1. Following the project called “Quality Nights” relating to health and safety at festive events presented at the meeting of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs on 14 July 2010 (cf. doc. 11906/10 CORDROGUE 63 SAN 148), the Presidency decided to propose Council conclusions regarding this matter.

2. In consultation with the COM and EMCDDA, draft Council conclusions were presented and examined at the HDG meetings of 13 September 2010 and of 12 October 2010.

3. On the basis of these discussions and taking into account the last comments of the delegations after the meeting of 12 October, the draft Council conclusions on the prevention and reduction of health and social risks associated with the use of illicit drugs in recreational settings were finalised.

4. Consequently, COREPER is invited to confirm the agreement on the text of the draft conclusions, as set out in annex, and to submit it to the Council for approval.
THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. RECALLS

- article 168 of the TFEU, which states that a high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities and that Union action, which shall complement national policies, shall be directed towards improving public health, preventing physical and mental illness and diseases, and obviating sources of danger to physical and mental health (..). The Union shall complement the Member States' action in reducing drugs-related health damage, including information and prevention.

- the EU Drugs Action Plan 2009-2012, which calls on Member States to further develop and implement effective, evaluated indicative prevention for specific high-risk groups of (poly-)drug users, by offering low-threshold access to counselling, problem behaviour management and outreach work where relevant\(^1\);

- the EU Drugs Action Plan 2009-2012, which calls on Member States to develop, implement and exchange good practice guidelines/ quality standards for prevention, treatment, harm reduction and rehabilitation interventions and services\(^2\);

- the EU Strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm\(^3\), which aims to curb under-age drinking, reduce hazardous and harmful drinking among young people, in cooperation with all stakeholders;

- the Council Conclusions on Alcohol and Health\(^4\), which proposes additional measures to reduce alcohol-related harm;

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1 OJ C 326, 20.12.2008; Action 12
2 OJ C 326, 20.12.2008; Action 17
3 COM (2006) 625 final
4 2980th Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 1.12.2009
2. REITERATES

- that Member States have the main responsibility for national drug policies, and that the Commission can further support and complement national policies in this area;

- that the recreational and nightlife setting should be considered as a place for preventive interventions, taking account its particular characteristics and limitations;

- that interventions in recreational and nightlife settings need to be developed principally within the framework of public health policy;

- that acute drug-related health harms and mortality in recreational settings can be avoided by implementing and enforcing public health measures that protect and promote the health of young people, among others by monitoring and enhancing the safety of recreational settings;

- that strategies for reducing the supply of illicit drugs in recreational and nightlife settings should be developed in cooperation with the entertainment and recreational industry;

3. NOTES

- that recent EMCDDA data\(^5\) shows that poly-drug use, with alcohol playing a major role, often takes place in the context of recreational activities, and that during holiday periods and weekends, young people are particularly liable to indulge in poly-drug-related activities that put them at risk;

- that studies\(^6\) conducted in recreational settings report higher prevalence levels of stimulant drugs use than in the general population;

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that the most recent report of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD), and its conclusions indicates that heavy episodic drinking ("binge drinking") increased in young people\(^7\);

4. **CONSIDERS**

- that the Report of the Final Evaluation of the EU Drugs Action Plan 2005-2008 concluded that in the field of indicated prevention – covering, among others, drug use in recreational settings – there is very little information on the existence of such programmes in Member States\(^8\);

- that overall, there is a limited availability of measures to prevent or reduce health risks and drug use and that information on drugs use and prevention measures in recreational setting is scarce\(^9\);

- that interventions in recreational setting are not always based in the best evidence available and that unintended consequences can be provoked by poor quality prevention interventions;

5. **INVITES THE MEMBER STATES**

- to encourage the development of evidence based interventions aimed at the prevention of drug dependence and the reduction of drug-related health and social risks young people may incur in their day-to-day life, including within the framework of their recreational activities;

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\(^7\) European Commission, First Progress Report on the Implementation of the EU Alcohol Strategy, September 2009;

\(^8\) SEC (2008) 2456, 20.12.2008; § 6.1.2.3 (2);

\(^9\) EMCDDA, Annual report on the State of the Drug Problem in Europe, 2009, pag.56, 57, 63;
- to ensure a high level of access to support services and care by pursuing a coherent, and integrated and mutually reinforcing approach between prevention, risk and harm reduction\(^\text{10}\), drug related diseases prevention, treatment and research;

- to consider the introduction of mandatory safety features and recommended or mandatory hygienic measures in recreational settings such as ensuring unlimited and free access to water, the availability of cool-down/ chill-out rooms, the availability of alternative transportation, the limitation of access to clubs for the under aged, etc;

- to ensure the effectiveness and proper implementation of these interventions, by basing them on an inclusive and transversal approach which involves full participation of key stakeholders, including – inter alia - nightlife industry, emergency and prevention services, the police and participants in recreational settings ;

- to facilitate and encourage the collaboration at local level of emergency services, health and social services, the police and the recreational sector, by developing cooperation protocols and procedures in case of incidents;

- to provide in recreational settings objective and accurate preventive approaches that target – among others - the potential consequences of risky behaviour, such as acute health problems due to [poly] drug use, driving under the influence, unwanted pregnancies/ sexual contacts, violations of public order, etc.;

- promoting and encouraging the development of training opportunities for personnel from public health and law enforcement services, as well as for staff in recreational establishments, targeting specifically preventive and risk reduction measures in recreational settings, including in the case of acute health problems;

\(^\text{10}\) Member states can define these terms in accordance with their national legislation and their national practices and strategy.
to enable policies and interventions aimed at creating recreational settings free of drugs and without alcohol abuses and in any case conditions of safety and environmental hygiene, using a integrated and balanced approach between prevention, risk reduction and control;

6. INVITES THE COMMISSION

- to promote cooperation and exchange at EU level with the aim to develop evidence-based approaches and best-practices in the field of indicated prevention, among others by supporting research and development activities that help improve the understanding of the recreational drug use and all its related facets, and to continue to encourage young people to become active partners in promoting their health through actions on youth and health\(^{11}\) and the EU 2020 flagship initiative on youth on the move\(^{12}\);

- to include the field of indicated prevention in recreational settings, in its proposal for an EU consensus on minimum quality standards and benchmarks by 2012, such in cooperation with the EMCDDA;

7. INVITES THE EMCDDA

- to continue monitoring the use of drugs and poly-drug use in recreational settings promoting, through networks and publications, data collection, further development and use of best practice interventions of proven effectiveness.

\(^{11}\) [http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/youth/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/youth/index_en.htm)