Reviewer’s report

Title: A cross-sectional survey of compliance with national guidance for alcohol consumption by children: measuring risk factors, protective factors and social norms for excessive and unsupervised drinking

Version: 3 Date: 3 August 2010

Reviewer: Zila van der Meer Sanchez

Reviewer’s report:

After the revision, the authors have clarified most of my issues on their manuscript. However, some of the answers raised new issues that must be considered in a new revision.

Major compulsory revisions:

For me the major point is the sample. If we don’t have a representative sample (as described in the revised version of the manuscript) it is very important to have stated in the limitations paragraph that the data cannot be generalized and also that the sampling process could produce biased results.

It is very important to state that data was analyses by conditional logistic regression and not by “regular” logistic regression. In the abstract and in the title of the table 2 it is not clear that it was the method of analyses. Please, let it clear for the reader. Also, it would be better if the authors substituted the LR (logistic regression) in the text and tables for CLR (conditional logistic regression).

Another question: the CLR’s were matched by the “local authority of the school”. It is not clear for me what variable was considered in the match (neighborhood of the school? City? County?) In other words: what is the “local authority of the school”?

Another point that emerged from the author’s answers is: if they decided to analyze only the 15-16 years old students because of comparability with ESPAD, why didn’t they made any ESPAD comparison in the manuscript?

I suggest the authors to return to the second part of their aims in the discussion: “From a range of potential risk and protective factors, we examine which are most strongly associated with behaving outside of the guidance and how such associations may inform public health interventions.” My question is “how such associations may inform public health interventions? Please, give practical suggestions.

Discretionary revision:

I would drop off the sentence “consequently weighted estimates have not been calculated” (2 paragraph; methods section), because it is implicit when you use CLR
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'