



EG on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (ASA EG)
Thirteen working Meeting
Tallinn, Estonia
3-4 November 2016

Title	Minutes of the 12 th working meeting of the ASA EG
Submitted by	ITA in Coordination with the Chair
Summary / Note	This document outlines the main discussion points and decisions made during the 12th working meeting of the ASA EG

Thursday, November 3

1. Opening of the meeting and welcome

Mr. Bernt Bull, the ASA EG Chair, who chaired the meeting, opened the meeting. Due to other commitments, the representatives from Poland and Lithuania were not able to join the meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The Meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda with the timetable as submitted in document ASA 13/2/1.

3. Report from the NDPHS meetings (CSR, Chairs, and ITAs, PAC side event).

Mr. Bernt Bull (Chair) and Dr. Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) informed about the CSR 26 meeting, held in Sopot and the PAC 12 side event "From Fact to policy and action."

The most important thing at the CSR meeting was the appointment of the new Director of the NDPHS. Ms. Ulla-Karin Nurm, Estonia, was chosen for that position. She previously worked at the public health department of the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia and later at the ECDC in Stockholm, Sweden. Ms. Nurm will start her work from August 2017.

The day before the CSR meeting, the side-event devoted to the presentation and discussion of the PYLL study results obtained in Partner Countries of the Northern Dimension Region took place in Sopot. It agreed that, should the NCD EG be willing to produce a policy brief, this process would be welcome. It can be discussed again by the CSR or PAC

The CSR has decided per the suggestion of Estonia, that the next year PAC side event will be devoted to the Alcohol issues.

The meeting took the note of presented information.

4. Country reports on recent developments in the field of Alcohol and Substance abuse policy developments

Ms. Ekaterina Dobrijana (Latvia) presented the information regarding the current situation in Latvia. The new legislative initiatives are under the discussions at the Latvian parliament (for the second reading). Those efforts include Prohibition to sell beer, fermented beverages, and alcoholic cocktails the ethyl alcohol by volume of which up to 5.8 %, bottled in packaging more than 1 liter. Prohibition to sell beer, fermented beverages, and alcoholic cocktails the ethyl alcohol by volume of which exceeds 5.8 %, bottled in a packaging of more than 0.5 liters. In parallel Ministry is preparing the "*Action plan for the reduction of consumption of alcoholic beverages and limitation of alcoholism for the next period*". The new Plan probably will focus mainly on the rehabilitation and treatment procedure's availability for persons diagnosed with addiction.

Ms. Una Martinsone (Latvia) then presented the Addictive substance use prevalence and trends in Latvia. One of the main issues in this field is the usage of the new psychoactive substance (NPS). Due to changes in legislation, the number of patients using NPS has decreased from 325 in 2014 to 133 in 2015. According to the last ESPAD study, Lifetime prevalence of NPS use among the 15-16 years old population dropped back to the level of 2010. Starting from next 56 mln Euro will be available in Latvia for the Health Promotion in activities for the next five years. In those funds, 36 mln Euro will be offered for the municipalities and the rest of the activities on the National level. It was also mentioned that nine mln Euro from this funds would be allocated for the addiction prevention activities.

While discussing the trends of alcohol consumption among the youth, Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that there is a general trend that young people are drinking less. Among the explanations are the gaming, increased immigration from other countries with the tradition of lower consumption of alcohol and the increased pressure on school results.

