

**Annual Assembly in Vilnius 22.10.2011**

### **ALCOHOL – NO ORDINARY COMMODITY**

#### **We need the best marketing regulations to the worst social and health harm**

Alcohol is no ordinary commodity and its consumption has been associated with significant harm to both individuals and society. The latest scientific knowledge stresses that there are new challenges in front of us: for instance FASD figures seem to be much higher than official numbers now show. Even the small amounts of alcohol seems to be the risk factor of cancer. Alcohol and elderly and gender differences is rather ignored subject. We are mostly talking about children and young.

Scientific proof is suggesting that alcohol marketing plays an important role and it is still mounting. In order to prevent alcohol-related harm, an effective alcohol policy is necessary. According to scientific data effective regulations on alcohol marketing can contribute substantially to such a policy.

Alcohol marketing regulations in France, Norway, Iceland and Faroe Islands can be seen as the best practices in Europe. NordAN annual Assembly has decided strongly support Lithuanian decision to have total alcohol ban of alcohol advertisement since January 1st 2012. Nordic Alcohol and drug Policy Network ( NordAN) has still decided to support the total ban on alcohol advertising.

Also the research has shown that Nordic and Baltic youngsters (16-24 years old) spend much more time browsing the internet than watching television. Alcohol producers have kept in pace with this development and know how to reach these new consumers through new media. It is obvious that especially young people are reached and attracted by the marketing practices in new media.

NordAN and its 89 member organizations regard that WHO strategy and action plan and European Alcohol strategy 2008-2012 are important push to its member states to act and enforce strategies and law enforcement. Nordic and Baltic actors keep in the future very crucial to continue with a new strategy after 2012 when current strategy ends. Alcohol harm cannot be attacked by short-term interventions. Long-term alcohol policy and enforcement is needed. Without enforcement even strong legislation does not help.