



**WHO Regional Committee for Europe 69<sup>th</sup> session**

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**Written contribution from European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare) and the undersigned organisations to agenda item EUR/RC69/8(E)**

*Roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Health 2020, the European policy for health and well-being: lessons learned from Health 2020*

The European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare) and undersigned organisations supports the European Regional Committee in the development of the Roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Health 2020, the European policy for health and well-being (resolution EUR/RC67/R3). Eurocare suggests taking more action on SDG 3.5 *Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol* in line with the WHO SAFER initiative as action to reduce the harmful use of alcohol will also contribute to many other goals and targets of the 2030 agenda.

Europe is the heaviest drinking region of the world with 9,8 litres of pure alcohol per person (15 + years), well-above the global average of 6.4 litres. Drinking alcohol is associated with a risk of developing more than 200 different types of diseases. Every day in EU+ countries around 800 people die from alcohol attributable causes (291.000 per year). Young people are disproportionately affected by alcohol. While 5,5% of all deaths in a population are alcohol attributable

- 19% or every 5<sup>th</sup> death in the age group 15-19 are alcohol attributable
- 23,3% or every 4<sup>th</sup> in the age group 20-24.

Most of the burden of alcohol-attributable mortality is from liver cirrhosis, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and injuries.

Eurocare would like to thank WHO Europe for taking the lead for many years on promoting alcohol prevention policies in order to reduce alcohol related harm. The latest being the European Action Plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol 2012 – 2020, which was endorsed by all 53 WHO Member States in 2011. WHO has suggested through its publications a set of clear policy options to reduce alcohol related harm. Unfortunately, there are still several policy actions needed to be implemented.



A number of alcohol policy actions as highlighted by WHO needs attention at national level. Health sector responses for early detection, brief interventions and treatment has been evaluated to be one of the best actions.

There is a need for clarity on the most important interventions and implementations strategies to reduce alcohol-related harm. WHO, as the primary norm-setting health agency, should lead this initiative. It might be timely to consider a Framework convention on alcohol. There is a continued need to focus on preventing and reducing alcohol related harm in Europe with a special focus on cross border actions like:

- Alcohol Pricing Policies including increasing taxes on alcoholic beverages
- Restrict exposure to alcohol marketing, with special focus on digital marketing
- Labelling of alcoholic beverages; ingredient listing, nutritional information and health information
- Regulate physical availability of retailed alcohol
- Drink driving policies and countermeasures

Some regulations are national, but several areas can only be tackled effectively with international support and transnational legally binding regulations.

Co signatures

