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Regional Committee for Europe Fifty-fifth session

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Resolution

Framework for alcohol policy in the WHO European Region

The Regional Committee,

Reaffirming that the harmful use of alcohol is one of the major public health concerns, with the highest levels of consumption and harm in the WHO European Region;

Recalling its resolution EUR/RC42/R8, by which it approved the first and second phases of the European Alcohol Action Plan, and the European Charter on Alcohol adopted at the European Conference on Health, Society and Alcohol in Paris in December 1995;

Recalling its resolutions EUR/RC49/R8, by which it approved the third phase of the European Alcohol Action Plan, and EUR/RC51/R4 by which it endorsed the Declaration on Young People and Alcohol adopted at the WHO Ministerial Conference on Young People and Alcohol in Stockholm in February 2001;

Recalling World Health Assembly resolution WHA58.26 on public health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol;

Recognizing that the harm done by alcohol is a pan-European problem with serious consequences for public health and human and social welfare affecting individuals, families, communities and society as a whole, that calls for increased international cooperation and the participation of all Member States in a cost-effective, appropriate and comprehensive response which takes due consideration of religious and cultural diversities;

Acknowledging the existence of socioeconomic and cultural differences, specific biological and genetic features, and variations in physical and mental health;

Noting the need to promote and further strengthen the public awareness of and political commitment to effective measures to combat alcohol-related harm;

Recognizing the threats posed to public health by the factors that have given rise to increased availability and accessibility of alcohol in some Member States;

Recognizing the importance of ensuring that a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach is a governing idea of the implementation of the Framework for alcohol policy in the WHO European Region;

Aware that public health concerns regarding the harmful use of alcohol need to be duly considered in the formulation of economic and trade policy at national and international levels;

Acknowledging the leading role of WHO in promoting international collaboration for the implementation of effective and evidence-based alcohol policies;

1. ENDORSES the Framework for alcohol policy in the WHO European Region outlined in document EUR/RC55/11 as a framework for strategic guidance and policy options for Member States in the European Region, taking into account existing political commitments as well as new developments, challenges and opportunities for national and international action;
2. URGES Member States:
 - (a) to use the Framework to formulate or if appropriate reformulate national alcohol policies and national alcohol action plans;
 - (b) to strengthen international collaboration in the face of increasing levels of common and transboundary challenges and threats in this area;
 - (c) to promote a multisectoral and evidence-based approach which recognizes the need for political commitment and the importance of encouraging mobilization and engagement of the community and civil society in the actions needed to prevent or reduce alcohol-related harm;

- (d) to promote alcohol-free policies in an increasing number of settings and circumstances, such as the workplace, in all traffic, young people's environments and during pregnancy;
3. URGES international, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as self-help organizations, to support the Framework and to work jointly with Member States and with the Regional Office to maximize the impact of the Framework's efforts to reduce the negative health and social consequences of the harmful use of alcohol;
4. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
- (a) to mobilize resources in order to ensure adequate health promotion, disease prevention, disease management research, evaluation and surveillance activities in the Region in line with the aims of the Framework;
 - (b) to cooperate with and assist Member States and organizations in their efforts to prevent or reduce the harm resulting from alcohol consumption and thereby the level of alcohol-related problems in the Region;
 - (c) to mobilize other international organizations in order to pursue the aims of the Framework for alcohol policy in the Region;
 - (d) to continue, revise and update the European Alcohol Information System to reflect the new Framework for alcohol policy in the Region and to include a legal database in the system;
 - (e) to organize the production and publication of a review of the status of and progress achieved in addressing alcohol-related problems and policies in the Region, to be presented to the Regional Committee every third year.