this reason, the description of the education in the participating countries is of great value. It shows how the education goals differ from region to region and how the education was adapted to the region's characteristics. As a result, a modified best practice model is outlined from analysing those modules that are handled in the same or in a different way. That model can then be developed for continued use.



## 2. THE PEER-TO-PEER APPROACH

Since the mid-1980s, the peer involvement concept has steadily gained acceptance in the health sectors of German speaking countries. 'Peer involvement' is defined as the involvement of individuals who are equal, of equal mind, or on the same level (cf. BZgA, 2003, p. 176). Peer involvement concepts are invariably personal-communicative procedures conducted within a certain reference group through members of that same group. The multipliers, mediators, or moderators for certain topics are 'equal' to the addressees of a certain message or piece of information (i.e. knowledge); they are at least part of the same circle of persons within which topics are discussed and problems are solved. "Peer involvement is the use of young persons to inform, counsel, or assist other young persons" (Appel, 1997, in: Backes/Schönbach, 2001, p. 6).

'Peer involvement' is a collective term for a number of peer activities and peer approaches. They all are of a primarily preventive nature and pursue information and education goals within potential risk groups (cf. Kaestner, 2003, p. 53). The following peer involvement methods can be described through their conceptual and methodical approaches:

- Peer education – education and learning through persons of the same age;
- Peer support – support through persons of the same age;
- Peer counseling – counseling through persons of the same age;
- Peer support – support through persons of the same age;
- Peer projects – short projects with persons of the same age.

(cf. Trautmann/Barendregt, 1994, p. 5 et seq.; Schönbach, 1996, p. 21; Kaestner, 2003, p. 52).

The peer education approach is probably the best known form of a peer activity. This often is used as an umbrella term for all kinds of peer activities so that we will describe the main characteristics of peer education, peer counselling, and peer projects before outlining examples from field work.

In peer education (education and learning through persons of the same age), single multipliers

work with groups of addressees. In peer counseling (counseling through persons of the same age), single multipliers work with individual addressees. In peer projects, groups of multipliers work with groups of addressees (cf. Backes/Schönbach, 2001, p. 7)

These peer approaches cannot be strictly separated from one another. The characteristic elements of one of these approaches frequently overlap with those of another approach during field work. During measures designed as peer education such as school class or youth camp work, during which peers work on topics with their 'equals' so as to impart knowledge on the addressee group it frequently happens that participants exchange personal questions or problems with multipliers, which comes close to peer counseling.

It is especially difficult to separate peer projects from the other peer approaches. Peer projects are characterised by activity and action orientation, and, quite frequently, a comparatively short duration. If a youth club or a school works on a topical stage production or a video film, for example during project week, and the target is to sensitise other youngsters during and after performance or screening for this topic then we may call the activity a peer project (cf. Kaestner, 2003, p. 57 et seq.)

One example from Magdeburg (Saxony-Anhalt, Germany): upon the initiative of a 19 year-old high school graduate, 72 students between 15 and 18 years of age from three schools worked on the concept of 'discrimination'. The graduate visited those schools and discussed the subject with the students (i.e. her peers, as they were members of the same age group). During the following weeks, the students created large-scale posters during arts lessons, expressing their experiences and values, aiming at sensitising other students for the subject. The posters were put on display in 22 inner-city tram stop shelters (which normally carry commercial advertising) for several weeks. This way, not only the students' peers but also younger and older persons were made aware of the problem of discrimination. The project description never mentioned the terms 'peer project' or 'peer approach'. Still, it was a bona

vide peer project: the idea and the initiative came from a person who intended to work on the problem of discrimination together with and for persons of her own age group (cf. Baake, 2008).

Terms such as 'peer education project' illustrate how difficult a strict differentiation between the various peer approaches is. If we use a wider angle, though, we find that many peer projects are based on the same principles as measures taken in peer education, and that peer projects often emerge from peer education measures. Regardless of the idea or approach that is pursued in the peer involvement, all peer approaches have similarities. They are primarily of a preventive nature and are applied with the goal to convey truths, attitudes, and behaviours to members of certain risk or target groups in as unspectacular and informal a way as possible, and to suggest the addressees risk adjusted behaviour. Social experience and the life situation of each addressee are taken into consideration in each case. All peer approaches for preventive work share one decisive advantage: the fact that age and status of multiplier and addressee are the same makes a convenient, low-key access to members of the target group possible. A multiplier is closer to the life reality of their target person than grown-ups with plenty of life experience, such as parents or teachers, social workers, or therapists (cf. Kaestner, 2003, 57 et seq.).

## 2.1 Support from Equals

Peer approaches often invite the assumption that they are procedures in which youngsters do something for other youngsters. This association is owed to the fact that the peer involvement concept was introduced in the 1980s. At a time when the dangers of substance abuse and AIDS had high visibility, peer involvement in prevention and information strategies was met with keen interest.

However, peer education approaches were actually introduced much earlier in order to disseminate knowledge among persons of the same age, and this was not restricted to young people. "As early as in the first century, activities from persons of the same age find mention in the Institutio Oratoria by Roman rector

Quintilian. He reports of children teaching younger children. The 'Dekurio' system, developed by Spanish Jesuits around 1550, involves one student teaching ten other students. This has been part of the Jesuit education system up to the present day" (Kaestner, 2003, p. 50 et seq.)

Tutorial systems (op. cit.), (re-)introduced in German schools and universities in the 1960s, rely on the peer approach, as do informal self help group systems in which people from comparable life situations meet. The peer approach forms the basis of traditional organisations such as the Boy Scout movement, other youth organisations or volunteer fire brigades although none of these are usually associated with peer work (cf. Heckmann, 2006).

During adolescence, the peer group is of crucial importance for the development of the individual. Young persons spend a considerable part of their free time among friends, school mates, and acquaintances from their own age group; in other words: their peers. Contact with persons of the same age occurs in school and also during leisure time. The significance of the peer group for the development of youngsters lies in the fact that they find themselves in the same life situation, share similar interests, and are faced with similar challenges and problems. It is especially significant that they spend much more life time with their peers than with their parents or elder siblings during this phase. The multitude of learning, experience, and experimentation chances which life time spent with people of the same age can offer is decisive for the development and maintenance of individual identity (cf. Engel/Hurrelmann, 1998, p. 83).

Adolescents from the same age group share the interest in taking risks, exploration, and proving oneself (cf. Raithel, 2004); the decade between the 16th and 25th birthdays mark the biographical peak of the readiness to take risks. Risk competence and even risk avoidance or renouncement (without loss of face) can be acquired in this context of borderline experiences (cf. Heckmann, 2007).

Even after adolescence, age peers do not lose their significance during post-adolescence and adulthood. The own family, started after leaving home and attaining



monetary independence, is usually the new reference and orientation point. Peers play a significant role for certain situations and problems after the age at which young persons start families has risen considerably during the past decades. They counsel and support during pairing up or separating and during child raising. Even during crises such as (psychic) stress situations, it is usually the family or friends who first offer support before professional advice is sought (if this is done at all). Even if there is no guarantee that peers can offer appropriate and useful information and support, these example situations clearly show just how important peers are in everyday adult life. The role of the peer – if anything – gains in importance after adolescence as the likelihood decreases that parents or teachers can give sound advice or support for a successful management of future tasks such as starting a family, making a living, or raising children over the years.

Peer approaches lose in significance at a later age although it seems that they emerge out of nowhere in day care facilities or self help groups and remain stable as mutual support systems.

From our angle it is interesting that systematic peer involvement has already found its way into traffic safety work: according to a well documented German project, experts such as former professional drivers or engineers inform elderly road users from their own age group about recent traffic rule modifications, vehicle technology, or traffic guidance systems (cf. Meka, Bayer, 2001).

## 2.2 Peer Education in the Field

“Peer education in the health sector is the teaching or sharing of information, values, or behaviours on health through members of the same age and/or status group” (Sciaca, 1987, quote in Backes/Schönbach, 2001, p. 7). The traditional meaning, ‘education of young persons through young persons’, with emphasis on persons from the same age group, is not a mandatory precondition of peer education. Grown-ups, too, who are hard to reach (or not at all) through traditional behaviour prevention can be moved to change attitudes or behaviours through peer guided interventions. Classic examples are projects in the HIV/AIDS prevention field such as

homosexual men informing other homosexual men, drug users informing other drug users, or prostitutes informing other prostitutes on topics such as HIV infection channels, safer sex, or minimum risk drug consumption.

The prime target of AIDS prevention is the avoidance of HIV infections. Since the days the HI virus was identified for the first time, active homosexual men and injecting drug users have been high risk groups in the US and Europe. It was tough breaking through to these groups although public information campaigns on a worldwide scale had been quickly developed. Early on, Salmen found that a mix of prevention measures (e.g. from doctors and churches) not precisely aimed at the requirements of parishes or target groups may even be counterproductive for an information campaign. In the US, those programmes not conducted by professionals but by volunteers from within the target group proved most effective. In one of the early centres of the disease, an innovative and quite impressive campaign targeted at the homosexual subculture was devised: the Stop AIDS Project in San Francisco (which quickly went on to be used as a model campaign in other cities) spread the message within the upset homosexual subculture to become active in prevention and form self-help organisations. The number of new infections was hoped to be brought down considerably (cf. Salmen, 1990, p. 89 et seq.)

Homosexual men organised and conducted roundtables where groups of eight to twelve (homosexual men) could discuss problems and experiences with AIDS and safer sex. After a year, the roundtables were publicised using a pyramid system; the target group was predominantly homo- and bisexual men. Roundtables were organised for other target groups, too; for instance for drug users or heterosexual youths and adults who frequently change their partners. More than 7,000 persons took part in roundtable sessions in San Francisco within a short period of time. When the goal – stopping or reducing new infections within the risk group – was reached, the programme was faded out. One of the prerequisites for a termination of the programme was the successful acceptance of safer sex rules as a new and accepted norm within the risk group of homo- and bisexual men (op. cit.)

In other fields of prevention and health work, peer education was successful, too. Since the 1990s, Vienna organisation RISIKO has trained young students to be peer educators for its project 'Systemic Prevention of Addiction' (SPS). These educators organise roundtables at their schools aimed at individuals, small groups, or whole classes. Topics of the talks are not so much drug-specific issues; rather, in-school and free time everyday life dominate discussions (cf. Bohrn, 1998, p. 9 et seq.).

Peer approaches in school are subject to 'tidal' changes. Initially, interest among groups of youths is high, but it soon wanes: there are other interesting things, commitment shifts to other areas, or classes take up all available time. The required precondition for the stability of the Vienna project is the joint decision taken by all groups involved in the project – students, teachers, and parents – that dependency prevention is

an important goal so that the project has a broad basis. Another success factor is the immersion training of the peers during a seminar held in a mountain cabin.

The peer work and also the counseling and networking between parents, teachers, and students have greatly contributed to the community feeling in the participating schools. Also, understanding the needs and requirements of the opposite sex has increased in many cases. The project even facilitates a much improved integration of 'outsiders' into class communities (op. cit.) and therefore has beneficial effects beyond the core target of dependency prevention.

Both projects outlined above and their well-documented and convincing successes were the inspiration for developing a concept in 1999 to counteract the unproportionally high number of young drivers involved in alcohol related road accidents.

