London, 5th May 2017

The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania

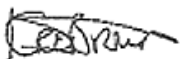**Support letter for alcohol policy measures in Lithuania**

On behalf of the Institute of Alcohol Studies we are honoured to express a strong support for the currently discussed alcohol control policy changes suggested by the Government of Lithuania.

The WHO European Region is the region with the highest alcohol intake and alcohol related harm in the world. According to the latest data of the European Commission, Lithuania is among leading countries with the highest availability of alcoholic beverages in Europe. It is a well-known fact that low availability in line with high alcohol prices and ban of advertisement are the best alcohol policy measures that can efficiently reduce consumption and eventually lower the burden of alcohol harm. These measures are recommended by the World Health Organization and alcohol policy experts all over the world and favourably viewed in the European society. Besides there is a vast amount of scientific evidence supporting the above-mentioned interventions.

In addition, we would like to emphasize that increasing alcohol price is one of the most cost-effective alcohol policy measures that decreases overall alcohol consumption and reduces related harm. Knowing that alcohol is relatively cheap in Lithuania we strongly encourage the Government and the Parliament of Lithuania to take this into consideration when implementing alcohol control policy.

We wish you strength and determination to withstand lobbyist pressure from the alcohol and related industries. It is very important that Lithuania, where alcohol related harm is one of the highest among European Member States take the lead in taking alcohol control seriously. The Institute of Alcohol Studies strongly appeals to every member of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania urging you to stand with your citizens on the side of public health and support proposed alcohol control measures.

Yours sincerely,

Katherine Brown
Director, Institute of Alcohol Studies