

EUROPEAN ALCOHOL AND HEALTH FORUM

SCIENCE GROUP

7th Meeting
25 October 2010

Rue Froissart 101, Brussels

Room 02/169

SUMMARY REPORT

1) Welcome and introduction by the Chair

- The Chair welcomed participants. The Chair established that five members of the Science Group have submitted a letter of resignation. (Annex 1)

2) Quorum (Rules of Procedure, Art. 1.1)

- With six members out of the remaining fifteen present the meeting did not reach quorum. (One more member arrived late and two were unable to attend due to last minute force majeure.)

3) Declaration of interests (Rules of Procedure, Art. 3.4)

- No interests prejudicial to independence in relation to the items on the agenda were declared by members.

4) Adoption of the agenda (Rules of Procedure, Art. 11.6)

- As the meeting was not quorate, the agenda could not be formally adopted. Nevertheless, the draft agenda was used to structure the meeting, with slight modification in the order of the items.

5) Summary report of the previous meeting

- As the meeting was not quorate, the draft summary report of the previous meeting on 18 May 2010 could not be formally adopted. It was noted that the draft report had been circulated to members twice, with no comments received. Absent members' confirmation of agreement with the summary report will be sought by e-mail.

6) Update on recent developments

- A brief update on recent developments was presented by the Commission's services. In the latest meeting of the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action (CNAPA) in September, issues around alcohol and ageing were addressed as a special theme. It was noted that the CNAPA will also be interested in the results of the Science Group's work around alcohol and the workplace.
- The Science Group was briefed about initial plans for launching an external evaluation of the structures set up for the implementation of the EU Alcohol Strategy, including the CNAPA and the Alcohol and Health Forum with its sub-structures. Along with an update of alcohol-related developments in Member States, to be carried out as part of ongoing cooperation between the Commission and the WHO, the evaluations will feed into a second report on the implementation of the Alcohol Strategy and will also inform the Commission's work on alcohol and health after the current Strategy ends in 2012. The evaluation of the implementation structures is planned as a participatory process, and it is likely that the contractor will also turn to the Science Group for input.
- In the meantime, work continues along established lines. The Alcohol and Health Forum's next plenary meeting will take place in November, back to back with the Open Forum which was postponed from April. The Science Group's Chair will report to the plenary meeting on progress on the alcohol and workplace assignment. The plenary meeting will also provide an opportunity to discuss options for renewal of the Science Group's membership. It was noted that on the previous day the Chair has an appointment to discuss alcohol-related issues with the Director-General for Health and Consumers.

7) Information on the renewal of Science Group membership (Rules of Procedure, Art. 7)

- According to the Science Group's Rules, beginning after the second year of its existence, one third of the members should be renewed every year, with the members to step down to be determined by drawing lot. The Science Group held its first meeting in June 2008.
- It was noted that there have already been five resignations from the Group, when at the same time it is only just starting work on its second assignment. On the other hand, the reserve list does not provide a broad enough basis for replenishing the Group. The Commission's services informed the Group that they will be preparing a document for the EAHF plenary to summarise short term and longer term options for renewal of the membership. It is up to the EAHF and its Chair to discuss and decide about the appropriate approach.
- In the following discussion it was highlighted that the Science Group's rules foresee that external experts can be co-opted to contribute to a given task.

8) Work in progress around the alcohol and workplace theme

- Update information on progress and availability of data relating to the alcohol and workplace assignment (EAHF Task request of 22 March 2010) was provided and options for further work were discussed. Participants agreed that work towards quantifying the impact of alcohol on the workplace should be continued as well as

work towards a summary of the state of play across Europe, although a comprehensive overview will not be possible. The importance of clearly defining the terms harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption was highlighted. As regards quantifying the impact on the workplace, participants agreed that there is some room for expanding and updating the currently available summaries, and that the effects of the recession should be given appropriate attention.

- Participants considered that it would be important for the Science Group to draw up its own report on this theme. It was agreed to establish a working group (P. Anderson, M. Martinic, A. Romelsjö) to organise the work and summarise the information. The lack of dedicated resources to carry out the task was noted, and it was agreed that the Commission's financial support would be sought for commissioning assistance in drafting a report, including search and review of the most recent relevant literature. Participants also agreed that involving one or more external reviewers would add to the value of the Group's report.
- As many members of the Science Group were absent from the meeting, it was agreed that written feedback would be sought from those not present on the approach taken by the participants, including any contribution the absent members offer to make. The whole Group would also be contacted for suggestions regarding external experts to be involved as reviewers or otherwise.

9) Agreeing on next meetings

- Participants agreed on the next meeting to be held in March. Suggestions for dates will be circulated to the Group.
- The possibility of a teleconference meeting was raised and discussed. Participants agreed to circulate to members of the Group a proposal to put discussion on technology options for teleconferencing on the agenda for the next meeting.

10) Any other business

- No other business was raised.

ANNEX 1 – List of participants

Name SURNAME	INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION
Prof. Peter ANDERSON	Maastricht University – Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences
Dr. Alberto BERTELLI	University of Milan – Department of Human Morphology
Prof. Ian GILMORE	Royal College of Physicians, London
Dr. Katrin LANG	Tartu University - Department of Public Health
Dr. Marjana MARTINIC	International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP), Washington DC
Dr. Dusan NOLIMAL	National Institute Public Health, Ljubljana
Prof. Anders ROMELSJÖ	Karolinska Institutet, Dept. of Public Health Sciences

EUROPEAN COMMISSION	
Michael HÜBEL	DG SANCO C4
Marjatta MONTONEN	DG SANCO C4

Absent with notice: Irmgard EISENBACH-STANGL, Eileen KANER, Michael KLEIN, Ronald KNIBBE, Jacek MOSKALEWICZ, Alojz NOCIAR.

Resigned: Roumen BALANSKY (16.6.2010), Ludovic DROUET (16.7.2010), Bohumil FIŠER (24.9.2010), Ulrich KEIL (16.6.2010), Alicia RODRIGUEZ-MARTOS (9.6.2010).