### 3. THE „PEER-DRIVE CLEAN“ PROJECT

Especially for young people and young adults, alcohol and narcotics consumption represents a clear and, in many European countries, increasing health hazard (cf. EBDD 2004). Risks connected with drugs consumption are frequently underestimated by young persons. Frequently, they do not recognise subsequent damage and long term health impairments as a risk to themselves.

Young drivers are clearly overrepresented in the accident statistics of all European countries. 25 percent of all accidents caused by driving under the influence of alcohol are caused by persons between 18 and 24 years of age; a group which only represents eight percent of the total population (cf. Federal Statistics Office, 2004). The main cause of death among youngsters is traffic accidents. Decades ago, a car was regarded a luxury object, and owning one was restricted to grown-ups with considerable experience in life and job. Today, the group of people who own a car has grown dramatically, and it includes young people, too. Motorised mobility is extremely attractive for adolescents and young adults, and this is especially true for the new member states of the European Union.

Over the last few years, police and law enforcement agencies have placed more emphasis on researching the connection between substance abuse and accidents, and it has become obvious that driving under the influence has become an acute safety risk.

The consumption of illegal substances is primarily a health system problem but becomes most obvious in road traffic. The consequences and the ensuing costs – for emergency services, medical treatment and care, aftercare, rehabilitation, and professional reintegration – in turn have to be met by the health care system.

#### 3.1 The Plan and the Target: a Prevention Approach for Europe

The goal was to find individual and practical strategies and rules for and in conjunction with novice drivers in

order to avoid dangerous driving under the influence. Prior experience from the Peer Project with Driving Schools (cf. Christoph/Heckmann, 2003) was reviewed for a possible transfer into the European context, adapted to regional requirements, and evaluated during a model phase.

Since the year 2000, young drivers, trained through this project, visit driving schools and organise roundtables for and with their peers on the subject of ‘alcohol and narcotics in road traffic’. The learners receive a background on alcohol or drug consumption as a cause of traffic accidents and are urged to reflect their own behaviour in that context. The project supports the work of driving schools and lawmakers; it does, however, approach the goal strictly from the novice driver’s perspective. The educators, themselves novice drivers, are peers in the true sense of the word.

A successful German peer project from Saxony-Anhalt:

- **High efficiency:** evaluation results show that novice drivers who participated in the peer project in their driving school were significantly less involved in drunk driving incidents than novice drivers who received their driving training without taking part in the peer project.
- **Target oriented approach:** young people are addressed at an age (about 16 to 24) at which they have some drug experience but are still out of reach of traditional prevention methods.
- **High motivation:** learners expecting to receive their driver’s license are highly motivated. This readiness to absorb information is put to use by the peer project for working with the issue of substance abuse.
- **Preventive approach:** driving under the influence is discussed before young drivers actually become part of motorised traffic. Risky behaviour is stopped even before it can become a habit.
- **Practical and readily applicable:** the financial input to reach a high number of target youths through dedicated laypersons (the peers) is comparatively low.

### 3.2 Targets of the PEER-Drive Clean! Project

Within the PEER-Drive Clean! project framework, intense communication was conducted about preventive measures taken in the various European regions regarding alcohol and controlled substances in road traffic as well as about experience with the peer education approach.

In the course of the PEER-Drive Clean! project, peer education projects in another nine European countries (Belgium, Estonia, the Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain) were established, which informed and enlightened youths, young driver learners, and novice drivers about the dangers of combining alcohol or drug consumption and driving. The Saxony-Anhalt project evaluation proved that the target group is best reached in driving schools. Independent PEER education projects targeting alcohol and drug prevention in road traffic were organised in the model regions in close cooperation with local driving schools, police, traffic safety agencies, and, if necessary, youth workers, universities, etc. Preliminary work had to be performed prior to the project implementation.

The local project directors were asked to conduct research into the situation of drug consumption by young people, the traffic accident situation, as well as focal point topics which apply to the work of the regional project partners.

A situation analysis was required for each regional project. The regional project partners had to establish contact with local driving schools, the police, etc. in order to clarify which prerequisites for the execution of the peer project exist and which had to be created.

The goal the Saxony-Anhalt project PEER-Drive Clean! had was reached: a successful transfer of the peer education model into other European countries. The project was successfully implemented in all model regions. It turned out to be especially useful to have chosen a comparatively straightforward approach to reach the target group. This could be adapted to each region's cultural and legal preconditions: for instance, several countries (such as the Netherlands or Belgium) have no mandatory theory test. Also, in many countries, persons from different cultural backgrounds attend driving lessons. This, again, was true for Belgium and the Netherlands; here, persons from the Muslim world took part in driving theory classes. As the consumption of alcohol is prohibited under Muslim religious rules, a discussion of alcohol and drugs in road traffic had to be conducted from a different angle. These examples shall suffice to show that the institutions implementing the peer projects in the model regions needed sufficient leeway to adapt the design and realisation of the peer units to the cultural, social, and societal framework.

## 4. CONCEPT OF THE Peer project (IN DRIVING SCHOOLS)

### 4.1 Background

Driving in an intoxicated state is a serious problem in all cultures in which alcohol drinking and vehicle driving are part of everyday life. This is reflected in the official road accident statistics. Especially the accidents related to alcohol, in which at least one of the involved parties was intoxicated, often result in serious or even fatal injuries.

The young drivers – a group that is a risk group in road use anyway – are also a vulnerable group that needs especial attention with view to the subjects alcohol and drugs.

*Germany: The fact that the share of the 18- to 25-years old involved in traffic accidents is almost 25 percent, while this age group has a share of only some seven percent of the general population shows how urgently an intervention needs to be performed.*

*In addition, since the 1990s it has become increasingly clear that among the group of the young drivers not only alcohol but also the consumption of controlled substances is becoming a significant factor for road safety. In 1995, the German police registered 607 traffic accidents with bodily injuries that were caused under the influence of 'other intoxicating substances' (drugs and other narcotic substances). In 2002, the number had gone up to 1,262 traffic accidents registered under those same circumstances. 68 persons were killed in these accidents.*

With growing accuracy of detection measures regarding the use of controlled substances during road use, the number of recognised accidents caused under the influence of drugs is going to rise.

Here, as well as with the accidents caused under the influence of alcohol, we have to assume that the estimated number of unreported cases is very high. Many of the accidents caused under the influence in which only one vehicle is involved cannot be counted in the official statistics because an intoxicated driver is not likely to report their own accident to the police.

Imparting health related messages to risk groups and finding acceptance of the addressees especially concerning sensitive subjects such as alcohol and drug consumption is a difficult task.

With the peer project in driving schools, two fields can be addressed in which the 'youths' target group is at the centre of the prevention work:

(1.) Road safety work – aims to reduce the risk during road use and the increment of safety of the traffic participant. The peer unit members in driving schools inform about the risk of alcohol and drugs in road use.

(2.) Drug and alcohol use prevention – aims to prevent addictive behaviour and addiction related illness. This relates to the abuse of psychoactive substances as well as the prevention of non-substance related addiction. In the frame of the peer unit implementations, driver learners are – via the 'detour' of future traffic participation – encouraged to exchange experiences (of behaviour, consumption, rules and norms among friends and acquaintances). The learners have the opportunity to reflect their own consumption behaviour and are eventually encouraged to modify risky consumption and to avoid risk situations.

## 4.2 Preliminary Considerations

Most young persons make their first experiences with alcohol and, possibly, drug consumption at an early age and before traffic participation becomes an issue for them.

However, the use of legal as well as illegal drugs at an early age, in spite of youth protection laws, hardly ever brings youngsters into conflicts with the law. These regulations are only perfunctorily enforced, and first or occasional consumption of cannabis is usually not noticed by the police.

In contrast, there are legal regulations for the sub-system traffic participation under the influence of alcohol and controlled substances that are enforced by the police. Youngsters and young adults have to realise that consumption of alcohol, ‚generously’ tolerated or even accepted in other cases, is no longer tolerated when they drive a vehicle. In that case, there are even sanctions for a breach of the law.

Not all young drivers are likely to be driving while intoxicated, and no one wants to be involved in a traffic accident, be it as the guilty or non-guilty party. However, targeting those drivers most at risk of driving under the influence of intoxicating substances due to their consumption behaviour and leisure activities is very difficult. Special programmes and measures that broach the problem of alcohol and drug use during road use are usually conceived for drivers that already have had problems with traffic regulations.

Young persons are confronted with this problem in earnest when they begin to drive a vehicle themselves at the latest. But when, where and how to approach the young persons, and when are they ready to reflect the problem of alcohol and drugs during road use?

## 4.3 Project Description

The Peer project is anchored in the driving school, the ‘threshold’ to motorised traffic participation. Driving school theoretical training (compulsory in Germany) is extended by one ‘lesson’ in which adolescents or young adults together with young driver learners discuss the problem ‘alcohol and drugs and road use’.

When? The discussion of the problem should take place before motorised traffic participation. Risky and negative behaviour during road use (drinking and driving) has not yet become a ‘custom’.

Where? The driving school is a good place to tackle the problem. Regardless of age, sex, social status or (sub)cultural orientation, every motorised traffic participant has taken a driving test before acquiring the right to drive a vehicle. It can be assumed that young persons that are in a driving school have had experiences with alcohol and possibly illegal drugs. Clubs, parties, or similar situations in which the consumption of legal and possibly illegal drugs play a role, will have been attended by the driver learners. Apart from this, driver learners have clear ideas about their motorised mobility. Driver learners have a specific goal: they want to obtain their driver’s license.

It is possible to include a special unit on the problem alcohol and drugs during road use in the preparation of the driver learners for their driving license test in cooperation with driving schools.

How? The focused discussion with the driver learners takes place through peers. The explanation of the risks and the knowledge transfer through peers has proved successful in drug use and AIDS prevention projects. In the driving school project, the peers are persons that are themselves novice drivers. They know the region and they had to develop rules for themselves how to handle alcohol or drug consumption and road traffic. They can share these experiences and personal rules with the driver learners.

The subject ‘alcohol and drugs and road use’ relates to the consumption patterns and the leisure time activities of drivers. The driving school sessions also touch upon the youth specific consumption patterns and leisure activities of young drivers. In so-called peer units, trained persons that are approximately the age of the young drivers and are novice drivers as well, invite to discussions on the subject alcohol and drugs and traffic participation.

The peer led ‘lessons’ expand the actual driving lessons by broaching the problem context ‘alcohol/drugs and road use’, approaching the future drivers in a personal

and value oriented manner. Broaching the issue of alcohol and drugs and road use through peers with only a beginner's experience in driving intensifies the handling and acceptance of the problem and thus creates high acceptance among the learners.

The young persons and adolescents are given the opportunity to reflect upon the problem before the vehicle takes up a fixed place in the everyday life and becomes important for leisure activities. With the targeted broaching of the problem the subject 'alcohol and drugs and road use' becomes tangible and finds its way into their actual reality.

#### **4.4 Task of the Educators - The Peer Unit in the Driving School**

The task of the peers is to give 'lessons' to the driver beginners on the subject of alcohol and drugs and road use. In these lessons, the peers take up the moderation position and invite the driver learners to discuss the issue. Frequently, the term 'delinquents' is used while discussing this delicate subject. In direct (frontal) presentations it is usually not possible to take opinions,

attitudes, or experiences of the driver learners into account. To avoid this, the peers should introduce the subject and then invite a discussion.

In the peer units, led by two trained peers, the learners are given the chance to develop personal rules for the handling of legal and illegal drugs. The law and the legal blood alcohol level are not the focus of these discussions.

