Ownership of Addiction
(Overall description of AREA 1)

Many things can come to mind when reflecting on what addictions are; the thoughts arising can range from pleasurable to painful, can touch on political to economic and health implications, from biological factors to different lifestyles. Addictions are multidimensional issues and the ways in which different societies conceive and implement their answers to them can vary greatly. If we take, for example, a realistic assessment of the costs and benefits of the current drug policies in contemporary Europe, we find that many of them are associated with large societal and economic costs and have failed to have an impact on the harms brought about by addictions. ALICE RAP, a five year European Commission FP7 co-financed research project, starting 1st April 2011, aims to provide scientific evidence to inform and reframe the public dialogue and to stimulate a broad debate on current and alternative approaches to addictions. Bringing together scientists from more than 30 countries and 29 different scientific disciplines, ALICE RAP is divided into seven areas and twenty one work packages through an integrated multidisciplinary research strategy. Area 1, Ownership of Addiction, will describe how societal responses to addictions are influenced by the different understandings and views that are “owned” by different professionals, stakeholders and other social networks. Area 1 is led by Dr. Matilda Hellman from the University of Helsinki.

1. The impact of discourse on actions (or, what Area 1 is going to do)

Public discourse and the social images of drugs and their consumers, as well as the role of different actors and networks, have changed over time. Area 1, through its three work packages (WP), will investigate the ownership of addictions through a historical study, an analysis of public and private stakeholder views on addictions, and through image analyses of professional and citizenship views.

WP1 - Addiction through the ages - will be coordinated by Professor Virginia Berridge from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. It will investigate, from historical, social and political science perspectives, the emergence of different concepts of addiction for different substances and activities (illicit and licit drugs, alcohol, smoking and gambling) in different European countries from the early modern period to the near present.
Public and private stakeholder views and their dialogue to build consensus in policy arenas will be analysed in WP2 - Stakeholder analysis - coordinated by Professor Betsy Thom from Middlesex University. Based on qualitative research approaches, the study will employ historical, political and social science perspectives to investigate the dynamics and effects of stakeholder involvement on policy formulation and implementation, on beliefs and ideologies regarding substance use, on the availability of substances, the responses to different patterns of use, the provision of services, and on the increasing importance of epistemic communities (knowledge-societies) at the European level. This work will account for the emergence, rise and demise of different stakeholder groups in different social, economic, legal, cultural, and policy contexts from the beginning of the 19th century to the present day, across a range of European countries and for different substances.

WP3 - Images - will be coordinated by the Area 1 leader, Dr. Matilda Hellman from Helsinki University. It will provide knowledge on how society defines, understands and categorises addictions (alcohol, drugs, tobacco, eating disorders, gambling, sex) and how this varies within society and between different cultural, historical and policy contexts. Among populations at large, in public discourse and by professions/groups, this WP will study perceptions of addiction problems in different time periods (the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s), using qualitative methodological approaches such as media content analysis and survey instruments that reflect general tendencies and frame deeper case analysis.

2. The partnership approach (Area 1 integration with the other areas)

A core aim of ALICE RAP is to promote integration, cooperation and networking, both within and between the Work Areas. The three WPs in Area 1 will inform the three WPs in Area 4, the business of addiction, and the three WPs in Area 5, the governance of addiction. Also, specifically, WP1 - Addiction through the ages, will contribute to a historical understanding of classifications and definitions of addiction, the content of WP4 in Area 2 – Counting Addiction.

In systematically pursuing this integration, the project will contribute to a new understanding of addictions, also facilitating the dialogue between science, policy, and media, and the translation of science into public policy.

3. Promoting changes through policy incidence actions

ALICE RAP’s broad aim is to “think, debate and shape” current norms and future implications of addiction and lifestyles in Europe over the next 20 years. Area 1 will analyse and synthesise the role of science and evidence in the definitions of addiction and in the formulation of public policy. Moreover, the analysis of the positioning and the influence (power) of different stakeholder groups on policy and interventions is crucial for the understanding of the policy arena. As a whole, the potential economic, health, and social consequences of new or alternative approaches – and their ownership – will be analysed in the project using foresight methodologies. These will be packaged as policy options for public and political debate at the EU and national levels.
One cannot understand the establishment and functioning of different concepts, such as addiction, criminalisation, substitution or treatment, without understanding by whom they have been promoted and advocated and what interests they have represented.

