



ALTERNATIVES TO STOP STREET DRINKING IN SPANISH YOUNGSTERS. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES WITH OTHER COUNTRIES*.

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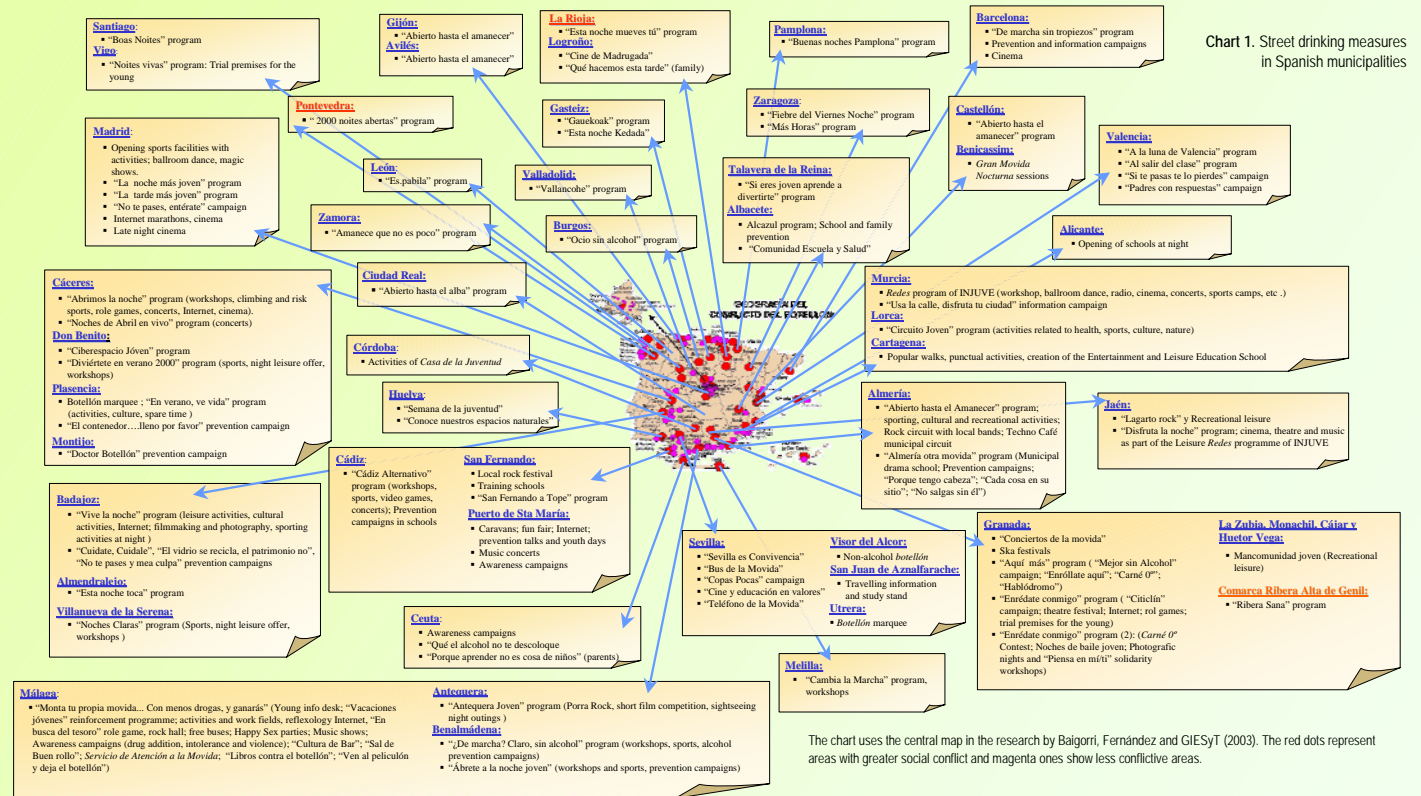
INTRODUCTION

Several experts (Baigorri, Chaves, Fernández, López and GIESYT, 2004; Elzo, 2002; Megias, 2002; Sánchez, 2001) consider that the approach to the alcohol abuse phenomenon by young people in public places (popularly known as *botellón* –street drinking) is neither adequate nor timely. So far, the alternatives put forward in Spain and other countries focus on just two aspects: the **legislative-repressive** one (production of laws and increased police presence) and the **offer of leisure activities at *botellón* hours**. Neither of them –individually or combined– have managed to palliate the problem in the long run. That is why current actions are intended to integrate both legislation and leisure with educational measures. The opinion of the stakeholders must also be taken into consideration in the planning of the actions: youngsters, parents, administration, and alcohol experts.