#### **4.5 Targets of the Peer Units**

The aim of the peer units is to reach adolescents and young adults and inform them about the reasons of drink-and-drive conflicts and about alternatives to driving under the influence of intoxicating substances.

The implementation of the peer project in driving schools attempts to achieve a reduction of traffic accidents caused by young drivers under the influence of intoxicating substances and, in the long run, a reduction of irregularities induced by intoxicating substances – regulatory offences or, in serious cases, criminal offences – during road use.





## 5. ASSESSMENT OF THE INITIAL SITUATION

For the preparation of the peer project it is essential to carry out an assessment of the initial situation. With this assessment, the feasibility of the peer project is put to the test, and it allows finding out the conditions for the success of the project.

This 'feasibility study' must encompass an investigation of the prevailing regulations and procedures for a successful implementation of the local peer project.

The following preconditions must be investigated:

- Process of obtaining a driving license;
- Legal regulations governing alcohol and drug levels and road use;
- Current statistics of accidents caused by alcohol and drug use.

Also useful is an analysis of which prevention approaches and projects are used in the participating regions regarding drug and alcohol use prevention and road safety.

This information can be quickly collected during the project preparation in co-operation with or supported by the regional peer project partners (specialists of the police force, road safety institutions, driving schools, and drug and alcohol use prevention counselling).

## 6. PREPARATION OF THE ACTION FIELD

### 6.1 Identification of the Region and of Partners

The first important step is to identify the region where the peer project will be carried out. It is recommended to choose a specific region (an administrative district or a town) for a test run of the pilot. Several points have to be considered in the process of identifying the region: local perception of the problem, available places to address the target group (driving schools) and their accessibility for the peers, location and personal capacity of the supporting organisation, and already existing co-operations.

For regions in which it is not possible to approach the driver learners during the driving training because in that region it is not required to attend theoretical lessons, other places and/or occasions need to be found in which peers can work with the adolescents and young adults. High schools, vocational schools, or project days in youth clubs are excellent alternatives.

*In Germany, all driver learners have to attend theoretical driving training in the course of several weeks (14 lessons in total). Approaching the driver learners during this theoretical training has proved to be ideal.*

## 6.2 Partner Recruiting

For the introduction of a peer project, the support from regional partners is essential. Specialists from the areas of driving schools (associations of driving instructors), driving license officials, police, youth work, members of regional ministries, representatives of the community, drug use and prevention officers, regional and supra-regional associations, etc. can support the project technically and also financially. The specialists should play a major role in the training of the peers.

*In Saxony-Anhalt, a committee was assembled in the year 2000, comprising delegates from the Land Ministries of Health and Transportation, the police, the Driving Instructors Association, the Union against Alcohol and Drugs and Road Use, and consultants for medical-psychological examinations. The committee decided upon which legal regulations had to be followed in the implementation of the peer project. The driving schools were informed about the project through the Association of Driving Instructors. The committee also ensured the financing of the project.*

The founding of a committee is not necessary for PEER-Drive Clean!. However, representatives of all relevant institutions should be invited to a work meeting in the phase of the project preparation, during which the purpose of the peer project is introduced. Depending on the involvement level of the participants it should be then decided whether the supporting organisation should organise regular meetings or whether the exchange between the partners should take place in another form.

However, it is important to officially inform the institutions that are responsible for any 'field' that the peer project touches and to make every effort to include their professional experience.

## 7. IMPLEMENTING PHASE

The supporting organisation has to assign a local peer project coordinator who conducts the partner search and acts as the contact person for everybody involved in the project. The assigning of a responsible person is essential, particularly for the contact with driving schools and the management of the peers.

The setting up of the project should take into account the already existing resources that the project partners might have at their disposal. For example, information from the Association of Driving Instructors to all of its members clearly expressing interest in participating in the peer project is a first step to win driving schools for the project.

### 7.1 Partner Driving Schools Recruiting

The driving schools are the cornerstone of the peer project and its implementation. Without the participation and the support of the driving instructors, the implementation of the PEER project in driving schools is impossible. However, they find themselves in an ambivalent position:

- On the one hand, driving instructors are professionally obliged to train driver learners to become responsible and safe drivers; in this capacity, they are quasi-teachers working with a public mandate.
- On the other hand, driving instructors are also business people who try to make their driving instruction for current and future clients as attractive as possible for sustained business, employment, and profit.

For the peer project, the driving instructors are the most important contact persons. It depends on their decision whether a driving school takes part in the project and whether the peers can have their talks with driver learners at all. For a sustained project, the initial contact needs to evolve into a partnership. The driving school owner needs to recognise that the project units on alcohol and drugs support them in their learner training in return for them devoting time and room and establishing contact to the target group.

The addresses and telephone numbers of the driving schools of the region can be obtained through a partner (driving license officials, Association of Driving Instructors) or can be found in the local telephone directory (yellow pages).

Parallel to a possible information campaign through the Association of Driving Instructors, the supporting association should inform the driving schools through a letter about the peer project and kindly ask for their participation. In Saxony-Anhalt, this information letter included a reply card/fax with which the interested driving school could sign in with the supporting organisation.

Depending on the feedback quota of the driving schools, a telephone enquiry may be necessary.

*A healthy dose of perseverance and frustration tolerance is needed. Not all driving instructors are interested in participating in the project, and quite a few may have mistaken the letter for an advertisement. Out of some 100 Saxony-Anhalt driving schools contacted, six were prepared to join the project straight away. Four contacted the supporting organisation, and ten joined the peer project after the subsequent phone acquisition.*

*Before the peers commence their driving school units, the driving instructors should be extensively informed by the project coordinator about the project (personal visits or telephone call).*

## 7.2 Peer Recruiting

Young people can be won for the work as peers in a number of ways. The supporting organisation has to decide which 'person group' should be recruited as peers.

The peers should belong to the group of novice drivers, they should be between 18 and 25, have a driving license, and have driving experience.

*Since the year 2000, students from the University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal, Saxony-Anhalt, have been recruited as peers. Many of the students work in the peer project to obtain study credits and use the experience in the project as a reference for their career entry.*

### Peer Participation Application

Basically, any young person that has an interest in the subject 'alcohol and drugs and road use' can work as a peer in the road safety project.

The advertising for the project can be made in the form of postings in schools, vocational schools, companies, leisure activities centres such as youth clubs, sport associations, cinemas, etc. A press report in which the PEER-Drive Clean! project is introduced and interested persons are encouraged to contact the supporting organisation could be useful.

*In Magdeburg/Saxony-Anhalt, an advertisement for a student job was placed in a local newspaper (a free monthly newspaper that is widely read by young people).*

### Preliminary Information for Interested Persons

The persons that contact the supporting organisation due to the postings have to be thoroughly informed about the project before the peers training commences. It has to be made clear to the interested persons which tasks are involved with peer work, what is expected of them, and which advantage for themselves they can expect as part of the project.

In the first year of the project in Saxony-Anhalt, the initial information rounds took place as individual talks: the interested persons came alone or in groups of two or three persons to an established meeting in

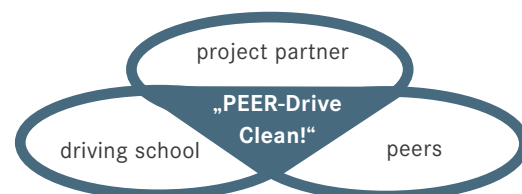
the rooms of the supporting organisation and were informed by the peer project co-ordinator.

After that, information meetings (one to two hours) were set up to which all interested persons were invited. In the course of those meetings, the supporting organisation introduced the project, explained the planned schedule of the project, and established a fixed date for the peer preparation seminar. At the end of each information meeting, the interested persons could decide whether they wanted to take part in the PEER project and, if so, they could sign up bindingly for the training as a peer.

## 7.3 Prerequisites for a Sustained Implementation

The peer project in driving schools and PEER-Drive Clean! are comparatively cheap measures to directly communicate with many young persons on the subject of alcohol and drugs consumption and to tie that information in with their own life reality. However, even if the project is not very cost intensive due to the participation of volunteers (i.e. the peers educators), sustained success requires continuing participation of the peers and support through the driving schools. On the local level, the peer project is conducted by a core group comprising the local coordinator (supporting organisation), the driving schools, and the peers. Only if these players can create a reliable and sustained basis of cooperation, the peer project PEER-Drive Clean! stands a chance to be a success.

### Core Group for the Project Implementation:



The initiating and/or supporting organisation, which nominates a coordinator for the project management, is either a regional institution for addiction treatment (addiction therapy or prevention), a traffic safety agency, or a university. The institution is active in its field and is a state-run educational facility or an organisation that conducts programmes focused on addiction prevention or road safety (information and prevention) for certain target groups. The universities have an education and research mandate. Usually, the supporting organisations receive public funding for the fulfilment of their statutory tasks.

Driving schools are privately operated businesses with a societally important mandate: they have to help driver learners become safe and responsible road traffic participants. Driving schools receive no public funding for fulfilling this educational mandate. Their training has to remain attractive for present and future customers (driver learners) so that the business will survive now and in the future.

The target group of the peer project – the driver learners – can only be reached if driving schools are prepared to allow the peer units to be conducted on their premises. However, driving instructors will only be willing to do so if they themselves are convinced of the approach, prepared to recommend the project, and receive positive feedback about the peer units.

Peer educators are young persons who volunteer to participate in the peer project alongside their main occupation (school or university student, apprentice). Peer educators are not contractually bound, full time employees of the supporting agency. Their participation in the PEER-Drive Clean! project must be compatible with their occupational goals.

As peer instructors, these young persons want to learn for their own future, work towards a reduction of road accidents, and earn some money. Being a part of the project has to be interesting so that the peers are able to benefit from participating beyond receiving a financial compensation.

For the implementation of the peer project, the following premises apply:

- Driving schools and peers can only be involved in the project on a voluntary basis;
- The peer units must not replace mandatory segments of the driving training or reduce the minimum number of lessons;
- Driving instructors must be able to perceive the peer units as a support of their instruction mandate;
- The peer project and the peer units must be attractive and must make sense to all those involved – instructors, learners, and peers.

For a sustained success of the peer project it must be factored in that the peers will leave the project after a certain period of time. This can have several reasons: a move to another city, a job in a different region, or final examinations. While this is perfectly normal for people the age of the peers, it still has to be considered in the project planning.

For the project coordination this means that new volunteers need to be recruited on a regular basis so that a sufficient number of peer units in driving schools can be offered.



## 8. FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR THE PEER TRAINING

After careful observation of peer training standards in the regions it has become clear that they are conducted largely following the same pattern. Training contents can vary, though. The length of the training and the number of participants can be different from country to country, too. This chapter focuses on a description of peer education practice in each region in order to profile the ideal peer education. This will serve as a best practice approach which still allows for regional conditions and leaves the institutions in present and future partner countries enough leeway to realise the training according to their requirements (for example different alcohol or drugs consumption patterns, different road traffic security situations, different youth cultures). The best practice approach is geared to the 'Handbuch für die Peer-Education' [Peer Education Handbook] issued by the Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung [Federal Health Education Agency] (cf. BZgA, 2001).

### 8.1 Group Composition

Peer educator training groups usually consist of ten to twelve participants in most countries. In Portugal, this group size is exceeded considerably. Several reasons speak for a smaller group size: usually, collaboration among participants works much better in smaller groups; barriers are overcome quicker; also, it is easier for the instructors to adequately work through the factual information and the teaching materials in smaller groups. The smaller the number of participants, the more intensive the exchange of personal and shared experiences among participants can be. The risk of personal animosities occurring between group members is higher in larger groups. On the other hand, the chance of having a vibrant, lively group is higher with a larger size.

