



EUROSIDER PROJECT

Preliminary results



Context



- Development and evaluation of an educational intervention for PWID in France : AERLI

ITSESI Individually tailored support and Education for Safer Injection (ITSESI)

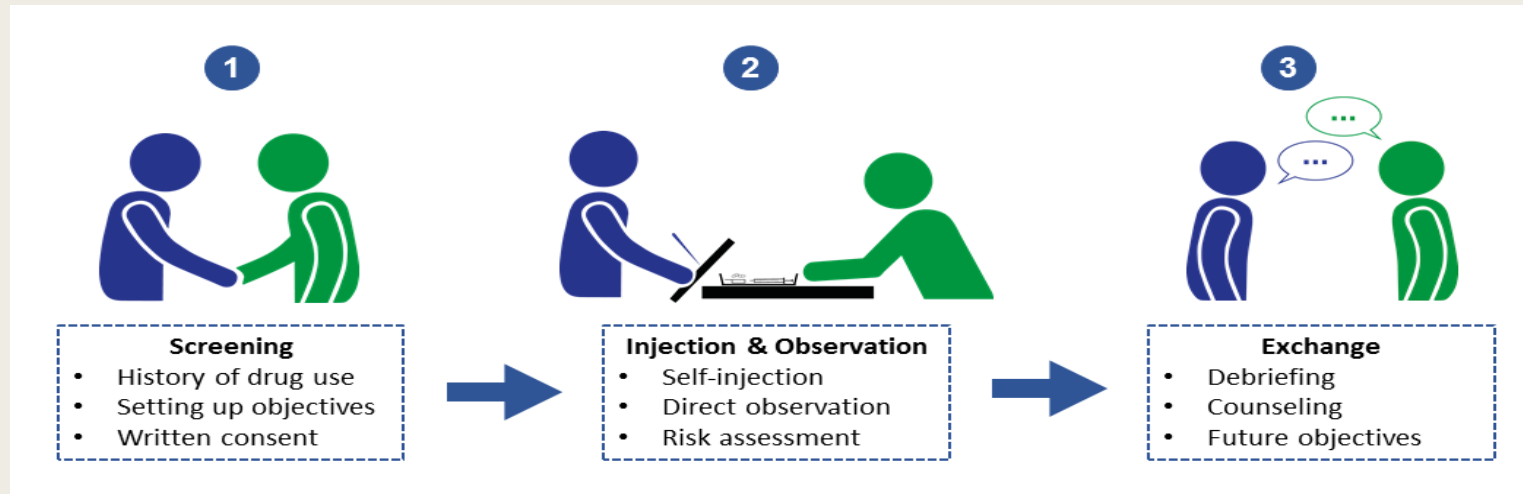
- ITSESI effectiveness (ANRS-AERLI study)

- *decreased HCV risk practices Roux et al, 2016*
- *decreased local complications*
- *improved access to HCV testing Roux et al, 2016*

- Implementation of ITSESI at a European level



What is an ITSESI session?



- **Hygiene** (Whether/how cleaning site of injection/hands)
- **Preparation** (syringe, spoon, fingers, type of product, acidification, water, heating, mixing, filtering, use of spared equipment)
- **Preinjection** (how cleaning site/searching where to inject, leaking needle...)
- **Injection** (arm, legs etc., alternate site, number of attempts, right orientation, speed etc.)
- **Injection done or not** (why not done-observations)
- **Post-injection** (management of bleeding and of used equipment, clean hands)
+ information on HCV prevention and care

Summary of project



EUROSIDER : A EUROpean Safer Injecting Drugs Education Research to reduce HIV/HCV risk transmission in people who inject drugs in four countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Romania)