Ms. Janna Markulla (Finland) mentioned that according to a current study in Finland there was a big quiet difference in a socio-economic status within the adolescents' alcohol use. Those adolescents with depressive symptoms and parents' of the lower social-economic status increased their alcohol consumption, while in groups that are more affluent the consumption was decreasing

The full presentation on situation in Latvia (in English) is available on the webpage of the Meeting in the post-meeting documentation at http://www.ndphs.org/?mtgs,asa_13__tallinn

Ms. Elena Scvortsova (Russia) presented the information regarding the current situation in Russian Federation. The new changes were introduced in the Russian legislation, and According to the changes alcohol-containing medications and medical products containing more than 0.5% of ethanol of the whole volume were attributed to alcohol containing products. It was also prohibited the producing and selling alcohol in plastic bottles of more than 1,5 liters on 23 June 2016. It is to be stopped on the 1st January 2016. Chair of the Federation Council on 30th March 2016 issued a Decree establishing the Council on the problems of drug abuse prevention at the Council of Federation. The per capita consumption of alcohol in 2015 was 11,8 lt of pure alcohol, including five at or unregistered alcohol.

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Ms.Svetlana Scvortsova (Russia) presented the situation with substance abuse among adolescent in Russian Federation. The trend in consumption of substance use among teenagers-school students 15-17 years in the RF is similar as other countries. They see the decrease in alcohol and drug use among this age group. At the same time, there is a tendency that the consumption of alcohol is higher among the girls than boys

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Ms.Pi Hoegberg (Sweden) presented the current situation in Sweden, starting with general trends with NCDs. It was mentioned that for example that Life expectancy increases, but not for women in low-socioeconomic groups, Mental ill-health decreasing among elderly, but increasing in youth. Tobacco and alcohol use decreases (generally in population), however, the narcotics-related morbidity and mortality increases

According to the ESPAD study results, Twenty-six percent of the Swedish 16-year-olds stated that they had used alcohol during the last 30 days, compared with 48 percent for the ESPAD average.

In the areas of Governmental policies, the Government announced a state inquiry in two parts; part one focused on regulating products containing alcohol and meant for eating/drinking (e.g. alcoholic ice cream/slush, alcohol, etc.), which at present are not covered by the Alcohol Act. Part two concerns alcohol marketing. The inquiry is expected to suggest changes in the legislation. In a written communication (in Swedish: Departementsskrivelse) from the ministry of health and social affairs, the Government proposes stricter legislation regulating the private import of alcohol from other EU countries. The proposal requires the buyer to arrange transporter. The government has awaited the Finnish “Alkotaxi” ruling by the European Court of Justice before acting on the subject.

As for the situation with narcotic drugs, The number of drug-related deaths during 2015 showed a continued increase compared to 2014 and previous years. The mean age is about the same over the last decade – around 40 years of age.

Mr.Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that historically from the political point of view, Norway, Finland, and Sweden had similar alcohol control policies. However, the legal organizing of it is different. As a result, it may happen that Sweden may face some problem with the EU regulations, while it is not a case with Norway and Finland, due to the fact how the lawyers formulate the laws and put different definitions.

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Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) briefly presented the current developments in Estonia. The new alcohol bill is still on hold, unfortunately. It is decided to follow the Latvian example and prohibit the sale of beer in 2L plastic bottles, because according to the current research that is the cheapest beer you can get on Estonian market. The excise tax is rising every year, despite some protests from the general population. As a result, there is now a tendency to bring the cheap alcohol from Latvia.

Ms. Janna Markulla (Finland) briefly introduced the current developments in Finland. The comprehensive reform of the Alcohol Act is under the preparation. The fundamental principles of this reform are: To maintain Alko's retail monopoly and the current licensing system. At the same time to dismantle all unnecessary, outdated or cumbersome norms included in the existing legislation. The proposed changes will tackle issue related to the serving of alcohol beverages on the premises, advertising, production and retail sale. The entry into force of the Alcohol act will be decided during the parliamentary session.

Prof Koshkina (Russia) asked if those changes were easing/liberalizing the Alcohol Policy.

Ms. Janna Markulla (Finland) responded that this was a correct overview of proposed changes

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that still, those regulations were stricter than in many other European countries

As for the Drug Policy, the new resolution is expected to be adopted in late 2016, with five main topics in the Law.

The new stricter Tobacco act entered into force in August 2016. The aim of the Tobacco act is to end the use of Tobacco and nicotine products "a tobacco and nicotine free Finland by 2030."

