



Handbook for Youth research for Compliance with Alcohol Age Limits and with Alcohol Marketing Regulations

Toolkit for young activists

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This handbook is part of a European training on empowering youth organisations working on the field of alcohol. We hope we can motivate youth organisations in preventing and reducing harm done by alcohol among young people in Europe.

This handbook gives you some tools to perform research on the enforcement of legal alcohol age limits and on alcohol marketing regulations in your country. You will be trained by a trainer who will explain all the details of the field studies. This handbook can support you in performing the field studies.

Why research?

The alcohol consumption between young people in Europe is still very high (*WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository (European Region) Recorded alcohol per capita consumption, & Rehm J, Gmel G, Room R, Frick U. Average volume of alcohol consumption, drinking patterns and related burden of mortality in young people in established market economies of Europe*). We would like to affect young people's attitude towards alcohol and have an impact on their drinking behaviour.

A way to influence their drinking behaviour is to reduce the availability of alcohol. One concrete way to reduce the availability of alcohol is to (for example) reduce the amounts of selling points or improve the compliance rate of legal age selling/ purchasing limits (*Babor et al. Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity: Research and Public Policy*). Another main factor relates to alcohol advertising. Scientists are clear about the impact of alcohol advertising: it provokes drinking on a young age and young people who already drink, because of alcohol advertising drink more frequently (*Anderson et al. Impact of alcohol advertising and media exposure on adolescent alcohol use: a systematic review of longitudinal studies*)

The results of this research can indirectly improve alcohol policy and can show that the existing regulations are not well enforced or not effective and that policy measures have to be taken.

Good luck and have fun!

Chapter 2: Mystery-shopping on selling/ purchasing age limits

2.1 What is mystery-shopping?

Within this chapter you will receive all the information to perform a good mystery-shopping of alcohol beverages research within your own country or municipality. Mystery-shopping is also called test purchasing.

- Mystery-shopping/ test-purchasing is a method to evaluate if sellers of alcohol comply with the legal age limits

The main principle of this research is that a buyer who is underage, or who looks underage, tries to buy alcohol and tests whether the seller is willing to serve or sell alcohol to him or her.

In a lot of countries young people who are just old enough to buy alcohol and reached the minimum purchase age, but look younger, are involved in the test-purchasing research. In some other countries real minors (who are not yet allowed to be sold alcohol by law) are performing the test-purchasing research. Both examples can be performed.

2.2. Who is adapting the mystery-shopping?

In 2013 the report 'Eyes on Ages – A research on alcohol age limits policies in European Member states (Mulder, J; Greeff, de, J. *Eyes on Ages. A research on alcohol age limit policies in European Member States. Legislation, enforcement and research*) showed a chapter about test purchasing research in Europe. In this study an overview is given of the European countries where test-purchasing is implemented, what kind of methods are used and what the results are. This chapter is about how mystery-shopping is used for research reasons.

In the following European countries test-purchasing is used as a type of research:

Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UK.

Organisations who are involved in test-purchasing are national, regional and local institutions for addiction and prevention, institutes for health and welfare, municipalities, universities, supermarkets, youth organisations, consumer organisations, research institutes and other. Mystery-shopping is used at local and national level and in most countries not used regular. For more information: see the Eyes on Ages study.

There are a few European countries in which mystery-shopping is used as a part of the enforcement procedure of the alcohol laws (Austria, Germany, Switzerland and UK). This means that after a minor (or a youngster who looks like a minor) has bought alcohol in a shop or bar, the bar or the shop can get financial fines or even get their licence revoked.

Within this handbook we only explain you how to use the mystery-shopping method for research reasons, not for direct enforcement reasons.

2.3 Know the alcohol laws

Before starting with the test-purchase research you should know the (local) alcohol laws. Depending on the laws, you should define the method of the test-purchase research.

You should know:

- what are the age limits for selling alcohol (on-premise and off-premise)?
- are there differences between high and low alcoholic beverages in terms of purchase age?

Concepts

On-premise retail sale refers to the selling of alcoholic beverages for immediate consumption, generally in pubs, bars, cafes or restaurants. **Off-premise** retail sale refers to the selling of alcoholic beverages for consumption elsewhere (like supermarkets, wine shops, kiosks) (*Reference: World Health Organization (WHO). (2004). Global status report: Alcohol policy. Geneva, Switzerland*)

High and low alcoholic beverages are differentiated in different ways: some countries like Belgium and Switzerland differentiate the low and high alcoholic beverages by the way the volume of alcohol is obtained: fermentation or distillation. It is also possible to differentiate low and high alcoholic beverages by volume (like the Netherlands or Denmark). Germany uses categories like beer, wine, sparkling wine and mixed drinks with wine or beer as low alcoholic beverages and mixed spirits drinks and spirits are categorized as high alcoholic beverages.

Age limits for **selling** alcohol means that the seller has to check the age of the buyer, and cannot sell alcohol e.g. to minors (in some cases in Europe younger than 16, 17 or 18 years). Age limits for **consumption** means that the consumer of the alcohol needs to have a certain age before he/she can drink the alcohol. Age limits for the **possession** of alcohol means that a person needs to have certain age before public possession (he/she owns the alcohol). Quite often this means that a person has bought the alcohol and the person is located in a public place.

- what are the age limits for the consumption of alcohol (for consumption in public and private settings)? And are there differences between high and low alcoholic beverages?
- what are the age limits for the possession of alcohol (for possession in public and private settings)? And are there differences between high and low alcoholic beverages?

The laws can also vary between regions or cities, but you should know the laws for the area where you want to perform the research. In several countries there are no laws

regarding the consumption or possession of alcohol, only for selling the alcohol. You can find these data in the Report on Alcohol Laws by APYN.