Our main goal was to review the actions implemented in different countries, but this no longer made sense when we realised how peculiar and complex the *botellón* was in Spain (see P-82 "Addictions", poster P-466). For that reason, none of the solutions proposed by other countries could be applied in Spain. This fact caused us to reconsider our starting aim, and so priority was given to the study of the main alternatives on offer to date in Spanish cities and towns suffering from this problem.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Chart 1 shows the main alternatives (comprehensive programmes, prevention campaigns, isolated activities) carried out in different Spanish towns where street drinking has become a practice. The figure shows provincial measures in RED and local ones in BLUE.



Once the contents of the activities evaluated, three large sections of measures can be established (Table 1). In general terms, distinction can be made between repressive measures (more police in *botellón* sites, tougher laws to control alcohol sales to minors and street consumption), and **social measures** encompassing aspects relative to public order: measures regarding access to pubs (price of drinks, age limitation) and measures connected to the improvement of the sites (cleaner streets, reduction of noise by moving the sites to less populated areas). Finally, among **psycho-social measures** we find leisure activities as an alternative to the *botellón*. To a great extent, they have to do with drug prevention aspects in general.

Those municipalities exclusively implementing **police measures** have only managed to disperse the young, *botellón* sites emerging somewhere else. This type of measure only resolves the public order problem (noise and litter) in a specific location in a very limited way.

REPRESSIVE – COERCIVE – LEGISLATIVE MEASURES	
CURRENT	INCREASED POLICE CONTROL. Enforcing the regulation on CLOSING TIMES of bars/pubs. CONTROLLED SALES AND CONSUMPTION of alcohol outside permitted hours and by minors; Constraints on advertising; Enforcing the legal ban on alcohol consumption in public places.
FUTURE	Specific places for alcohol sales; Information to families; Prohibition of alcohol consumption and sale at night; Penalties on pubs promoting street drinking; Silence edict.
INVOLVING PARENTS	Time to get home; MONEY (Control of weekly allowance).
SOCIAL MEASURES	
PRICE OF DRINKS	Reduce prices in authorised establishments
MOVING THE SITES	<i>Botellódromo</i> , in outskirts, non-populated areas
MAINTENANCE	Intensify cleaning
ESTABLISHMENT	Light establishments (leisure establishment with ban on alcohol supply); Facilitate entrance to pubs (reduce prices and age of admission)
SHOPS WHERE DRINKS ARE BOUGHT	Cooperation of bars/pubs in certain campaigns; Institutional awareness campaigns about problems caused by alcohol in minors, targeted at bar owners and staff; Easier revenue to pub owners
PSYCHO-SOCIAL MEASURES	
LEISURE MEASURES	Indoor swimming pool; Internet; Concerts; Sports centre; Library; Cinema; Dance; Friends meeting room, associationism-voluntary work, light discos
PREVENTION MEASURES	Prevention campaigns integrated in night leisure programmes; Advertising campaigns in mass media; Re-education. Attitude and habit change in the young
ALTERNATIVES with PARENTS	Family support; Parent schools; Re-education on leisure with children
ALTERNATIVES in EDUCATION CENTRES	Specialised professionals; Adequately applied drug prevention; Social skills workshop; Specific and compulsory course in LOGSE curriculum.

On the other hand, we must note the criticism to social measures just aimed at stopping conflict derived from large concentrations of young people (litter, noise, vandalism). For that reason, it is logical to see measures involving the **moving of the sites to non-populated areas**, but such places must be conditioned (free bus transport, toilets, bins...) or **drink prices being reconsidered** at pubs for youths to have access and not occupy public spaces. But these measures do not take into account the health problems posed by the high alcohol intake in people aged 14 to 25 (see poster P-466); much to the contrary, they encourage higher consumption.

Psycho-social measures have little repercussion, as the leisure offer designed by the Administration does not match the demands and needs of the young (activities they might like and at *botellón* times, see P-466 y P452).

In general terms, we can conclude (Chart 2) that the alternatives proposed so far focus on some dimensions of the phenomenon (mainly on the public order conflict in response to neighbour complaints) and on some of the stakeholders (police, youngsters, retailers). We must start thinking of **more global actions** to address the whole of the phenomenon, at the same time taking account of the knowledge available on the variables that take part in the consolidation of a behaviour.



Table 1. Groups of measures applied to reduce street drinking