The full presentation on situation in Finland (in English) is available on the webpage of the Meeting in the post-meeting documentation at http://www.ndphs.org/?mtgs,asa_13__tallinn

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) stated that there are no major changes in Alcohol policies. There are some discussions related to increasing the alcohol strength of be sold in the ordinary shops from 4.7% to 5.6%. However, this proposal was rejected by the Parliament majority. The big discussions are now ongoing towards the duty-free sale of alcohol in the airports. Norway and Iceland allow selling those products in the arrival hall. Parliament has demanded from the government to present report o cost-effectiveness of this kind of system. As for the Drug Policy, there is a proposal to weaken the penalties related to cannabis usage and make a stronger commitment from the health sector's side on the treatment of drug users. The opinion polls are not supporting a broad and comprehensive liberalization of cannabis use and are still supporting the restrictive measures.

The Norwegian institute of alcohol and drugs was amalgamated with the National Public health Institute from first og January 2016. Interestingly researchers at this institute were promoting the idea of usage of snus and electronic cigarettes as a harm reduction element. At the same time the National Public health institute is not supporting this idea, so it will be interesting to follow the dialogues between those two bodies.

The Meeting took note of the presented information

5. NCM activities

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NVC-NCM) will briefly inform about the work of the Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues (NVC), and the relevant activities of the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM). The Nordic Public Health Project arena proposal was finally approved. The aim of the arena will be to channel the project funding for Nordic projects and activities with the overall objective of reducing the Health inequalities with a particular regard to prevention of lifestyle risk issues, like alcohol, nutrition, and physical activities. The arena has a cross-disciplinary approach, and the Secretariat will be based at NVC. The arena will review proposals and recommend funding. Final decision about funding is made by the NCM social affairs civil servants' council. The budget is allocated for the next two years. There is currently three proposals submitted to the arena. One project proposal is related to the research on Alcohol Policy and changes in drinking habits among youths and the elderly. Another proposal is to look at best practices in cannabis treatment in the Nordic countries. Additionally one proposal on tobacco has already been approved for funding.

The final report of the first two-year project on Alcohol harms to others was published and now second project proposal was produced and approved for implementation. During the second part of the project the alcohol harm to others from the life course perspective will be studied. Particular attention will be paid to the impact of Socio-Economic status on alcohol use and harm to others.

Ms. Pi Hoegber (Sweden) asked who was the target group of the NVC projects

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NVC- NCM) responded that the main target group was the Policy makers, politicians, NGOs, and Civil Society organization who can influence the Policymakers.

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) asked if the NVC was addressing the reports coming from other big international activities, like ALICERAP or RARHA.

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NVC-NCM) responded that in the case of RARHA, they were planning to use the survey data for the new project on alcohol's harm to others in a life-course perspective.

The Meeting took note of the provided information.

6. Current developments on International Arena – (Status of implementation of EU Joint action plan on alcohol, RARHA)

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) briefly described the present situation of the next EU Joint action plan on alcohol. The final conference of RARHA took place in Lisbon, and the leaders of all three working packages presented the results of their work. The results of RARHA survey will be introduced at the beginning of December. EU initiated joint action to have a better follow up on the research collaborate with implementing bodies and governments. However, now the EU commission decided not to have a new joint action on alcohol. This is going now to be discussed by the EU Committee on Health Research. The commission has instead proposed a framework project with full EU financing, but were the work will be done by institutions chosen through a tender process. A Clear majority of member states want to have a follow up

with the joint action as the implementation of the first plan became successful. It was also suggested to invite to one of the next meeting the member from the working package on the development of guidelines, to discuss several issues raised during their work.

Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) mentioned that for Estonia the most important part of the RARHA was the working package 4, the monitoring of Alcohol consumption situation (especially the drinking patterns) in Europe. Having the comparable data seems very useful for all countries as it also may help to develop the joint actions. At the same time, it appears that there is some fatigue among some member states towards the next joint action plan, and that can be or reason for unclarity with the second round of joint action plan.

Mr.Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that one problem could also be the fact that not all ministries have used this method and got any gain from the implementation of RARHA. To find some compromise between the member states and the EU commission, Marija Montonen (Finland) has suggested a combination of joint action and the tendering process. The result of this suggestion needs to be seen in a near future. At the same time, EU put aside 4 Mln Euro for the next four-year, for so-called framework tender and action in the field of Alcohol prevention.

The Meeting took note of the presented information.

7. Overview of the ASA EG activities in 2016

Dr. Zaza Tsereteli (ITA for the ASA EG) briefly presented the activities of the ASA EG in 2016. It was mentioned at the beginning of the year, that activity will be very much depending on the resources available and that year 2016 will be used for the preparation of one of the main activities of the ASA EG in 2017, the PAC side event on Alcohol. During 2016, implementation of joint Norwegian – Russian project on Somatic and Alcohol took place (presented in the agenda item 8). In addition to that, ASA EG initiated a workshop related to the Alcohol and Drug Prevention at the Local level. The workshop took place in Poland and was supported by the Norwegian EEA grant and the financial mechanism. Representatives of Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Moldova, Sweden and Norway participated in this workshop. Because of the workshop, the concept paper on the possible future regional project was developed. The idea of the project was also discussed with the Russian Ministry of Health and it was agreed that if Russian Federation would find the project interesting, it may join with their financing.

The ITA will develop the draft progress report for 2016, as soon as it is requested by the NDPHS Secretariat and again all the members of the ASA EG will have an opportunity to be actively involved in the finalization of this document, as it was in previous years.

The meeting agreed that the ITA would distribute the concept paper “Prevention activities at the local “ among the ASA EG members, so other countries can decide if they would like to join this possible project.

8. Information from the relevant on-going projects (alcohol and Somatic Diseases)

Ms. Eugenia Koshkina (Russia), briefly reported about the implementation of the Project on surveillance of alcohol and drug use among hospitalized somatic patients. The first phase of the project is completed, and participant institutions are now preparing the second and most critical phase of the project, the study research. The contracts are signed with the hospitals in Oslo and Moscow. The study will include patients admitted to somatic emergency departments. The survey is planned as a collaboration between a hospital in the cities of Oslo and Moscow. The aim is to include approximately 3000 patients admitted for treatment of acute somatic diseases, in each city. The research includes test new and innovative lab methods for analysis of biomarkers for alcohol use combined with questionnaires. It is planned that the actual implementation will start at the beginning of December.

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) once again emphasized the importance of this project and invited other countries to consider the implementation of similar activities in cooperation with the Norwegian National Public Health Institute. The aim can be to assess the situation with somatic institutions dealing with patients many times without giving an advice of going to treatment on alcohol-related harms.

The full presentation (in Russian) is available at the webpage of the Meeting in the post-meeting documentation at http://www.ndphs.org/?mtgs,asa_13__tallinn

The Meeting took note of the presented information and decided as appropriate

9. Cooperation with the International bodies – Report on NordAN's current activities

Mr. Lauri Beekmann, Secretary General, NordAN, presented information on the activities and plans of NordAN. The NordAN's annual conference took place in Oslo, on October 12-13, 2016. The primary focus of the conference was the youth drinking. The aim was to find out the reason behind the positive trends of recent decline in alcohol consumption among the youth. Among the possible reasons were mentioned the internet, which led now to the so-called internet addiction. The religious factor (mainly in Scandinavian countries) was also presented. The conference statement is now under development, and as soon as it is ready, it will also be shared with the ASA EG.

