

For immediate release

HARM REDUCTION POLICIES ESSENTIAL TO PREVENT CANCER, SAY I-COM AND MEPS

- I-Com study, presented at roundtable, finds harm reduction policies must be endorsed in plan to tackle cancer
- MEPs support I-Com's findings and commit to using the Special Committee on Beating Cancer to pressure Europe's Beating Cancer Plan to address cancer prevention and embrace harm reduction policies
- Roundtable is first event that brings together experts and MEPs from 8 countries to highlight harm reduction's potential in Europe's Beating Cancer Plan

Brussels, 30/09/2020

I-Com, the Institute for Competitiveness, yesterday hosted a landmark roundtable, summarised [here](#), in the context of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan bringing together policymakers from across the political spectrum, academics and scientists to present the findings of their [study](#) on best practices to beat cancer.

During the roundtable, the discussion analysed best practices and successes of harm reduction policies across Europe. Enabling citizens to live healthier lifestyles by making less risky products accessible, such as vaping devices for smokers, by conducting education and awareness campaigns about responsible alcohol consumption and by building infrastructure promoting physical activity are examples of the core ideas driving the evidence-based approach behind harm reduction policy. During the public consultations on the Beating Cancer Plan, 20% of submissions highlighted harm reduction's potential role.

Dolors Montserrat, Hosting MEP and a member of the Special Cancer Committee, said:

"I want to thank I-Com for the study just published that highlights how prevention policies aimed at reducing risk factors have a lot of potential to help Europe beat cancer. The Special Cancer Committee and the European Parliament welcome the study findings aimed to contribute to the future actions orientation of the Beating Cancer Plan. Our wish is for the Parliament to play a key role in developing the Plan in effective and fruitful coordination with the European Commission."

Commenting on the roundtable, Stefano da Empoli, President of I-Com, said:

“We were delighted to present our recommendations on how harm reduction can support the prevention of cancer. It is now clear that public health experts, policymakers and academics all support the inclusion of harm reduction policies to help prevent cancer and mitigate the harm caused by tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy diets. Legislators must, at all times, keep patients at the forefront of their minds. Now is the time to embrace harm reduction”

Margratis Schinas, European Commissioner for Promoting the European Way of Life, said:

“Our aim for the Plan is that cancer should no longer mean chances fading away, dropping out from projects, or stigmatisation. Instead, one day, cancer shall mean accessible treatment, recovery and, therefore, life opportunities for all affected people. And this is possible. Up to 40% of cancers can be prevented.”

I-Com’s recommended best practices in minimising the harms caused by alcohol, tobacco and nutrition, include reducing the availability of alcohol, increasing the availability of smokeless tobacco products and building infrastructure promoting physical activity.

ENDS

MEDIA QUERIES

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ABOUT I-COM

The Institute for Competitiveness (I-Com) is an Italian independent think tank based in Rome and Brussels, founded in 2005 by a group of scholars, professionals and managers. I-Com aims at influencing the public debate at national, European and international level, analysing the most important drivers for competitiveness and growth.