



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
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ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ

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BUREAU RÉGIONAL DE L'EUROPE  
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Date: 11 October 2021

Ms Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen  
Speaker of the Seimas  
Gedimino pr. 53,  
LT-01109, Vilnius  
Lithuania

Our reference:	Your reference:
Notre référence:	Votre référence:
Unser Zeichen:	Ihr Zeichen:
См. наш номер:	На Ваш номер:

Dear Madam,

I have the honour to congratulate you on the implementation of effective alcohol control measures over several years, which have led to significant reductions in mortality due to alcohol consumption. By legislating to raise the minimum legal drinking age, restrict hours of alcohol sales and ban alcohol advertising, the Government of Lithuania has demonstrated its commitment to improving the health of its population and saving lives. These innovative policy measures are based on evidence, and are cost effective and deliver high impact, following WHO “best buy” recommendations to regulate pricing, availability and marketing of alcohol.

The WHO Secretariat has provided written advice to the Committee on Health Affairs of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania regarding the current proposals for amendments to the Law on Alcohol Control. I am personally very concerned about these proposals, which would substantially weaken Lithuania’s strong alcohol control policies. They come at a time when Lithuania remains one of the countries in the WHO European Region with the highest levels of alcohol consumption and related harm. Total alcohol per capita consumption in Lithuania is currently 12.8 litres, compared to the regional average of 9.5 litres; and a total of 24.5% of deaths in the country are attributable to alcohol, while the regional average is 10.1%.

I urge you to stay firm and prevent the relaxation of strong and evidence-based alcohol control policies in Lithuania. The more available alcohol is, the more it is consumed, with greater harm to individuals, families and society. Rather than increasing access to alcohol, I would suggest that you complement the minimum drinking age regulations with actions to promote alcohol-free environments. I urge you to retain comprehensive restrictions and invest in activities to ensure full compliance.

The WHO Regional Office for Europe stands by you during this important and challenging period. We are ready to provide support and advice to Lithuania to ensure its continued commitment to implementing effective alcohol-control policies and to avoid losing the progress made, which has not only reduced alcohol-attributable harm in Lithuania, but has also provided a model that other countries can emulate.

Yours very truly,

Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge  
Regional Director

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**Copy for information to:**

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