Examples: what are the differences?

In Lithuania all age limits (for selling, consumption and possession) are determined at 18 years. There is no difference between high and low alcoholic beverages. In Norway they only have age limits for selling alcohol. The age limits are the same for on-premises and off-premises and are 18 years for low alcoholic beverages (<22,0%) and 20 years for high alcoholic beverages (≥22,0%).

STEP 1: Find out what the age limits are in the area you want to perform mystery-shopping research.

2.4 Goal of your research

Before you start with the test-purchase research try to define a goal of your research. Why do you want to use this type of research? Is it because you want:

- media attention about alcohol laws (age limits) and enforcement?
 - Do you want an article in a (local) newspaper or an item in a (local) radio or TV-show about age limits or the compliance of age limits? Is your goal to gain public attention for the topic?
- to monitor the compliance of age limits in your city/country? And to conclude about changes over the years?
 - Do you want data about compliance rates, for publishing, and see changes over the years. Also to measure the effect of interventions and enforcement actions in a certain city/country?
- to assure a representative result of the compliance of a certain community or country?
 - Do you want to make a statement about the actual compliance rate of a certain community or country? You want to say for example: the compliance rate of the age limits in supermarkets in City X is 35%.
- to improve the compliance rate of age limits?
 - This can be the case when you already know the compliance rates or know that it is really easy for minors to buy alcohol. After performing the mystery-shopping you can use the data for lobbying for better alcohol laws or better enforcement of the laws by (local) governments.
- to communicate with sellers of alcohol about the compliance of age limits?
 - Do you want to have concrete data to convince the sellers that the compliance of the legal age limits is bad? With the mystery-shopping data you can try to convince them to change their behaviour.
- or maybe another goal?

- Maybe you want to gain experience in performing research, or you want to start a relevant project with youngsters in the field of alcohol policy.

Your purpose can also be a combination by different goals. And related to the goal of the research: think about the research questions you want to answer in your research. Please reflect and write it down before you start with the real practical research.

Examples: what can be your goal?

Example 1: The goal of the mystery-shopping research is to convince the decision makers of city Y to invest more money in local enforcement of the age limits of selling alcohol, to increase capacity and eventually range the compliance of the age limits.

Example 2: The goal of the research is to gain media attention (with the results of the mystery-shopping research) on the alcohol topic. You want to create more knowledge and attention on the topic by sellers, parents, youngsters, politicians etc.

STEP 2: Determine the goal of your research and think about research questions you want to answer in you research.

2.5 Methods

After performing STEP 1 and STEP 2 you can start with the preparations for the 'real' research.

Before starting the actual research you will need to:

- make a sample selection of selling points
- make a planning
- install a research team
- train the mystery-shoppers
- train the researchers
- give an educational program on alcohol
- arrange practical aspects

We will explain all these aspects in the next paragraphs.

2.5.1 Sample selection

Depending on your research goal, you can make a sample selection of the alcohol selling points you want to visit during the mystery-shopping research. We advise you to start with a small amount of alcohol selling points for your first research. When you are more

experienced, you think about a mystery-shopping research which gives representative results of the compliance of a certain community or country. In a representative research you need to visit much more selling points.

For your first research you can choose one community where you want to perform the mystery-shopping research. This community should at least have social services available, a lot of businesses, much entertainment and accessibility to (public) transport. Within this community you can select 10 till 20 selling points you want to visit during the mystery-shopping research. These alcohol selling points should be hotspots: Hotspots are places which are popular for young people/minors and where it seems to be easy for them to buy alcohol. These hotspots can be a variety of different types of selling points, like supermarkets, bars and sport canteens. Depending on the goal of your research, you can choose one, two or more types of selling points to visit. The easiest way (to start) is to select one type of selling point.

From all these hotspots you should collect more information: the name, address and type of the selling point (supermarket, bar, disco etc.). Also find out when this selling point is open, and when (days and time) most youngsters will be present in these selling points.

STEP 3: Select some hotspots you want to visit during the mystery-shopping research. From these hotspots you need to know: the name, address, type and opening-hours.

2.5.2. Make a planning

Before you start the research, you have to make a practical route. First you need to plot all the alcohol selling points on a map. You can do this on a classic (road) map or in Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>). In Figure 1 and 2 you can see how we mapped the hotspots in Google Maps.

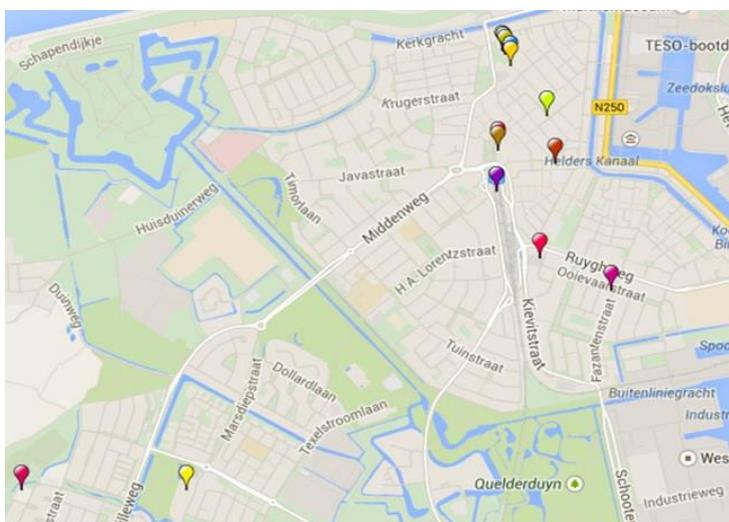


Figure 1: Example of planning map I.