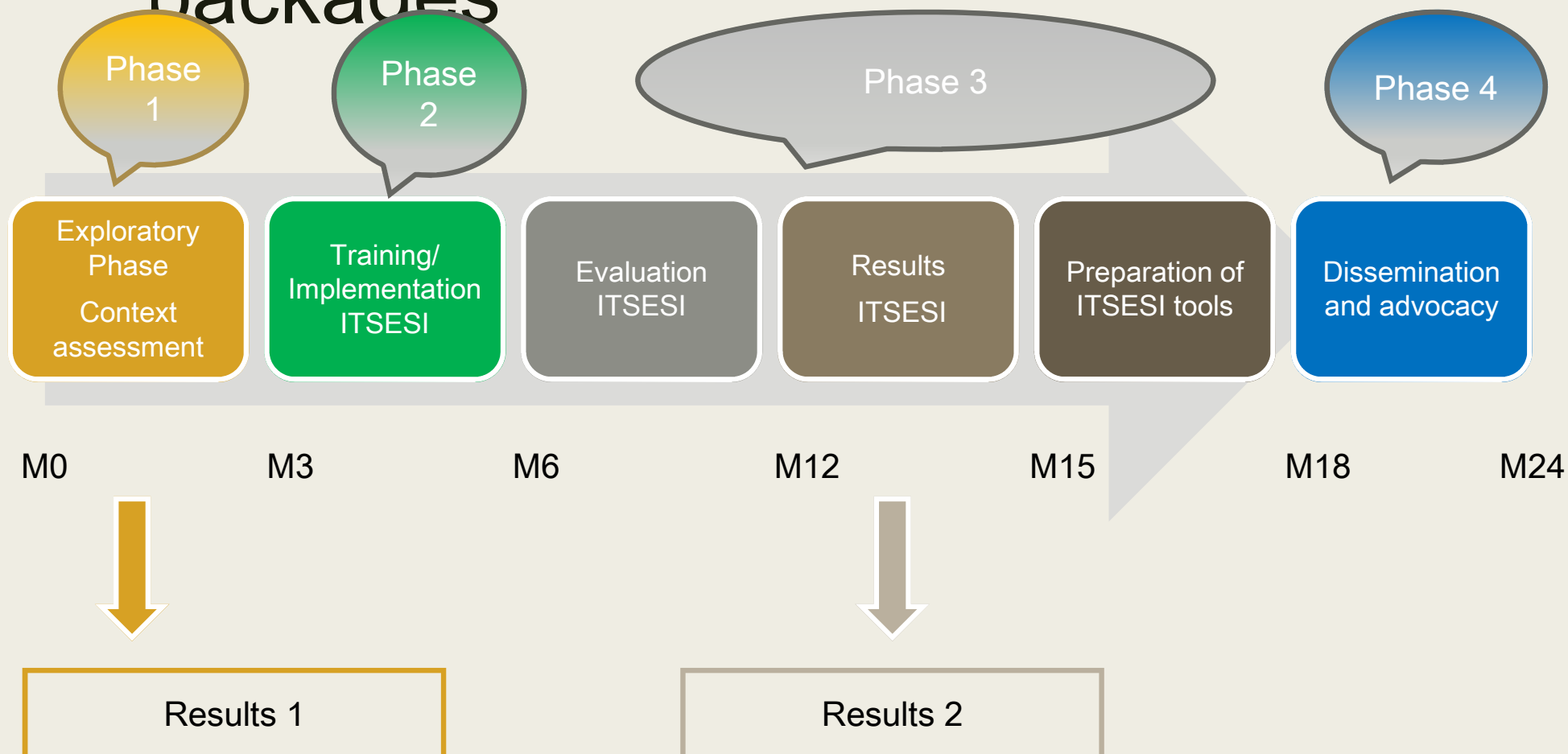
- ❖ The main objective is to implement and evaluate the ITSESI intervention to reduce risk practices among PWID at a European level

- ❖ Specific Objectives:
 - To assess the national and local context of services working in the area of HIV/HCV prevention

 - To prepare and disseminate validated tools for an feasible and effective ITSESI intervention at a European level

 - To advocate on policy level for implementation of these ITSESI tools

Remind Work packages



Phase 1: Exploratory phase (Inserm)

- Objectives:

- Providing an inventory and analysis of each national HR funding and policy context
- Understanding the context of HCV care for PWID for each country involved
- Developing a basis for further ITSESI activities (training and implementation)

- Methods:

- Literature review,
- Questionnaires,
- Focus groups.

