



**Statement from the European Expert Conference:
Medical and Economic Disadvantages of Using Alcohol (MEDUSA)**

Poznan, 11-12 October 2011

The participants acknowledge the scientific evidence and the results presented at conference. In the European Union, harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption is the second most significant risk factor for ill-health and premature death. Harmful use of alcohol is a major public health concern. Comprehensive and effective alcohol policies are therefore crucial both at national, regional and EU levels.

Note that in 2006, the European Commission launched its Communication on an EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol-related harm; in 2010 the Sixty-third World Health Assembly adopted the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and, in September 2011 the third European action plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol was adopted.

Note that even if Member States have the main responsibility for national alcohol policy, there is need for international coordination, collaboration and support of the European Commission to complement national public health policies.

The MEDUSA Expert Conference reiterate the Council Conclusions on Alcohol and Health adopted by the EU Health Ministers in November 2009, that the Commission should:

- Continue to provide strong support to Member States
- Report to the Council, in 2012 at the latest, on the progress and outcome of the Commission's work and on activities reported by Member States
- And take steps to ensure that a new EU strategy or action plan will follow the current strategy
- Underline the need to take the necessary steps to ensure that reducing alcohol- related health- and social harm is recognized in the implementation of all relevant Community policies and activities
- Take the necessary steps to protect young people from exposure of alcohol marketing and to provide consumers with evidence based information on alcohol's impact on health
- Acknowledge the need to strengthen closer cooperation between Member States and thus the need to establish a body at European level focusing on monitoring, data gathering policy implementation, prevention and capacity building

Finally, the meeting urges policy-makers to make use of the substantial scientific knowledge base that exists on effective and cost-effective strategies and interventions to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm.



MEDUSAMEETING

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