

NordAN

Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network

Assembly of Representatives 11th of October 2008 Tallinn - Estonia

Agreed Resolution:

You often hear that drinking alcohol is a private matter for the drinker, and nothing for the government to worry about.

Nothing could be more wrong.

Alcohol is an important source of harm to other persons than the drinker.

Most visible, alcohol is involved in most incidents of violence.
Either the perpetrator or the victim, or both, are drunk in the majority of cases.

Many traffic accidents happen because the driver has drunk alcohol, which leads to death or injuries for many innocent people.

Hundreds of thousands of children in the Baltic and Nordic states live in families with alcohol problems. This leads to immense suffering, also in cases where there is no physical violence.

The harm that is inflicted by alcohol on other persons than the drinker is the most important reason for governments to try to prevent people from drinking too much. In the Nordic and Baltic states, the habit of getting drunk is still a dominating alcohol problem.

In order to prevent harm to others, both the total consumption of alcohol and the frequency of intoxication must be reduced.

The increased availability of alcohol, together with the marketing activities of the commercial alcohol industry, tends to increase the consumption of alcohol and the harm that follows from it.

Therefore we call on our national governments to implement evidence based policies of prevention, such as higher alcohol taxes and restrictions on availability, as well as enforcement of responsible serving of alcohol and better resources for treatment of alcohol dependence.

We recognize with satisfaction the progress that has been made in the European Union in terms of emphasizing the need for "protection of young people, children and the unborn child" in the 2006 EU Alcohol Strategy, and call on all states in the Baltic and Nordic region to follow up.

The regulations of the EU also have to be adjusted, so that they do not prevent member states from combating alcohol related harm by an active, evidence based alcohol policy.