

Global Alcohol Policy Conference (GAPC) 2026

8 – 10 April, Rio de Janeiro

Plenary Programme

Conference Theme: Public Health and the commercial determinants of alcohol harm: responses by governments and civil Society

Day 1 – Wednesday 8th April

07:30-08:30 Registration and coffee

08.30-09.30 Plenary 1: Opening – Welcome Speakers

Chair: Charles Parry

9.30 – 10.30 Plenary 1 continued: Regional Developments

Chair: Issah Ali, Western Africa Alcohol Policy Alliance TBC

WHO regional policies and frameworks may have a significant impact on norms supporting alcohol policy regionally and globally. This session highlights some recent successes and provides perspectives from different actors: the WHO secretariat, research engagement and the role of civil society.

1. Xi Yin, Coordinator, Noncommunicable Diseases Prevention and Health Promotion, WHO WPR
2. Carina Ferriera Borges, Head and Programme Manager, Prevention and Control of NCDs, WHO Euro
3. Anja Busse, Team leader, Drugs, Alcohol and Addictive Behaviours (ADA) Team, Department of Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, WHO HQ

10:30 – 11:00 Morning break

11.00 – 12:30 Plenary 2: Commercial Determinants of Inequity – Alcohol policy - reducing inequity by reducing alcohol harm among those experiencing disadvantage and less power.

In many societies those who are disadvantaged through poverty, colonisation, historical trauma and racism have worse health outcomes and alcohol harm contributes to and exacerbates this. Implementation of effective alcohol policies has been shown to contribute to promoting a more equitable society.

Chair: Gayle Amul

1. Monika Kosinska, Global Technical Lead, Social Determinants of Health Equity, WHO
Commercial Determinants of Health: Essential to Addressing Health Inequities
 2. Kristen Maynard, Aotearoa, New Zealand
Power, privilege and the 'colonising taking' – key policy considerations for addressing alcohol harm and inequity
 3. Natana Magalhães, Brazil
Alcohol's role in gendered violence and disproportionate effects among Black Brazilians, call for alcohol policy reform
 4. Pia Mäkelä, Finland
The success of alcohol policy in reducing socio economic inequities in health
- Q and A

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

We encourage you to visit the poster presentations and exhibitions

14:00 – 15:30 Plenary 3: Introduction and Regional/Interest groups workshops

During the negotiations for the UN High-Level Meeting (HLM) on NCDs and Mental Health, held on September 25, 2025, there was significant weakening of the UN HLM NCD document. A review of WHO Global Alcohol Action Plan (GAAP) is expected before its mandate expires in 2030. This may offer key opportunities for engagement with the process.

This session strengthens regional and interest networks and Alliances to support alcohol policy development at national, regional and global level and informs planning towards 2030. Following the introductory speaker, we will break into groups

Chair: Paula Carvalho de Freitas

Speaker: Dr Thaksaphon Thamarangsi (Mek), Chief Representative and Director, CMB Bangkok office

WHO Global Alcohol Action Plan: WHOse Actions and WHOse Plan?

Group workshops

- How do we ensure a process to get a stronger response at global, regional and country level in lead up to 2030?
 - How best to respond to commercial actors' engagement with Member States and UN agencies and reduce their influence on outcomes?
- Africa
 - Southeast Asia and low consumption countries
 - Western Pacific (Asia and Oceania)
 - Europe
 - Latin America,
 - North America,
 - Indigenous peoples

15:30 – 16:00 Afternoon break

We encourage you to visit the poster presentations and exhibitions

16:00 – 17:30 Concurrent session 1

Day 2 – Thursday 9th April

08:00 – 08:30 Registration

08.30-10.30 Plenary 4: Regulating marketing of alcohol

Alcohol marketing remains one of the least well implemented of effective alcohol policies. Many populations express support for regulation to reduce exposure to marketing but government response is slow and the commercial interests are very protective of their marketing which is crucial to their maintenance and expansion of their profits. A comprehensive approach is required including responding to new marketing such as for no alcohol products. Efforts to support improved regulation to ban marketing are underway, including by local government. The use of AI on social media and digital platforms to identify vulnerable consumers requires developing new technology, using AI, to allow surveillance and ensure compliance.

