

# Conclusions from the Workshop on Public Health

## Strength

Evidence of the negative impact of goods (tobacco, alcohol, food, consumer products) on health

## Weakness

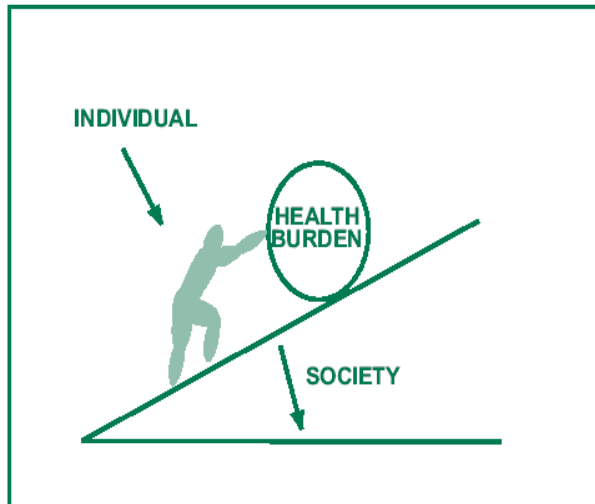
No Health Impact Assessments on EU policies

## Opportunity

Goods and services are regulated at EU level

## Threat

Significant divergence between health goals and economic approach



At EU level there is a **tension between health outcomes and economic and financial concerns** that has become increasingly strained. The European Court of Justice has been frequently called upon to adjudicate on this relationship, with mixed outcomes.

The time has come for the health community to finally address this sufficiently. To fully explore how the health safeguards that exist in the internal market Treaty Articles can be fully utilised to **contribute towards positive health** rather than undermine it.

There is a strong evidence base for the inter-relationship between certain goods such as alcohol, tobacco, food, consumer items and health outcomes. As the EU internal market regulates these goods and associated services such as advertising or sales promotion, there is **huge potential** for influencing health outcome through effective market legislation.

Where are the **Health Impact Assessments** (HIA) on EU policies? This is a treaty obligation (Article 152) so why do co-legislators (Council, Parliament) not demand a thorough examination of the impact on health of EU policies? The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is one policy that would clearly fail a rigorous HIA.

Individual health is a right but also a duty to the community. The role of society is to aid people by lowering the gradient. This approach allows room for individual choice and responsibility but also provides a focus for all stakeholders (health professionals, authorities, NGOs and industry) to concentrate their efforts on an **'enabling'** environment.