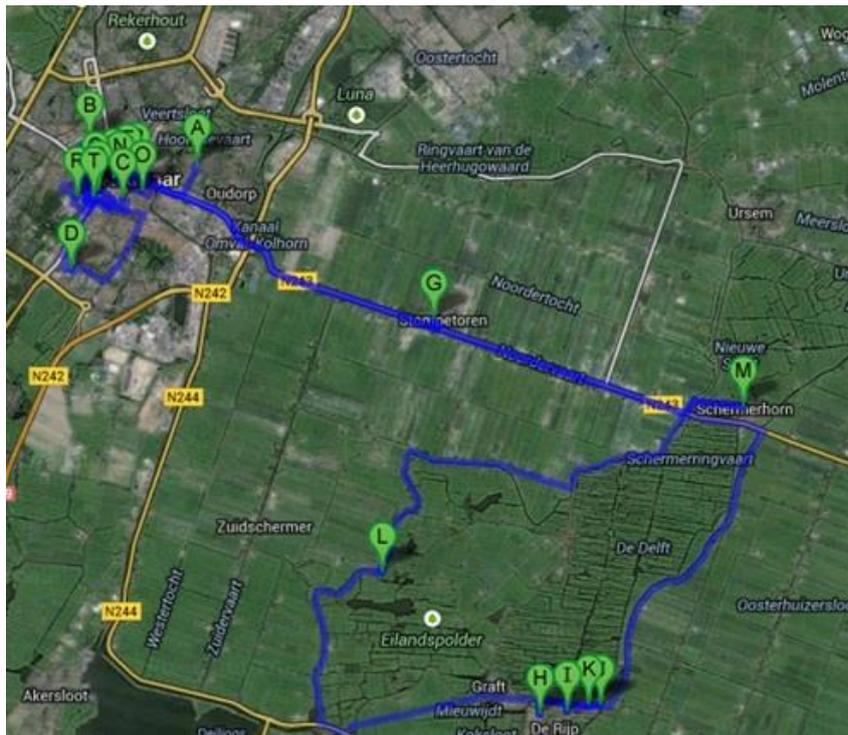


Figure2: Example of planning map II.

Team 1				Team 2			
Time	Name of selling point	Name of mysteryshopper	Address	Time	Name of selling point	Name of mysteryshopper	Address
Day 1 12:00-12:40	Supermarket 1	Boy A	Address	Day 1 at 22:00-22:20	Bar 5	Girl C	Address
Day 1 at 12:45-13:05	Supermarket 2	Girl B	Address	Day 1 at 22:30-23:05	Discotheque 1	Boy D	Address
Day 1 at 13:15-13:25	Little shop 1	Girl B	Address	..etc....			
... etc.	...etc.			Day 2 at 14:00	Sport canteen 3	Boy D	Address
Day 2 at 21:30-22:05	Bar 1	Boy A	Address	Day 2 at 14:20	Sport canteen 4	Girl C	Address
Day 2 at 22:15-22:45	Discotheque 2	Girl B	Address	Day 2 at 15:10	Supermarket 7	Boy D	Address

After plotting the hotspots you need to determine the dates and times of your visits. An efficient planning is needed before starting the research. In this planning you need to take into account aspects like traffic jams and opening hours of the hotspots. The planning should also be time-effective. You should visit the alcohol selling points at 'normal' times, when it is busy inside the premises and when the visit is not really notable.

For example: It is not a good idea to visit a disco at 6:00pm, when there are (most probably) no other guests. In table 1 you will find an example of (a part of) a planning. If you expect a traffic jam, more time is needed between visits. This planning is made for two teams (for one research).

As you can see in this planning: for every visit you need around 15 till 20 minutes. These 15 till 20 minutes includes the visit itself and giving answer to the questionnaire.

STEP 4: plot all the alcohol selling points on a map and make a practical planning for one or two research teams. This planning should include times you want to visit the hotspots.

2.5.3 Build a research team (including signed statement of parents if you use underage buyers)

Every team you want to work with consist of 2 researchers and 2 mystery-shoppers. Over-18-years researchers are important to accompany the mystery-shoppers. You can work with more teams if needed. Preferably you work with at least one researcher who is a colleague of yours or knows your organisation well, so he/ she can work independently and is a responsible person. You also can find a student (university level) who wants to do an internship in your organisation. They can help as a researcher.

You can find mystery-shoppers at schools or in other youth organisations. Depending on the alcohol laws (legal age limits) you can select some mystery-shoppers from 15 or 16 or 17 or 18 or maybe even older. The age limits for selling alcohol will determine the age of the mystery shoppers. In the Netherlands the legal age limit is 18 years of age, so we use mystery shoppers of 17 years of age. They have to look like 'normal' 17-year aged young people. What means that they have an average height and posture. During the mystery shopping research they have to wear the usual clothing for 17-year aged youngsters. Preferable you will find at least one boy and one girl who want to participate in the research.

We prefer mystery shoppers who are familiar with buying alcohol: ideally the supermarket, bar or little shop is no new environment for them. In that case they know how to behave in these alcohol selling points.

For the selection of the mystery shoppers the best way is to ask parents or teachers and minors who are already familiar with your organisation. It is easier to get an official

permission if parents or teachers already know your organisation. You need a signed statement that the parents give permission that their underage child helps performing this research. Explain the parents the goal of the research and what kind of activities the mystery shoppers are going to do. It is really important to tell the parents that the minors are under supervision of researchers during the whole project. And at the end of the day the researchers will bring the mystery shoppers safe at home. Without this statement you cannot start your research. If you only work with youngsters who have the legal age to buy alcohol, it is also wise to involve their parents within the research and explain the goal of the research to them. These statements are only for the research organisations who are responsible for performing the mystery-shopping, and are not included in the report.