If at all possible, a group should comprise a well balanced number of male and female members. This way, several different perspectives of the important factors communication and interaction about the subject matter can be introduced to the group. Gender related angles are required during the work in driving schools; persons of the same sex usually have an easier time establishing a rapport. This is important as persons of both sexes will be attending the driving lessons.

Another important aspect is the age of the future peer educators. They ought to belong to the same age group as the driver learners, i.e. they themselves are novice drivers, having acquired their driver's license only recently. The peer education approach also requires that the peer educators are familiar with the region: they conduct the same activities, visit the same clubs and bars, make the same or related experiences; they just have a little headstart. Peer educators need not be university students (in Germany, where the project model originates, they are). However, it is easiest to find socially aware persons among young students. If peers from other educational facilities or organisations volunteer this will certainly give the atmosphere a boost and possibly facilitate closer proximity among participants.

These group composition principles are reflected in the education programmes of the participating countries. An even distribution of male and female group members is desired, and there are no exclusively male or female groups in any of the participating countries. In practice, this is not always easy as the willingness to participate in the project is not evenly distributed among the sexes. Usually, female peer educators are easier to find.

### 8.3 Targets of the Peer Training

The primary goal of the peer training is the preparation of their driving school units.

The peers must be well trained so that they are qualified to conduct their peer units competently and with confidence. For this it is necessary that they have a headstart in terms of knowledge over the driver learners. This way, they are always in the position to lead the discussion at any time.

It is important to teach the peer educators communication techniques to open and maintain a conversation with the learners. The goal is to reduce inhibitions among the group members and encourage them to take part in the discussions.

A third, crucial part of the peer training is disseminating pedagogical knowledge, so that the educators can sensitise the learners to the subject alcohol and drugs in connection with road traffic participation, to reflect risky and risk free behaviour, to reflect upon their own experiences in connection with driving under the influence, and to be able to prevent the driver learners from driving under the influence. Ideally, this will be achieved with as little 'preaching' as possible.

To summarise, the goal of the peer training is threefold:

- Teaching of specialist competence;
- Teaching of communication competence;
- Teaching of pedagogical and didactical competence.

A fourth element is equally important: social competence. This is almost indispensable for establishing a functioning interaction with the driver learners. Important components of social competence are the ability to raise motivation, capacity for teamwork and communication, keen perception, and intercultural competence. As these skills cannot really be learned, it is quite important to select peer educators that bring them to the project. Some partners employ fairly restrictive selection criteria for an optimal group composition.

### 8.4 Collateral Training or Compact Training?

Two methods are available for the peer training:

The collateral training stretches over a longer period of time; it consists of regular, usually weekly, meetings.

This is the method of choice if the training is part of a study course and can be offered in the form of seminars. Partners who conduct the project in the framework of a university study course (Slovenia, Estonia, Portugal, and Germany) favour this method.

The advantages are obvious: the peer training is much more comprehensive as information can be disseminated in a much more detailed way, and a tentative practical trial may be run. Also, there is much more room for additional topics. The downside of a collateral training is the possibility of participants dropping out.

For a compact training, they only need to devote two days or a weekend out of their leisure time. The challenge here is finding a time window compatible with all participants.

A compact training is suitable for groups of peer educators that cannot meet on a regular basis. This will most likely apply to apprentices and young professionals. Members of those groups are tied into daily schedules which frequently do not allow them to participate in meetings at fixed times. Compact trainings offer the chance to immerse the participants in the subject – also from a group dynamics angle. Especially if the compact training is conducted in the form of a work camp, the peer educators may well come out as a team of like minded individuals on a mission.



## 8.5 Peer Training Phases

For both methods, training is subdivided into several phases. These encompass group formation, the training for conducting self-contained peer education units, and the trial run of a peer education unit.

### Topics

- 1 – Presentation and project outline
- 2 – Introductions, confidence building, group formation
- 3 – Discussion of the subjects road traffic security and the consumption of alcohol and controlled substances
- 4 – Planning and conducting peer education units in driving schools; counseling of peer educators through peer trainers on a regular basis.

Table 1: Phases of the Peer Educators Training

**Phase One** (presentation) is, strictly speaking, not a part of the peer training. Rather, the project is presented to the public, and a concerted effort is made to recruit young persons to participate in the project. Young people can be won for the work for the peer project in many different ways. The supporting organisation has to decide which group of persons should be recruited as peers.

Young people from all educational and professional walks of life can and should be approached. All future project participants ought to hold interest in the subject alcohol and drugs and road traffic and be motivated to take initiative on behalf of their peers.

Publicity can be generated through posters in institutions, cafes, bars, or discotheques, and through articles and/or advertisements in regional papers targeting young people (see also chapter 7.2, p. 29).

**Between the first and the second training phase**, an information session is held. It is used to elaborate on the contents and the targets of the project. The project is explained to the future peer educators in order to instigate their commitment to the project. It has to be made clear to the interested persons which tasks are involved in working for the peer project, what is expected of them, and which advantages for themselves they can expect as part of the project.

At the end of an individual talk or an information meeting, the interested persons can decide whether they want to take part in the peer project and, if so, they can sign up bindingly for the peer training. Additional stimuli such as financial compensations for peer units, credit points towards study programmes, etc. can be offered. After the information session, all interested persons are expected to decide for or against joining the project.

**Phase two** of the training (meeting the future fellow peers) aims at facilitating the group feeling of the peer educators and possibly work towards a pairing up for future peer units. Those persons who decided to join come together in this phase to learn about the course of the training and their future tasks. This phase is designed to build up mutual trust within the group of future peer educators; this is important because they are expected to share personal experiences during future driving school units. Trusting relationships within the peer group are crucial for a relaxed communication atmosphere so that an equally trusting environment can be created in the driving school groups. At the same time, communication techniques that help creating a communicative environment are taught. Again, this is very important for the roundtables in the driving schools.

**Phase three** (discussion of the subject matter) is used to discuss the subject itself, give topical information, and find answers to any questions. For the PEER-Drive Clean! project this means confronting the peer educators with the matters at hand: alcohol and controlled substances in connection with motorised road traffic, drink-and-drive conflicts, and the avoidance of driving under the influence. Communication and didactical techniques as well as related facts (legal situation, effects of alcohol and drugs on the capability to drive, problem solving through avoidance strategies) are also taught during this phase. It will be useful to involve external experts such as police or road safety officers in this phase. Equally important is the proactive involvement of the future peer educators and their ideas in the planning and preparation in the project. Therefore, the course of a typical peer education unit ought not be too strictly

regulated during the training so that the peers are encouraged to work independently and to react in a flexible way to certain aspects which might come up during a peer unit.

**Phase four** (preparation and trial run of a peer unit) is used to prepare future activities (peer units) and to conduct them after a trial phase. The peer educators are to be made capable of conducting peer units in driving schools independently and without any further instruction. A further step is to trial run a peer unit according to a guide. For this, the situation in the driving school is simulated in the seminar room. Two participants take over the function of peer educators and the rest of the participants take up the role of driver

learners. The project members get a feedback after the role play about what was good and what could be done better. This trial run of an independently conducted peer unit and the ensuing discussion with the participants and the trainers is very useful to incorporate improvement suggestions and to avoid failures in the first real peer unit. The first few units will be those in which the new peer educators feel least sure of themselves. For this reason it is advisable that the first peer education units are accompanied by a peer trainer. The added advantage is the fact that the peer trainer is present during the realisation of the project and may judge if the peer unit and/or the training need to be improved in certain areas.

## 9. METHODS AND CONTENTS OF THE PEER EDUCATOR TRAINING

This chapter is an outline of the peer training in Saxony-Anhalt. The project has been conducted since the year 2000, and the peer training practice has proved successful. The European project partners received it in the form of a guideline, and they were invited to adapt it for their own peer training. The realisation of the project training is always subject to conditions in each country. There are numerous differences in the fields of the legal situation, the educational system, or resources which make the application of the German system unworkable.

It can be assumed that the young persons who want to work as peer educators have very little previous knowledge on the subject, possibly none at all. This is an advantage for the PEER-Drive Clean! project. The peers should be able to talk to the driver learners on the same level; they should not present themselves as 'drug prevention professionals' or 'little police officers'.

According to the peer concept, peer educators ought to be regarded as partners; the fact that they have some experience in the field of alcohol and drug consumption and road safety gives them the ability to instigate and conduct a discussion with the driver learners.

Taking this background into account, three main topics crystallise in the contents of the preparation: teaching of factual knowledge, reflection of the own experiences, and training techniques (cf. Heckmann/Kraus/Christoph, 2006, p. 20 et. seq.).

### 9.1 Dissemination of Factual Knowledge

For the work in driving schools, the peers need to have basic knowledge of the subject. This encompasses legal regulations as well as the potential legal consequences of driving in an intoxicated state. Knowledge of the significance of alcohol and drug consumption among young people as well as information about controlled substances is crucial background information for the peer educators.

*In Saxony-Anhalt, teaching factual knowledge takes place in the form of a lectures cycle in which experts from the fields of police, drug use prevention, the law, and driving instruction present their 'professional view' on the subject in short presentations to the project participants and discuss with them afterwards.*

The inclusion of regional experts holds many advantages for the PEER-Drive Clean! project:

1. The peers get first-hand information, questions and misinformation can be immediately cleared up by the experts.
2. The experts can relate to the regional situation in their presentations. Project participants learn about the situation in their region and can use that knowledge in the driving schools.
3. The peers experience special appreciation of their engagement when they are trained by the consultants and specialists for the region themselves, and quickly appreciate the importance given to the peer education project in driving schools.

*To achieve that the students stay 'authentic' during the driving school units, it is important that they not just absorb the knowledge and the opinions of the experienced experts. The lecture cycle is designed so that the peer educators acquire a knowledge lead on the subject; this, however, does not mean that all the contents have to be repeated to the driver learners.*

## 9.2 Reflection of the Own Experiences

Possibly the most meaningful part of the peer training is the reflection of the own experiences. The questions ‘how did I feel as a novice driver?’ and ‘how do I handle alcohol and drugs and road use?’ are questions of paramount importance.

At first, the future peer educators work in small groups, write down their results, and then discuss their experiences in a plenary session with all other participants. The aim of the reflection of the own experiences is to find out what was important for the group members at the time of their driving instruction and to see whether the motives have changed since. Also, effective strategies for the avoidance of drives under the influence are developed. An important part of the discussion is the own handling of alcohol or drugs in connection with road use. After the reflection round, the group members have to decide what they would discuss about in their peer education units (‘what was lacking in my own driving instruction?’; ‘what is important to know in connection with alcohol and drugs?’; ‘which risks prevail in my region?’; ‘which means of safe transportation home are there in my region?’).

## 9.3 Training Techniques

How can important knowledge of contents as identified by the group members be imparted on the addressees? The methodical preparation of the peer educators for the work with adolescents and young adults is to be seen as a process that begins with the transfer of factual knowledge and continues until the practical implementation of the peer unit.

Keeping in mind the available time frame in the driving schools, it has to be decided beforehand which contents are indispensable for the units. These must be sorted and, occasionally, rearranged, and introduced according to the group’s requirements.

