
Regional Committee for Europe
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Resolution

European action plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol 2012–2020

The Regional Committee,

Reaffirming that the harmful use of alcohol is a major public health concern, 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;

Recalling its resolution EUR/RC55/R1, by which it approved the Framework for alcohol policy in the WHO European Region;

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA61.4 on strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and WHA63.13 on a global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol;

Having considered the European Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2012–2020;¹

Affirming that the Action Plan aims to give guidance about action to fight alcohol-related harm at all levels and to set priority areas for European action, for increased international cooperation and for the participation of all Member States in a cost-effective, appropriate and comprehensive response that takes due account of religious and cultural diversities;

Recognizing that the Action Plan will be in line and coordinated with the European Action Plan on Noncommunicable Diseases 2012–2016, the Framework for action on public health and Health 2020, the new European policy for health;

Recognizing the threats posed to public health by the harmful use of alcohol and the importance of ensuring that in implementing the Action Plan, Member States seek the support and engagement of all the sectors involved in a multidisciplinary approach;

Aware that public health concerns regarding the harmful use of alcohol need to be duly considered in the formulation of economic, marketing 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. AGREES that the European Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2012–2020 offers guidance and policy options for Member States in the WHO European Region, taking into account existing commitments as well as new developments, challenges and opportunities for national and international action;
2. RECOMMENDS Member States²:
 - (a) to use the Action Plan 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;

¹ Document EUR/RC61/13

² And, where applicable, regional economic integration organization.

- (c) to promote and support policies and interventions to decrease the harmful use of alcohol that preserve and protect public health interests while ensuring that measures to this effect remain proportionate and evidence-based;
- (d) to promote an evidence-based approach that includes all levels of government, as well as all affected sectors and stakeholders involved including communities, civil society and the private sector in the actions needed to prevent or reduce alcohol-related harm;
- (e) to promote alcohol-free policies in an increasing number of settings and circumstances such as the workplace, means of public transport, the environments of children and youth and during pregnancy;
- (f) to reduce exposure to alcohol marketing, and in particular to protect children and youth from alcohol marketing of all kinds;
- (g) to ensure, that in doing so, the measures aiming at reducing the harmful use of alcohol comply with international treaties and agreements;

3. CALLS UPON international, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as self-help organizations, to support the Action Plan and to work jointly with Member States and with the WHO Regional Office to develop and implement national policies to reduce the negative health and social consequences of the harmful use of alcohol;

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) to exercise leadership in tackling this public health problem and support policy-makers in Europe with formulating national policies and plans as part of their overall response to noncommunicable diseases;
- (b) to monitor the progress, impact and implementation of the Action Plan, use the information collected to revise and update the European Information System on Alcohol and Health, and use data to compile regular progress reports of alcohol consumption, harm and responses in the Region;
- (c) 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 Action Plan;
- (d) to cooperate with and assist Member States and organizations in their efforts to develop and implement national policies that prevent or reduce the harm resulting from alcohol consumption and alcohol related harm in the Region;

- (e) to promote partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental organizations and between Member States, as well as with WHO, other international organizations and regional actors in support of the Action Plan; and
- (f) to mobilize other international organizations in order to pursue the aims of the Action Plan.