Example of a parental statement:

RE: Alcohol sales to youth under the legal selling age: a study about compliance.

Letter of approval of participation,

I, as parent/guardian of are aware of the intentions of this research. I know this research will test the legal selling age of alcohol in alcohol selling points. I hereby grant my approval for my child participation in this compliance study.

Name parent/guardian:

Date: 21st / 3 / 2012

Determine the financial compensation of the mystery-shoppers and the researchers (or in-kind gifts - e.g. when buying beer, let the shoppers and researchers buy an item of their choice). The mystery shoppers and sometimes also the researchers will receive a financial compensation for their work. Probably, this will differ per country. During the research they also get free lunch and dinner. For more information about finances: see paragraph 2.5.7.

STEP 5: Find two researchers and two mystery-shoppers that can perform the mystery-shopping research. You need a signed statement of the mystery-shoppers that the parents give permission that their underage child is allowed to help performing this research. Also involve the parents of the mystey-shoppers who are not underage. You need to determine the financial compensation of the mystery shoppers and the researchers.

Before starting the research you need to train the mystery-shoppers. You can organise a separate meeting for this training, or give the training just before the start of the research. Including a short educational program (see paragraph 2.5.6) you need

approximately 60 minutes for the training. In this training you need to address at least the following topics:

- Introduction of each other: explain in which teams you will work. Exchange mobile phone numbers in case of emergency.
- Goal of research: explain the goal of your own research.
- Explain what the protocol is in supermarkets, cafeterias and liquor stores (off-premise) and what the protocol is in bars and sport canteens (on-premise). This protocol you need to adapt to your own regional/national situation. If for example it is illegal for a minor to possess alcohol (by law), you maybe have to change some parts of the protocol.

Example: what can be a protocol in On-premise selling points?

1. First think about the different aspects of the questionnaire you have to remember during your visit.
2. Try to enter the selling point together (only the mystery-shoppers).
3. If necessary pay the entrance.
4. If security/the bouncer will not let you in, do not go into a discussion. Leave the place and go to the car/ continue your way elsewhere.
5. If you are inside: order an alcoholic drink (what is most normal to order for youth in your country and what is cheap).
6. If they ask for ID: show your own ID. If they ask for age: say that you are old enough to buy alcohol (for example: 18 years or 21 years). A 'normal' underage buyer will also lie about his/her age.
7. If you do not get the drink, do not go into a discussion. Leave the place and go back to the car.
8. If you get the drinks, pay it. After a while (two to five minutes) leave the bar/disco and go back to the car/ continue your way elsewhere. If the drink is in plastic, then you can bring the alcohol outside.
9. Do NOT drink alcohol. Leave the glass or bottle in the selling point when it is open (and not in plastic). Maybe you can empty your glass or bottle in the toilet or in a pot with plants if this is not to conspicuous.
10. Fill in the questionnaire together with your team.

Example: what can be a protocol in Off-premise selling points?

1. First think about the different aspects of the questionnaire you have to remember during your visit.
 2. Try to enter the selling point together (only with the mystery-shoppers).
 3. Look for and alcoholic drink (some beers, bottle of wine or alcohol-pop) and take it to the counter.
 4. If they ask for ID: show your own ID. If they ask for age: say that you are old enough to buy alcohol (for example: 18 years or 21 years). A 'normal' underage buyer will also lie about his/her age.
 5. If you do not get the drink, do not go into a discussion. Leave the place and go back to the car/ continue your way elsewhere.
 6. If you can buy the drinks, pay it. Take the bottle with you outside to the car/ continue your way elsewhere.
 7. Do not open the bottle and do NOT drink the alcohol.
 8. Fill in the questionnaire together with your team.
- What to do in a problem situation: if the mystery-shoppers do not feel safe, they directly need to return to the researchers. Never start discussions with other customers or sellers about the research. If it is not possible to return to the researchers (when something happened), they need to call the researchers. If this is not possible the mystery shoppers will show the 'safety -letter' (see paragraph 2.5.7).
 - Explain: DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL AT ANY TIME
 - Practice a situation: during the training you can imitate mystery-shopping in a supermarket or bar. The researchers can pretend to be a barkeeper or cashier, and the mystery-shopper can practice the protocol in different situations.

STEP 6: Train mystery-shoppers before the start of the research

2.5.4 Train the researchers

Before starting the research you need to train the researchers how to accompany the mystery-shoppers and how to monitor the quality of the research. You need to train the researchers in a separate meeting than the mystery-shoppers. You need approximately 60 minutes for the training. In this training you need to address at least the following topics:

- Introduction of the organisation: explain the goal of your organisation and what types of projects you perform.
- Goal of research: explain the goal of your own research.
- Professional attitude: the parents and the minors see the researchers as part of your organisation. So the researcher should have a professional attitude towards the parents and youngsters. They should be capable of answer questions of them about the research.
- Pick-up the minors: before the research the minors should be picked-up at their home. During the picking up of the minors you should remind the mystery-shoppers to bring:

- An ID card/passport
- A jacket
- Empty wallet
- Signed statement of their parents
- Train mystery-shoppers: in a separate meeting, or just before the start of the research you should train the mystery-shoppers about the research (see 2.5.3). The researchers should know all details of this training, the protocol and also what to do in a problem situation.
- Questionnaire: during the training of the researchers you should show them the questionnaire and emphasize that it is very important that they fill in the questionnaire accurately. It is also important that they fill in one answer and no range. For example: if the age of the cashier is asked in the questionnaire, do not feel in 'between 15 and 18', but choose one answer (for example 17 years).
- Planning: show the researchers an example of a planning and explain them that they should follow the planning (and look if they can stick to the time-schedule). See paragraph 2.5.2. for an example of a planning.
- Different teams: if your work with different teams, you should introduce the different teams to each other. During the research it is important to keep in touch with each other about the planning (being on time) and agree about the selling points that cannot be visited by the mystery-shoppers.
- When you cannot find or visit a selling point: when you cannot find a selling point (e.g. it does not exist anymore), or the selling point is not open, you should visit another selling point as a replacement. Make a list of 'extra' selling points in case the selling points (on the planning) cannot be visited (backup list).
- Financing: every team (the researchers) will get some money before they start with the research. This money is for buying alcohol (for mystery-shoppers), for some food and drinks during the research and for gasoline or money for parking costs. The researchers should keep all the receipts. Before the research you can explain how much money they can spend for each part.
- Fines: do not get any fines during the research (speeding ticket, parking ticket) the researchers will have to pay all the fines themselves. Please drive carefully with the minors in your car.
- Secrecy: the research is called MYSTERY-shopping. So it is important, especially for the researchers, to not tell about the research and the goal of the research to other people. If the selling points know that a mystery-shopping research will take place, they will change their behaviour (for a short period) and the results will not show the reality.
- Contract: explain what kind of (voluntary) contract the research get during the mystery-shopping research.

STEP 7: Train the researchers in advance of the research

You will have to educate mystery-shopper about alcohol - before, during or after the research. The mystery shoppers need to be informed about the health risks of alcohol use. Tell them about the effects of alcohol on their body. You can find multiple examples of education about alcohol on www.apyn.org or by contacting the authors of this practical guide.

The mystery-shoppers often discover during the research that it is very easy to buy alcohol, also for minors. By giving the youngsters good information about the risks of alcohol we hope that the research will not stimulate the consumption of alcohol among this minors. If some of them already know about the health risks of alcohol use, educate them in a shorter way. If you already educated the minors on alcohol (for another project), it is not necessary to repeat this (but it can't hurt if you repeat).

STEP 8: Educate mystery-shoppers about the risks of drinking alcohol (me, others and society)

2.5.7 Practical aspects

Getting Around

In some countries, if you want to perform a mystery-shopping research you need a car, to pick the minors up at home. For the actual visits a car is needed to visit all the alcohol selling points. If the selling points are really close to each other, you can park the car and walk around or you can use public transport. You need to arrange a car with place for 4 people (2 researchers and 2 mystery shoppers for every car). If you hire a car, make sure that full insurance is paid.

Questionnaire

After every visit the mystery shopper will (assisted by the researcher) fill in a questionnaire about the specific selling point. Find attached in Figure 3 an example of a questionnaire.

There is a different questionnaire for on-premise and for off-premise. Please feel free to make some adjustments for your own situation and your own goal and research questions. The most important are the three questions about age, ID and success of buying - they should be included in every questionnaire.

Before the research starts make sure you have enough questionnaires – make some additional copies, just in case. After every visit the mystery-shopper fills in the questionnaire. Half of the premises should be visited by a female and half of them by a male mystery-shopper . Before starting the research you need to know which alcoholic drinks are popular for underage people and also cheap to buy.

Off trade questionnaire

Name of selling point: _____

Type of selling point: big supermarket little shop street seller

Location of selling point: rural area urban area

Day of visit: Wednesday Thursday Friday

Time of visit: _____

Gender of mystery shopper: boy girl

Name of the mystery shopper: _____

How many counters are in the selling point _____

How many counters are open _____

How many people were in front of you in line _____

How many people were behind you in line _____

Do you know the seller in person yes no

Gender of seller: man women

Estimated age of seller: _____

Did the seller ask for your ID yes no

Did the seller ask for your age yes no

Could you buy the alcohol yes no no, they did not have any alcohol in the shop

Price of the alcohol: _____

Notes:

Figure 3: Example of questionnaire I.

On trade questionnaire

Name of selling point: _____

Type of selling point: bar/pub discotheque

Location of selling point: rural area urban area

Day of visit: Wednesday Thursday Friday

Time of visit: _____

Gender of mystery shopper: boy girl

Name of the mystery shopper: _____

Was there a bouncer: yes no

Did the bouncer ask for your ID: yes no

Figure 4: Example of questionnaire II.

Money

During the research you need some (small) cash for buying the alcohol that should be taken by mystery-shoppers. This money will be given to them by the researcher just before entering the shop/bar. You need to take into account that some bars or discotheques will also ask money for entrance.

ID card

During the mystery shopping the minors need some form of identification (ID). If there is a national ID, the mystery shoppers should keep this ID with them during the research. If there is no national ID, maybe they can bring some other ID like for example a school card, student card, bank-card. Try to find, together with the mystery-shoppers, another form of ID.

Safety letter

Before you can start the actual visits, you need to make a 'safety-letter'. The mystery-shoppers will carry this safety letter during the entire research. When the mystery shopper feels unsafe, he/she can show this letter. In the safety-letter you should not mention the names of the mystery-shoppers, only the name of the research organisation who is responsible for performing the mystery-shopping. This safety-letter should not be included in the report. See **below** for an example of a safety letter.

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Alcohol sales to youth under the legal selling age: A study about compliance.

Dear Sir/Madam,

In assignment of ...(organisation)..... in ...(area/city).....we perform a compliance research about selling alcohol to underage youngsters.

The youngster you are speaking to is performing this research as assignment from... (organisation)....and has no own interest in this research. You will not get any sanctions from the local authorities in any way.

If you have any questions or clarifications about the research you may contact.

