



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate C - Public Health and Risk Assessment
Unit C4 – Health Determinants

COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL POLICY AND ACTION

1st Meeting

LUXEMBOURG, 5 November 2007

Summary Report

The meeting was chaired by Michael Hübel, Head of Unit C4, DG SANCO

1. Adoption of the agenda

- The Chair welcomed all participants (*cf. List in Annex I*), stressing the importance of this first meeting of the Committee and underlining the contribution it is expected to make in the process of coordinating government-driven policies aimed at reducing alcohol harm, building on the good practice identified in the Commission's Communication of October 24, 2007.
- The agenda was approved without modification.

2. Presentation of the implementation structure for the EU Alcohol Strategy

- Following an introduction by the Chair, the Commission services illustrated the structure set up for implementing the European Union Strategy on Alcohol. The implementation strategy is based on three main pillars: the [European Alcohol and Health Forum](#) (with its Science Group and the Task Forces on Marketing Communication and Youth-Specific aspects of Alcohol), the Committee on National Policy and Action, and the Committee on Data Collection, Indicators and Definitions. Working across EU policies (transport, education, youth, agriculture...) will provide an additional dimension to this approach.
- The new Committee on Data Collection, Indicators and Definitions will contribute to the establishment of reliable and comparable data on alcohol consumption, drinking patterns and harm, as well as of common indicators and definitions. It will be composed of representatives from Member States, the European Commission, WHO, ESPAD (European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs), EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) and other bodies/organisations; it will be in close contact with other related processes, such as the Lifestyles Working Group (European Health Information System), the European Statistical System, WHO's data bases.... Members of this Committee may be invited to attend meetings of the Committee on National Policy and Action.

3. Role and working methods of the Committee on National Policy and Action

- The Commission services outlined the role of the Committee on National Policy and Action, emphasizing the difference existing between the Forum (aimed at generating concrete and immediate stakeholder action at all levels), and the Committee, which will serve to coordinate and further develop policies on alcohol. To this end, it is essential that members act as focal points in their respective countries, and inform the Committee about developments on alcohol policy.
- The Committee gave the Commission services a mandate for drawing up a draft document on the scope of the Committee's work, its priorities and working methods. The document will be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee.

4. Update on Forum progress

- The Commission services informed the Committee about the outcomes of the 1st Plenary Meeting of the Forum, held in Brussels on 17 October 2007, and on the progress made so far with respect to the establishment of the Forum's two Task Forces (on youth-specific aspects of alcohol, and on marketing communication; observers from the Committee on National Policy and Action may participate in these Task Forces).
- The Science Group which will be created to provide scientific advice to the Forum will be established following a Call for expression of interests. The draft Call text will be published on the SANCO website in November (together with application forms and the declarations of interest¹); the deadline for applications is 31 January 2008.
- Regarding the scope of commitments by Forum members, the Commission services clarified that these are expected to reflect the nature and size of the various categories of Forum members (economic operators, NGO's...).
- As far as Forum membership is concerned, the Commission services underlined that national organisations wishing to join the Forum will be asked to sign the Charter and become members affiliated under the umbrella of one of the existing European-level organisations.
- The summary report of the 1st Forum plenary meeting was distributed.

5. Monitoring of Member States good practice (overview tables)

- Following a brief review of the work carried out so far, the Committee members agreed to check the tables sent in previously once more, and to complete any lacking information with regard to the situation on 1 January 2007.

¹ http://www.ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/alcohol/Forum/alcohol_science_group_en.htm

- The Commission services intend to publish the monitoring tables on the DG SANCO website at the beginning of 2008. This exercise will be repeated on a yearly basis; the new round for 2008 should start in spring 2008.

6. Health Warning labels – state of play

- The Commission services recalled that in line with the Communication, the Commission intends to explore, in cooperation with Member States and stakeholders, the usefulness of developing efficient common approaches throughout the Community to provide adequate consumer information. Such reflections are particularly important as some Member States are planning to introduce warning labels (e. g. on alcohol and pregnancy), and as more generally there is an ongoing discussion about best practice in consumer education.
- During the discussion, the Committee members representing Finland, France, Ireland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Norway presented their countries' developments and plans in this area.
- The Commission services underlined that the Commission will continue to monitor developments in member states very closely; discussions on this important issue will be continued at the next meeting of the Committee.

