

**YOUTH LEISURE AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:
SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL RESPONSES BASED ON A PROGRAM
OF ALTERNATIVE MEASURES IN PALENCIA CITY**
**OCIO JUVENIL Y CONSUMO DE ALCOHOL: RESPUESTAS SOCIOEDUCATIVAS
A PARTIR DE UN PROGRAMA DE MEDIDAS ALTERNATIVAS
EN LA CIUDAD DE PALENCIA**
**LAZER JUVENIL E CONSUMO DE ÁLCOOL: RESPOSTAS
SOCIOEDUCACIONAIS DE UM PROGRAMA DE MEDIDAS ALTERNATIVAS
NA CIDADE DE PALENCIA**

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ABSTRACT: This article shows the results of an investigation carried out within the Socio-educational *Program of Alternative Measures* framework, as a pedagogical response to the intensive alcohol consumption on public roads by the youth population. For that, the socio-educational intervention and its effects on the group of young people, who have successfully completed the educational measures, are analysed. Coordinated by the NGO Liga Española de la Educación y Cultura Popular [Spanish League of Education and Popular Culture] in collaboration with the Municipal Administration, under the *Ordenanza Reguladora para la Promoción de la Convivencia y la Prevención de las Drogodependencias en la ciudad de Palencia* [Regulatory Ordinance for the Promotion of Coexistence and the Prevention of Drug Addiction in Palencia City] (Palencia City council, 2013), since June 2014 the program has been set out as an alternative measure to an economic sanction. Alcohol, present in the social and cultural life, is a relevant aspect, which is part of the gatherings and celebrations of the population in general, and especially, for the youth society linked to the nightlife leisure. Four hundred and twenty three young people in total were sanctioned from June 2014 to December 2018, out of them, 133 opted for educational measures, being the object of our study the 112 who successfully completed the program. The compilation of information uses own sources from a mixed research methodology, supported by an *ad hoc* questionnaire, from the analysis of the technical reports' contents and from conversations held through *WhatsApp* between the responsible Social Educator and the young people. From a quantitative and a

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	<p>qualitative analysis, the results show that carrying out educational measures is considered fair by the young people, who know about the alcohol effects although they keep continue consuming it; in addition, it is evidenced that almost a tenth of the young people indicate, that they will not binge drink again, after completing the program.</p>
<p>PALABRAS CLAVE: Juventud ocio alcohol cambio de actitud educación cívica educación social</p>	<p>RESUMEN: En este trabajo se presentan los resultados de una investigación realizada en el marco del <i>Programa Socioeducativo de Medidas Alternativas</i> como respuesta pedagógica al consumo de alcohol intensivo en la vía pública por parte de la población juvenil. Para ello se analiza la intervención socioeducativa y los efectos de la misma en el colectivo de jóvenes que han terminado las medidas educativas con éxito. Coordinado por la ONG Liga Española de la Educación y Cultura Popular en colaboración con la administración municipal bajo la <i>Ordenanza Reguladora para la Promoción de la Convivencia y la Prevención de las Drogodependencias en la ciudad de Palencia (Ayuntamiento de Palencia, 2013)</i>, desde junio de 2014 el programa se plantea como medida alternativa a la sanción económica. El alcohol, presente en la vida social y cultural, es un aspecto relevante que forma parte de los encuentros y celebraciones de la ciudadanía en general, y especialmente, en la sociedad juvenil vinculado con el ocio nocturno. Un total de 423 jóvenes fueron sancionados desde junio de 2014 a diciembre de 2018, de los cuales 133 optaron por medidas educativas, siendo objeto de nuestro estudio los 112 que finalizaron el programa con éxito. La recopilación de información utiliza fuentes propias de una metodología de investigación mixta apoyada en un cuestionario <i>ad hoc</i> y en el análisis de contenidos de memorias técnicas y de conversaciones mantenidas mediante <i>WhatsApp</i> entre el educador social responsable y los jóvenes. Desde un análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo, los resultados desprenden que los jóvenes consideran justo realizar las medidas educativas, que conocen las consecuencias del alcohol aunque continúen consumiendo, además, se evidencia que casi una décima parte de los jóvenes indica, tras la realización del programa, que no volverá a hacer botellón.</p>
<p>PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Juventude lazer álcool mudança de atitude educação cívica educação social</p>	<p>RESUMO: Este trabalho apresenta os resultados de uma investigação realizada no âmbito do Programa Socioeducativo de Medidas Alternativas como resposta pedagógica ao consumo intensivo de álcool nas vias públicas pela população jovem. Para isso, são analisadas a intervenção socioeducativa e os seus efeitos no grupo de jovens que concluíram com êxito as medidas educacionais. Coordenado pela ONG Liga Española de la Educación y Cultura Popular, em colaboração com a administração municipal sob a Portaria Reguladora para a Promoção da Coexistência e a Prevenção de Dependências de Drogas na cidade de Palencia (Cidade de Palencia, 2013), desde junho de 2014, o programa é proposto como uma medida alternativa à sanção económica. O álcool, presente na vida social e cultural, é um aspecto relevante que faz parte dos encontros e celebrações dos cidadãos em geral e, principalmente, na sociedade jovem ligada à vida noturna. Um total de 423 jovens foi sancionado de junho de 2014 a dezembro de 2018, dos quais 133 optaram por medidas educacionais, sendo os 112 que concluíram o programa com sucesso o objeto de nosso estudo. A coleta de informações utiliza fontes típicas de uma metodologia de pesquisa mista, suportada por um questionário <i>ad hoc</i> e a análise do conteúdo de relatórios técnicos e conversas realizadas pelo <i>WhatsApp</i> entre o educador social responsável e os jovens. A partir de uma análise quantitativa e qualitativa, os resultados mostram que os jovens consideram justo realizar medidas educacionais, que conhecem as consequências do álcool, mesmo que continuem a consumir, além disso, é evidente que quase um décimo dos jovens indica, após a conclusão do programa, que ele não voltará a participar de encontros nos quais os seus iguais se dedicam a beber na via pública, encontros os quais são conhecidos por “Botellón”.</p>