Name.....

Phone number.....

E-mail.....

STEP 9: Arrange some practical aspects like a car, money to buy the alcohol, questionnaires, ID card and a safety letter.

2.6 Analyses and report

2.6.1. Analyses

After performing the research you need to analyse the data of the mystery-shopping research. The easy way is to fill in all the results of the questionnaire in Excel (see below for an example; the selling points in the table below are not 'existing' but just an example).

Name	City	Adres	Type	Time of visit	Day	Name of shopper	Ask for age	Ask for ID	Selling alcohol
Good Store	Amsterdam	..	Supermarket	14:05	Friday	Rob and Lisa	Yes	Yes	No
Super Store	Rotterdam	...	Supermarket	14:30	Friday	Rob and Lisa	No	No	Yes
Bar solar	Utrecht	...	Cafe	20:30	Saturday	Bob and Nataly	No	No	Yes
Footballclub Fit	Amsterdam	...	Sport	16:10	Saturday	Bob and Nataly	Yes	Yes	No
Disco light	Rotterdam	...	Cafe	21:35	Friday	Rob and Lisa	Yes	No	Yes
Mambo Bar	Utrecht	Cafe	22:44	Thursday	Molly and Peter	No	No	Yes
Soccerclub fanatic	Eindhoven	..	Sport	11:34	Sunday	Roby and Daniel	No	Yes	Yes

Out of these Excel tables you can make tables in the report about the compliance rate and about how many times bartenders or cashier asked for age or ID (or both). For your first mystery-shopping research it is better to keep it easy, but if you have some experience with the research or you have a lot of data, you can use a statistic program like SPSS.

Out of the Excel overview you can make an overview of the results in tables like these below. The first table is about the amount of visits, the amount of compliance and the compliance rate. These data you can get out of the Excel overview. The second table is about how many times bartenders or cashier asked for Age, ID or both (Age + ID) and how many times there was correct compliance (CN). Cn means that they did not sell alcohol to the minors. No personal data of the selling points will be open for the public (if necessary: only the individual results are available for the local governments).

Kind of alcohol selling point	Amount of visits	Number of times of compliance	Compliance rate(%)
Little shop	12	0	0%
Big supermarket	13	3	23%
Bar or Pub	9	1	11%
Discotheque	8	2	25%
Total	42	6	14%

	Age (CN)	ID (CN)	Age + ID (CN)	Nothing was asked (CN)	Total (CN)
Little shop	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (0)	12(0)
Big supermarket	2 (0)	1 (1)	4 (2)	6 (0)	13 (3)
Bar or pub	1 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	5 (0)	9 (1)
Discotheque	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (2)	3 (0)	8 (2)
Total	5 (0)	2 (1)	10 (5)	25(0)	42 (6)

2.6.2 Report

Depending on your goal, you can make a factsheet, report or news-bulletin about the results. We recommend you to include at least the next elements (for a report or factsheet):

- Introduction: in your introduction you should explain the national or local alcohol laws. Also give an introduction about alcohol and health: why it is important to be involved in the alcohol topic.
- Goal of the research, research questions and methods: explain in your report the goal of the research, the research questions and method to explain the reader why and how you performed this research.
- Results: what are the results of the research? Make a clarifying overview of the results. Present the results in different tables or graphics. Give answer to all your research questions. We advise you not to show individual results of selling points in the report.
- Conclusion and recommendations: depending of the goal of your research you can write down the conclusions and recommendations in your report. You can make recommendations for: policy makers, enforce-agencies and alcohol-sellers.
- References: write down your references.
- Extra information only for clients: if you collect data for an enforcement agency or a local government you can provide individual results of the selling points.
- General: In the report no personal names or data of the mystery-shoppers are included. The privacy of the mystery-shoppers is very important.

STEP 10: After analysing the results you should make a report which include: an introduction, research goal and research questions, methods, results (tables), conclusion and recommendations and references.

More information about mystery-shopping:

- Gosselt, J. F., Van Hoof, J. J., De Jong, M. D. T., & Prinsen, S. (2007). Mystery shopping and alcohol sales: do supermarkets and liquor stores sell alcohol to underage customers? *Journal of Adolescent Health, 41*(3), 302-308.
- Van Hoof, J.J. & Gosselt, J.F. (2013). Underage Alcohol Sales—It Only Takes a Minute: A New Approach to Underage Alcohol Availability. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 74*, 423–427.

- Tael, M. (2011). Alkoholsete jookide testostemise pilooturing (Pilot study on alcohol purchase by youngsters). Tallinn: National Institute for Health Development.

Chapter 3: How to monitor and review alcohol advertising?

Introduction

This part of the manual deals with a relatively simple research about alcohol advertising that young researchers can perform independently. The goal of this research is to contribute to the discussion about limiting or banning alcohol advertising.

There are more and more voices discussing a possible ban on advertising and sponsoring of alcohol, like it happened with tobacco in the last ten years in many European countries. There are already countries where alcohol advertising is strongly restricted as in France (no alcohol advertising on radio and TV, no alcohol sponsorship and only product characteristics of alcohol may be depicted in advertising), Sweden (no advertising on radio and television and on the Internet) and Norway (total ban on alcohol advertising).

You can stimulate the debate about the current policy in your country with respect to alcohol marketing by examining if the alcohol advertisers act in accordance with the existing voluntary and legal regulations or violate these. The following explains how you can do that.

3.1 Young people and the impact of alcohol advertising

Experts agree that alcohol consumption among young people in Europe is a big problem and can lead to many short and long-term damages. Young people start drinking at a young age and when they drink, they often drink too much per occasion.

