



EC "Help" Student Network Meeting
5-7 May 2010 – Riga, Latvia

MAY 7, 2010

YOUTH DECLARATION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

PREAMBLE

We, the young people of Europe, express our concern regarding the future of all Europeans by writing this declaration to promote a healthy lifestyle and to raise awareness of tobacco related issues.

This declaration was composed by participants from 59 youth and student organisations present at the 'Help' Student Network Meeting in Riga, in May 2010.

Created in 2006, the European Youth Manifesto underlines the need for tobacco control policies to be developed at the European Union (EU) level. Progress has been made and smoke-free legislation has been adopted by most Member States. We recognise the steps undertaken by European and national bodies, but we believe there is still significant room for improvement, especially regarding the implementation of existing EU and national legislative measures.

Today, 3 out of 10 citizens of the EU aged 15 and over say they smoke.¹ The tobacco pandemic kills 5.4 million people every year.² That accounts for about 100 million deaths in the 20th century and will account for an estimated 1 billion deaths world-wide in the 21st century.³ Health is a fundamental human right; the tobacco pandemic is man-made and preventable.

EU institutions, national authorities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the media and all other stakeholders must work together with the youth towards the implementation of tobacco control policies. The responsibility for implementation is on all parties.

We, as the future generation, call all Europeans to action, and urge them to follow the subsequent recommendations concerning the problems associated with tobacco addiction:

¹ Flash EuroBarometer, European Commission, No 253

² Mathers CD, Loncar D PLoS Medicine Vol. 3, No. 11, 2007

³ WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic: The MPOWER package. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2008



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The participants of the “Help” Student Network Meeting recommend that EU institutions:

1. Permanently involve European youth in all aspects of tobacco-related issues by establishing a permanent European Youth Network on Tobacco Control.
2. Recommend guidelines for all educational institutions concerning the execution of tobacco control programmes for their students.
3. Develop a strategy for introducing the same tobacco laws and regulation in all Member States.
4. Create a common fund to finance tobacco control projects and independent research, with easy access to grants.
5. Support the reconversion of tobacco growers.
6. Increase the visibility of the Help campaign which should become the platform for tobacco control actions.

The participants of the “Help” Student Network Meeting recommend national authorities to implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), with emphasis on the following:

1. To raise tax on tobacco products and products associated with tobacco consumption, and invest that money in prevention and cessation programmes.
2. To provide financial and political support to NGOs to promote prevention programmes based on non-formal education.
3. To develop compulsory educational programmes on tobacco, adapted to every age and culture, starting from the first year of formal education.
4. To ban all forms of tobacco advertisement, including promotion, sponsorship, donations, scholarships and subliminal advertising.
5. To ban smoking in public places and ensure compliance by combining fines with community service.
6. To restrict access to tobacco products by banning vending machine sales and restricting visibility of tobacco products in shops.



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7. To protect vulnerable groups by increasing awareness of the adverse effects of second-hand smoke.

The participants of the “Help” Student Network Meeting recommend to youth/ student organisations and NGOs:

1. To get involved in decision making processes through advocacy by encouraging, monitoring and evaluating implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.
2. To collaborate and exchange best practices at local, national and international levels. Work towards creating a web-based platform for information sharing and networking.
3. To ensure organisational sustainability and to promote capacity building through knowledge, management and retention.
4. To support tobacco control projects, with research-based data and methods where appropriate.
5. To engage in advocacy with other civil society organisations, e.g. promoting smoke-free events by NGOs.
6. To develop a stronger external image through branding and communication. One aspect of this should be a common smoke-free logo.
7. To reject any funding or collaboration with the tobacco industry or affiliated organisations.