



The EU alcohol policy

**Expert Group on Social Determinants and Health Inequalities
Meeting, 16 June 2015**

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Is there a need for action to reduce alcohol related harm in Europe?

Alcohol related harm in Europe

10.2 litres of pure alcohol per year (WHO, 2010)



- DALYs (disability adjusted life-years): over 4 million per year
- Great costs to society (E 156 billion) ; premature deaths , health care, absenteeism and unemployment
- Need to reduce the burden of chronic diseases on health systems
- Need to increase healthy life years and productivity

Cross border aspects



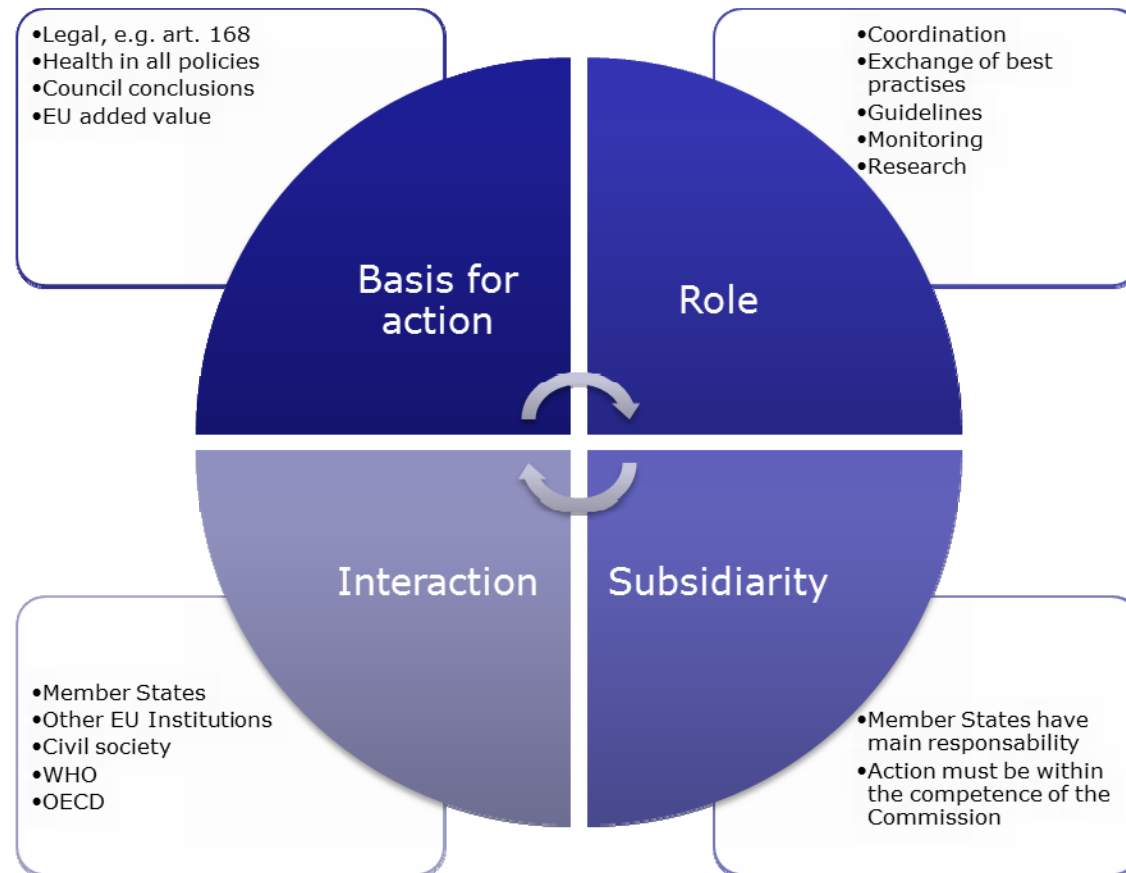
- E.g. cross border sale, advertising
- **Health inequalities: life expectancy between Western and Eastern Europe; Young people**
- Monitoring, exchange of information
- Multi stakeholder approach with EU wide stakeholders

Call for action and support



- Member States, Council
- Parliament (ENVI Committee)
- Civil society

Basis for EC action



The objectives and tools of the 2006 EU strategy are still valid

Much has been achieved (e.g. in Member States and in the European Alcohol and Health Forum)

However, Europe is the region with highest consumption and the level of harm remains high