Alcohol consumption by young people is determined by several factors and one of these factors is the impact of alcohol marketing. Other factors are: the drinking behaviour and norms of parents, the availability of alcohol at home and in shops and the influence of their friends.

Alcohol advertising also makes that young people are confronted daily with the promotion of drinking; they are exposed to a compilation of open or more hidden messages on radio, TV, internet, billboards and advertising in supermarkets. Often these advertisements are specifically attractive for youth and young adults. On TV you see nice humorous commercials about a particular brand and obviously advertising only shows the positive features of alcohol. From an early age, children often unconsciously learn as a result of seeing all these advertisements that alcohol consumption is quite normal and cosy and if you do not drink you're not a part of the group.

Alcohol marketing and alcohol advertising

Alcohol marketing is a broader concept than alcohol advertising. Alcohol marketing includes all promotional activities of alcohol producers and sellers such as advertising via television and radio, sports sponsorship, product placement, pricing and for example the design of new products. In this context we focus on alcohol advertising and thereby only on the concrete manifestations of marketing that are visible

to everyone: commercials on television, commercials on radio, bill boards on the streets and ads on the Internet.

Because alcohol is a risky product, the promotion of alcohol has to be regulated. Everyone understands that you cannot stimulate children to drink alcohol and an alcohol producer cannot claim that alcohol is healthy or that you feel happier after a glass of whisky. Also, it is clear to everyone that an alcohol commercial cannot be broadcasted during a children's program on TV. For these reasons alcohol advertising is regulated by statutory rules and by rules of the alcohol industry itself. Statutory rules are often clear about what is allowed or what is not: for example, advertising for low-alcohol beverages is allowed but not for spirits or advertising on TV between 6 am and 9 pm is forbidden. As was said above some countries prohibit all forms of alcohol such as Norway; Finland recently decided to restrict alcohol advertising via social media.

In an attempt to avoid legal restrictions of alcohol advertising, the alcohol industry designed their own marketing regulations, the so-called alcohol marketing self-regulation. The self-regulation of alcohol advertising by the alcohol industry is accepted by many European states as an alternative to statutory regulations, despite the fact that research shows that self-regulation fails to protect young people and therefore is not a safe alternative to legal measures. However, the lobbying by the alcohol industry is very strong so many politicians and governments do not take any action.

Legal rules try to limit explicitly the amount of exposure to advertising. The alcohol industry has been working with the vendors of alcohol (supermarkets, restaurants and others) to set rules about what is allowed about advertising from their perspective. These rules are much vaguer and softer than the statutory rules and relate mainly to the content, the message, of the advertisements.

Some examples of items from a self-regulatory code (derived from the website of ICAP, an international organization that defends the interest of alcohol producers: www.icap.org)

**Advertisements should not be specifically aimed at minors or show minors consuming alcoholic beverages. Advertisers should avoid media or events where a majority of the audience is known to be underage.*

**If a group of people is shown consuming the product, the person who is not consuming should not be ridiculed. Likewise, advertisements should not suggest that drinking is an essential part of life or a necessary routine.*

**Alcohol should not be presented as necessary to have fun, or as enhancing the success of a given social occasion*

3.2 The impact of alcohol advertising

Many studies have been conducted about the influence of alcohol advertising on the drinking behavior of young people. There is convincing evidence that alcohol advertising is harmful to young people. A most recent European longitudinal study that was

commissioned by the European Commission and implemented in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland demonstrated that it counts for all these countries that if young people see more alcohol advertisements they will drink more (AMPHORA project, 2014). In other words: there is a proven causal connection between advertising and drinking and vice versa: less exposure to alcohol advertising means less drinking.

A ban on alcohol advertising, according to The World Economic Forum and the WHO is one of the three most effective measures to tackle alcohol problems in Europe.

A far-reaching legal limit of alcohol advertising is a nightmare for the alcohol industry. Advertising and sponsorship is one of the most powerful tools of the industry to attract new consumers and to bind drinkers. It's not by accident that the alcohol industry invests billions in advertising. It's obvious that alcohol industry is afraid that what happened to tobacco, a total advertising ban, eventually will also be the case for alcohol.

3.3 Research on the volume of alcohol advertising

The influence of alcohol advertising on drinking behavior of young people is determined by the amount of advertising seen by young people and by the content of the advertisements. Especially research on the amount of alcohol advertising young people are exposed to, is important. The impact of alcohol advertising on drinking behavior is mainly determined by the amount (volume) of advertisements young people are confronted with.

A study, commissioned by the European Commission (2012 AMMIE, see annex 1) shows among other things that children and young people often see alcohol advertising even more frequently compared with adults. Research on the amount of alcohol marketing exposure is crucial for the debate on regulation of alcohol advertising. The problem is that volume research is rather complex and expensive: you need a lot of quantitative data, disaggregated by age, about the viewing and listening figures of popular TV and radio programs (alcohol commercials are often broadcasted before and after these programs) and you need the numbers of visitors of internet programs where alcohol advertisements are shown. Research on the volume of alcohol advertising is difficult because you cannot easily collect the data yourself and therefore you are obliged to buy these necessary data. Advertisers themselves do have these data, but obviously they are not willing to make these available for research.

3.4 Research on the content of alcohol advertising

What is well feasible, is to test the response of young people on the content of alcohol advertising. It is research about the images and about the explicit or implicit message of

an advertisement. Research shows that not only the volume of alcohol but also the content of an alcohol advertising message can have impact on the drinking behavior of young people. The following comments are important regarding this type of research:

1. The main purpose of examining the content of alcohol advertising is to determine whether or not advertisements are appealing towards young people. To register and to conclude about the response of young people towards the appropriate advertisement is an important goal of this research. Another goal is to determine if the existing voluntary or legal content regulations about the content of advertisements are violated. These content regulations are usually derived from European legislation (the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, see annex) and most of them are also part of the self-regulation of alcohol producer.
2. One of the questions raised by the study is whether young people perceive certain advertisements as attractive or are appealing to them or not. With the answer you collect information about the possible impact of these advertisements on the drinking behavior of young people. If this study finds out that a specific advertisement is appealing to young people the conclusion can be justified that the regulations are violated.