7. Update on Building Capacity project – Barcelona 2008 Conference

- The Slovenian Committee member summarised the preparations for the [European Alcohol Policy Conference](#). This event, which is co-organised by the Slovenian Presidency and the Spanish authorities within the framework of the ['Building Capacity' project](#) under the 2003-2008 Public Health Programme, will take place in Barcelona on 2-5 April 2008.
- During the discussion that followed, it was proposed to organise the next meeting of the Committee in Barcelona back-to-back with the Conference; the proposed date is April 2 (pm).

8. Report from Member States on ongoing activities, with presentations from Italy and Germany

- The Italian and German Committee members made detailed presentations on alcohol policy developments in their Member States, which were followed by a brief discussion.
- The Commission services thanked the Committee members for their initiative and underlined that Committee meetings should as a general rule foresee this kind of focus on one or two Member States at future meetings.

9. Report from WHO

- The WHO representative reported on ongoing activities within WHO Headquarters and the WHO Regional Office for Europe.
- A particular focus was on the development of a tool for collecting data on alcohol consumption, harm and policies, which could be used to follow up

both the implementation of the Framework for alcohol policy in the WHO European Region and the Commission's Communication on an EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol-related harm; coordinating the implementation of measures under these two policy initiatives is also the purpose of a WHO/EU partnership project due to start early 2008.

- The current survey instrument entitled "Global Survey on Alcohol and Health" has been expanded to include three sections, namely alcohol policy, supply/consumption and health indicators. The information provided by WHO Member States will be essential for the preparation of the Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health, planned to be published in 2009, as well as for an update of the European Alcohol Information System. The survey will start in early 2008.
- A draft resolution for a global alcohol strategy will be discussed by the WHO Executive Board in January 2008. In order to prepare a report for the Executive Board, a consultation with WHO Member States will be held in Geneva on December 3.

10. Any other business

- No further points were raised.

Annex 1 – List of participants

MEMBER STATES	SURNAME	FIRST NAME
Austria - Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Familie und Jugend	KOHL	Doris
Belgium - Expert politique du tabac et de l'alcool	CAPOUET	Mathieu
Belgium - Administratie Gezondheidszorg	VANDENBULCKE	Barbara
Bulgaria - State Psychiatric Hospital of Treatment of Alcohol and Drug Addiction.	TOTEVA ZHENKOVA	Sonya
Czech Republic - Ministry of Health	GOTTVALDOVA	Eva
Denmark - National Board of Health	BROHOLM	Kit
Estonia – Ministry of Social Affairs	BUNDER	Sirje
Finland - Ministry of Health and Social Affairs	TUOMINEN	Ismo
France – Direction Générale de la Santé	TACHE	Cécile
Germany - Bundesministerium für Gesundheit	KIRSCHBAUM	Gaby
Ireland – Department of Health and Children (Health Promotion Unit)	BREEN	Robbie
Italy – Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Osservatorio Nazionale Alcol -CNESPS.	SCAFATO	Emanuele
Lithuania - Public Health Division	KRIVELIENE	Gelena
The Netherlands - Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport	VAN GINNEKEN	Sandra
Norway - Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care services	BULL	Bernt
Portugal - Institute on Drugs and Drug Addiction	CARDOSO	Manuel
Romania - Bucarest National Public Health Institute	STOLICA	Constantin Bogdan
Slovak Republic - Ministry of Health	OKRUHLICA	Lubomir
Slovenia - Ministry of Health	PETRIC	Vesna-Kerstin
Sweden - Ministry of Health and Social Affairs	NILSSON-KELLY	Karin
Switzerland - Federal Office of Public Health- Division of National Prevention Programs	BAERISWYL	Petra
Switzerland - World Health Organisation (Headquarters and the Regional Office for Europe)	RENSTROM	Maria
United Kingdom - Department of Health	ACTON	Crispin

EUROPEAN COMMISSION	SURNAME	FIRST NAME
DG SANCO C4	HÜBEL	Michael
DG SANCO C4	KAMPHAUSEN	Wilfried
DG SANCO C4	KOUKOUNI	Antria
DG SANCO C4	STREY	Monika
DG SANCO C4	VETTORAZZI	Stefano