

# NordAN

## Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network

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### Momentum 2009 – NordAN plan of action

#### Strategic goals

We will establish NordAN as a modern, innovative network of organisations in the Nordic and Baltic countries who work to promote restrictive alcohol and drug policies.

Our goal is to influence decision makers at national and regional levels to adopt and implement policies of solidarity, as much as possible based on research and experience.

#### Priorities

We work through giving service to and coordinating our member organisations, but also in direct contacts with decision makers and their administrations at the regional Nordic, Baltic and Northern Dimension level.

Our priority is work on the regional level, but since our possibility to carry out efficient, evidence based policies in our countries is dependent on decisions on the European and global levels, we also need to keep in touch with and try to influence what is happening in Europe and globally.

On the European level, we primarily work through our membership in Eurocare and Alcohol and Health Forum, and as a collaborating partner in the Building Capacity Project and the Alcohol Policy Network. We also cooperate with the Alcohol Policy Youth Network. On the global level we work through submissions to the World Health Organisation, but also by trying to influence our national governments to support the WHO in Geneva and the regional office of WHO in Copenhagen, and to influence the decisions in the WHO and UN bodies to adopt policies in line with our platforms. Global organisations where there is a need for Nordic-Baltic participation are the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA) and the International Council of Alcohol and Addictions (ICAA).

#### Resources and methods

At the beginning of 2009 NordAN has 88 member organisations. During 2009 we hope to increase our membership to at least 100, particularly in the Baltic countries. When our new statutes are adopted, our board will consist of 10 members. We also hope to be able to retain a full time secretary general.

Our communication to member organisations and other interested will include our website and six newsletters. We will also build up a service of articles that can be used by our members in their home countries\*.

#### INTERNAL PROCESSES:

By introducing bilateral co-operation between members in respectively Nordic and Baltic countries on a number of specific issues we will further support the building of umbrella organisations and coalitions in all member countries. Through communication on website and newsletters we are going to reach out and invite all relevant actors to join in this process.

On the basis of the Tallinn Conference conclusions we will invite the introduction speakers of the Tallinn Conference and others to join a web based discussion to examine in depth how the strengthened emphasis on harm to others and the family angle will influence the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention activities – thus building capacity to deal with harm to others.

One of our main activities during 2009 will be the annual conference in October in Helsinki, Finland. In collaboration with the Finish Centre of Health Promotion we will plan and complete the Conference and Annual assembly of representatives in Helsinki 23-25 October 2009. We will support the development of specialized seminars in connection with the annual conference especially a seminar on supplementary training of professionals and volunteers working with prevention (education and social marketing). On the basis of a produced template the national umbrella organisations and selected organisations in the Baltic countries are asked to report back to the secretariat on recent and most important development and own activities in each country four times a year. On the basis of these country reports the board will produce an annual paper on recent developments and area for joint efforts in the next annual action plan.

### **ALCOHOL POLICY PROCESSES IN THE NORDIC AND BALTIC COUNTRIES:**

Analysing and supporting the overriding development and reorganized structures of the governmental co-operation on social welfare and public health issues in the "Northern Dimension area":

Closely follow and support the Nordic Council of Minister's new established **alcohol-committee** which will deal with development of a joint Nordic position towards the development of the EU strategy, WHO strategy and the Swedish Presidency of the EU; support and participate in the Expert Conference to be held in Stockholm in September

In connection with the **Icelandic presidency** of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2009 one of the focal points will be the increased use of medicaments in northern societies: In collaboration with WOCAD (Women's Committee on Alcohol and Drugs) produce a basic thematic article on the gender issue of this increased use of prescribed drugs and maybe establish a workshop or a seminar on the subject in the Helsinki Conference.

In preparation of the **Danish presidency** of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2010, where the issue "Inequality in health" will be highlighted, we will establish a study on the Malcolm Marmot "closing the gap" report from the WHO, and keep close contact and support the Danish authorities involved. This issue can also be handled in a workshop or seminar at the conference in Helsinki.

Active participation in the alcohol subgroup of the Social Inclusion, Healthy Lifestyle and Work Ability (SIHLWA)- meetings of the **Northern Partnership on Public Health and Social Wellbeing**. We are going to participate in both the International Trade Agreements and EC Law seminar in Riga in February and in the planned conference on alcohol industries lobbying civil servants, assist the working group on the HIV/AIDS and alcohol issue and take a leading role in the development of a Family Conference to take place in the autumn of 2009.

In close contact with the civil servants in both the NCM alcohol committee and the SIHLWA alcohol subgroup; NordAN hopes to influence these officials, the governments and the parliamentarians in the northern dimension area.

Prioritised political tasks will be to support the northern dimension co-operation on public health and social welfare; to raise alcohol policy issues connected to the Swedish Presidency of the EU, to promote such issues in connection with the 2009 elections of EU parliament and the selection of a new Commission and off course to prevent the processes of the WHO from being influenced by the drinks industries.

