



WHO/EU Evidence into Action Alcohol Project (EVID-ACTION)

Advancing Alcohol Policy for Cancer Prevention High-Level Launch of the IARC Handbook for Cancer Prevention, Volume 20b

14 October 2025, 10.00-11.30 CEST
Auditorium III, UN City and online
Copenhagen, Denmark

24 March 2025
Original: English

Scope and purpose

Alcohol consumption is a significant public health challenge, intricately linked to a wide range of health risks, including cancer. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified alcoholic beverages as Group 1 carcinogens, confirming the strong evidence of their role in causing several types of cancer, including those of the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, liver, colorectum, and female breast. In 2020 alone, an estimated 741,300 new cancer cases globally were caused by alcohol, highlighting the urgent need for evidence-based interventions. In the EU, alcohol consumption was estimated to cause 111,300 new cancer cases in the same year, corresponding to 4.1% of all new cases.

The IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention provide comprehensive reviews and consensus evaluations of the evidence on the effectiveness of preventive interventions that may reduce cancer incidence or mortality. In developing these handbooks, IARC convenes independent, interdisciplinary working groups of international experts who transparently synthesize diverse streams of evidence and translate them into an overall evaluation based on established criteria. Volume 20B of the IARC Handbook of Cancer Prevention specifically focuses on alcohol policies and identifies and evaluates effective interventions and policy measures to reduce alcohol use and ultimately reduce the burden of alcohol-attributable cancers.

Recognizing the pressing need for targeted, evidence-based action, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and IARC, in a framework of the WHO/EU Evidence into Action Alcohol Project (EVID-ACTION), are organizing this high-level launch event to disseminate the handbook's findings, emphasizing its policy relevance and practical recommendations for reducing the global cancer burden associated with alcohol.

The objectives of this high-profile event are to:

- Launch the Handbook for Cancer Prevention Volume 20B with high-level endorsement and maximum visibility.
- Maximize reach and engagement across diverse audiences, including building awareness for the Handbook at the highest level.
- Raise awareness and understanding of the link between alcohol and cancer through scientific evidence and trusted messaging.
- Catalyze political commitment and multisectoral action for stronger alcohol policies across Europe.

- Provide a media-friendly platform to communicate key findings, policy recommendations, and actions of the Handbook.

The target audience of the event are national and regional policymakers, public health officials and experts, cancer prevention experts, representatives from international organizations and non-governmental organizations, researchers and academic institutions, media, journalists and communications professionals.

The event will be conducted as a hybrid event in English language. Interpretation into Russian will be provided.