Continued work to reduce alcohol related harm still needed

The objectives

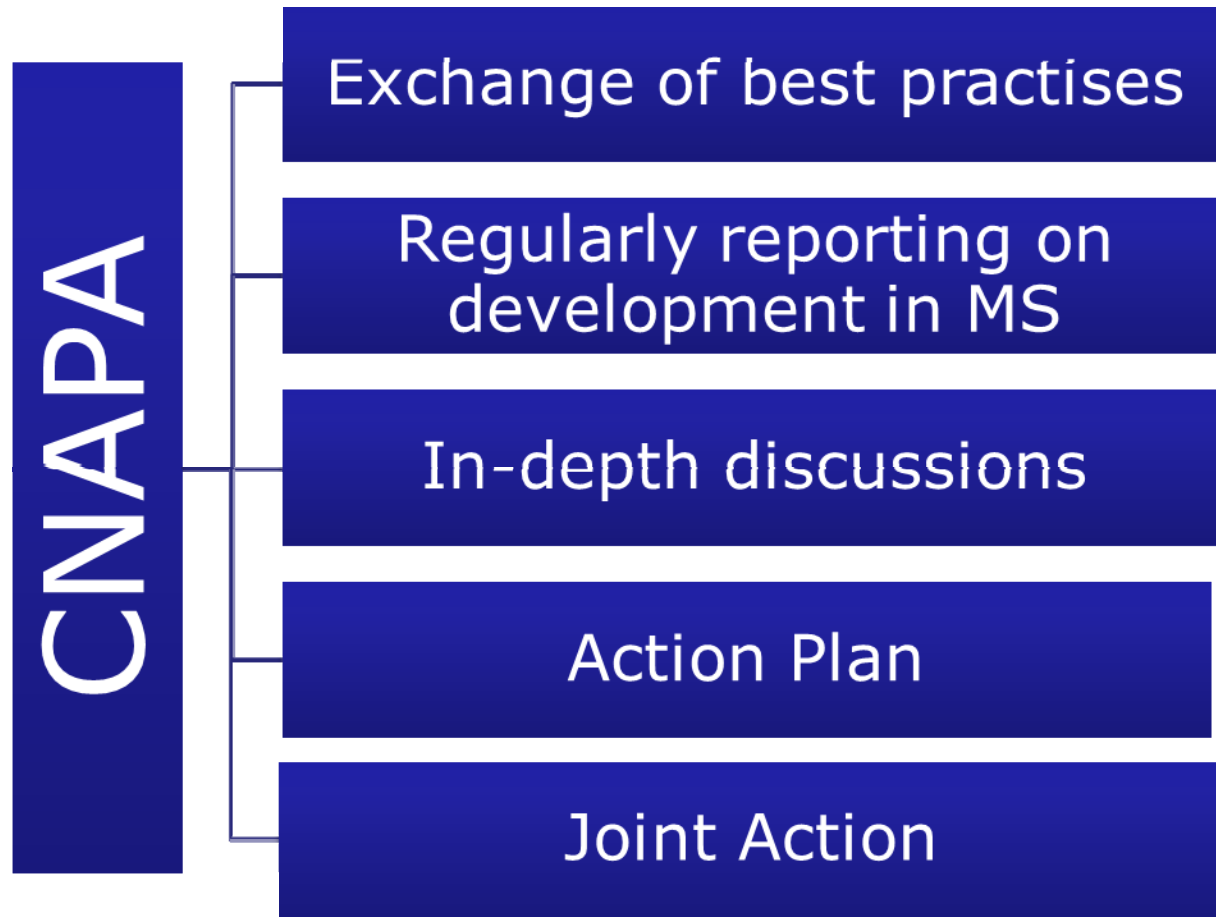
Protect young people, children and the unborn child

Reduce injuries and death from alcohol-related road accidents

Prevent alcohol-related harm among adults and reduce the negative impact on the workplace

Inform, educate and raise awareness on the impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption, and on appropriate consumption patterns

Develop and maintain a common evidence base at EU level





Action Plan on Youth Drinking and on Heavy Episodic Drinking (2014-2016)

Endorsed by CNAPA on 16 September 2014

Lists options for action – voluntary participation

Builds on and supports the objectives of the Strategy

Areas for action:

- Reduce heavy episodic drinking (binge drinking)
- Reduce accessibility and availability of alcoholic beverages for youth
- Reduce exposure of youth to alcohol marketing and advertising
- Reduce harm from alcohol during pregnancy
- Ensure a healthy and safe environment for youth
- Support monitoring and increase research



Best practises and Guidelines

Projects funded under the Health programme

- 3 year Joint Action to reduce alcohol related harm (RHARA)(2014-2016) lead by Portugal, 28 Member States (plus Norway, Iceland and Switzerland) : cf RHARA website
- Collaboration with WHO (data collection to monitor trends in alcohol related harm and implementation of the Strategy) and OCDE
- 2015 work programme: 1.7 million for projects in the area of alcohol: call for proposal launched by CHAFEA on 5 June

2015 Pilot project on Health inequalities includes Alcohol related harm issue



RHARA JOINT Action

Core packages

- **Strengthening monitoring of drinking patterns by implementing a questionnaire and analysing existing data (led by Poland)**
- **Guidelines on low risk drinking (led by Finland) based on countries surveys including need for guidelines for specific groups or situations, types of health related information**
- **Good practice tool kit (led by Slovenia): based on assessment of countries good practices related to early interventions, public communication campaigns and about school based programs education.**



European Alcohol and Health Forum

Includes all parts of civil society

Commit to concrete action

Exchange of information



Forum areas for action

Strategies aimed at curbing under-age drinking

Information and education programmes of the effect of harmful drinking and on responsible patterns of consumption

Possible development of efficient common approaches to provide adequate consumer information

Actions to better enforce age limits for selling and serving alcohol

Interventions promoting effective behavioural change among children and adolescents

Cooperation for promote responsibility in and prevent irresponsible commercial communication and sale



Alcohol and health Forum

331 commitments since 2007

Working group on governance created in 2014

- Conclusions for improving the quality and reporting of commitments published last December
- Prolongation of the mandate
- 2015-2017 Forum Workplan adopted by the plenary meeting which will address the following topics:

Underage drinking, binge drinking, Labelling and Health information , drink and drive as well as workplace



Alcohol and health in all policies

Many of the measures to reduce alcohol related harm are within the competences of the Member States

Existing EU legislation that restricts the Member States possibility to use measures freely:

Example: Advertising

- Ongoing regulatory fitness check in 2015 of the Audio Visual Media Services Directive
- Ongoing study on minors' exposure to alcohol advertising on linear and non-linear audiovisual media services and other online services



For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/policy/index_e

- THANK YOU -