1. Introduction

The current social model has given a leading space to leisure linked to a very diverse scopes, a space and time that influence the personal and social development; leisure represents an important role in people’s lives, specifically in young people, and even more especially in those more vulnerable (López, Sarrate & Lebrero, 2016).

Leisure, as Monteagudo and Cuenca (2012) remarks, is a central value in people’s vital evolution, not only as a fun’source, but also as a vital meaning and as a contribution to the quality of life.

Alcohol consumption is a constant in people’s lives as reflected in the *European Survey of Health in Spain 2014* (Youth Institute [INJUVE], 2017) pointing out that alcohol is present in more than 60% of the Spanish population up to 74 years old. The subject dealt with in this study is addressing the link between youth and alcohol consumption; according to INJUVE (2017), the young population reproduces this kind of practices same as other age groups do, although with different performances and spaces as “the intensive alcohol consumption is usually associated to group nightlife leisure or to binge drinking” (p. 386).

The binge drinking is one of the phenomenon linked to alcohol consumption by the younger population, concentrating the consumption in few hours, usually prior to their presence in night spaces (*pubs* and *discotheques*) traveled by young people during the weekend. The massive and intermittent alcohol intake during short periods of time, are consumption patterns that turns out being particularly neurotoxic (Pascual & Guardia, 2012). In Spain, the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality (2017) defines it as “the consumption on the same occasion, during the last 30 days, of five or more alcoholic beverages for men and four or more in the case of women” (p. 34). However, despite this, the majority of the young population considers alcohol “as a basic element to liven up the night outings” (Pallarés & Martínez, 2013, p. 137).

The patterns of alcohol consumption in adolescents and young people associated with binge drinking, involve the ingestion of very high amounts in short periods of time, outside their homes, usually using spaces on public roads in the company of their peers and especially on weekends, which also generates problems of public order and civic coexistence associated with the different episodes of drunkenness that minors go through, revealing that alcohol is already part of the youth culture (López-Cortacans, 2017). For this reason, some authorities, have opted for the diversion of this type of practices to faraway places and not visible from the city centre and thus avoid noise problems and the corresponding complaints from the neighbourhoods; In other occasions the presence of the police and eviction is chosen, often accompanied by fines and punishments, since the environmental impacts generated by binge drinking are multiple: dirtiness, deterioration of public spaces, public insecurity, emitted noise and insalubrity of public roads, among others (Díaz, Marín, Piñeiro, Palavecinos, Benayas & Alonso, 2009).

The current *National Strategy on Addictions 2017-2024* (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, 2018), points out that “it has been observed a slight increase in the risky alcohol intake and in the consumption of other substances, especially in young people, along with a low perception of the risk and a social ‘normalization’ of the recreational use of substances” (p. 21). For this, one of the challenges is to generate patterns of responsible consumption of alcohol and drugs through strategies focused on information and prevention at all levels, as well as the control of activities that can trigger addiction situations.

