

Project Barkoukis (Greece)

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A test of the effectiveness of the SafeYou program in four countries. A randomised control trial

Research-led educational interventions have been recommended as an effective way to tackle doping use across levels and types of sport, and WADA has made significant investment in promoting related efforts. The SAFE YOU Anti-doping Education Program was developed through the collaborative efforts of academic experts, athletes, anti-doping practitioners and policy-makers from five European countries with the support of the European Commission's Erasmus+ funding between 2015-2019, and consists of theory-informed and evidence-based diverse and novel offline and online resources for anti-doping education (problem-based learning scenarios, case studies from real athletes, and web-based resources, such as an interactive decision-making support tool). Although the SAFE YOU project has been commented by the European Commission and achieved a "European Success Story" status, its anti-doping educational resources have not been extensively examined in competitive sport. Project SAFE YOU aims to empirically investigate, for the first time, the effectiveness of the SAFE YOU Anti-Doping Education Program among competitive athletes from four countries: United Kingdom, Greece, Romania and Cyprus. Specifically, SAFE YOU aims to:

- a) Level up the knowledge and psychological skills of competitive athletes with respect to doping use.
- b) Support competitive athletes in making informed choices about doping.
- c) Empower athletes to become "clean sport champions" and lead the way for others.

SAFE YOU responds to WADA's 2020 Social Science Research Grant Program strategic priority to increase and enhance research-led anti-doping education by upscaling an existing research-led anti-doping educational program and evaluating its effectiveness across four countries with different traditions, legacy and resources in anti-doping education. Through an international consortium of expert academics and National Anti-Doping Organizations, SAFE YOU Anti-doping education program will be examined and the project will provide anti-doping practitioners and policy-makers with valuable resources for the implementation of evidence-based and empirically-tested anti-doping education.