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) asked if there were some connections between the youth drinking patterns and their socio-economic status. Presented at the conference

Mr. Lauri Beekman (NordAN) responded that one study from Oslo showed that the youth from the rich part of Oslo was drinking more than the one from the poor part. It was also mentioned that the last was also place where the Muslim migrants were living

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NVC-NCM) added that during the study on harms to other one research in Oslo show that 15-year-olds in the east part of Oslo were very restrictive and critical towards the drinking, while in the western part, the youth was looking to this issue more easily.

The another problem mentioned at the conference was the lack of the cooperation between the different services working with the youth.

NordAN is preparing a project to map a cross-border issues, to show how big companies are active in various countries and how countries are struggling with this issues. It is also a plan to analyze alcohol policies introduced in the different countries and the influence of other factors (cultural for example) on the situation with the alcohol consumption trends, to facilitate the processes of discussions on alcohol policies in the NordAN partner countries.

Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) mentioned that one of the working packages of AMPHORA project was related to the analyze of the impact of different aspects (culture, globalization, etc...) on the alcohol consumption trends. Culture may define the starting point of alcohol consumption, but the policy sets where it could go.

Last year NordAN published the Nordic Alcohol Policy report. Recently it was released the policy paper on alcohol advertising. The main line of this policy document is the request for the total ban of the alcohol advertising (like in Norway and Iceland).

Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) mentioned that while developing the Estonian white paper on Alcohol, they have learned that may be the total ban on an advertisement could be against the single market rules of EU. However, it still may be applicable depending on the formulations in the law.

Mr. Lauri Beekman (NordAN) also touched the so-called nanny state index, published last year. The Nanny State Index is a league table of the worst places in the European Union to eat, drink and smoke. Sweden and Finland are in the first and second place in this table related to alcohol, meaning that states have very restrictive measures.

Mr.Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that one of the problems could be related to so-called agitation/nanny approach...that socially can be very dangerous. So, while planning the population-based approaches it needs to be taken into account that some methods can be problematic in the long run.

Ms.Triinu That (Estonia) stated that it very much depends on the technics, how the message is delivered to the target group. As an example, she brought the campaign designed for the young people. It came out that warning about the social consequences or positive health consequences were more useful than just frightening with some adverse outcomes and results.

Ms.Eugenia Koshkina (Russia) presented the methodological and clinical guidelines developed in Russia, related to the prevention work of substance abuse. They are available also on the webpage of the Russian Narcological League (www.R-N-L.ru).

The meeting took note of the presented information.

10. Preparations for the PAC side event in 2017

Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) mentioned that the PAC side event coincides now with the Estonian EU Presidency, and this needs to be taken into account while deciding on the time and content

of the side event. One possibility is to conduct the side event in conjunction with EU Presidency conference and give the NDPHS more visibility on the EU arena. Unfortunately at this moment the Estonia's Presidency plan is still not confirmed and as a result no decision about the possible future events. Nevertheless, she proposed to continue preparations for the side event and at the same time to wait for the decision from the Estonian Ministry. As a possible date for the event, she proposed 19-20 October or 2-3 November.

Mr.Lauri Beekman (NordAN) mentioned that NordAN was also planning its annual conference in Tallinn, in 2017.

Mr.Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) replied that ASA EG was intended to work on the side event together with the NordAN, having in mind that they were also planning to organize a conference in Estonia. However, due to the changes with EU presidency, things have been changed and new arrangements needed to be discussed. Still, in any case, the presence of NordAN at the NDPHS Conference will be much appreciated.

Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) recapped the previous discussions concerning the topics of the side event – Cross-border issues (marketing), cross-border trade (including internet sales), affordability (as a cross-border issue), labeling, and finally minimum price unit (with the possible invitation of Scottish representatives). In addition to above mentioned one presentation from Russia (advertising or pricing) is also planned.

Mr.Lauri Beekman (NordAN) suggested contacting the EURO CARE concerning the labeling issues.

