

Media Release

BIAC Comments on the Release of the OECD Report on “Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use: Economics and Public Health Policy”.

Paris, 13 May 2015 – BIAC commends the focus of the OECD on the importance of health for the success and the productivity of our economies. ***“We need to know more about the effectiveness of policies and innovative solutions that support the health of our people and workforce”***, said Bernhard Welschke, BIAC Secretary General.

In this context, the recently launched OECD study on *Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use: Economics and Public Health Policy* could be seen as a missed opportunity, as the report struggles to offer a comprehensive analysis of the reasons and – most important – the solutions for alcohol-related harm. BIAC members appreciate the challenge to come to conclusions with a limited set of data and projections, but it is important not to jump to narrow conclusions, such as the emphasis on prices, by increasing taxes and setting minimum prices, and greater regulation of advertising as a way to reduce harmful consumption.

In fact, governments and societies need to develop a deeper understanding of the factors that lead to abuse of alcohol and the education and prevention programs designed to curb its incidence that need involvement of all sectors. This was at the heart of recommendations from the BIAC membership that were conveyed to the OECD.

BIAC will continue to facilitate the dialogue on policies and initiatives that allow industry to be a solutions partner in the fight against harmful consumption of alcohol. Industry has been a leader in initiatives to reduce the incidence of underage and binge drinking, and campaigns to improve road safety efforts, among others. ***“BIAC is committed to continue its close cooperation with the OECD to consider the serious and widespread efforts business itself is undertaking to prevent the abuse of alcohol and to promote healthy lifestyles”***, said Bernhard Welschke.

About BIAC:

The Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD advocates for open markets, investment, and private sector-led growth. BIAC is the officially recognized voice of the international business community at the OECD. BIAC's members are the major business organizations in the OECD member countries and a number of OECD observer countries.

For more information, contact [Maud Garnier Bourrelly](mailto:maud.garnier@biac.org), BIAC Communications Director.