

Resolution on upholding the
alcohol retail monopoly
system in Nordic alcohol
policy



The Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network (NordAN), a collaborative civil society body committed to fostering evidence-based alcohol and drug policies across the Nordic countries,

Recognising the critical role the Nordic Alcohol Policy plays as a cornerstone of the respected Nordic welfare state model, globally praised for its dedication to social equality, public health, and a high standard of living,

Acknowledging the foundational premise of Nordic alcohol monopolies, which operate based on responsible sales practices, generating revenue for the state to support public services,

Highlighting the distinct disparity in controlled sales outlet density under the monopoly system, as shown in Finland with its approximately 370 Alko stores exclusively selling beverages above the 5.5% alcohol limit. While approximately 6,400 outlets, including grocery stores, kiosks, and restaurants (with an off-premise sales permit), currently sell alcohol up to the 5.5% limit, any change would permit these numerous locations also to offer beverages with higher alcohol content, significantly expanding the public's access to stronger alcoholic drinks,

Drawing attention to ongoing discussions in Sweden and Iceland about introducing "farm sales," emphasising that such moves could undermine public health by weakening the monopoly system,

Reiterating the benefits of a centralised public monopoly, which is fundamentally rooted in the foundational principle of keeping private profit motives out of the sale of alcohol. This allows for the implementation of ethical standards and prevents the escalation of alcohol sales that would occur under profit-driven models,

Hereby:

1. **Calls on all Nordic countries** to steadfastly support the Nordic Alcohol Policy and its foundational values of health, equality, community cohesion, sustainability, and family well-being.
2. **Urges Nordic nations to consider** the broad consequences of modifying their monopoly systems. Specifically, they should examine the potential spike in sales outlets and its subsequent risks, such as increased alcohol-related harm.

3. **Advocates for the irreplaceable role** of monopoly systems in mitigating alcohol-related issues, including their vital part in reducing addictive behaviours and serving as a preventative measure in addiction rehabilitation strategies.
4. **Emphasises the stakes for Nordic stakeholders**, suggesting that alcohol is not an ordinary consumer good but a societal concern with far-reaching implications, making a state-controlled sales system crucial for public well-being.
5. **Promotes increased collaboration** among civil society, public health experts, and policymakers to preserve the effectiveness and alignment of the monopoly system with the broader goals of the Nordic welfare state.
6. **Recommends that Baltic countries** study the Nordic experience with alcohol monopolies to learn valuable lessons for developing policies prioritising public health and societal stability.

This resolution was adopted by the Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network (NordAN) during its General Assembly meeting held in Tallinn, Estonia, on October 5, 2023.