Mr. Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) mentioned that the aim is also to develop a ministerial statement, so the topics need to be chosen in a way that all participant countries adopt the statement. The absence of German representative at the ASA EG may have some impact on this process. He suggested that Chair Country contacts the German Ministry with the request to nominate the representative at the ASA EG. He also proposed to start the work on the statement at the beginning of 2017, so that draft will be ready by June-July, meaning that Ministries have enough time to revise and comment on the document.

Mr.Bernt Bull (Norway) point out that the statement in the preamble may have references to the WHO Global Alcohol Strategy and EU Alcohol Strategy. Then it could be brought up some issues that are emerging, that are: Harm to others, Alcohol and the elderly and may be something from RARHA (common survey).

Mr.Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) indicated that ASA EG is also planning to develop a thematic report with three possible topics: prevention among the elderly, prevention among the pregnant women and prevention at the workplace. Therefore, those topics somehow can also be touched in the statement.

Ms.Triinu Taht (Estonia) has briefly presented the plan for the side event with the possible timetable. It was also suggested that not more than six presentations could be planned for the side event. The poster presentations can also be considered for the side event/conference

The meeting agreed that the ITA will draft the provisional agenda with the timetable for the side event, and will distribute it among the ASA EG members. The EG members will send

their comments and suggestions concerning the topics and the names of possible presenters. The ASA EG will continue the preparations for the side event, and at the same time will wait for the decision of Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs concerning the meetings.

11. Development of Possible Thematic report

Mr. Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) presented proposal related to the possible topics of the next thematic report of the ASA EG. Two researchers (Estonian and Russian) selected by the ASA EG to develop the report. The request for the financial support for the development of the report is submitted to the Royal Norwegian Ministry of health and Care Services. As soon as the Ministry decision is known, ASA EG will decide how to proceed with the development of the thematic report.

Ms. Eugenia Koshkina (Russia) noted that the topics were suggested due to their importance and it is fascinating to see how these issues are tackled in the different countries.

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NVC-NCM) mentioned that all those topics were also closely connected with the problem of harms to others, therefore fascinating to study. So, those topics can be somehow linked to the harm to others issue.

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) suggested that while discussing the prevention at workplace, the ASA EG needs to contact the OSH EG and seek their assistance and expertise when developing the chapter of the thematic report.

The Meeting took note of presented information.

12. Development of ASA EG working plan for 2017

Mr. Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) briefly presented the ASA EG action plan for 2017, which was already submitted to the CSR meeting in Sopot. He thanked the ASA EG members for their active participation in the development of that plan. He asked then Ms. Pi Hoegberg (Sweden) to clarify the issue related to the possible project on Cross-border trade.

Ms. Pi Hoegberg (Sweden) informed that the Ministry of Social Affairs of Sweden considering this topic as an urgent issue and they want this work to be done. However, the Public Health Agency of Sweden, which was considered as a possible lead agency for this project, stated that they could not take this role. So, the question remains now which organization can take the lead in this project.

Meeting agreed that Ms. Pi Hoegberg (Sweden) would develop the concept paper, to be distributed among the ASA EG members, to define who can be the lead agency for this project.

13. Strengthening the capacities of the local municipalities to implement efficient and sustainable preventive work.

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that Norway was interesting to follow up on the implementation of ADPY project and to use the EEA grant mechanism for the possible financial support of future activities. One of the first countries that approached Norway with the request of continuation of ADPY activities was Lithuania. Later Poland and Estonia had also expressed their interest. Some elements of the project were put into the activities under the Norway-Moldova bilateral health agreement. Poland has developed a proposal for the workshop on this topic, which was submitted and supported by the EEA grant in Poland.

Mr. Zaza Tsereteli (ITA) informed that based on the discussions at the workshop, the concept paper on the possible regional project has been developed. There is also a possibility to bring to the project the neighboring countries of participant states, meaning that Russia can also join the possible project. This issue was discussed with the Ministry of Health of Russian Federation. The target group of the possible project is 13-25 years old age group, and the duration is three years.