- Key information to collect: epidemiology, drug use patterns and injection, policies and legal risks for PWID, Harm reduction services

Results: Barriers

- Political and economic context:
 - *Low funding for harm reduction services (equipment, field workers) in Bulgaria and Romania, financial crisis in Greece;*
 - *Limited coverage of these programs (gender focus, homeless, Roma, health insurance, supply of material);*
 - *Sustainability for field workers;*
 - *Socio-cultural barriers: stigma, patterns of use and increasing needs (injection equipment, testing, treatment), poverty*
- Legal situation makes inconsistent the direct observation of injection

Actions

- Advocacy part moved back to the beginning of the project
- Provision of injecting materials thanks to Apothicom
- Adaptation of ITSESI:
 - *Observation by self-made video (Bulgaria)*
 - *Injection of placebo in PAD (Romania, Greece)*
 - *Direct observation (Portugal)*

Phase 3: Evaluation of ITSESI (Inserm)

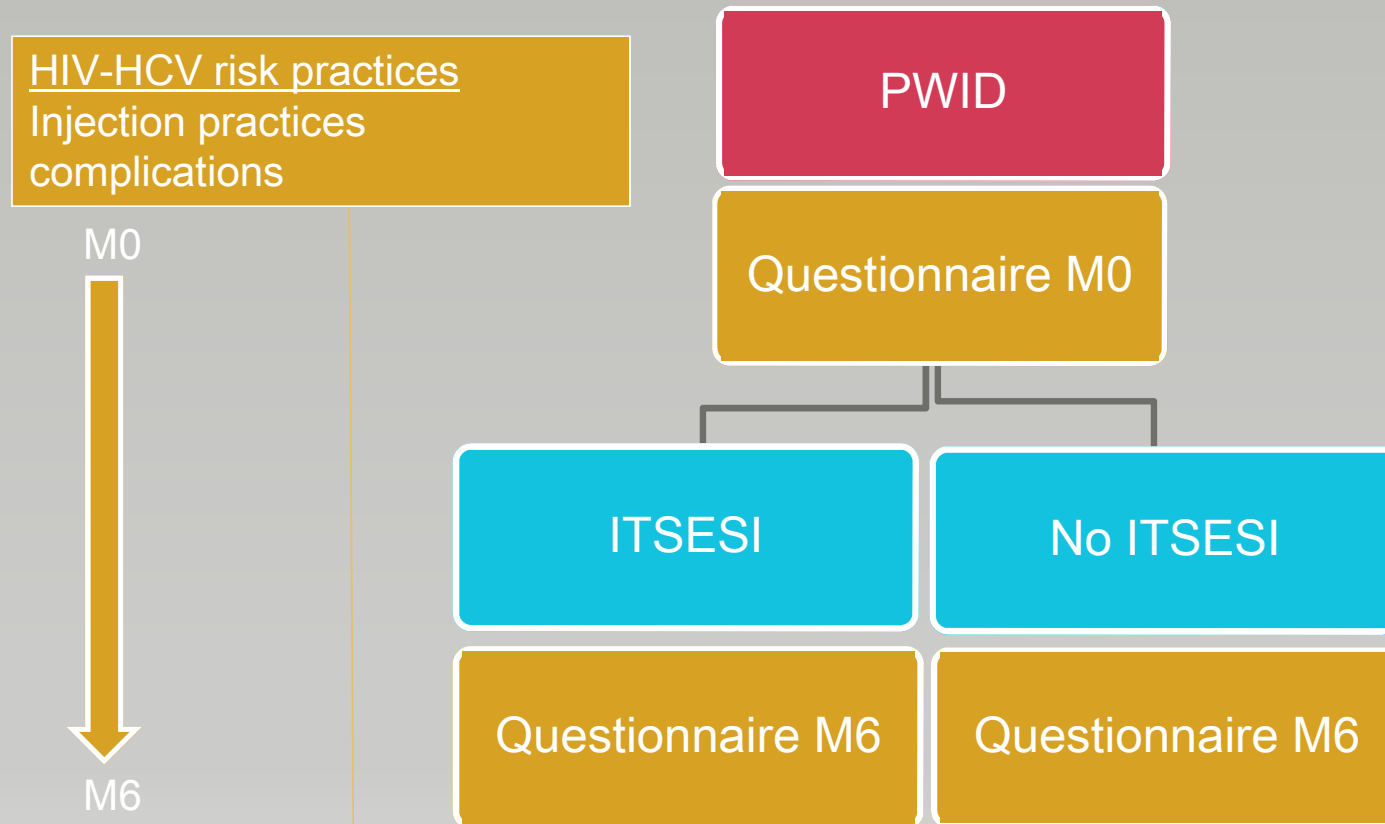
- Objectives:

- To assess the feasibility and the effectiveness of this community-based educational intervention on drug injection in different contexts
- To help improve understanding of field workers' perceptions about this educational intervention and the difficulties they may have with it.-

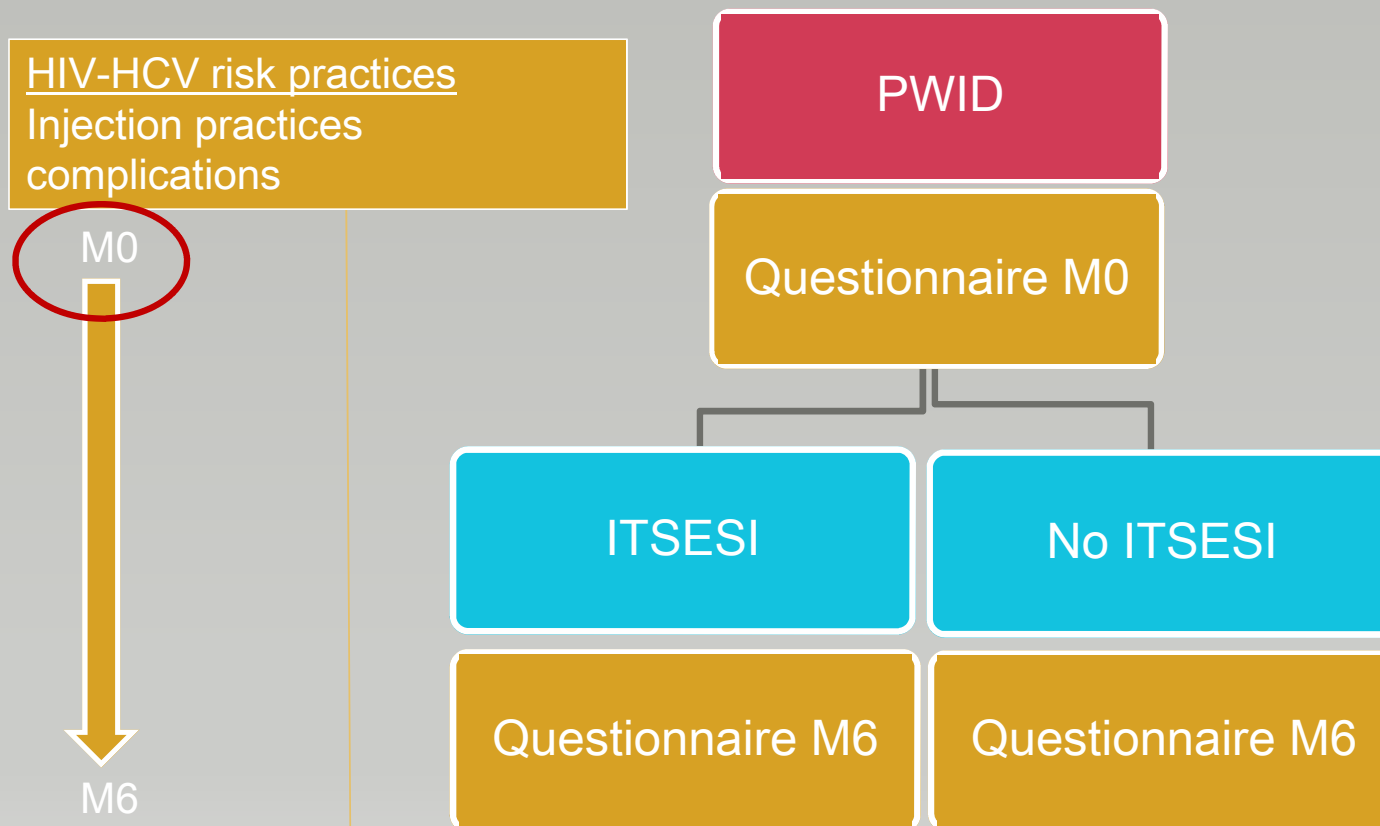
Effectiveness : enrollment of 300 PWID (75 per country), follow-up of 6 months, 2 face-to-face questionnaires (M0-M6), main outcome: HIV-HCV risk practices