WP1 will aim to develop a comprehensive understanding and analysis of the historical development of ideas about and policies towards addiction, intoxication, habit, dependence, problem use and other formulations, across Europe over time, at national, cross national and supranational levels. Historical but also social science and political science concepts will be used to explore themes and issues, using different research methods.

The work package will be coordinated by Professor Virginia Berridge of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and by Dr Alex Mold of the same institution, both of whom are historians.

1. What the work package is going to do

The work will proceed through:
- Country studies
- Studies of international organisations

The country studies will involve historiographical literature reviews and primary research on writing on addiction and other formulations through the ages, across areas including drugs, alcohol, smoking and gambling. Partners will work on studies of individual countries and attention will also be paid to regional dimensions (for example in Scandinavia). There will be studies also of areas which formerly formed administrative entities. Countries involved are: Italy, England, Sweden, Austria and Poland.

The studies of international organisations will examine the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions, its publications and conference proceedings (see separate description); concepts of addiction and dependence promulgated through the World Health Organisation (WHO) expert committees; and through the work of the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). We will thus examine the key role of international bodies in establishing the legitimacy of different concepts.

The international studies will be led from Sweden and England.
2. How the study connects to other parts of AR

In line with the partnership approach of the ALICE Rap project, the work of WP1 will be relevant to the other work packages in Area 1, most obviously work package 2, led by Betsy Thom, which will look at the stakeholders in addiction. WP1 will also connect with other work packages across the whole project, in particular WP4 on classifying addiction; WP13 on governance views; WP17 on culture and biology and WPs 19-21 on coordination and integration. We aim to bring the historical perspective and understanding into the work of all partners, so far as is possible.

3. How the results might contribute to reframing our understanding

Addiction is often seen as a ‘value free’ concept, out there and waiting to be discovered. We hope to establish an understanding that the concept and its reformulations have been the outgrowth of wider forces in the field and in society. These forces encompass the interests being examined in other work packages. Our work package has the potential to inform across the project and, consequently, inform addiction policy.
The addictions field is populated by a wide range of stakeholder groups drawn from the public and private spheres and crossing disciplinary and occupational boundaries. Stakeholders have a key role in the formulation and delivery of policy and also in the production and dissemination of ‘evidence’ used to inform policy and practice. Increasingly, stakeholders and stakeholder networks have emerged and developed beyond national boundaries and play an important part in knowledge and policy transfer. Understanding the dynamics of stakeholder involvement in the policy process, and its role in relation to evidence based policy, is important in examining policy responses to substance use and addiction.

Work Package 2 (Area 1) is coordinated by Professor Betsy Thom, from the Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, Middlesex University, UK. It aims to investigate the dynamics and effects of stakeholder involvement on policy formulation and implementation and develop a theoretical framework for cross national understanding and analyses of stakeholder involvement in issues of substance use, problem use and addiction.

1. Unravelling stakeholder involvement and influence (or what WP 2 is going to do)

This work package will describe and analyse shifts in stakeholder groups (including ‘user’ groups) over time and place, examining the variable power of different groups to advance their perspectives on substance use and addiction and taking account of the specific political, economic and social contexts within which such groups jostle for position in the policy domain. Descriptions and analyses of current stakeholders in the partner countries will form the basis of cross-national comparisons. Epistemic communities (especially those in the European arena) will also be examined and their links with national stakeholder groups investigated. The proposed research will add to current understanding of stakeholder influence on policy and practice both at national and supranational levels and will contribute to developing a framework for future cross-national analyses.

Based on mixed qualitative research approaches, the study will adopt historical, political and social science perspectives to investigate the dynamics and effects of stakeholder involvement on policy formulation and implementation, on beliefs and ideologies regarding substance use, on the availability of substances, on responses to different patterns of use and to the provision of services, and on the increasing importance of epistemic communities (knowledge-societies) at the European level. The work will comprise:
1. Accounts of the emergence and evolution of stakeholder groups over time (from 19\textsuperscript{th} century) in 6 partner countries. This will be based on reviews of primary and secondary written material and will provide the context for examination of the analysis of current stakeholder issues. The reviews will locate stakeholder dynamics within the political and social context and the ‘zeitgeist’ of the time. These accounts are likely to be augmented later using interview material from subsequent phases of the research.