On the other hand, the *Survey on Drug Use in Secondary Education in Spain* (ESTUDES 2016) (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality,

2018), reveals that the age for the onset of alcohol use is 14 years, affirming that:

Most of the 14-year-old students (55.3%) have already had alcoholic beverages in the last 12 months, a percentage that increases 18.6% points when considering the 15 year-old segment. However, the prevalence between 17 and 18 years of age hardly varies, finding that approximately 9 out of 10 students of these ages have drunk alcohol in the last year. (p. 15)

In its report, the *Survey on alcohol and other drugs in Spain* (EDADES, 2017) (Ministry of Health, Consumption and Social Welfare, 2018), points out that binge drinking habit is present in all age groups although its prevalence is related to the age of the population, young people between 15 and 24 years old are the ones who show a greater practice of this habit (38.8%). Associated with binge drinking, it is contemplated the prevalence of polyconsumption (consumption of two or more psychoactive substances in the same period) in that population that has binge drunk in the last 12 months. Another critical fact that this study provides is that the perception of risk associated with alcohol consumption is less widespread among the population that has binge drunk in the last year.

As Calafat (2007) points out, the romantic and optimistic vision that young people have about binge drinking is worrying, justifying the consumption as a form of transgression or youth identity, associating positive cultural aspects to this habit, which means “disguising the growing immersion of young people in a consumer economy that seduces them, traps them and guides them towards lifestyles which consequences will be greater inequalities and more frustrations” (p. 221). An identity that reflects the group leading role in youth leisure, the need to belong to the group, turning peers into one of the educational agents, with a broad influence on the behaviour of adolescents and young people (Valdemoros, Sanz & Ponce de León, 2012).

There are numerous researches which address the alcohol consumption and binge drinking phenomenon, among others, Baigorri, Fernández & GIESyT (2004); Calafat et al. (2005); Baigorri & Chaves (2006); Pallarés & Martínez (2013); Pulido, Indave-Ruiz, Ruiz-García, Bartroli & Barrio (2014), as well as more regional and local researches that analyse the habits and effects of consumption, which gives off the interest and concern that generates in the different sectors of society and to the citizens themselves.

Another important aspect is to bear in mind the numerous negative consequences associated

with binge drinking, such as youth violence, poor academic performance, cognitive deterioration, diseases, dependency, economic costs in the social, educational, penal and health systems (Vargas, Trapero, Gil & Lima, 2018), aspects also included in the ESTUDES 2016 report.

1.2. Responses to youth alcohol consumption from the Regulatory framework

The aforementioned information highlights the need to rethink the preventive measures put in place in this matter and the necessary restructuring, taking into account personal, social, economic and also environmental terms, which requires a joint and interdisciplinary efforts to mobilize the different social sectors, as the short and long-term consequences of alcohol consumption, linked to personal and social development areas, are unquestionable.

We share with Amezcua, Flores, Rodríguez, Cano, Rodríguez & Quesada (2011) that the effectiveness of interventions aimed at youth prevention of alcohol consumption will be greater if the cultural context and the meanings that the young population gives to drinking are taken into account and the agents involved in the educational process (families and educational professionals in different areas), to, through their interpretations and perceptions, put into practice and rebuild new designs of preventive actions at different levels, focused on the dialogue, participation and exchange of knowledge.

That is why, educational agencies in all their modalities, school and social, have a great challenge ahead associated with alcohol consumption, because as Puig and Morales (2012) states, "citizenship education is a current need, as the result of the characteristics of our society, from which the need to train active citizens, aware of their rights and fulfilment of their duties is emphasized" (p. 446).

Having outlined the numerous consequences of this type of habits for young people, it is essential to rethink the responses at the international, European and national levels, and how this has been materialized in the regional context and specifically in Palencia City.

From the international and European level, the World Health Organization (WHO) through the *European action plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol (2012-2020)* recommends implementing systems for the prevention, the increase of the recommended age of consumption, and joining forces at educational and legislative levels to hinder access to minors. Along these lines, the conclusions of the Council of Europe (2015) on *An EU*

strategy for the reduction of alcohol-related harm, in addition to what has been previously stated, invites the Member States to minimize health impacts and to a greater work in effective measures and good practices in prevention.