Note: The exact wording of the text in the self-regulation regarding the impact of an alcohol advertisement on young people is a very 'clever' one (from the position of the alcohol industry): only alcohol advertisements that are *specifically directed* at young people are not permitted (see example of this text pag X). This means that if an advertisement is perceived to be attractive or appealing by young people themselves, this doesn't mean that this regulation is violated. If you put a complain about youth-attractive alcohol advertisements the decision of the Alcohol Advertising Committee (which is normally a part of the self-regulation system) will often be: although this advertisement could be attractive towards young people it is not specifically targeted at young people, so you're complain is rejected.

That why we support the conclusion of the so-called FASE report:

Alcohol advertisements should be evaluated according to young people's interpretation and not according to the intention of the advertiser. Allowing alcohol advertisements that contain solely product information is an example of a content restriction that fulfils these criteria (Effective Alcohol Marketing Regulations; A proposed framework to evaluate existing alcohol marketing regulations; STAP; 2010; www.EUCAM.info).

3.5 Study about the reactions of young people on the content of alcohol advertisements

It is possible to determine on a relatively simple manner how young people react on alcohol advertising. The questions we suggest to put to young people after seeing some examples of alcohol marketing practices are derived from the advertising regulations of the European legislation (AMVSD) and from the voluntary regulations of the alcohol

industry. These regulations are primarily intended to protect young people from harmful influence of alcohol marketing.

Based on the responses of young people who are interviewed, you can draw conclusions about the particular advertisements. The main question is: are the regulations in the eyes of the respondents obeyed or in other words: are the regulations in this case protective towards young people? If there appears to be a violation of regulations it can be decided to lodge a complaint about it. In every country exists a so-called Advertising Committee that monitors if the commercial advertising follows the self-regulatory codes. Complaints about possible violations of the self-regulatory codes can be directed to these committees. You find examples of complaints against several national codes in the already mentioned report:

Commercial promotion of drinking in Europe; key findings of independent monitoring of alcohol marketing in five European countries; STAP/EUCAM, 2012.

For downloading the report go to www.EUCAM.info.

Note: If you have scientific pretensions you should consult scientists to carry out this analysis properly. This example is only intended as a first introduction to this type of research.

Step 1: Study the existing regulations of your country regarding alcohol marketing

Select in particular those alcohol-marketing regulations, which are intended to protect young people and formulate research questions based on these regulations.

Two examples of articles that can be found in almost all regulations and which are relevant for rating by young people are:

1. "Advertising for alcoholic beverages is not allowed to specifically focus on minors"
2. "Alcohol advertisement shall not create the impression that the consumption of alcohol contributes to social or sexual success."

Step 2: Collect examples of alcohol advertisements

The advice is to collect systematically examples of alcohol:
-Register and copy all alcohol ads during one week of two or three TV stations which are broadcasted around programs that are popular for young people under 18 years. Note the time of broadcasting.

-Take pictures of billboards with alcohol advertisements and note the location for one month.

-Collect all alcohol advertisements from magazines that are targeted at youth and young adults.

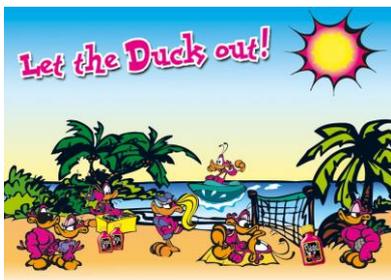
Note: on the websites of the alcohol producers you normally can find the original images of the monitored advertising practices if you didn't manage to take good pictures or to copy the commercials.

Step 3. Select your respondents

Boys and girls from 13 to 18 are mainly the relevant age; that is the age when many young people start to drink in Europe. You would need 15 young people from each age group to put down a solid research results. Schools can and will usually help you in approaching young people.

Step 4: Show the collected marketing practices to the respondents and register and analyse their answers

Example 1: a poster



Questions for the respondents :

Do you think this advertisement is specifically aimed at minors?

YES

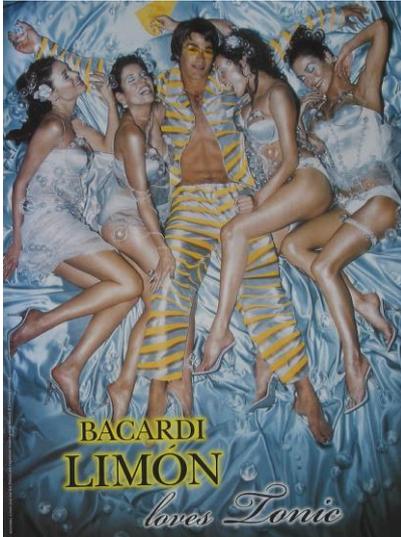
NO

Do you think this advertisement is appealing to minors

YES

NO

Example 2: a poster



Question for the respondents:

Do you think this advertisement create the impression that the consumption of alcohol contributes towards social or sexual success?

YES NO

Do you think this advertisement links alcohol with social or sexual success?

YES NO

Step 5: Describe and present the results

You can present the results of the study to politicians in order to underpin your arguments for better and more protective marketing regulations or even for a total ban. Consider if your results are good enough to present them even to the press.