2. a) In each partner country, open ended, taped interviews with key informants (approx. 25 in each country) will form the core of the contemporary stakeholder analysis.

b) In the research led by THL (Finland) data from local media, official documents and participant observation in meetings among authorities and professionals will be the approach in investigating stakeholder issues as they arise among professionals and clients in outpatient treatment units.

c) In the study led by UNICRI, a range of approaches will be used to study and compare stakeholder issues arising in different legal systems when intoxication and addiction are handled: the main study material will be laws and regulations, legal articles, judgements and transcripts, some key informant interviews and courtroom observation.

3. Mapping and description of selected epistemic communities at European level. This will be used to examine the relationship between national and supranational stakeholder groups and the role of epistemic communities in policy transfer. Documentary sources and interviews will be used.

4. Cross-national examination of data from country reports (ongoing over the course of the programme); analyses at supranational level of the role of epistemic communities and the generation of ‘multistakeholder dialogue’ as one aspect of stakeholder influence and ‘positioning’ of stakeholder groups.

2. WP 2 - integration with the other work in ALICE RAP

A historical perspective is clearly important for understanding current stakeholder dynamics. Close collaboration with WP1 (addiction through the ages) is envisaged. Stakeholder dialogue plays a part in how ‘addiction’ is defined and measured; as such WP2 will be relevant to the work packages in area 3 (determinants of addiction). Area 4, WP12 - Addictions’ web of influence - will broaden the stakeholder analysis by its inclusion of economic, industrial stakeholders. Investigation of the role of stakeholders will be relevant to the examination in Area 5 of Governance of Addictions.

3. The contribution of WP 2

The findings of this WP will provide a framework for understanding and researching stakeholder influence within the policy process. It will, in addition, open up investigation of stakeholder influence of the production, execution and dissemination of the evidence base of policy.
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Images
(Overall description of WORK PACKAGE 3, Area 1)

Work Package 3 (WP3), coordinated by Dr. Matilda Hellman, from the University of Helsinki, will study images of addiction in press reporting, by professionals (GPs and social workers) and in populations at large. The activities of the work package will provide understandings of mental pictures and opinions grounded in these images.

The overall aim is to produce knowledge on how society defines, understands and categorizes addictions and how this varies within society and between different countries and systems. Comparisons will be made between the countries involved and discussed within different cultural, historical and policy contexts. The knowledge production of the WP will advance scientific understanding of the addictive process, of the factors contributing to addiction as well as of factors related to recovery.

1. Studying IMAGES (what WP 3 is going to do)

The WP will study perceptions of addiction in society: among populations at large, in public discourse and by professions /groups in different relations to addiction problems.

The core study consists of analyses of print press items. Partner countries involved in the press analysis are Hungary, Italy, Finland, Netherlands, Poland, UK.

The media study will look at changes in public images and understandings of addictions in different times; focusing also on different addictions and on different country specific situations and conditions that have marked and formed views on (specific) addictions. Of specific interest is for the country partners to date an expansion or inflation of the concept of addiction and to study how this has affected views on who is the addict, who is considered the authority and where the addiction problems are viewed to be located.

Interesting cases of variation in perceptions of use and policies are media reporting on tobacco, of which perceptions have changed radically the last thirty years, and of drugs, of which prevalence and perceptions vary between the studied countries. Most people will only receive second-hand information about drug addiction, which is why media discourse plays a particularly important role in the formation of popular views on the nature of the problems. Also media images of alcohol and of eating disorders are expected to contain insights into coinciding larger trends in society at large.
Another study of the WP 3 will conduct Reception Analytical Group Interviews (RAGIs) in order to discern tendencies when it comes to **images of addiction among certain gatekeepers** for people affected by addiction problems. Partner countries for this part of the study include Finland, Italy and Poland. Comparative data has previously been collected from Finland, France and Germany.

Images of addictions (alcohol, gambling and eating disorders) among general practitioners and social workers will be investigated in order to get insights into how addiction problems are looked upon and defined by representatives of the sectors in society that have responsibility for acknowledging and handling the problems. Clips from an archive of film scenes (The Helsinki University Addiction Clip Collection - HUACC) are used as stimulus texts for discussion in focus groups interviews. The differences in views on the problems will be contextualised in and explained by differences in systems and cultures.

The third part of WP 3 includes surveys on representatives of populations to capture the **general public’s social representations of different addictions**. Partner countries include Sweden, Norway, Poland and Germany. The survey has already been conducted in Sweden, Finland, Canada, Russia, and, in part, Switzerland.