In Spain, different *National Drug Strategies* have been implemented (Ministry of the Interior, 2000; Ministry of Health and Social Policy, 2009) and currently the *National Strategy on Addictions (2017-2024)* includes, for the first time, specifically the alcohol as a field of action, in line with the European trail. Social reality demands the need for a basic state legal framework regarding the use and consumption of alcohol; therefore, since 2018 it has been working on a legal benchmark under the motto of *Minors without alcohol* (Official Gazette of the Cortes Generales, 2018) that marks some common guidelines for the entire state.

Finally, in the case of the experience at hand, the *VII Regional Plan on drugs 2017-2021* in the autonomous community of Castilla y León (BOCYL, 2017), is a benchmark, becoming the strategic instrument that pays attention to this matter actions, and the *Regulatory Ordinance for the Promotion of Coexistence and the Prevention of Drug Dependencies in the Palencia City* (Palencia City Council, 2013), establishing itself as a tool that aims to face situations and circumstances that may affect or alter coexistence citizen, also attending to the protection of public spaces, mutual respect and health. Facing antisocial behaviour, it aims to be an instrument that, beyond the regulation and the sanctioning regime, serves as a deterrent for individuals or groups offending, favouring an appeal for responsibility and for the exercise of civility. In the case of minors, and given their special protection, it is contemplated to convert the fines into alternative re-educational means of training and awareness, which seek to hold minors responsible for the social damage caused as well as to avoid the said behaviours repetition, usually associated with drug use, among which alcohol is particularly important.

2. Objectives

Starting from the aspects previously discussed and the specific reality in which the work is located, it is considered that from the socio-educational intervention, in addition to knowing the reality at hand and the habits and practices that are developed in it, it is essential to analyse the programs put into practice and rethink improvement strategies that have an impact on the development of a responsible and conscious consumption of alcohol and other drugs by the young population, as well as assess the implementation of alternative

leisure programs thanks to which young people can generate new healthy leisure habits different from the dominant one.

From these premises, these works make the use of public resources visible and offer a knowledge of the effects that the interventions being carried out are generating in the population. Therefore, the objectives set out in this work have been:

- Outlining the profile of the group of young people who go through the educational measures in the Palencia City.
- Analysing the uses and reasons that link adolescents and young people with alcohol consumption.
- Knowing the assessment and perception that the participants have about the *Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures* and the effects thereof in relation to the habits and consumption patterns.

3. Methodology

3.1. Context and research scene

The *Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures*, carried out by the NGO Liga Española de la Educación y Cultura Popular [Spanish League for Popular Education and Culture] (LEECP), which is presented here, is framed within the regulatory ordinance indicated above marked by the Palencia City council (2013), which is approved as a tool to face situations and circumstances that can affect or alter citizen coexistence.

The collaborative relationship of the LEECP and the Palencia City council eases a framework for the protection of minors, motivating the contemplation of alternative educational, training and awareness measures in the sanctioning system, so that the minor assumes the damage caused to the society and avoid the repetition of such behaviour. The implementation of the program, in June 2014, arises as an educational alternative to economic fines imposed due to an uncivil behaviour, highlighting among them, those derived from the consumption of alcohol and drugs. It is the parents or legal guardians together with the minor who decide whether to opt for an economic or an educational sanction. The first modality initially involves paying the amount of sixty euros, which the family will assume, and in the case of educational measures, the completion of thirty training hours. In the event of being a repeat offender, both modalities will be increased, on one hand the economic amount and on the other hand the number of training hours to be completed.

The *Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures* is not intended to be the only solution to the complex problems that certain antisocial behaviours constitute, but rather a response to citizen concern about this phenomenon. A deterrent tool for the offenders and an appeal for responsibility and civility, even for those to whom their representation is attributed, this, of course, without prejudice to the competency of other public administrations, and the required collaboration with the Administration of Justice.

Sanctioned young people who have opted for the educational path will complete the total hours in the company of the program's social educator and supported by their family. Educational actions must be adapted to the characteristics of the young people, and will be developed through collaboration with public or private non-profit services' own tasks.

These educational actions are defined as a socio-educational intervention that involves the confrontation of the sanctioned people with their own behaviour and its consequences, to achieve the assumption of their own acts responsibility. The type of activities that are contemplated must meet different requirements, in no case will, the performance of paid tasks or the replacement of jobs, be considered, it should be educational and non-productive activities. The selection and implementation of this program will seek a clear adaptation to the characteristics, situation and possibilities of the young person and the nature of the events, in order to guarantee that they are capable of assuming the activity, understanding its consequences. In all cases, an individualized program is developed, which will never interfere with any school and/or educational activities.

