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TWF paper

In developed countries, alcohol is responsible for slightly less than the disease burden caused by tobacco in terms of deaths, but very close to it in terms of DALYs (Disability Adjusted Life Years), therefore it is ranking first or close to it, but in any event very high, as far as harmful effects.

Alcohol advertising on TV has increased tremendously in last few years, and targeting in particular the young generations (which should be prohibited in the first place), with explicit references to sex, sport, social success (which should also be prohibited in any case, regardless to the target).

Public opinion pollings have revealed that alcohol advertisements are identified as favourites by the majority of those surveyed. In particular teenagers believed that the majority of the alcohol advertisements were targeted at young people. This was because the advertisements depicted scenes – dancing, clubbing, lively music, wild activities - identified with young people. Finally, teenagers interpreted alcohol advertisements as suggesting, contrary to the code governing alcohol advertising, that alcohol is a gateway to social and sexual success and as having mood altering and therapeutic properties.

The Culture Committee of the European Parliament has stated in a report *the need to define clearly the content of, and rules on, advertising, in particular that relating to alcohol, which has a particularly harmful effect on children and vulnerable people.*

As from 1st August 2005, within the UE it is forbidden to advertise tobacco on printed media, radio, television, Internet, and also to sponsor international events. We do not see why alcohol, with very similar harmful effect to that of tobacco, is treated so much differently (with the exception of France, where Loi Evin has addressed at the same time TV advertisements on tobacco *and* alcohol).

The emphasis on habits, traditions, economic factors should have no relevance when considering the dramatic figures of deaths (*in Italy one every 15 minutes*). The same as with tobacco, where habits, traditions and economic factors were put aside when deciding about banning all advertisements.

We believe not only the TV advertisements targeting the young people should be matter of concern, but all of them, targeting all consumers, as, whilst young people are vulnerable, there

are other vulnerable categories, like women in general, and in particular women above the age of 65, where consumption is sharply increasing in Italy.

We strongly support the view that alcohol advertisements on TV, Internet, teleshopping, and sponsorships should be banned, along with tobacco, and Article 15 of the previous TWF paper should be amended accordingly.

Ennio Palmesino - President Italian Association of Clubs of Alcoholics in Treatment