The work in the driving school may include using mode-

ration cards, topical slides, film clips, newspaper clippings, etc. Project participants are required to create a realisation pattern for their first few peer education units which they then put to the practice test. The first two or three peer units and the discussion of the experience among the peer educators team still belong to the ‘method finding’ phase. After the first few peer education units, their contents can be established as standards or as a fixed constant in a priority list.

## 9.4 Seminar Scheme in Saxony-Anhalt

Once a year, the project partner organises a two-day long basic seminar during which new project participants are prepared for the implementation of peer education units.

The two day seminar always takes place on a weekend (Friday and Saturday) in a youth education facility. Friday morning starts with a lecture cycle that allows a theoretical first approach to the subject. It is important that the participants have sufficient opportunity to ask questions and enter into a discussion. In 15 to 20 minutes presentations, the experts give a broad outline of their professional (and sometimes also personal) view of the subject.

Presenters from the field of...	Subject/presentation title:
<i>Addiction prevention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug use at a young age</li> </ul>
<i>Police</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of alcohol/drug consumption in young persons</li> <li>• Task of the police regarding alcohol and drugs in combination with road use</li> </ul>
<i>Traffic psychology</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident causes</li> <li>• Interaction of education, control, and punishment</li> <li>• Legal regulations</li> </ul>
<i>Forensic medicine</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical-psychological examinations</li> <li>• Causes of drives under the influence of intoxicating substances among driver beginners</li> <li>• Conditions for being able to drive</li> </ul>
<i>Driving school training</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traceability of illegal drug use and taking of blood samples</li> <li>• The driving school environment</li> <li>• Contents and course of the driving instruction</li> <li>• Contents on the subjects alcohol, drugs, and medicine</li> <li>• Incorporation of the peer unit and experiences with the peer project</li> </ul>

Friday afternoon and evening of the basic seminar is used for the 'meeting round' and the 'reflection of the own driving school time and the experiences as a driver beginner'. The participants introduce themselves to a seminar partner. They are set the task to illustrate on a flip-chart what the partner told had them (approx. 20 minutes). After this, the partners introduce each other to the group.

On Saturday, the key topics 'recollections of my own driving instruction and the time as a driver beginner' and 'own coping with the subject alcohol/drugs and road use' are analysed by the participants in small groups.

**Meeting the Group Members**

- Partner interview:**
- Name, age, course of studies, interests
  - How did I learn about the peer project?
  - Why do I want to take part in the peer project?
  - Questions about the lectures
  - What do I expect from the seminar?

- Recollections of Own Driving Instruction**
- Group work, 3 to 4 persons:**
- For how long have I had a driving license?
  - Why did I want to have a driving license at the time?
  - How was the subject alcohol/drugs approached?
  - Changes in the everyday life through the driving license
  - What does the driving license mean to me today?
  - Behaviour during the trial period?
  - Offences, additional training, accidents

After the discussion concerning the motives for obtaining a driving license and the ensuing changes in everyday life, the participants again split up in small groups to work on the subject alcohol and drugs and road use.

### Own Behaviour

Group work, 3 to 4 persons:

- Drinking occasions in connection with driving situations.
- Discotheque/club drives
- Own drunk driving, drunk drives among friends and acquaintances
- How did I handle the problem? (Have I had drink-drive conflicts?)
- Can drives in an intoxicated state be avoided? Which alternatives are there and which strategies are suitable?
- What do I want to share with the driver learners?

The results of the small group work are then introduced to the other participants and are discussed in the whole group. The results of these discussions form the base for the contents that will be used for the peer education unit implementations.

In almost every introductory training, the following subjects were recognised as important for a peer education unit:

- Traffic insecurity as a driver beginner
- Expectancies of the driver learners about having a driving license
- Responsible alcohol consumption – dangers of drinking towards the legal limit
- Peer pressure
- Drinking-driving conflict situations (also drug use) and realistic strategies for the avoidance of danger situations.

At the end of the seminar, the future peer educators are set the task of developing their own guidelines for their peer units.

During another meeting, the future peer educators trial run their guidelines in a role play. For this, the driving school setting is recreated in the seminar room. Two participants take over the function of peer educators while the rest of the participants assume the roles

of driver learners. The new project members receive feedback after the role play about what was good and what could be done better.

### A Prototypical Peer Unit in Saxony-Anhalt

#### Greeting

The peer educators greet the driver learners and introduce themselves giving name, age, course of studies, and their personal motives for being part of the project. The purpose of the peer project is then introduced and the project idea explained. An introductory round of the driver learners follows. Here they are asked to give their first name, their age, and the reason of wanting to have a driving license.

#### Introduction

There are many possibilities for the introduction to the subject of 'alcohol and drugs and road use':

- Collection of drinking occasions in the everyday life;
- Question: how many traffic accidents occur under the influence of alcohol?
- Question: does it make a difference whether the driving license is paid by the learner or if the parents pay for it?
- Question: how is the problem dealt with among your friends?

Newspaper articles can underpin the dimension of the problem of alcohol and illegal drugs and road use, linked to the question whether the driver learners take the issue as seriously as the peers do.

#### Main part

After the introduction, the subject alcohol and controlled substances is treated in depth. For a visualisation of the problem, slides/overheads of the legal regulations can be used. Embedded cartoons invite their use as a base for conversation and instigate a discussion. The use of other media (e.g. films) should be considered depending on the infrastructure of the driving school. To deepen the discussion of the subject, the Alcohol Quiz can be used.

The experiences that the peer educators have made with alcohol and drugs must not be underestimated or forgotten: they can be used to illustrate situations if needed.

Besides giving information, the peer educators ought to present alternatives to driving under the influence, for example fifty-fifty taxi fares. The aim of the peer unit should be that the driver learners form an own opinion on the subject and that they can defend it and act accordingly.

### **Closing**

At the end of the unit, the driver learners are asked how they liked the peer unit, whether they found the discussion rounds useful, and which improvement suggestion they would make. At the very end of the unit, the peer educators wish the driver learners luck for the imminent driving test. With the message that the 'personal zero alcohol rule' is the best solution and that the driver learners should remember the peer unit in crucial moments, the peers take their leave.

## **Standards for the Peer Units in Driving Schools in the Federal State Saxony-Anhalt**

Duration of the peer units: 60 to 90 minutes

### **Greeting**

Introductory round: Own introduction, used for explaining the purpose of the peer unit

Icebreaker, winning of attention

Enquire about the expectancies of the participants and include them in the course of the unit

### **Course/Contents**

Collecting risk situations and drink occasions:

- Flexible usage of media (slides, video, newspaper)
- Trigger film and moderation cards

Joint discussion (encouraging silent participants; stopping the chatterers)

- Bringing in of own experiences
- Reflecting regulations and change of regulations
- Change of perspectives
- Reinforce positive group opinion of sober traffic participation

### **Closing**

- Testing of the effect of thought-provoking impulses
- Prevention recommendations feedback from the group
- Summary or alternatively some closing words
- Saying good bye to the participants





## 10. FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR THE PEER EDUCATORS TRAINING

Basic conditions for the peer educators training always vary. This is due to the fact that the partner institutions are active in different action fields. In Slovenia, Estonia, Portugal, and Germany, PEER-Drive Clean! is implemented by universities and universities of applied sciences. In Italy, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, and in Brandenburg, 'PEER-Drive Clean!' is conducted by therapeutic institutions working in the prevention field. The National Anti Drug Agency in Romania is part of the Ministry of the Interior.

As we can see, the framework conditions for the peer educators training vary considerably. Universities and universities of applied sciences have an advantage: they can make participation in the peer project attractive by awarding credit points for taking part in a study relevant course. It is probably easier, too, to win interested persons at educational facilities.

Also, the number of trained peer educators varies from country to country. In most countries, training took place in small groups not exceeding 12 persons; Portugal was the only country with a much larger group of 41 persons. A total of 27 peer educators were trained in Belgium. This is because Belgium is a bilingual country (Flemish and French): the 27 participants came from two languages areas.

Country	Name	Type of institution
Belgium	Responsible Young Drivers	Road safety foundation
Germany/ Brandenburg	Tannenhof Berlin-Brandenburg	Addiction assistance and prevention
Germany/ Saxony-Anhalt	MISTEL/SPI Forschung	Co-opted UoAS Magdeburg research institute
Estonia	Tallinna Ülikool	university
Italy	Villa Renata	Addiction assistance and prevention
The Netherlands	IrisZorg	Addiction assistance and prevention
Austria	Knappenhof gesGmbH	Addiction assistance and prevention
Portugal	Universidade Tecnica de Lisboa	university
Romania	Anti-Drug Agency	State agency assigned to the national narcotics commissioner
Slovenia	Univerza Ljubljana	university
Spain	IREFREA	Prevention research centre

Table 2: Institutions Implementing the PEER Drive Clean! Project

Country	Number	Women	Men
Belgium	27	9	18
Germany/Brandenburg	17	12	5
Germany/Saxony-Anhalt	10	7	3
Estonia	10	5	5
Italy	11	10	1
The Netherlands	8	6	2
Austria	10	7	3
Portugal	41	37	4
Romania	12	3	9
Slovenia	7	5	2
Spain	6	4	2
total	159	105	54

Table 3: Total Number of Trained Peer Educators



## 11. PEER TRAINING AND PEER UNITS

Comparing the training contents, it becomes obvious that there is a considerable difference in the extent of the peer training from region to region. The reason for this lies in the differing time frames in which the training can take place. Also, addiction assistance and prevention facilities are active in different fields than universities. In the following, the contents of the peer training in each of the participating countries are described in detail. We can see that the training was not conducted following a fixed pattern; still, many common modules were applied during the training. The partners in the participating countries oriented themselves to the training patterns of the model project in Saxony-Anhalt. However, they adapted the training to the specific requirements of their regions.

The training contents of the German project in Saxony-Anhalt will not be repeated here (cf. 9.4). Likewise, the training in Brandenburg will not be outlined here as it precisely followed the Saxony-Anhalt pattern.

The course of the training in each country is complemented with the guideline for the peer units as developed from the results from the peer training sessions. These show in more detail how the training targets were met and which criteria for a practical application were employed.

The formal sequence of a peer unit in a driving school is identical in all participating countries: it comprises the introduction of the peer educators and the project itself, the main part, and the closing and leave-taking; this is the sequence of the Saxony-Anhalt model project. During the introduction, the peer educators introduce themselves, explain their intention and the peer project, and inform about the institution they are affiliated with.

The introduction includes an outline of the structure and goals of the unit and may also feature small group games in the form of quizzes. These 'icebreakers' are designed to reduce reservations and shyness within

the learner group. In some countries (Slovenia, Austria, Germany), short films on the subject are shown, for example a film featuring an accident in consequence of drunk driving, displayed in a particularly drastic way. The Slovenian project partner also presents its own research results on typical addiction patterns among youngsters.

In all countries, the main part of the unit contains a discussion which is aimed at inviting the learners to recognise their own behaviour patterns and to consider problem solution approaches.

Typical questions include:

- Are there personal experiences with alcohol or controlled substances or occurrences among friends?
- Have the driver learners been confronted with a drink-drive conflict, either as the driver or as a passenger/observer?
- In which way do alcohol and illegal drugs take effect; what is the effect of mixing alcohol and illegal drugs?
- At which occasions are they consumed?
- Which problem solution methods are feasible?
- How can such behaviour be influenced?
- What are the legal regulations for alcohol and drugs and road use (blood alcohol limits, driving under influence, etc.)?
- Within youth culture, how often and in which surroundings are alcohol and/or drugs consumed?