Through our website, newsletters and other relevant media we will select a number of relevant issues; produce thematic articles (templates)\* and at the same time collect and make public links to basic scientific background materials for these articles on the website.

Coordinated initiatives to influence; inform and enlighten the national governments and parliamentarians gathered also at the Nordic Council Sessions (NCS), the Baltic Assembly, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) and in the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Arctic Co-operation – all in all: the Northern Dimension.

#### **EUROPEAN ALCOHOL POLICY PROCESSES:**

According to the NordAN commitment to the **Alcohol and Health Forum** we will use our Nordic and Baltic network to strengthen the support for evidence based alcohol policies. By following this action plan 2009 we are very much doing so. Besides that we will be represented at AHF meetings.

There is a strong Nordic representation in **Eurocare** and as associated member; we will support the issues on the Eurocare's Action plan 2009 by sending their newsletters and other materials to our members and other networks, by participating in the pre-alcohol and health forum meetings that Eurocare are planning to organise and by participating in the annual meeting to take place in Stockholm 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2009.

Being a collaborating partner to the **Building Capacity Project** (BCP) and thus having a seat in the Alcohol Political Network (APN) we will take part in the meetings planned to take place in Stockholm 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> of June

We will further develop the contacts we have with the officers in charge of the WHO programme on non-communicable diseases, injuries and violence and the WHO European framework on alcohol in the **WHO European regional Office in Copenhagen**. We will seek to influence parliamentarians and governments to increase the financial support to the WHO Europe and to man the alcohol consultancy office

#### **GLOBAL ALCOHOL POLICY PROCESSES:**

Late in 2008 NordAN did contribute to the WHO Global alcohol strategy process by sending a contribution and by recommending members to do likewise. In 2009 we will follow up our contribution through the above mentioned initiatives on the national and northern dimension levels and by our contacts to Eurocare, Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA) and the ICAA where already strong Nordic influence and representatives are present. We will seek to uphold our contact to the Nordic- Baltic representative in the WHO board (Estonian Maris Jesse). We support the continuation of a joint Seminar on international Alcohol Policy in Helsinki as a follow up to the seminar in Tallinn.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF NORDAN DRUG POLICY PLATFORM:**

On the basis of the existing NordAN platform and the principles of the NordAN drug policy dialogue project application to the Nordic Council of Ministers we will conduct a dialogue process leading to the passage of a more specific NordAN drug policy platform.

On the basis of our application and a catalogue of selected issues for further discussions we will seek scientific support from the Nordic Council on Alcohol and Drug Research (NAD) in carrying out an extended summer board meeting with the primary goal to write a drug policy platform. In the months ahead of the Helsinki assembly of representatives this will be discussed in depth by all members of NordAN.

During these discussions will be asked what demands and suggestions we will put forward to the parliamentarians and governmental bodies in the Northern dimension area and if and how NordAN shall influence European and Global political processes for instance by membership or support of international NGO organisations and networks as Europe Against Drugs (EURAD) and World Forum Against Drugs (WFAD).

If our application to the Nordic Council of Ministers is not approved, we will nevertheless try to implement as much as possible of this process, leading to a more specific drug policy platform to be adopted by the assembly of representatives in Helsinki.

**\*NordAN article service**

An important tool in the work of NordAN is to stimulate our member organisations to write articles in national media and to help them with both the presentation and the factual content. Therefore NordAN every year will produce a number of articles, often written by persons in our member organisations or other experts who are willing to write for us without payment. The articles shall function as inspiration for articles and/or lectures. They can be used by the member organisations as they please. If they are quoted verbatim, the name of the author should be indicated, otherwise they can be used without acknowledging the source.

Priority articles for 2009

1. **Harm to others.** The theme from our Tallinn conference, giving the reason for a shift in emphasis in the alcohol and drug policy debate from harm to the drinker/drug user to other persons harmed by alcohol and other drugs.
2. **Industrial epidemics.** A scrutiny of the lobbying activities of the alcohol industry and giving reasons for not giving the so called "economic operators" influence over alcohol policy.
3. **The price- the most important policy tool.** Arguments and research concerning the price policy. Border trade. Affordability.
4. **Labelling.** Policy and arguments concerning labelling of alcoholic beverages, in line with Eurocare policy statement.

Possible articles, produced if the resources permit:

5. *Marketing of alcohol towards youth.* Drawing on the findings of the ELSA project.
6. *Alcohol and the elderly.*
7. *The symbolic meaning of alcohol and drinking.* Drawing on writings by Robin Room.
8. *World Trade Organisation.* Risks for national regulations concerning alcohol.
9. *Women and alcohol.* Different gender aspects on the alcohol issue.
10. *The role of schools in prevention.*
11. *Protection of the unborn child.* FAS/FASD and alcohol policy.
12. *Alcohol and public order, violence.* Among other things experiences from Norway and the UK.

In addition we should also have some capacity to produce articles on new topics when need arises during the year.