Jointly and contained in the aforementioned ordinance, three frameworks of measures are proposed, first of all the *educational actions of social interest* that involves the restoration, if applicable, of the deteriorated public property or related actions (cleaning and/or conditioning of urban furniture, cleaning and maintenance of public leisure areas, parks and gardens, sports facilities, cleaning of public areas where parties had been held, binge drinking, celebrations, removal of posters and/or graffiti); secondly, *unpaid educational actions of community interest*, to be developed in the field of social services or for the benefit of people in situations of isolation or at social exclusion risk (collaboration with centers/functional diversity associations, youth, older people, shelter for passers-by, social advocacy, etc., in which they can carry out support and/or accompaniment activities, always supervised by a professional); and finally, *psychosocial actions*, the person, subject to

this measure, must carry out specific educational content activities aimed to facilitate the development of their social competence (participation in both group and individual activities related to the sanction or when the supervising professional considers appropriate for an adequate personal and/or social development: workshops, interviews, individual and group therapy, trainings ... on different topics: social skills, drugs, sexuality, new technologies, etc., as per the needs of the case). All of them with a great flexibility, easing that sanctioned minors can go through its own process subject to its context and social and personal reality.

The intervention process of the *Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures* is based on four steps. The first step, receiving the case and collecting information is a joint work between the Palencia City council Traffic Section and the social educator, in special cases the collaboration of the Municipal Permanent Commission created for this purpose will be required. The second step is the summons of the family and the minor, a first meeting jointly to see the different options for the implementation of the measure and a subsequent individual interview with the minor in order

to personalize the measure. The third step is to initiate and develop the proposed measure with the minor, with the follow-up and accompaniment of the social educator in person and in order to facilitate its development, by the use of *WhatsApp*. The last step is putting in writing the evaluation report and once the hours set in the measure are completed, the closure of the case and a last meeting with the young person is proposed for a joint assessment with the social educator.

As evidenced, there are many people, social agents and institutions involved who benefit the development of the intervention due to their commitment and collaborative work in favour of youth throughout the process (Poza-Vilches, Fernández-García & Ferreira-Delgado, 2018).

As shown in Table 1, the number of fines is highly variable, the difference in fines imposed along the several years of this study is significant, a matter that is subject to the lack of general guidelines, as we have previously mentioned, and which remains up to the personal judgment of the police officer. It can also be seen how the educational modality is an increasingly selected choice to comply with the sanction.

Table 1: Execution of the sanction by economic modality or by educational modality

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Economic modality	130	30	39	79	12
Educational modality	24	31	16	31	31
Total	154	61	55	110	43

Source: own elaboration.

3.2. Participants

The *Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures* began in June 2014 and continues in force today, taking December 2018 as a reference date. As shown in Table 2, during the five years of the research a total of 133 minors have opted for alternative measures, out of them a total of 112 minors (84.2%) has successfully completed the measures, meaning that they appropriately completed all the measures and their attitude and

follow-up in the program was positive. On the other hand, there are 10 minors (7.6%) who quit the program, implying the acceptance of an economic sanction. Lastly, 11 young people (8.2%) did not fulfil the measures, so, the Program itself has notified its revocation and the referral to the economic sanction. All the young people who have successfully completed the measure compose the study's target group; all of them authorized the transfer of data to the research, whilst the confidentiality is guaranteed.

Table 2: Execution of Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Successful completion of the Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures	18	21	16	31	26	112
Dropping out of the Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures	5	2	0	0	3	10
Unfulfilment of the Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures	1	8	0	0	2	11
Total	24	31	16	31	20	133

Source: own elaboration.

3.3. Design and tools for the documentation collection

To address the research objectives, observing the specificity of the analyzed program, a descriptive survey study type was used (Torrado, 2012), which can be classified as longitudinal since it tracks the group of young people participating in the program between the years 2014 and 2018, although the specific study target group are registered and unregistered as their penalties starts and finishes. Given that it focuses on a very specific program, it can be pointed out a better compliance of the internal validity criteria of the research than those of external validity (given that generalization is never intended). In this survey study framework, the *ad hoc* questionnaire was designed, as well as the categories of analysis of documentary information. For doing so, as pointed out later on, in both cases studies already developed have been used as a reference, which act as a source of validity of the instruments; however, given the specificity of the study and of the instrument, a specific reliability study has not been included.