To get the discussion under way, these questions can be brought up using a quiz or a little game. In this part of the peer unit, films (e.g. in Germany, Austria, and Estonia), drawings (Slovenia), or pictures are used displaying the consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The results of the peer unit are then summarised and the evaluation and feedback sheets are disseminated and filled in. The peers thank the group and take their leave.

## 11.1 Belgium (BE)

### Peer Educator Training (BE)

In Belgium, the peer educator training is conducted over two days; on the first days for the French speaking peers, on the second for the Flemish speakers. In essence, the training is focussed on factual knowledge.

The Safety Pack has information on road safety, driving under the influence of drugs, and legal conditions. Statistical data and the main causes for road accidents are explained. Also, the importance of safety installations in the car (e.g. seatbelts) and the effects of speed, braking distance, etc. are discussed.

The second part is devoted to the discussion of drug consumption and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The most popular drugs are characterised. They are differentiated by type and consumption motivation: uppers, downers, and trippers. As cannabis causes problems in road safety but is regarded by many a harmless substance, it is necessary to place special emphasis on the effects of cannabis consumption on the ability to drive.

The third part of the training is devoted to moderation techniques. It starts with a small exercise. The speaker slips a number of blunders and mistakes into their presentation in order to sensitise the audience to a deficient moderation technique. After a detailed introduction to the Peer-Drive Clean! project, the group is presented the elements of successful moderation. The moderator should command three essential moderation competences: didactical, pedagogical, and factual. Another important skill is social competence: capacity for teamwork, communication skills and intercultural competence.

In the last part, active moderation is practised within the group with special attention to the topic of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Just as designed for the driving school units, two group members take the roles of moderators. Afterwards, they are evaluated by the group, and the group decides if the candidates qualify for being part of the project or not. All group participants can assess for themselves if they would qualify or if there is still room for improvement to become good moderators.

### Contents of the Peer unit (BE)

The volunteer members of Responsible Young Drivers (RYD) explain to the driver learners during the introduction the extensive work of their organisation towards the safety of novice drivers.

Great care is taken during the main part that the peer educators do not talk too much so that interaction and sharing of knowledge can take place. Three skills are expected of the participants: social, pedagogical, and leadership competence. The discussion largely focuses on three questions:

The circumstances surrounding alcohol or drugs consumption: At which places are they consumed? Which drugs are consumed by young persons? Why do they consume them?

The risk in the combination of consuming drugs and driving: What may be the legal consequences? In which way is the own performance impacted? Are there differences between girls and boys in regard of drink-and-drive conflicts? Why do we indulge although we are aware of the dangers of consuming controlled substances?

Organising the trip home after a party at which alcohol and/or drugs were consumed: Are there strategies for avoiding or solving the problem? Should a driver be appointed prior to the event? What are the reasons for using the car although intoxicating substances have been consumed? What is the own reaction after finding out that a friend has consumed intoxicating substances?

The combination of several substances: What is the effect of combining alcohol and drugs? What is the effect of combining energy drinks and alcohol? Which effect does additional tiredness have? Can prescription drugs and alcohol be combined?

Behaviour: Does certain behaviour allow the inference that drugs and/or alcohol has been consumed? How can people be influenced to put an end to such behaviour? Do enforced measures make sense? Which role does prevention play?

## 11.2 Estonia (EE)

### Peer Educator Training (EE)

In Estonia, the peer educator training is offered in the form of a university seminar. The training stretches over an entire semester. It is worth mentioning that driving instructors in Estonia need to obtain a university degree.

After the general introduction, several alcohol testing instruments are presented in order to familiarise the participants which self testing devices are available on the market.

After that, a discussion of alcohol, illegal drugs, and prescription drugs is instigated with emphasis on those substances' impact on the driving ability. Also, Estonian traffic data is evaluated, focussing on the share of young persons involved in traffic accidents after consuming alcohol.

On this basis, material for a peer unit is gathered. This can encompass, amongst others, videos, PowerPoint presentations, or pictures. Estonian peer units frequently use shocking videos displaying the fatal consequences of driving under the influence. After the materials collection is concluded, the standard for an Estonian peer education unit is developed in the form of a guideline created by the future peer educators. The first peer unit is simulated in a role play session. The peer training is organised in a way that driver learners who participate in the peer unit are capable of understanding the drink-and-drive conflict and of finding ways to avoid or solve it. In accordance with the Behaviour Theory (cf. Ajzen, 1991), problem solving strategies are expected to result in automatic behaviour patterns in the driver learners.

### Contents of the Peer unit

During the introduction, a quiz is conducted, designed to collect the driver learners' opinions on the subject. The evaluation and discussion of the quiz results constitutes the main part. Some questions which are answered (sometimes incorrectly) and discussed at length:

In which way does alcohol impact the human brain and the organism (psychologically and physically)? What is the effect of cocktails (champagne and vodka, alcohol and drugs, etc.)? What reinforces the effect of consumed alcohol (mood, health, food, tobacco use)? Why and in which way do these factors impact the ability to drive a vehicle? In which way can an inebriated person be prevented from driving? What can be done if a person wants to drive after consuming alcohol? What should be done after finding out that someone has driven after consuming alcohol? What may be the consequences of drunk driving (for driver and passenger)? Are penalties for driving under the influence sufficient? If not, what sort of punishment may be more effective? What are the consequences of so many people drinking and driving?

Estonian peer units often employ videos, some of them quite shocking, displaying the fatal consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol. This is targeted at the participants' emotions.

In order to evaluate the success of the peer education unit, the introductory quiz is repeated at the end of the session.

## 11.3 Italy (IT)

### Peer Educator Training (BE)

The Italian training seminar lasts two days. The seminar opens with a lecture about the model project in Saxony-Anhalt and the project implementation in Italy. Both general and specific targets are incorporated: the prevention of road accidents, especially among youngsters and young adults in connection with alcohol and drugs; influencing young drivers to stop risky behaviour; building up networks on a regional and European level for creating more publicity for road safety.

The second part of the seminar is focused on road accidents in the Venice region, based on statistics from the last ten years. The number of road accidents has never been higher in this region. The figures are then compared with nationwide statistics. The most dangerous urban and country road accident hotspots are marked.

The third part of the seminar is dedicated to the effects of alcohol and drugs on the human organism. Immediate but also medium and long term effects of alcohol and drugs consumption and their effect on the ability to drive are presented and discussed. Emphasis is placed on the impact on the central nervous system, on physical and mental dependency, and on the risks – not only for the own body but for society on the whole. There is information, too, which drug has which impact on the ability to drive (visual problems, reduced concentration, prolonged reaction time, etc.)

Another lecture focuses on traffic regulations, legal sanctions in case of traffic violations, and behaviour models for safe driving. Special emphasis is placed on legal regulations governing alcohol and/or drug abuse and driving.

Two concluding lectures explain the peer education approach and the methods of group work. The peer education approach is outlined in broad terms and explains in which fields it has been applied (e.g. HIV prevention).

During the method training, role plays are used (the peer educators assume various roles); afterwards, the dynamic processes during the role playing are discussed, interpreted, and reflected. The peer trainer instructs the future peer educators how to conduct their own peer units.

### Contents of the Peer unit (IT)

At the beginning of the peer unit, the confidentiality of the discussion is expressly confirmed.

The main part is introduced by a question such as 'What did you do last weekend?' It could also be started with a brainstorming session on the subject 'driving'.

In case the discussion runs out of steam, short films or a role play are used. The participants' experiences are compared and the opinions weighed so that a common view or at least a summary of the various aspects can be distilled towards the end.

## 11.4 The Netherlands (NL)

### Peer Educator Training (NL)

In the Netherlands, the future peer educators receive their training once a week over a period of three months. Emphasis is placed on three aspects:

- knowledge of the effect of alcohol or drugs on the ability to drive;
- communication techniques;
- influencing the participants' behaviour and traffic regulations in the Netherlands.

Three meetings are devoted to the consequences which the consumption of alcohol or drugs has on the driving performance. All relevant information with regard to soft and hard drugs is disseminated.

During the second phase of the training, communication skills are taught and methods of influencing behaviour are discussed. This part of the training is based on the Transtheoretical Model (cf. Prochaska et al., 1994), a concept of describing, explaining, predicting, and influencing intentional behaviour changes. The model recognises six phases:

1. Precontemplation
2. Contemplation
3. Preparation
4. Action
5. Maintenance
6. Positive or negative termination

(cf. BZgA 2006, p. 233 et seq.)

Three meetings of three hours each are set aside for this topic.

The third and final block of sessions deals with the traffic regulations and the law in the Netherlands. During two meetings, the consequences of driving under the influence – health-related as well as societal and legal – are discussed.

After finishing this series of sessions, the peer educators are considered ready to conduct peer education units without assistance.

### Contents of the Peer unit (NL)

In the introduction phase, the peer project is explained and a quiz is presented:

You go to bed at three in the morning after five beers and five genevers. Will you be able to drive safely after you get up in the morning?

When you have to drive after consuming alcohol, will cocaine make you fit to do so?

Whoever gives a wrong answer is asked to sit down. The last person to remain standing receives a small gift (e.g. a key ring).

In order to instigate reflection on alternatives, the Bob campaign is presented. Bob is the person who stays sober to drive the others home. This campaign has run in the Netherlands and in Belgium since the mid-nineties. Bob always receives compensation such as a wellness massage.

More food for thought and discussion is brought up by the video documentation of a drink-drive experiment: early on in the video, the interviewees discuss their drinking habits; they are convinced that they are quite capable to participate in road traffic even though they have consumed alcohol. The participants in the training discuss factual information and the legal situation of drinking and driving. Only then the second part of the video is screened: after a test in controlled conditions (breathalizer test, driving test) it becomes obvious how wrong the interviewees were in their estimation.



## 11.5 Austria (AT)

### Peer Educator Training (AT)

In Austria, the training seminar is held over three months with one weekly session. The project partner in lower Austria is a therapy institution treating addiction related illnesses, so the emphasis of the training lies on addiction dangers and addiction illnesses. In-depth information is given on the effects of alcohol and drugs – controlled as well as medical. The terms ‘enjoyment’, ‘abuse’, ‘craving’, and ‘addiction’ are clearly defined and differentiated; also, the context of juvenile behaviour and peer pressure is discussed.

The second training phase explains the legal framework of road traffic, especially for driver beginners. This phase encompasses information on alcohol and road safety as well as the frequency of accidents. The lecturer places strong emphasis on the legal implications for novice drivers and possible sanctions for driving under the influence of alcohol.

The third phase prepares the future peer educators for their work in the driving schools. It focuses on self reflection. The participants introduce themselves to the group and explain their motivation for taking part in the project. After that, the peer educators come together in small groups and exchange their experiences in the context. This is important as their own experiences as novice drivers are part of their sessions in the driving schools and form the basis of strategies for avoiding drunk driving. Subjects broached during the peer training sessions form the core of the peer units.

In the next training phase, the peer units are simulated using role play. Two peer educators form the team, the other group members are driver learners. Several pairings are tried out in order to find out ideal team combinations,

After a few run-throughs, a guideline for conducting a peer education unit is prepared. This ensures that the peer units are based on real-life experience and that the guideline represents the ideal peer education unit. The guideline itself is loosely knit to leave sufficient room for the peer educator’s creativity and spontaneity. Very

early on in the actual peer units in the driving schools it becomes clear that the peers’ personal experiences find much more interest than a recital of legal stipulations or other facts.

