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European Alcohol Policy Alliance

Alcohol labelling - a missing link in consumer information

Alcohol Health and Policy Conference



Amsterdam, 3rd October 2014

1. Brief introduction to Eurocare
2. Ingredients labelling
3. Policy framework at the EU level
4. Health information for alcoholic beverages
5. Eurocare position- allowing informed choices



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Ingredients listing- calories

“Energy content of 7.1 kilocalories per gram; only fat has higher energy value

“Studies in the UK- alcohol accounts for nearly 10% of the energy intake among adult drinkers*

“Some studies in the US- men consume around 8210 kilocalories from alcohol a month and women 3790 *

An average glass of beer (250ml), 5% alcohol has an approximate 110 calories

A large glass of red wine (125ml), 13% alcohol has 115 calories

An average drink of whiskey (25ml), 40% alcohol has 111 calories



*Bates B, Alison Lennox in Obesity and alcohol; an overview (2012) National Obesity Observatory, NHS

**Tujague J. And Kerr W. C. (2009) Metabolic Effects: Energy Intake Estimates of Respondent- Measured Alcoholic beverages. Alcohol and Alcoholism Vol. 44. No1, pp.34-41



Labelling requirements for alcoholic beverages in the European Union:

1. Vertical industry specific- mainly wine and spirits

2. Horizontal

“ Labelling of foodstuff

“ Nutrition and health claims

“ Authorised food ingredients (additives flavourings ,enzymes)

“ Chemical safety (contaminants, pesticides residues, food contact material)

“ Food hygiene



1. Vertical legislation- wine

- Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 of 29 April 2008 on the common organisation of the market in wine, amending Regulations (EC) No 1493/1999, (EC) No 1782/2003, (EC) No 1290/2005, (EC) No 3/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2392/86 and (EC) No 1493/1999
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 670/2011 of 12 July 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 607/2009 laying down certain detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 as regards protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms, labelling and presentation of certain wine sector products
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 538/2011 of 1 June 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 607/2009 laying down certain detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2008 as regards protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms, labelling and presentation of certain wine sector products
- Annex II of Regulation 1333/2008 on authorised food additives, including an explicit reference to the specific EU CMO rules on Oenological Practices for wines. This Regulation established the need for the submission on a case by case basis of a specific technical dossier in order to modify Annex II as to adopt it to the technical and commercial innovation while ensuring consumer protection.
- Regulation 579/2012 requires listing of: (i) eggs and egg based products, (ii) sulphites/ sulphites, (iii) milk and milk based products. Listing might be accompanied by pictograms which could improve the readability of the information provided to consumers.



1. Vertical legislation- spirits

- Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation 1576/89, harmonises measures regarding European marketing of spirit drinks. Specific labelling and presentation rules are provided for by this Regulation. Where the labelling of a spirit drink indicates the raw material used to produce the ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin, each agricultural alcohol used shall be mentioned in descending order of the quantity used. The term 'blend', 'blending' or 'blended' may be used only if the spirit drink is a blend of two or more spirit drinks belonging to the same category. The maturation period or age may be specified only where it refers to the youngest alcoholic component and provided it was subject to revenue supervision or equivalent. Lead-based capsules or foil may not be used as closing devices for the containers of spirit drinks.
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 716/2013 of 25 July 2013 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of spirit drinks.



Legislation vs. health information

- European Union legislation allows for more than 50 different flavouring, additives, preservatives and agents to be added to alcoholic beverages*
- None of these regulation informs the consumers of the ingredients or nutritional value i.e. calories sugars etc.



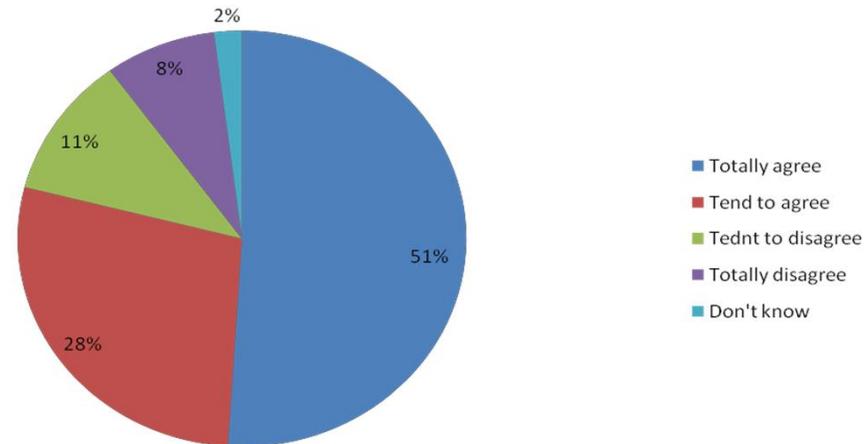
* Annex II to the EU Regulation 1333/2008