Addictions included are alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, heroin, gambling, tobacco, medical drugs, and Internet use. Aspects covered are the perceived severity of each addiction as a social problem, perceived risk of “getting hooked”, attributions of responsibility for acquiring and solving each problem, and perceived options for lasting change with and without formal help. Answers will be related to socio-economic variables (age, gender, education, family situation, profession), and personal experiences of addictions and solutions and/or such experiences by someone close.

### 2. The partnership approach (WP3 integration with the other work in ALICE RAP)

In line with the partnership approach of the ALICE RAP project as a whole, the work of WP3 will be strongly synergistic with the work of the other work packages in Area 1. In addiction, all ALICE RAP work concerned with defining and grasping the problems around addiction will be relevant for WP3. Therefore, links are anticipated with work in WP4, Area 2, “Classifying addictions”, WP13 in Area 5, the “Governance view”, and WP18 in Area 6 on “Understanding and promoting resilience in the young”. There will also be interesting connections to be made between this work and the work of WP20 in Area 7, “Integration and communication”.

### 3. Reframing addiction

The significance of the addiction phenomenon has grown over time; in culture and language use. There is an increased demand for the addiction concept, it is used for transmitting a variety of important significations, and it is applied today much more frequently, and much more loosely than it was twenty years ago. It has become a natural ingredient in our ideas and mental perceptions of the world. New types of cultural image hierarchies, concerning the severity of the problems and perceptions of possibilities of recovery, correlate with overall societal and cultural trends in the European societies of today, and influence individual and population health-related behaviour.
In the autumn of 2010 the 53rd International ICAA Conference on Dependencies will be held in Cancún, Mexico. This is a conference with a long history, deriving its origin from the 1885 Meeting against the Abuse of Alcoholic Beverages in Antwerp. Some 20 years later, during the 11th conference in Stockholm in 1907 (now known as the International Congress against Alcoholism), the International Bureau against Alcoholism (IBAA), later renamed the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions (ICAA), was founded. This became the central body behind these international conferences on alcohol and drug issues that are still going strong after 125 years.

The ICAA, preceding organisational committees, and the conferences occupy quite a unique position as a continuous public manifestation of alcohol and drug issues, and the proposed project will take on this organization and the conferences during the 125 years between 1885 and 2010. The two-fold aim of this sub-study, is, 1) to examine this phenomenon as an expression of the varying concepts of the alcohol and drug issue, and 2) to analyse the role and function of this international conference.

The work is undertaken by Johan Edman, from the Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs (SoRAD) in Stockholm University.

1. What the study is going to do

The task proposed, to use this material to investigate the different expressions of the alcohol and drug issue during a period from the late 19th century up until the early 21st century, is expected to be highly productive. In the documented proceedings you can find contributions covering a very broad spectrum: from inflammatory speeches propagating temperance, and thoroughly executed medical investigations of hypothetical diseases or care and treatment research, to road safety issues, subversive sociological interpretations of social problems and the user and gender perspectives of recent years. Taken as an example, the conference proceedings offer a good opportunity to discuss the very concept of addiction, its variation between cultures and change over time. Is it the substance which is addictive, or is addiction a property of the person using the substance? Who is supposed to be responsible for the social handling of
addiction/abuse – doctors, psychiatrists, eugenicists, police, social workers, temperance workers? A historical contextualisation of this source material allows a deeper understanding of dominating themes and trends in the discussion on alcohol and drugs, but the conferences can also be seen as a prism uncovering a larger history of (western world) societal development during more than a century.

The second part of this study aims to investigate the conference’s role and function, per se. You can hardly treat these conferences solely as an unbiased expression of dominating trends, since these public manifestations are also highly active agents in the production of trends and themes. The question put in the headline above suggests that these gatherings could be seen both as science meetings and occasions for knowledge dissemination, as well as arenas for networking and policy making. The ICAA and the conferences have certainly been a political arena, a tribune to be captured by whoever wants to put forward their message. The empirical research task will here be to analyse interested parties (political agents, representatives of the science community, the alcohol industry, popular movements, non-governmental organisations and other pressure groups) behind popular themes, but also to discuss expected effects of putting out one’s message in a context like this. What part has the international congress played in different periods since the 1880s, who have been the intended recipients of these messages and what more concrete results have different agents set their hopes on?
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Sub-study: Outpatient study – views among health care professionals
(Description of sub-study in WP2 – Stakeholder analysis, Area 1)

1. What the study is going to do
The objective of the sub-study is to examine the views and understandings of alcohol and drug related harms among relevant professionals and their potential clients, in outpatient treatment units. The countries involved are Finland, Italy and Latvia. The idea is to carry out comparative analyses between the three participating counties in order to understand how cultural perceptions and social arrangements affect the feasibility of preventive interventions in emergency department settings.