### Contents of the Peer unit (AT)

At the beginning of the unit, the peer educators introduce themselves to give the driver learners an opportunity to bond. After that, the project itself and the contents of the unit are briefly explained.

The exchange of experiences is introduced through a problem consciousness phase. During this phase, photographs are shown of places where drivers were killed and where they are now commemorated by flower bouquets, crosses, or pictures.

A number of questions are put before the driver learners:

‘Has anybody ever been passenger to a drunk driver?’ or ‘Has anybody ever driven under the influence of alcohol?’ or ‘What happened; were there consequences?’

The peers bring in some of their own ideas and experiences.

An information round for the driver learners using statistical data follows. The message here is ‘We, the novice drivers, are the prime risk group.’ After that, the possibilities of avoiding risks and alternatives to drink-drive conflicts are discussed.

Next, the subjects ‘controlled substances’ and ‘medical drugs’ are introduced. Input from the participants is important as there is little problem awareness regarding medical drugs, and few driver learners would admit to having consumed illegal drugs.

Finally, the driver learners are urged not just to reflect alcohol and drug consumption but also to be aware of their responsibilities in road traffic and invest a few minutes for planning something valuable prior to partying: a safe trip home.





## 11.6 Portugal (PT)

The training seminar in Portugal is conducted at the Technical University Lisbon in one day.

The first lecture is about young people's health. It focuses on the effect of alcohol and controlled substances on a young adult's health. This results in information in which way youngsters can stay healthy and how they can be prevented from overindulging.

A second lecture gives information on national regulations regarding driving motorised vehicles. The future peer educators learn about the goals of the driving school training and about rules and penalties governing driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Special emphasis is placed on alcohol or drugs consumption in young drivers. Methods of preventing driving under the influence are discussed. The role of the police in the context of driving under the influence is explained from the viewpoint of a police officer.

From the medical angle, too – especially with reference to their historical importance and the change in consumption patterns – alcohol and drugs are discussed. Experts from National Institute of Forensic Medicine and from the National Institute of Drug and Harmful Substance Addiction are present at the lectures.

The final section of the training prepares the peer educators for their task. They learn techniques which enable them to steer the peer units and lead discussions about the combination of drinking and driving with the driver learners. Various conceivable scenarios involving driving and the consumption of alcohol or drugs are simulated in role plays. Group discussions about not indulging prior to a car drive are practiced to prepare the peer educators for the driving school situation.

### Contents of the Peer unit (PT)

National road accident statistics are presented and compared with those of other nations (e.g. Brazil) to put the size of the problem into perspective. Various types of drugs and their effects are explained. Also, several beverages and their alcohol contents are discussed.

One of the central statements of the Portuguese peer units is the fact that alcohol can cause addiction. If several persons visit a discotheque or a club, they depend on the driver. It is therefore crucial that he or she remains sober.

It is understood that no group member judges other participants' experiences with alcohol or controlled substances during discussions.

## 11.7 Romania (RO)

### Peer Educator Training (RO)

The Romanian peer training seminar stretches over three days. First, the peer approach is explained in general terms. This includes the history, theoretical aspects, models, and goals of peer education. The group members are part of this through a brainstorming session on the subject. They are also taught at this early stage of the training which rules peer educators ought to follow to conduct successful driving school units.

On the second seminar day, the effects of alcohol and various controlled substances (heroin, cocaine, cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamine) are explored. Emphasis is placed on the effect of these substances on the driving performance. The peer educators realise the important role they play in addiction prevention.

The third part is devoted to the Romanian road traffic law. Drugs and alcohol testing devices used by the Romanian police are presented. Also, the available data on drug consumption in the context of road traffic participation is made available.

Finally, methods and techniques of peer education are gathered. Some of them, such as unbiased listening, role playing, simulations, or brainstorming are explained and tried out by the group members. At the end of these practise exercises, the results are evaluated and processed into recommendations for the field work.

### Contents of the Peer unit (RO)

Among the materials which are used for disseminating factual information are films, books, newspaper articles, and PowerPoint presentations specifically made for the seminar.

In it, three young persons who found themselves in high risk situations are presented. Several small groups are formed and asked to identify risk factors and find solutions. Then, all groups present their results. Should the discussion not come off the ground, a story is told: a dying girl writes a letter to her mother, telling her about happenings of the previous night. She had promised not to drive drunk and also not to ride in a car whose driver is under the influence. The end of the story is that she is lying in the street after an accident; it was caused by a drunk driver, and the girl is the victim.

## 11.8 Slovenia (SL)

### Peer Educator Training (SL)

In Slovenia, the peer training is conducted in the framework of a university seminar. After that, regular follow-up meetings are held every two weeks.

The training starts with information on the distribution and the characteristics of legal and illegal drugs popular among students between 15 and 19 years old. The focus of the session is on the risk of drug consumption and which measures can be taken against drug use. This is underpinned by results from qualitative studies with the emphasis on consumption patterns: non-consumers, consumers, and problem consumers.

Risk reduction plays a major role. This approach is very pragmatic; the goal is to persuade consumers to indulge in a restrained manner or even to abstain altogether. The participants are encouraged to perform a risk analysis on themselves (e.g. binge drinking on the weekend, combining various drugs, alcohol, or drugs in combination with participation in road traffic). After that, a workshop on popular attitudes and stereotypes towards drug consumers and consumption is conducted. Societal and personal prejudices are distinguished and placed in relation to the own attitude. This way, the origins of those stereotypes may be traced. Another exercise is designed to explain the addiction principle. The group members determine which things in life they could forgo. They exchange their own experiences with alcohol and controlled substances.

Field work is part of the peer training, too; amongst others, interviews or group discussions are conducted among the target group.

In the course of the peer training, an exchange visit took place between the Netherlands and Slovenia: a member of the Dutch PEER-Drive Clean! project partner gave a lecture on the Transtheoretical Model and on phases of behaviour change (see above).

The next lecture focuses on typical risk situations and risk management. It is about popular drugs, when they are consumed, and which effect they have. The group analyses traffic accidents and puts them in relation with their own experiences. Several risk situations are used as examples: weekend parties, vacations, or everyday vehicle use. Emphasis is always on alcohol or drug consumption. It became clear during the session that first encounters with drink-drive conflicts took place within the family. It also emerged that driving under the influence of alcohol is tolerated more than driving under the influence of drugs. Finally, a few rules for avoiding risk situations were developed. For instance, one member of the group must always stay sober, a cab should be taken, etc.

Visits of institutions relevant to the subject are part of the peer training, too. Several talks were organised with representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Transport, and some driving schools.

A special feature of the peer training is a workshop for creating cartoons on the subject of drinking and driving. The resulting drawings were the basis of the subsequent discussion. During the creative process, informal talks about the participants' own experiences would occur. This part of the training is considered rather important because it facilitates personal exchange between group members.

Another part of the training is the familiarisation with discussion techniques. For example, pro and contra arguments are juxtaposed, or discussion openings using films are tried out. These discussion techniques are tested in established projects such as rehabilitation facilities for former drug users. Together with a mentor, the future peer educators prepare a discussion and test it, much like a dress rehearsal, before they use it in their own peer units in a driving school.

## Contents of the Peer unit (SL)

In the introductory section, the own research findings regarding youth and alcohol/drugs are presented. These opening questions arise from it:

- How important is the driving licence for you?
- Which parties do you visit on the weekend?
- Do you consume alcohol or drugs at those parties?
- Do you follow rules regarding your consumption?
- What are your experiences with alcohol and drugs?
- Which ways are there to avoid driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs?

The drawings and cartoons (see above) can serve as the basis of the discussion. One example is a scene in a bar: all the guests have consumed intoxicating substances and cannot drive; there is no money left for a taxi or to call somebody. The way home is at least 15 kilometres.

The questions:

How would you decide?

Would you ride along with the inebriated driver?

Would you look for other ways of getting home?

This conflict appears to be unsolvable; it provokes a number of greatly differing opinions.



## 11.9 Spain (ES)

### Peer Educator Training (ES)

In Spain, the peer training is conducted in the course of regular meetings spread over two months. First off, the PEER-Drive Clean! concept is outlined. After the project targets and the peer educators' tasks are explained, the participants receive information about the psychological and physical impact of alcohol and drugs, which risks are involved with driving under their influence, and about the legal regulations governing limits and penalties in case of exceeding the legal limit (alcohol) or detection (drugs).

The second phase introduces the peer education approach. The concept and especially the practical application are explained. The standard peer unit, developed in Saxony-Anhalt, serves as the model for a successful application. Several techniques for breaking the ice between group members are taught. Several discussion techniques are figured and tried out like the method Philips 6/6 or elaborating of so called „limit situations“ which are used in the peer unit.

In the last part of the training, strategies for starting up a discussion are presented. This encompasses personal experiences, everyday stories and appropriate news articles on drink-drive conflicts, and accounts of extreme situations in which is quite difficult to make the right decision. From this, questions for the future novice drivers are distilled. All conceivable alternatives should be discussed, regardless if they come from the peer educators or the driver learners. Finally, any remaining questions on the part of the peer educators are answered, and the feedback and documentation forms are handed out.

### Contents of the Peer unit (ES)

In order to create a relaxed atmosphere, an icebreaker session is conducted: catch the ball, in which a ball is thrown at random to one of the group members, who then answers questions about their person. The sequence of the 'interviewees' is non-linear and surprising, and this enhances the readiness to speak out (which often is very limited at the beginning).

The PEERs emphasizes that it is good to share the own experiences in a group and animate the participants to talk about the own experiences. The should exchange in a group without judging the individual experiences.

So called „limit situation“are characterised, for example when a group put pressure on a drunken driver to drive. The participants should put oneself in the position of the driver. Main aim is to find alternatives to avoid drunken driving.

Is the group to large, the method Philips 6/6 can be used. The participants are divided in groups with 6 persons. Every group should do a Brainstorming about the subject in 6 minutes. The opinions of the participants can be collected in this way. Instead of the individual opinion of every participants can be presented the result of every group.

At the end of the PEER-unit a conclusion is draw and unanswered questions are replied. The feedback sheets will hand out before the participants will take leave of the Peers.

The core of the peer unit is the simulation of 'borderline situations', e.g. a group exerting pressure on an inebriated person to still drive. The driver learners can place themselves in the driver's position and are encouraged to find alternatives.

## 11.10 Summary

All project partners agree that it is extremely important to avoid making the peer educator training and also the peer units too theoretical; otherwise it would be difficult to maintain attention, interest, and the support of the project.

The common goal of the peer training in all participating countries is the preparation of the peer educators for their driving school units. The peer educators should be ready and prepared to conduct them without assistance. At the same time, there ought to be enough room for individual elements. However, a supervised meeting after a number of peer units is regarded as necessary to be able to optimise the contents of the peer unit.

The training in each country contains basic information of road traffic laws and regulations. Mostly, the consequences of road use in connection with alcohol or drugs are discussed. If deemed necessary, the topic medical drugs and road use is touched upon, too. It is important in this context to mention the effects of drugs of all kind on the ability to drive.

Recent statistics, especially those focussing on inebriated novice drivers in traffic accidents, are made available to the participants.

