

Determinants of Intentions for Doping In Sports (DIDIS)

Doping use is a major concern in contemporary sports, reflecting both the issues of unethical practice and the health risk imposed by the systematic use of illegal doping substances. So far, prevention efforts have focused on increasing athletes' risk awareness and raising the ethical issues involved in doping. Yet, there are no interventions aiming at the psychosocial aspects of doping. This is mainly due to the scarce evidence on the psychological profiles of athletes who use, or not use, prohibited substances, as well as on the social factors that encourage doping. The objectives of the project are: a) to identify the motivational profile of athletes who use prohibited substances or have high intention to do so, and compare it with those who do neither use, nor intend to use such substances; and b) identify the social factors (perceived norms and social context) wherein pro-use intentions are formed and translated to action. More specifically, the proposed project intends to:

- a) Provide a parsimonious, theory-driven, and integrated model of the psychosocial determinants of prohibited substance use in sports, and
- b) Examine the effect of psychosocial variables on athletes' intention to engage in doping, in order to inform subsequent prevention interventions aimed at young athletes at risk for doping.

To achieve these objectives a theoretical model, integrating key concepts in motivation and decision making theories, will be developed. This integrated model will provide an innovative theoretical framework for the understanding of doping behavior. The model will be examined in a representative sample of Greek middle- to high-level athletes ($N = 1500$) aged between 18- to 25-years-old with the use of structured questionnaires.

Research towards this direction will assist the development of evidence-based anti-doping interventions, aiming to identify at-risk populations for doping use, and target the immediate antecedents of doping behavior. The project's findings will be diffused to the academic community and public stakeholders involved in the development of doping prevention and related education programs.