Health related information

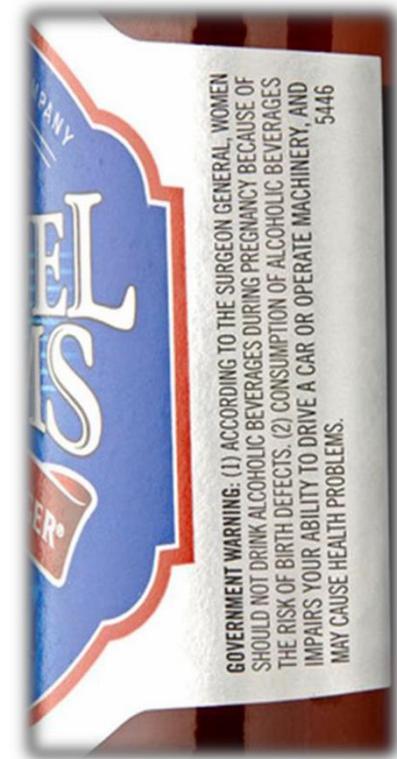
- Reminding consumers about the dangers and health risks from the product
- Measure for change of perception of risks associated with alcohol consumption
- Establishment of alcohol as *no ordinary commodity* among public at large
- Strong public support

Health warnings on the bottles



Health related information- some lessons learned

- ✓ Promoting discussions
- ✓ Raising awareness, changing attitudes- legitimate a socially challenging intervention i.e. drink driving
- ✓ Tobacco labelling- influence in indirect manner- influencing non smokers to use social and peer pressure, de- normalising smoking
- ✓ Behavioural change over time



“Introduction of health information on containers of alcoholic beverages

Containers should be required to provide the following information:

- “ Their ingredients
- “ Substances with allergenic effect
- “ Relevant nutrition information (energy values, kcal)
- “ Alcoholic strength





ALCOHOL CAN CAUSE CANCER

If you are concerned about your alcohol consumption, call [appropriate help line and phone number] or visit [appropriate website].

Beer is the world's most widely consumed alcoholic beverage; it is the third-most popular drink overall, after water and tea. It is thought by some to be the oldest fermented beverage. Beer is produced by the saccharification of starch and fermentation of the resulting sugar. The starch and saccharification enzymes are often derived from malted cereal grains, most commonly malted barley and malted wheat. Unmalted maize and rice are widely used adjuncts to lighten the flavour because of their lower cost. The preparation of beer is called brewing. Most beer is flavoured with hops, which add bitterness and act as a natural preservative, though other flavourings such as herbs or fruit may occasionally be included.

Nutrition Information	Quantity per Serving
Energy (kcal)	123 kcal
Fat	-
Carbohydrate	6.7g
Protein	1g
Fibre	-
Sugars	2g
Sodium	5.3g

Ingredients: Hops, Malted Barley, Maize and Water

Beer label made in Belgium, Brussels
By Laurent Bekaert.
See: www.bekaertdesign.com



Health promoting information on containers of alcoholic beverages should:

- ✓ Placed in a standard location of the container
- ✓ Parallel on the base of the container
- ✓ Clearly separate from other information on the labels i.e. Be placed in boxes with thick borders
- ✓ Size should be determined by minimum percentage of the size of the container
- ✓ Written in capital letters and bold type
- ✓ Appear on contrasting background (i.e red bold type on white)
- ✓ Rotating and with sufficient vividness and strength to attract consumers
- ✓ Use images that are informational in style and taken from other ongoing campaigns
- ✓ Determined by the European Institution/ Agency or Ministers of Health (public not private agency)





**ALCOHOL MAY HARM THE UNBORN
BABY**



**ALCOHOL MAY HARM
THE UNBORN BABY**



**ALCOHOL SLOWS YOUR REACTION
TIME - DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE**



**ALCOHOL SLOWS YOUR REACTION
TIME - DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE**





**ALCOHOL CAN CAUSE
LIVER CIRRHOSIS**



**DON'T DRINK WHILE OPERATING
MACHINERY**



**ALCOHOL CAN CAUSE
LIVER CIRRHOSIS**



**DON'T DRINK WHILE OPERATING
MACHINERY**



Eurocare position- allowing informed choices

- “Alcohol labelling deserves to be a more prominent in the field of European alcohol policy
- “ It has good legislative potential (legal basis)- achievable goal
- “ Unique opportunity for dissemination of health information at the point of sale and consumption
- “It would contribute to the shift of paradigm- important first step in raising awareness, increasing knowledge and change perception of risks associated with alcohol consumption (legitimise more restrictive policies)



Thank you for your attention

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