The core of the training sessions in all project locations is the drink-drive conflict. The peer educators (and, through them, the driver learners) learn about the consequences of being found driving under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances (revocation of the licence, penalty payment, also social or psychological

effects). At the same time, the exploration of the conflict using practical examples or own experiences offers an ideal anchor point for the discussion of avoidance strategies.

The training in most countries includes communication techniques to prepare the future peer educators for their driving school units. Communication and discussion techniques are important tools for helping many driver learners to open up and even share personal experiences.

The peer educators ought to use one standard guideline for their units; this way, all teams can work towards a common goal, and continuing work on the project can be done in a more systematic manner. With all the common components, there are a few differences or additional aspects from country to participating country: (table 4)

In general we can state that there are many common factors in the peer educator training and also in the realisation of the peer units. Basically, all training seminars are oriented to the Saxony-Anhalt guideline. The peer unit guidelines, too, are very similar to the German model. However, there is plenty of space for variants, which makes it is easy for new countries to join the project.

It is likely, though, that more differences than in the peer training and the prescribed standards will emerge from the realisation of the project in each country; here, the model developed from theory and experiences is confronted with regional peculiarities, mentality, biographical background, and the general mood.

Commonalities	Differences
Traffic rules	Use of external experts
Legal regulations, especially with regard to alcohol and drugs and road use	Discussion of general health aspects and addiction illnesses
Effect of alcohol and drugs, especially with regard to the driving ability	History, theory, models of the peer education approach
Drink-drive conflict	Presentation of own research findings on the subject
Risk situations	
Avoidance strategies	
Saxony-Anhalt's project as a model	
Communication techniques	
Development of a guideline for the peer unit	

Table 4: Comparison of the Peer Trainings in Participating Countries

## 12. BEST PRACTISE FOR THE PEER EDUCATOR TRAINING

The ideal training period is a two day seminar. Not only is the peer training for their future task compact, swift, and intensive; the actual field work does not require a lengthy preparation period, and the peer educators can quickly gain practical experience. This is also important as a project such as PEER-Drive Clean! requires a quick implementation in order to work as a successful innovation.

It is recommended not to make the training groups too large. **A group size** of ten to twelve participants is ideal. If the group is larger, there is not enough time for answering all questions at length; also, role plays during the training programme are less manageable. In addition, the exchange of personal experiences is harder in groups that are too large. Ideally, the distribution of the sexes is even, in other words, the same number of male and female group members is best. It usually is easier finding young women to participate. A greater effort is therefore required to recruit young men.

The **training schedule** must offer sufficient time for a familiarisation phase. This is important for a central point of the training: the participants' candid description and their reflection of their own experiences. Only if the peer educators are able to share their own experiences during a peer unit they can expect the driver learners to do the same. They have to act as role models for the future drivers.

Legal regulations and sanctions, the effects of legal and illegal drugs, and their impact on the ability to drive form the basis of the **facts** dissemination.

External experts are an especially effective way to lend reliability and credibility to these facts. Also essential is the training of special **discussion and moderation techniques**. Only if the peer educators have mastered these techniques they can sensitise the driver learners for the drink-drive conflict, make them aware of risk situations, and teach them to evaluate and follow avoidance strategies under their guidance or, ideally, on their own. In order to gain confidence during their training, the peer educators make effective use of role plays simulating the peer unit situations in driving schools. These are particularly efficient if they allow for plenty of feedback.

The **guideline for conducting a peer education unit** safeguards practice standards for all peer educators over a longer period of time. It is crucial that the guideline is created by the peer educators group. Only if these standards have reached a certain continuity, changes and developments based on experience and common sense become possible.

After the conclusion of the training, regular peer meetings are recommended. They offer the team the opportunity to swap notes on the first experiences in their units, and it will be helpful to use this way of team peer supervision in the future. The meetings should allow the peer educators to discuss their open questions with the trainers and the experts and to gather more know-how and expertise.

The best practice principles are formulated in line with the character of the entire peer education project in driving schools: easily and clearly described, straightforward, and easily memorised.





## 13. CONCLUSION

Each partner of the PEER-Drive Clean! project is faced with the task to adapt the peer project concept, conceived and realised in Germany, to the conditions in their region in order to inform driver learners and novice drivers of the dangers and risks of combining the consumption of alcohol or drugs with road use. Theoretical driver training as found in Germany and Austria is not an obligatory part of driving instruction in all participating countries. For this reason, driving school managers (e.g. in Belgium or the Netherlands) needed to be convinced to motivate driver learners to take part in a peer education unit. Recruiting students was not possible in all regions as not all project partners have direct access to a university or were not able to establish it.

This shows that basic conditions for the PEER-Drive Clean! project differed considerably from region to region. Still, the project partners succeeded in anchoring the project in driving schools of ten European countries, offering peer-conducted education units for driver learners and novice drivers

on the subject of alcohol and drug consumption (cf. Heckmann et al., 2007). One result of the evaluation conference in June 2008 was that all partners of PEER-Drive Clean! were able to win more partners beyond their own region so that the peer project could already be extended to more driving schools.

The presentation of the unit practice showed that the education is performed following a fixed schedule in all regions oriented to the Saxony-Anhalt peer education guideline. Many common features can be found in all participating regions; there are also a number of differences. These refer to the training period, training contents, and to the number of participants of the peer education training.

In order to strengthen the peer education approach, all regions should continue standardising their training. At the same time, the project aims at leaving the participating project partners sufficient leeway for their own ideas.

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## Letter to co-operation partners

European Model „PEER-Drive Clean!“

Implementation of a PEER project in driving schools in ..... (Region)

Invitation to a work meeting

Dear Sir or Madam,

The number of accidents of young people and young adults is disproportional high. Often enough the accidents of the 18- to 25 years old are caused under the influence of alcohol or even illegal drugs.

To approach this problem and to inform young people about the danger of alcohol and drug consumption during road use, the PEER project in driving schools was developed in Germany. This project has already been successfully implemented for several years.

This year, counting with the support of the European Commission, the international model „PEER-Drive Clean!“ has been started, in which our institution ..... (Name) is a partner.

Our aim is to initiate a PEER project in driving schools in ..... (Region) as well, in which young driver learners are informed about the risk of alcohol and drug use during road use thus reduce the number of accidents of the vulnerable group „young drivers“.

We would like to count on your co-operation to carry out this purpose to be able to adapt the project to the conditions in our ..... (Region).

Herewith we have the pleasure to invite you to a work meeting of the steering group of the Peer project in ..... (Region) at

Date, Time, Place of the meeting.

On the first work meeting we would like to introduce to you the concept of the Peer project and jointly analyse how the implementation of the project in ..... (Region) could look like.

We would appreciate if you would support our project and if we could greet you in our first work meeting.

Please do not hesitate to call me for any further information or any questions you would like to ask me.

Yours sincerely

Project co-ordinator

## Letter to a driving school, asking for the participation in the PEER project

To all the driving schools  
in ..... (Region)

“PEER-Drive Clean!” in ..... (Region) on the problem alcohol and drugs during road use- co-operation  
with interested driving schools

Dear madams and sirs,

Driver beginners and young drivers are very frequently involved in traffic accidents. Next to a too high speed, very often is the use of alcohol and/or drugs during road use the main cause for these accidents.

For the purpose of doing something against this problem, „PEER-Drive Clean!“ was initiated a project that- supported by the European Commission- is being carried out in 10 European countries.

Peer means “equal”, in the sense of being the same. In this project young people are trained on the subject „alcohol and drugs during road use“. They are themselves driver beginners and in this sense „equal“ with driver learners, because they have to deal with the subject alcohol during traffic participation as well.

The peers, trained by the police and drug counselling centres, go to driving schools and speak there with driver learners about the risks and the use of alcohol and drugs during road use and discuss with them about the experiences in their circle of friends. The aim of these conversations are to develop together with the driver learners strategies and possibilities to be able to organise leisure time, traffic participation and parties in such a way that no traffic accidents under the influence of intoxicating substances can occur.

„PEER-Drive Clean!“ should make young drivers conscious about a responsible use with alcohol/drugs during road use. It is obvious that no one wants to be involved in an accident caused under the influence of intoxicating substances. „PEER-Drive Clean!“ gives the young drivers the opportunity to develop a vivid, realistic picture about the problem alcohol and drugs during road use.

We would like to start with “PEER-Drive Clean!” in ..... (Region) and would be very pleased if you would join the project with your driving school.

We can offer you that trained peers will come regularly to all the courses and, additional to the driving lessons, they will speak to the driver learners „among equals“ about alcohol and drugs during road use.

In the case that we have aroused your interest on PEER-Drive Clean and you would like to support us in it's implementation, please use the fax form or call us.

Please, do not hesitate to contact Ms./Mr. Name of the co-worker for any further information or question that you may have (Tel.-Nr.)

Sincerely yours,

.....

To .....

.....

..... (Address)

I/We am/are interested in „PEER-Drive Clean!“. We would be very pleased to be called  
by Ms./Mr. .... (name)

.....

Name of the driving school

.....

Name of the contact person

.....

Address of the driving school

.....

Tel./Fax/E-Mail

.....

„PEER-Drive Clean!“

Peer project for the prevention of alcohol and drugs during road use

You are looking for an interesting project and would like to work in groups with adolescents and young adults?

If you are between 18 and 25 years old, have a driving license and enjoy teaching, the Peer project is just right for you!

What do we do?

We go to driving schools and speak to driver learners about the risks of alcohol and drugs during traffic participation. Our aim is, together with the driver learners, to “pinpoint” conflict situations in which alcohol and drug consumption might meet driving a vehicle. “Every driver learner should be so well informed that he/she can avoid alcohol or drugs during traffic participation“.

What does PEER mean?

Peers are persons that have almost the same status and are around the same age. We, the participants of the PEER project, are also not very experienced drivers so far and we know very well when the situation with alcohol might escalate.

Why do we do this?

You must have already read the press reports about “disco/club accidents” with severe bodily and even deadly injuries. These accidents are often caused under the influence of alcohol. Many of these accidents might have never happened if the drivers had been sober.

Because this problem exists all across Europe, the project „PEER-Drive Clean!“ was started with the support of the European Commission and we are the ones responsible for the implementation of the PEER project in ..... (Region).

If you would like to become part of the Peer project, simply contact us under:

Name.....

Contact data .....

.....

.....

## Press release

Looking for young adults for a project in driving schools

There are increasing numbers of young drivers who use alcohol or drugs during road use. Especially on weekends deadly accidents occur under the influence of intoxicating substances after a disco or night visit, with loud music and friends in the car. To prevent these accidents the project "PEER-Drive Clean!" was started, in which young persons (peers) additionally to the driving instruction discuss about the use of drugs and alcohol during road use as well as the driver learner's experiences in their circle of friends. Ideas and strategies are jointly developed how it is possible to organise leisure time, vehicle and partying without the risk of serious consequences such as losing the driving license or causing an accident. The aim is to sensitise fresh driving license holders and to develop a conscience for the responsible dealing with alcohol and drugs during road use.

The ..... (Institution) is looking for young persons that would like to take part in this project. They will be professionally trained and supported with a regular experience exchange.

On the ..... (Date/Time) interested young persons can inform themselves about the „PEER-Drive Clean!“, the training is planned to take place on the ..... (Date/Time).

The project „PEER-Drive Clean!“ is supported by the European Commission and is carried out in 10 European regions. The INSTITUTION carries out the pilot project in .....( Region).

Interested persons in the work as peers or taking part in the project as a driving school, please contact

.....  
.....  
.....

(Contact data of the Institution)



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