INFLUENCE THE EU IN 5 MINUTES – ALCOHOL AND CANCER

***DOCUMENT TO HELP INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF MOVENDI INTERNATIONAL ANSWER THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION QUESTIONNAIRE ON CANCER – USE IT IN ENGLISH OR TRANSLATE TO YOUR OWN LANGUAGE IF YOU INTEND TO SEND IT TO MEMBERS***

WHEN YOU TRANSLATE BE AWARE OF THE CHARACTER LIMIT ON THE TEXT ANSWERS (600 CHARACTERS)

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INFORMATION ON HOW YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL CAN PARTICIPATE AND INFLUENCE THE EU'S NEW BEAT CANCER PLAN THROUGH AN OFFICIAL WEB CONSULTATION

BACKGROUND

The European Commission has started work on an action plan against cancer. Strong forces within the alcohol industry are mobilising to prevent the new action plan from mentioning the link between alcohol and cancer. The EU has now asked all citizens: what should the cancer plan include? This is our chance as a movement to mobilise and show the EU that there is strong support for the cancer plan to mention and act on the link between alcohol and cancer! Participation takes 5-10 minutes and the survey is open for everyone to answer until 7 May.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Step 1: Click here
Step 2: Change to your preferred language
Step 3: Scroll down and click on the yellow “Respond to the questionnaire” button
Step 4: Sign in with either Facebook, Twitter or Gmail
Step 5: Read through the introduction of the Commissions Europe Beats Cancer Plan
Step 6: Start filling in the answers to the “About you” questions. To the question “I am giving my contribution as”, fill in “EU citizen” or “non-EU citizen”.

Below, you will find example answers to the alcohol-related questions of the web survey. It is of course optional to use the examples or borrow ideas from them. To the questions that have no example answers, you can answer based on your own experiences or simply leave them unanswered if you wish to.

General Questions part 1

Question 2. What do you think is needed to beat cancer? What do you think citizens can do to help beat cancer?

Alcohol causes cancer. Governments need to use alcohol policy best buys to beat cancer. They also need to ensure public awareness of alcohol’s strong link with cancer. Citizens can help support alcohol policy solutions to beat cancer. They can also help raising community awareness about alcohol and cancer, promote alcohol prevention in their communities and encourage their governments to take policy action to reduce alcohol use at population level. The policy measures should include: 1. Raising the price of alcohol. 2. Limiting alcohol availability. 3. Banning alcohol advertising, promotions. 4. Maintaining and supporting government-run alcohol retail monopolies.

What do you think health professionals can do to help beat cancer?

International research shows that alcohol can cause cancer even at low levels of consumption. Health care systems must develop strategies for informing about this. For example: Health professionals should ask questions about a patient’s alcohol use as part of regular routine questions on diet, exercise, and smoking. It is absolutely important that health professionals are informed themselves about alcohol harm, that they do not promote alcohol myths and that they can inform patients about alcohol’s cancer risk and the fact that there is no safe or healthy amount of alcohol use.

What do you think public authorities/national governments can do to help beat
cancer?


Question 3. "Do you support the idea that the EU should do more to address cancer?"

Choose the "yes" alternative

In which areas do you think the EU should prioritise its efforts

Choose the "prevention" alternative

Which actions would you consider most useful in the areas indicated below?

Choose the "reduce alcohol consumption" alternative

STEP I: PREVENTION - Preventing cancer by addressing risk factors

Question 4. Do you have enough information about how to prevent cancer?

Choose the "no" alternative

What information would you need?

Compared to other cancer risk factors, awareness about alcohol and cancer is shockingly low. The link needs to be clearer at all levels of society, including health care, relevant syllabuses at universities, and in national public campaigns and information related to health and well-being. Moreover, the EU should fund national
information campaigns that inform about the link between alcohol and cancer.

5. Which of the actions below do you think would have the biggest impact on your lifestyle habits (e.g. diet, physical activity, tobacco or alcohol consumption)?

Choose the following
1) Measures on prices (including both taxation and/or incentives)
2) Advertising
3) Legislation

GENERAL QUESTIONS Part 2

18. Tell us what a successful cancer plan means to you. 10 years after we implement the plan, what should have improved in the lives of European citizens?

It should tackle the biggest cancer risk that so far has escaped public and political attention. The cancer plan should enable countries to pursue scientifically proven alcohol policies. In 10 years, countries should: 1. Be able to tax alcohol that is brought in from other EU countries for private use 2. Tax all alcohol based on alcohol content 3. Be able to enforce national restrictions/ bans on alcohol advertising, promotions, also for all cross-border advertising 4. Have high levels of awareness about alcohol and cancer through information campaigns and warning labels on alcohol products.

21. How can you(or your organization) contribute to the EU plan on cancer?

Citizen
I can help raise awareness about the link between alcohol and cancer. I can help promote alcohol-free environments and alcohol-free choices in work and leisure time settings. I can also help support government action on alcohol prevention to reduce the cancer burden.

Organization
Our organization works to raise awareness about the fact that alcohol causes cancer, that there is no safe or healthy amount of alcohol use regarding cancer risk and to
debunk alcohol myths in general. Our organization works to translate evidence into action and supports policy-makers to use alcohol policy solutions for cancer prevention. Our organization also works to expose the alcohol industry to curb their political interference and the myths about their products.

22. Is there anything else that you would like to add that has not been covered in this consultation?

If the EU wants to take the cancer prevention seriously, the EU must stop spending tax money on supporting the marketing of alcohol – a group 1 carcinogen according to WHO - through wine promotional subsidies within the common agricultural policy. Policy action should be coherent. Alcohol’s clear link with cancer, and other alcohol harm in the EU means that subsidies of the alcohol industry lead to higher social, economic and healthcare costs for societies.
In addition, for cancer prevention the EU should implement strategies to help countries to delay the alcohol onset among young people.

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!