Chair: Zila Sanchez

1. Ganief Hendricks, Deputy Minister of Social Development, South Africa
Marketing and the Commercial Determinants of alcohol harm
2. Daniela Correia
The Impact of the Lithuanian alcohol marketing ban on adolescent drinking
3. Huong Le Nhu Dieu, Viet Nam
Evidence of Alibi Marketing through No- and Low-Alcohol Promotions on TikTok in Vietnam
4. Raul Martin del Campo Sanchez, PAHO
Actions to regulate alcohol advertising: how to move forward on the agenda
5. Speaker 5: Kashish Aneja
Driven Alcohol Marketing Regulation: Addressing Algorithmic Targeting and Age-Verification Challenges in Digital Policy Frameworks

Q and A

10:30 – 11:00 Morning break

We encourage you to visit the stands and exhibitions

11:00 – 12:30 Concurrent session 2

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

We encourage you to visit the poster presentations and exhibitions

14:00 – 15:30 Plenary 5: Managing Availability

The distribution channels of commercial alcohol products are often ubiquitous and poorly regulated and enforced. Government monopoly control of retail and/or licensing systems can provide limits on alcohol supply through trading hours, limiting physical outlets, home delivery and sale to underage people. Common responses are establishing national regulations such as minimum purchase age and maximum trading hours supplemented with a licensing system which can be used to achieve control over supply. Mobilising Input from community, health sector, police and central and local government into licensing processes illustrates valuable community action in support of policy in order to reduce alcohol harm.

Chair: Surasak Chiayasong

1. Sally Casswell
Availability indicators: laws and enforcement
2. Stig Erik Sorheim
Lessons from Norway's retail distribution system
3. Aadielah Maker-Diedericks
The value of monitoring liquor licenses to enlist communities to act on their rights and engage in alcohol conversations, reduce availability and develop working relationship with liquor authorities
4. Wit Wichaidit
Thailand's changing legislation: outcome, arguments and analysis

Q and A

15:30 – 16:00 Afternoon break

We encourage you to visit the poster presentations and exhibitions

16:00 – 17:30 Concurrent session 3

Day 3 Friday 10th April

08:00 – 08:30 Registration

08.30 – 10.30 Plenary 6: Report from regional workshops and commentary from global governance panel

Report back from the regional group workshops: Feedback 7 x 10 minutes each
Topic: *Strategic planning for 2030: WHO Global alcohol action plan goes to 2030 (see regional workshop session on the first day for details on groups and questions).*

Chair: Paula Johns

Feed-back panel:

1. Adam Karpati, Senior Vice President, Public Health Programmes, Vital Strategies
2. Anja Busse, Team Lead, Alcohol, Drugs and Addictive Behaviours at WHO
3. Dr Thaksaphon Thamarangsi (Mek), Chief Representative and Director, CMB Bangkok office

10:30 – 11:00 Morning break

We encourage you to visit the poster presentations and exhibitions

11:00 – 12:30 Concurrent session 4

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

We encourage you to visit the poster presentations and exhibitions

14.00 – 15.00 Plenary 7: Alcohol Taxation

Chair: Aveek Bhattacharya

1. Son Dao
Vietnam's 2025 Alcohol Tax Reform: Progress Made, Work Ahead
2. Mpho Legote
Alcohol taxation – the case of South Africa
3. Jacqui Drope
Hitting the RESET button: Progress on alcohol tax policy

15.00 – 16.00 Plenary 8:

Achieving the targets: the road to 2030

Moderator David Jernigan

Panel:

1. Leticia de Oliveira Cardoso, Ministry of Health, Brazil
2. Orratai Waleewong, Global Health Division, Ministry of Health, Thailand
3. Issah Ali, Western African Alcohol Policy Alliance, Vice Chair GAPA

16.00– 16.30 Closing