Regarding the information collection procedures, the main tool has been a questionnaire, adding the compilation and subsequent documentary analysis of the program, the annual technical reports and conversations via *WhatsApp* of the professional with the minors. The techniques used for data collection are features in the qualitative methodology, incorporating instruments and sources of information typical of a mixed method which provides also quantitative data, since both and simultaneously offer a knowledge that is more in line with the reality. To give uniformity to the analysis carried out, the work is done from different levels that constitute the four central categories. The first, shows the young people profiles who are fined due to an uncivil behaviour (*sociodemographic characterization*); the second,

addresses the uses and the relationship they have with alcohol and drugs (*use and consumption*); the third, systematizes and analyses the reasons why consumption is carried out (*consumption reasons*); and, the fourth, provides the assessment carried out by young people about the program itself as an alternative measure to an economic sanction (*assessment of the socio-educational program of alternative measures*).

The instrument designed for the collection of information was an *ad hoc* questionnaire prepared by the Program research and intervention team taking the EDADES and ESTUDES surveys as a reference. Filled by the young people at the end of the program, in an anonymous way, a technique that has allowed obtaining in a systematic and orderly way, information about the relevant variables (Colás and Buendía, 1992). The data collected covers the total sample, that is, 112 individuals (coded as subject 1 to subject 112; S1-S112). The questionnaire was designed based on the four categories of analysis indicated with a total of 22 items, mostly structured with closed questions with multiple choice answers, but including one open answer that can be chosen where opinions in relation to the item can be inserted; In addition, to conclude, two more subjective open questions are presented.

Regarding the documentary analysis, it has been carried out from the content analysis technique, conceived as a textual and empirical materials analysis procedure that has allowed us to deeply understand the reality studied (Alonso, 1998). Five technical reports in total, were delivered to the financing administration, corresponding to the periods in which the program was carried out (2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018). On the other hand, the conversations held through *WhatsApp* between the social educator and the young people (maintaining the same coding as in the questionnaires) have been analyzed, since

these conversations provide relevant information during the process, in its evaluation and are part of the documentation collected by the professional for subsequent evaluations and implications of the program.

4. Results and analysis

The trinomial of leisure, alcohol consumption and fun, seems to have become a new form of urban culture that develops new ways of interacting, one of them being the most well-known: binge drinking. Out of the 112 young people who are part of the study, 94% were penalized for binge drinking, 5% for urinating on the urban road, a matter directly related to binge drinking, and lastly, 1% for occupying public space.

Socially, the fact of binge drinking has been integrated into weekend entertainment, throughout the country in general, and specifically in Palencia City. It is natural to walk through the city centre and observe young people, along Carrión riverbank, using and consuming alcohol in public places which serves as a meeting point, becoming "informal youth spaces" (Soler, Trilla, Jiménez-Morales & Úcar, 2017, p. 24).

In relation to the *sociodemographic characterization* category, 112 people have participated and have successfully completed the measures, out of them 78 (70%) are men and 34 women (30%). Eighty-nine per cent of the study target group has a Spanish origin, 4% Colombian, 2% Moroccan and 1% comes from the Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Paraguay, Ecuador and Romania. It is interesting to verify that the age of the sanctioned persons coincides with the age of highest incidence of the binge drinking, the highest percentage being concentrated in 16 and 17 years old minors, with 34% and 39% respectively. Followed by the 18-year-olds young people with 18% and then, with a lower figure, the 15-year-olds minors with 7% and 14-year-olds minors with 2%.

The information collected provides a meaningful look at how the binge drinking is a social reality of the youth population without differentiation by the training that young people have or their training and professional perspectives for the future. Regarding the educational level, 56% are ESO students, 32% are high school students and 6% represent the students of Initial Professional Qualification Programs (PCPI) or intermediate grade respectively. In relation to the expectations of their future, 55% want to complete university studies, 20% want to complete ESO in order to complete a subsequent medium-level training cycle, 14% want to finish high school to complete a subsequent higher-level training cycle, there is a

6% of those who after completing the ESO want to join the work life and 5% are those who have not yet made a decision.

Secondly, we are interested in learning about the *use and consumption* of alcohol and drugs by young people. When 100% of young people who successfully went through the alternative measures, responded the item "alcohol is ...", 59% consider it a less dangerous drug than illegal ones, 37% consider it to be just as dangerous as illegal drugs, 3% consider that it is not a drug and 1% do not answer. From these answers we extract several observations, a very representative part of young people relativizes the risk of alcohol consumption since it is a legal drug, an aspect that can foster its consumption, when sale and consumption are legal, consuming does not have to be a problem. On the other hand, if minors consume alcohol being aware of its associated risks, this aspect must involve a reflection on what the keys to raising awareness among young people regarding their responsibility towards its consumption are.