Ms. Svetlana Scovortsova (Russia) stated that their institute was continuing the research of substance abuse among youth in Kaliningrad district.

Meeting decided that ITA will distribute the concept paper to the members of the ASA EG and other countries can decide if they would like to join the project (mainly Latvia). The deadline for the submission of the regional project proposal will be clarified, and the next steps decided accordingly. Mr. Espen Andersen (Norway) will coordinate the follow-up activities

14. Cross-disciplinary cooperation within the NDPHS: a) NCD EG project idea – "Platform for health literacy promotion." Possibilities for cooperation b) HIV/AIDS & AI, Prison Health, Primary Health Care and other topics of the NDPHS strategy)

Mr. Bernt Bull (Chair) presented proposal received from the NCD EG "Platform for health literacy promotion." The aim of the project is the creation of the Common Health Literacy Survey Questionnaire (HLS-EU-Q) for the NDPHS Partnership and to increase the level of knowledge on HL of decision-makers at all levels of governance and to raise their awareness of the importance of HL for people's health and social development.

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NVC-NCM) mentioned that the HLS-EU-Q was an unfamiliar tool and it was also interesting to know the results of the previous survey, which according to the proposal was conducted in 8 countries. Members of the ASA EG have looked up at this questionnaire, but unfortunately, no information was available about the institution or persons behind the questionnaire and also its content.

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) mentioned that the proposal was discussed within the Ministry and they were critical towards this approach as it was only addressing the individuals. Norwegian Ministry submitted its remarks also to the Shanghai Zero draft Declaration. Conference. The Norwegian Position is that in a health promotion context it is crucial to aim for a greater level of «health literacy» at the level of decision makers in other sectors. It is important that "health

literacy" is not reduced to focus only on health information solely to individuals so they can make healthy choices.

Ms.Nina Karlsson (NVC-NCM) mentioned that according to the proposal the NCD EG was aiming to implement the same kind of survey and target only specified groups. However, it is not clear what can be achieved while studying only specific groups without comparing it to the knowledge of the general population, what can be learned if selected only specific groups. Secondly, if the project was still aiming to target only specific groups, similar to the ones from the previous survey, then maybe it was more advisable to start the development of special activities for those groups based on previous findings, and not just repeat the survey.

Ms. Pi Hoegberg (Sweden) noted that there was a lack of references to the evidence-based results of the previous survey. Information on whether methods aiming to increase HL have the evidence base to reduce alcohol consumption or harm is needed. It was not clear if the HL of targeted groups has been changed after the first survey and they have started to behave differently.

Mr.Bernt Bull (Norway) emphasized once again that effective decision is hindered by the lack of knowledge at the professionals level. Therefore the HL project needs to be more oriented towards system and policy makers, then individuals.

The Meeting decided that ITA will share the comments of the ASA EG with the NCD EG and ask them to provide, if possible, the result the previous survey.

15. Next ASA EG meeting

Ms. Nina Karlsson (NCM-NVC) noted that NCM could consider hosting the next meeting of the ASA EG, and that, after discussions in Copenhagen, the ASA EG will be informed about the decision.

Ms.Jana Markulla (Finland) mentioned that in case of negative response from the NCM, she could also discuss in Finland the possibility of hosting next meeting of the ASA EG

Mr. Bernt Bull (Norway) thanked NCM and Finland for its offer to host the next ASA EG meeting.

16. Any other business / issues from the first day of the meeting

No, another business was discussed

17. Adoption of the meeting minutes

The ASA EG Chair proposed that it would send out draft ASA EG Thirteen Working Meeting minutes to the participants on December 3 and that comments on the draft would be due, at the

latest, on 10 December. The revised minutes would be distributed on December 13 to be adopted per capsule provided that no further comments be submitted within one week.

The Meeting agreed to the proposed procedure

18. Closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked the participants and the host, Ms. Triinu Taht, for a great meeting.