Feasibility/acceptability : 2 focus groups with field workers

Phase 3: Evaluation of ITSESI (Inserm)



Phase 3: Evaluation of ITSESI (Inserm)



Phase 3: Results

Table 1. Sociodemographic and health characteristics of ITSESI participants (baseline data, n=305)

	N (%)				Total N=305
	Bulgaria N=75	Greece N=75	Portugal N=75	Romania N=80	
Women	18 (24)	5 (7)	12 (16)	18 (23)	51 (17)**
Median age (IIQ)	38 (34-40)	39 (35-44)	42 (38-45)	36 (32-41)	38 (34-43)
Very precarious housing	3 (4)	16 (21)	29 (39)	1 (1)	49 (16)**
Employment (official or informal)	31 (41)	12 (16)	8 (11)	24 (30)	75 (24)**
History of prison[§]	32 (43)	37 (49)	35 (59)	44 (55)	148 (51)
History of overdose	41 (55)	48 (65)	27 (36)	57 (46)	163 (54)**
Frequent use of HR services^{&}	29 (39)	24 (32)	67 (89)	10 (13)	130 (43)**
HIV testing in the past 12 months^a	35 (60)	38 (81)	34 (72)	34 (65)	141 (69)
HCV testing in the past 12 months^a	10 (71)	28 (82)	19 (53)	13 (62)	70 (67)

§ 16 missing values

& in the past 6 months

^a Among participants who reported being negative for HCV or HIV

** p-value of Chi2 test < 5%

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Phase 3: Results

Table 2. Drug use characteristics of ITSESI participants (baseline data, n=305)

	N (%)			
	Bulgaria N=75	Greece N=75	Portugal N=75	Romania N=80
Drug use				
Daily use of heroin ^{&}	6 (8)	28 (37)	16 (21)	53 (66)
Daily use of cocaine ^{&}	0 (0)	20 (27)	5 (7)	0 (0)
Daily use of crack ^{&}	0 (0)	0 (0)	23 (31)	0 (0)
Use of amphetamines ^{&}	35 (47)	4 (5)	2 (3)	1 (1)
Injection of methadone ^{&}	66 (88)	0 (0)	3 (4)	10 (13)
On opioid substitution treatment^{&}	64 (85)	26 (36)	56 (75)	35 (44)
Injection by another person^{&}	23 (31)	25 (33)	33 (45)	42 (53)
Injection in sexual context^{&}	6 (8)	20 (27)	15 (20)	21 (26)

