



Breaking addictive silence

ALICE RAP Press Backgrounder

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ALICE RAP is a trans-disciplinary EU project which aims to help policy makers “re-think and re-shape” current and future approaches to the huge human and economic costs of addictions and lifestyles in Europe.

Over five years, the ‘Addictions and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe Reframing Addictions Project’ (ALICE RAP) will weave the work of over 100 scientists from 73 institutions in 31 countries into an integrated evidence base for informed policy action. The research programme includes a wide range of different quantitative and qualitative scientific disciplines stretching across the humanities and social sciences and the biological and medical sciences.

Expertise from scientific disciplines contributing to Alice Rap:

Addiction studies, anthropology, cognitive science, criminology, demography, economics, education, engineering, epidemiology, evolutionary biology, foresight management, history, journalism, law, mathematics, media, neurobiology, political science, psychiatry, psychology, psychotherapy, public health, public management, social marketing, social policy, social psychology, sociology, technology, and toxicology.

The project aims to critically examine and analyse currently fragmented research and strengthen scientific evidence to inform a new dynamic platform for public and political dialogue and debate on current and alternative approaches to addictions.

ALICE RAP is a 10 million Euro project co-financed by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission, and coordinated by a team in the Hospital Clinic Foundation, of the University of Barcelona.

Our Approach

ALICE RAP – ***Reframing the understanding of addiction and redesigning addiction policy based on objective scientific evidence.***

Policies governing addictive substances and behaviours need to balance individual freedom and social responsibility, while taking into account social, economic and ethical considerations. But scientific evidence points to the fact that **the classification and legality of addictive substances has rarely been related to the relative harm that these substances can cause** to individuals or to society. In fact, while there is a large amount of global scientific evidence to inform the development effective drug policy to improve public health, current policy in most societies takes little or limited account of this research.¹

¹ Babor T. F., Caulkins J., Edwards G., Fischer B., Foxcroft D., Humphreys K. et al. Drug Policy and the Public Good. Oxford: Oxford UP; 2010.

ALICE RAP **will work to change this by analysing** the potential economic, health, and social consequences of new or alternative approaches to govern and manage addiction using foresight methodologies and expert working groups to identify more effective and efficient EU and national level policy options.

Areas of focus

The project is divided into seven areas and twenty one work packages (three in each area), making up an integrated multidisciplinary research strategy:

- ‘The ownership of addictions’ - a historical study of addiction over the ages, an analysis of stakeholder views and image analyses.
- ‘Counting addictions’ - how addictions are classified and defined, pulling together the enormous quantity of data on multiple addictions and their impacts on health and society.
- ‘Determinants of addiction’ – aims to better understand the initiation, transition into problem use and transition into and out of dependence.
- ‘The business of addiction’ - studies revenues, profits and participants in legal and illegal trade, the impact of suppliers and webs of influence on policy responses.
- ‘Governance of addictions’ - the ways in which societies steer themselves to deal with different lifestyles, present governance practices on established and emerging addictions, and future scenarios.
- ‘Addicting the Young’ - youth as customers, the impacts of new technologies on use, the interrelations of culture and biology, and features that promote resilience and reduce problematic use.
- ‘Coordination and Integration’ - the programme management takes a partnership perspective, built on the idea that health and social challenges cannot be successfully tackled by actors working alone.

For more information please contact:

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