The emergency department is a suitable institution to be studied, being institutions in which health care professionals are most likely to encounter intoxicated clients and/or clients with substance abuse problems. Interaction between the clients and the staff of the emergency department is of a crucial importance: the personnel meeting the intoxicated clients define the situation and classify the role of alcohol or intoxication as a reason for the injury of the patient. An important aim of the study is to understand how health care professionals in the emergency departments view intoxicated clients, how they experience their own professional potential to handle the situation, and to find out is the extent of professionals’ knowledge on effective methods to minimize harm caused by substance abuse. Since resources for comparative analysis between Finland, Italy and Latvia are limited, a pragmatic solution will be to develop a questionnaire to elicit and allow assessment of the attitudes and understandings among professionals working at the emergency department. The questionnaire includes both structured and open-ended questions, and the data can be deepened with thematic interviews among the professionals. The questionnaire is developed drawing on experiences from previous studies and on an ongoing pilot study by THL.

The context for data collection in Finland is the setting of natural experiment provided by the ongoing establishment of the new register systems in the local outpatient health care units in one pilot area (Kymenlaakso). This will be compared to the situation in Latvia and Italy. The purpose of the routine register systems under construction is to monitor the frequency, causes and severity of acute harms related to addiction and heavy alcohol consumption, such as violence, injuries, accidents and poisonings. BAC-test or Screening instruments like the AUDIT-C test are piloted in indentifying clients with alcohol problems.

The study contributes to the knowledge on how professionals’ understandings and values concerning substance misuse and harms which steer their professional practices –
and how the institutional surroundings, as reported by the stakeholders themselves, facilitate or hinder the possibility of applying effective methods for minimizing harms related to substance abuse.

In addition to studying professionals’ views in Finland, qualitative thematic interviews with potential clients will help to understand the interconnections between addictive behaviours, risky situations and related acute harms, from their point of view. This will be done by thematic interviews with groups of young people in the location. Furthermore, the study can be expanded to examine how the register information directs the process of local governance in the natural setting provided by the pilot project in Kymenlaakso. This process is studied through data from local media, official documents and participant observation and interviews in meetings among authorities and professionals.

2. How the study connects to other parts of AR.

This sub-study connects to the wider research on Area 1 of the Alice Rap-project, especially to WP14 (Governance practice) and WP 15 (Redesigning governance) by providing an empirical example of how different stakeholder views meet, are shaped and how they influence each other. The local health care professionals belong to the international knowledge-society (epistemic community) of medical professionals, and at the same time they represent the local culture, local professional group interests and traditions and understanding of their patients’ views and attitudes. The contextual situation provided by the local developmental project creates a "theatre" for studying the different stakeholder roles, their argumentation and their use of different kinds of evidence. Health professionals as stakeholders are also relevant for the discussions in WP 12 (Addiction’s web of influence in Area 4) Health professionals are central actors in shaping views on treating addictions, and their work influences the societal costs of addiction. In Area 5 this sub study can contribute and to learn from the discussions of how societies in the EU have translated governance views on addiction problems into practices, by providing insight on local implementation of governing policy.

3. How the results might contribute to reframing our understanding of addiction or to better policy

Cultural values partly determine the way that causal connections between addictive behaviour and harms are understood in practice: It is up to the professionals filling in the register forms to decide the role of addictions as one of the causes that led to the injury. These cultural representations among personnel also direct their prevention practices. The sub-study will provide important information of the impact of stakeholder values (in this case health care professionals) to an addictive substance (in this case, alcohol) on health care practice.

The results from the study will create a better understanding of how stakeholders’ points of view influence the practical implementation - or non implementation - of prevention measures. We know that well-targeted brief interventions in primary health care can be effective in preventing some of the acute harms related to addictive behaviours. Results from studies looking at everyday practice show that these measures are not widely used by professionals and they do not always fit with the everyday work in primary health care practice. One barrier to putting effective early interventions into practice may be the local cultural representations of addiction-related problems that we are studying here.