When talking about alcohol consumption, 29% report having tried it and 28% state that they consume it regularly. Fifty percent have tried alcohol and tobacco and 26% consume both substances on regular basis, demonstrating a polyconsumption of associated legal drugs. It is significant, how 13% of adolescents have tried drugs such as cannabis, cocaine, speed, ecstasy, etc. along with alcohol and tobacco, an aspect that shows that alcohol is a naturalized present by adolescents and young people, and, in addition to be associated with tobacco, has a direct relationship with other non-legal substances. Noting, besides, that 12% state their regular use of cannabis, another substance that is increasingly present and normalized by young people, along with alcohol and tobacco. These data are in line with the ESTUDES 2016, which indicates that alcohol is the most widespread substance among secondary school students (14-18 years old), followed by tobacco and cannabis.

The average age of consumption initiation is 13,9 years, a figure very similar to the national level; the frequency of monthly consumption is 5% of young people who report not drinking, 50% for the option of three to four times, 25% of those who drink one to two times a month, 11% report to consume five to six times, and 9% aim to consume seven or more times. The average monthly consumption is 3,5 times a month, data that is closely related to weekends, considering Saturdays as the day when this type of leisure is present the most. In the same line, they indicate the occasions in which they have been drunk in the last six months, 67% indicate that they have been drunk 1 to 10

times, in contrast, 17% indicate that they have not been drunk on any occasion. On the other hand, 10% shows that they have been drunk more than 20 times and 6% between 10 to 20 times.

Alcohol use and consumption by the youth population in today's society has been consolidated as a form of nightlife leisure, a situation that nowadays is still unresolved. Today's Young people do not evaluate the problems, they consider that it is a natural matter linked with fun and youth, the data indicates that in addition, they do not consider it as dangerous as illegal drugs, as S60 points out by *WhatsAap* "drinking is not that bad, drugs are worst". On the contrary, when asked to imagine how they would feel if they see their father or mother drunk, it is interesting to see how 92% relate it to a feeling of worry, grief, or shame, only 5% would see it as normal, and 3% do not answer. Aspect that shows the relation they made as a matter of age, identifying that it is fair for a young person to carry out a non-responsible consumption, but when talking about an adult person they identify it as a problem.

The third category tries to know the reasons that make today's young people consume, a matter that gives us clues to be able to work from the youth reality. The reasons that make teenagers drink are subject to enjoyment in the first place, 38% of them indicate that they enjoy more, that they are more uninhibited and can enjoy the party more. Secondly, 32% indicates, along with the abovementioned matters, that they consume because their friends so do, an aspect that shows the need for a group identity that adolescents have, associating it also, with the social pressure that this group imposes. There is a 23%, who also declare that they consume only because they like the alcohol taste. Finally, 7% indicates that they do not drink, a fact that may attend to those young people who join binge drinking but do not drink as the EDADES survey (Ministry of Health, Social Service & Equality, 2017) differentiates, or simply, this percentage attends to the expected social response in terms of being politically correct.

On the other hand, 95% consider that they are aware of the consequences of alcohol, an aspect that shows how preventive work carried out from the school, social and family spheres, in informative terms is effective, even though this does not mean that consumption is avoided. This is very interesting, from an educational sense, in order to rethink the preventive strategies put into practice and how to go from informed knowledge to a decrease in consumption. However, it is also necessary to qualify the contradictions involved in knowing the consequences of consumption but

assessing that it is not highly harmful, as we have already pointed out.

The society judges the consumption of young people through the binge drinking, and there are many unresolved questions regarding how to avoid it, considering that offering greater alternative leisure spaces to young people could minimize the social reality of alcohol consumption. Regarding this, 53% of the study population consider that the leisure resources that exist in Palencia City are sufficient compared to 47% that consider them insufficient. Many of them propose recreational activities such as paintball (S5; S36), excursions (S8; S11; S41), sports activities (S31; S72; S81; S105; S108; S112), dance and urban music related activities (S49; S72; S101), motors world related activities (S17; S112), *parkour or streetworkout* (S26; S35; S55; S57; S61), and even solidarity activities (S57; S58). They also point out the importance of having their own space, with educational actions designed by entities or public administration but which they can also self-manage (S79; S35). The information collected in this item is highly valuable, since it is essential to know their needs and interests and give voice to young people when designing youth policies, only in this way, taking into account their concerns, their needs related to leisure and enjoyment of their free time, in an alternative and healthy way, can be covered.