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Phase 3: Results

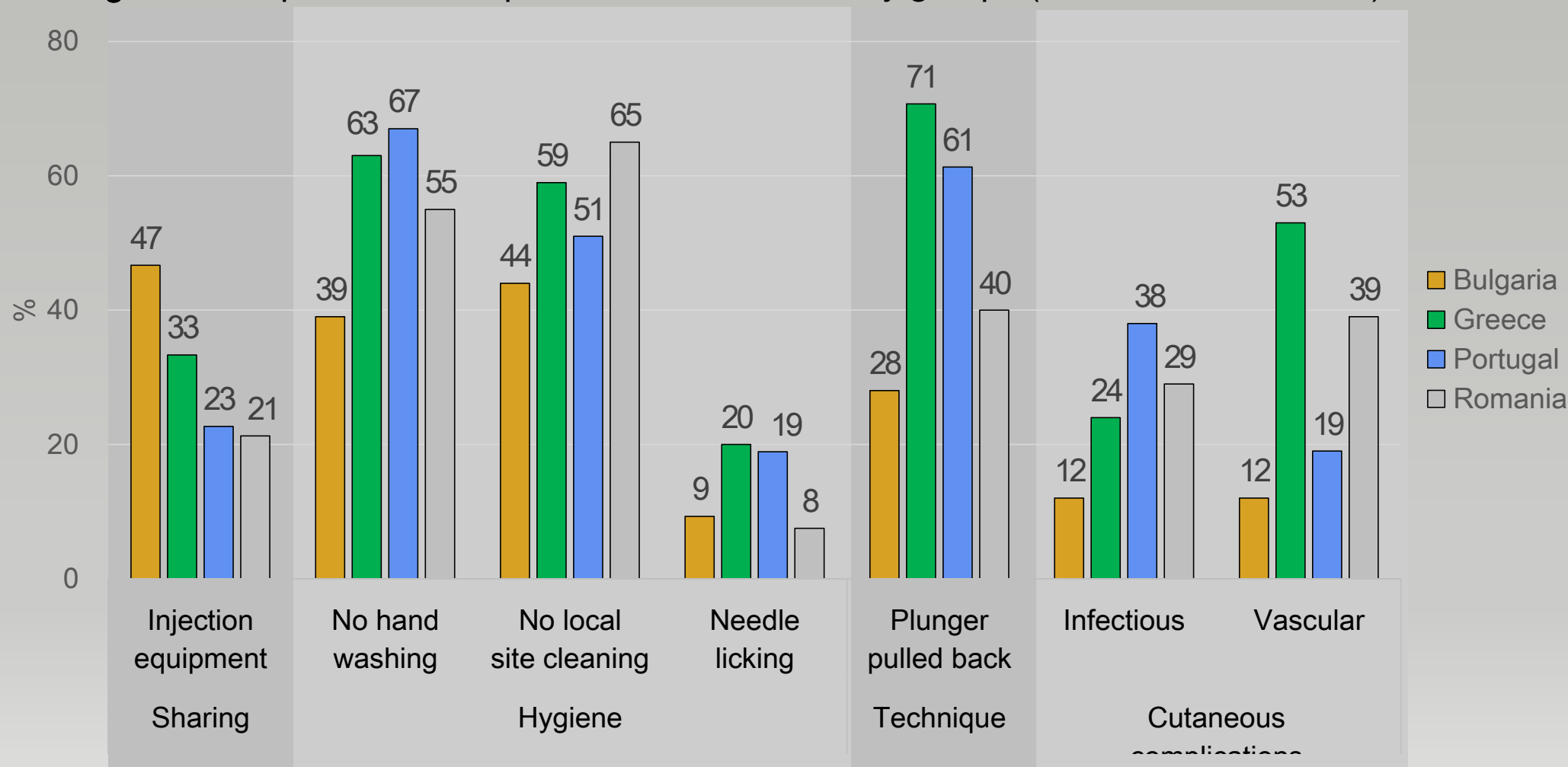
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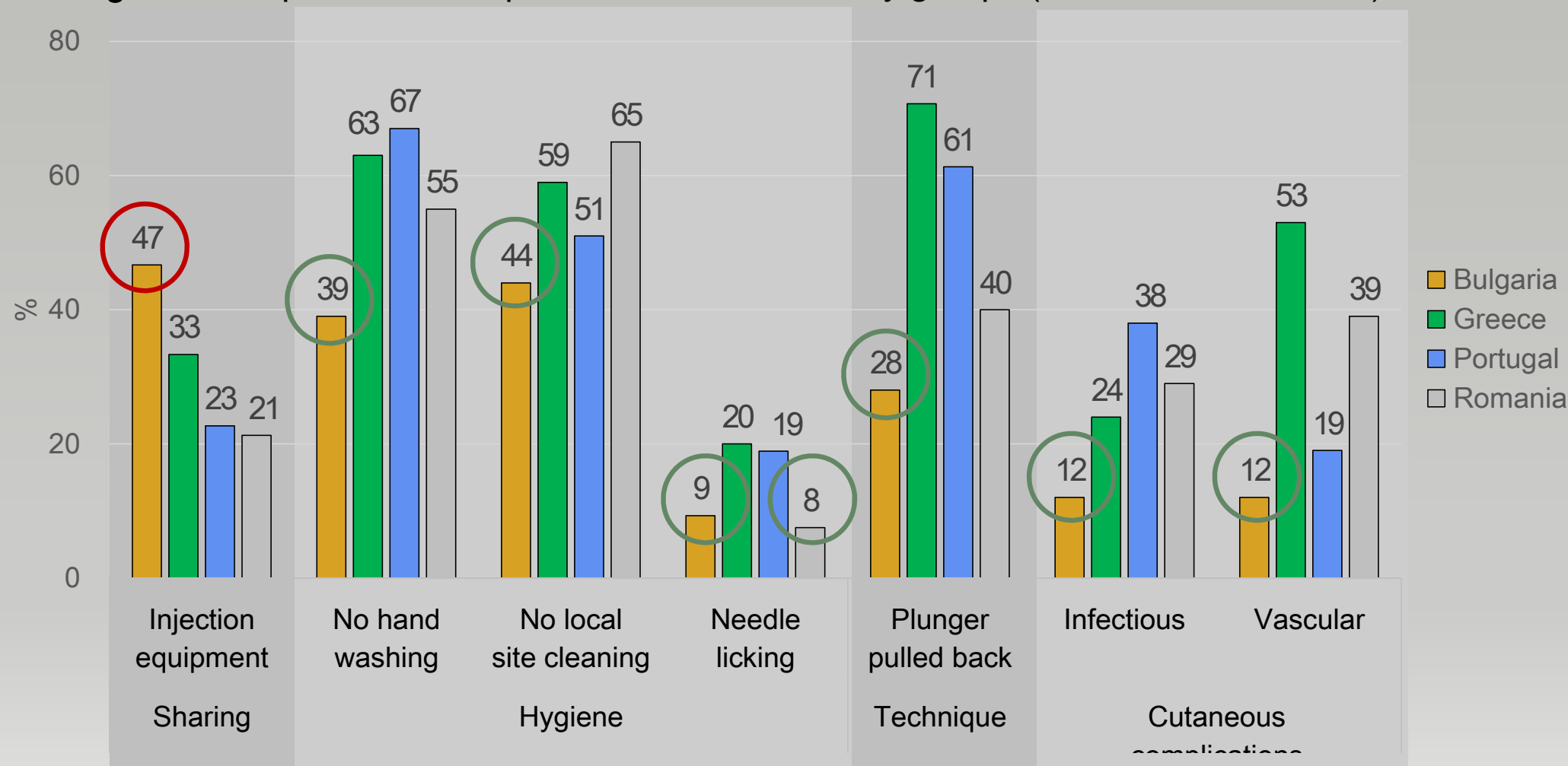
Phase 3: Results

