

Stockholm, 9 December 2016



To mr Jüri Ratas, Prime Minister of Estonia
to mr Jevgeni Ossinovski, Minister of Health and Labour

Support letter for alcohol policy plans in Estonia

Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network (NordAN) an international umbrella organization for NGOs in the Baltic and Nordic states, involved in reducing harm from alcohol and drugs to society would like to express our support for the alcohol policy bill that the Government of Estonia has given its approval.

Limiting both alcohol marketing and availability are important measures when a country attempts to decrease the level of youth drinking and alcohol related harm at large. These measures have a strong evidence base and are recommended as the “best-buys” by the World Health Organisation. Together with tax policies it creates a combination of interventions that has the strongest potential.

As a Nordic network we would like to stress that limiting alcohol advertising, reducing alcohol availability and also raising alcohol taxes not only reduces per capita consumption levels but more importantly the levels of alcohol related harm. Even if overall alcohol consumption levels in Finland are similar to Estonia, due to much stronger alcohol policy measures, they experience lower levels of different harms. And even more so in Sweden, Norway and Iceland, where consumption levels are also lower.

As you know, Nordic countries have strong regulations for alcohol advertising. Norway and Iceland have a total ban, Sweden allows only very limited ways for alcohol marketing with a ban for alcohol advertising on television and Finland has been one of the first countries to introduce comprehensive ban for alcohol advertising on social media. This is clearly also one of the reasons why according to a recent ESPAD study, Nordic countries have experienced the biggest reduction in youth drinking.

In order to reduce alcohol related harms, it requires bold and decisive action. We urge you to implement these planned measures and keep on working with evidence based alcohol policies.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Allebeck,
president, NordAN

Lauri Beekmann
Executive Director, NordAN

NordAN was established in September 2000 as a network of non governmental, voluntary organizations who all worked to reduce the consumption of alcohol and other drugs and who supported a restrictive alcohol and drug policy and who did not receive contributions from the commercial alcohol industry. Acting on these principles NordAN today have grown to have 90 non-governmental, voluntary member organisations in all the eight Nordic and Baltic countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden), all active in the alcohol and drug field.