Expectations of the project and some general information

Pathways for Health project Berlin 2006

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Expectation 1. Feed in to the Commission’s work on the strategy

- All evidence on effectiveness is essential in the consultation process
- Binge-drinking, Drink-driving and consumer information/health warning labels is identified key areas
In the consultation process

- We need you to get cross-cultural evidence
- We need your network and expertise to develop the strategy – and later on to implement it.
- We need comparable information and data
- We need you to be updated on MS development
Expectation 2. Provide innovative actions

- The EU work doesn't end with the Commissions Communication
- Intervention’s need to relate to a changing world
- Cross-country exchange of new actions is of interest for all (local, national and EU)
Expectation 3. Create reliable information and make it accessible

- Important to identify good practice of drink driving countermeasures (evaluations of good quality)
- Important to collect consumers' views on labelling and other types of consumer information on alcohol
Collect cross-cultural evidence on what has impact on young people’s binge-drinking

- Highest on the Commissioner’s agenda
- Area of common interest for stakeholders, including industry
- Area of common concern for European citizens
The foreseen EU strategy what seem to be the key areas

- To create evidence
- To protect young people
- To protect third parties
- To combat drink-driving
- To prevent alcohol-related harm among adults
- To inform and raise awareness on the impact of alcohol
Emerging consensus

On the protection of young people

- No sales/serving to under-age drinkers – better enforcement
- No marketing activities targeting under-age drinkers
- Support of interventions with a proven effect on under-age drinking
Emerging consensus

On Drink-driving countermeasures

- Better enforcement; Random Breath testing, license suspension,
- Actions to rise awareness;
- Lower Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) for young and novice drivers
- Treatment for repeated drunk-drivers
Emerging consensus

- On the protection of third parties
  - Awareness raising activities on alcohol’s impact during pregnancy and on violence and crime.

- On prevention of alcohol related harm among adults
  - Brief treatment interventions for hazardous and harmful drinkers
  - Responsible beverage service (selling/serving)
Emerging consensus

To create cross-cultural evidence

- A common knowledge base in EU
- High quality research
- Exchange of best practice
Emerging consensus

To raise awareness on the impact of alcohol

- Consumer friendly information; attractive and easy to understand

- Education – but not on its own
Identified controversial issues

**Taxation**

- **Reported “Pros”**
  - price and tax measures are effective and cost efficient tools to reduce young - and heavy drinkers consumption (and total consumption)
  - strong research support.

- **Reported “Cons”**
  - MS with high taxes have problems with harmful drinking
  - no evidence for the effects in Southern EU
Identified controversial issues

Restrictions on sales/serving to adults

- **Reported “Pros”**
  - Strong evidence for policies limiting hours and days of sale – limiting opening hours leads to less violence

- **Reported “Cons”**
  - Research on restrictions on availability is mainly from northern MS – the evidence is not strong in southern MS
Identified controversial issues

Advertising: regulation or self-regulation

- **Reported “Pros”**
  - regulation is more effective: better compliance and enforcement than self-regulation that covers only “members”
  - restrictions on advertising reduces harm

- **Reported “Cons”**
  - self-regulation is more flexible and more effective
  - no evidence that “bans” have significant effects on alcohol consumption and harms
Identified controversial issues

- **Information campaigns/school based education**
  - **Reported “Pros”**
    - information/education resolve all problems
    - some school education is shown to be effective (using the right method)
  - **Reported “Cons”**
    - research shows only small effects, therefore
      - no good use of scarce resources
Identified controversial issues

- Harmonisation: Labelling, Age- and BAC limits
  - **Reported “Pros”**
    - EU added value due to convergence in EU, cross-border trade, globalisation – harmonisation would facilitate trade (labelling) and “uniform rules” (age-limit/BAC; raises awareness
  - **Reported “Cons”**
    - No evidence (especially labelling), this should be national competence; no EU added value.
Next steps

- For the moment finalizing an Impact Assessment
- Draft Communication before summer
- Intention to take forward a Communication in 2006 (adoption by the Commissioners’ in September)
Thank you very much for your attention.......and good luck with your work.