Figure 1. Proportion of risk practices in the 4 country groups (baseline data, n=305)



Phase 3: Results

Figure 1. Proportion of risk practices in the 4 country groups (baseline data, n=305)



Phase 3: Results

Table 3. Factors associated with at least one cutaneous infectious complication during the past 6 months (baseline data, n=305) - Odds ratio from a logistic regression

	Unadjusted OR N=303	Adjusted OR N=302
Country		
Bulgaria	0.23*** →	1.36 (NS)
Greece	0.52*	0.52
Portugal	Ref	Ref
Romania	0.66	2.33
Injection > 2 / day		2.85**
No washing hands		1.73
Heroin injection		1.92*
Speedball use		2.22*
Frequent use of HR services		1.84
Rushed injections due to fear of being seen		2.46***

***: p<1% ; **: p<5% ; *: p<10%

Phase 3: discussion on preliminary results



- Country-specific characteristics : socio-economic status, type of drugs used, material sharing, injecting practices, complications
- Similarities related to PWID : age, gender, prison
- Question: Does ITSESI intervention impact drug injection practices similarly in each context?

Conclusions (1)

- Alarming situation in Bulgaria and Romania in terms of HR funding and drug policy
- In all countries, PWID remain criminalized
- Precarity associated with injection-related complications

Conclusions (2)

- Importance of :
 - *adapting HR interventions to local context (drug policy but also drug use patterns)*
 - *advocating for access to HR services*
- The next step
 - *evaluating ITSESI effectiveness (by using the M6 questionnaire) in terms of sharing, injecting practices and complications*
 - *Scaling up*

Final meeting at the Hep-C summit

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Hep-C
Community Summit
Marseille 25-26 Nov 2019



BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN RESEARCH, HARM
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