In the last category, related to the *evaluation of the socio-educational program of alternative measures*, it is observed how 97% consider fair to go through alternative measures instead of involving their family in the payment of the economic sanction stipulated due to their actions, the rest of them (3 %) does not consider it fair. A fact that gives us a glance of young people responsibility, as the S10 points out "since I have done it, I have to pay the fine! and not my parents, who have had nothing to do with it"; Along the same lines, other young people point out "being responsible for their actions" (S11; S43; S61; S91; S100; S103; S107) and that "not everything is settled with money" (S20).

83% consider very positive to carry out the sanction in the educational modality; Participation in educational actions of social and community interest is an aspect that they value positively due to meeting new projects and people (S29; S31; S50; S55; S56; S57; S106), stating their intention to keep collaborating (S23); It is interesting as well, to highlight the positive evaluation that they show regarding the projects where they were involved (S25; S35; S41; S46; S63; S66; S75; S98). Regarding the community interest actions related projects, it is significant how they empathize with the people's problems, as they point out in a

WhatsApp conversation with the social educator “I have been able to learn from another point of view about the alcohol problems in people whose lives have been completely changed, and by empathizing with them you realize that it can really become an addiction and a very serious problem” (S98) and “I have learned all the bad things that alcohol can cause and the problems that it entails in the long term” (S107). Regarding social interest projects, we highlight how they become aware of their actions, two of the young people point out: “when I went to URBASER to collect all the waste left after binge drinking, I understood all the trace left behind, and that it is difficult to clean it up” (S63), and S104 recognizes “the collaboration that is needed to keep clean a place after a binge drinking since we leave everything dirty” writes on *WhatsApp*. All this, makes easier a greater awareness at a citizen level and how “tough”, as they express themselves, working is (S22; S54; S86; S99).

It seems that when completing the hours of alternative measures, young people have another view about alcohol and binge drinking, they state that performing the program facilitates “a greater awareness of the alcohol effects” (S32; S40; S78; S81) and “of what binge drinking means” (S45; S58; S76), an aspect that have an effect on a position of “not binge drinking” (S8; S9; S19; S36; S38; S48; S64;) and on “I will try to drink less” as S1 points out on *WhatsApp*.

Finally, 100% value the social educator work with an average score of 9,5 out of 10, valuing aspects such as the professional personal closeness, empathy, flexibility and including *WhatsApp* as a communication and follow up tool. The role of the social educator is key in the project development, since the professional and training development endows this professional figure with the appropriate skills and attitudes to take on this type of actions, framed in non-school spaces and timings, but which also requires its presence in school contexts in preventive terms.

5. Conclusions

This work aims to provide a portrait of the reality of the nowadays youth leisure and consumption,

contributing with an image that helps to know about and understand the status of the matter, in order to design educational projects that promote less consumption and/or a responsible consumption, providing benefits for youth and community.

Binge drinking is part of the everyday nature of most adolescents and young people; it has become one of the dominant leisure patterns. Society and educational agencies must implement new mechanisms to face the reality from the education in entertainment and free time, offering alternatives that create interest and balancing the positioning and responsibility that youth have towards consumption.

The analyzed data shows the social and educational value of preventive programs and interventions, however, the knowledge of the risks associated to consumption and awareness of it, seems not to avoid the habits already internalized for several decades; Rethinking responsible consumption and self-knowledge may be the best options to face this phenomenon, empowering educational actions and avoiding measures that focus exclusively in the economic side.

Taking into account the opinions of the people forming part of the program, as well as the analysis of the presented data, a shared perspective is demanded, which requires a joint action protocol, especially in addressing the in situ phenomenon, objectifying the parameters that determine the sanctioning event, an aspect that implies the training and awareness of the professionals involved who belong to different areas.

The *Socio-educational Program of Alternative Measures* is rethinking its action framework, in coordination with the different public administrations and institutions involved, facing the alcohol consumption problem in general, and consumption in public spaces in particular, as one of the triggers of antisocial behaviours, considering that this type of programs must become an example of minors and young people educational intervention good practices, thus giving a pedagogical response in terms of responsibility and civic education that places special emphasis on preventive actions.

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