



Alcohol and the EU's Beating Cancer Plan



Alcohol and Cancer – What everyone needs to know

Zoom meeting ECL, WHO Europe and Eurocare

25th May 2021

The European Alcohol Policy Alliance was formed in 1990 with 9 member organisations

Today:

- 51 members
 - 22 countries
 - Secretariat in Brussels



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Alcohol and CANCER

IN THE PICTURE 12 Feb 2021

Alcohol and Cancer



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About us

Eurocare is an alliance of non-governmental and public health organisations across Europe advocating for the prevention and reduction of alcohol-related harm.

Member organisations are involved in advocacy and research, the provision of information and training on alcohol issues, and services for people whose lives are affected by alcohol problems.

Eurocare's mission is to promote policies that prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm. Our message regarding alcohol consumption is that "less is better".

Eurocare is not affiliated to and does not receive any funding from the alcohol industry or any of its social aspect organisations.

2.

- All aspects of cancer, from prevention and early detection to treatment and survivorship.
- Maximise research, data and new technologies
- Setting out a new EU approach to tackle cancer.
- **Prevention:**
- Promoting healthy lifestyles,
- Reducing environmental pollution
- Accelerating the uptake of HPV vaccination



Alcohol-related harm in the Plan

- Support to Member States and stakeholders for the implementation of best practice interventions and capacity building activities.
- The Commission will review the EU legislation relating to the taxation of alcohol and on cross border purchases of alcohol by private individuals.
- To reduce the exposure of young people to marketing of alcoholic beverages, the Commission will closely work with Member States to reduce online marketing and advertising of these products.
- The Commission will also propose to stop stimulating consumption of alcohol via the EU promotion programme for agricultural products.
- Furthermore, mandatory labelling of the list of ingredients and calorie content and inclusion of health warnings on the labels of alcoholic beverages will be proposed before the end of 2023.
- Support will be provided to Member States in the implementation of evidence-based brief interventions on alcohol in primary health care, workplace and social services.

How the Plan ties with other key policies on cancer?

- The Plan will be closely linked to a number of other priorities:
- Horizon Europe Mission on Cancer that will boost European research and innovation in the field of cancer
- The Pharmaceutical Strategy that will address shortages and consider the patients perspective early on in developing therapies.
- The Farm2Fork Strategy that will promote healthy diets
- The European Health Data Space that will provide better infrastructure to ensure that health data is up-to-date and comparable, also for research purposes.
- The goal is a health-in-all-policies approach.

- DEEP SEAS, FAR SEAS, ALHAMBRA, Fiscal studies tenders from European Commission
- Fiscal studies will present case studies on taxes
- ALHAMBRA Task 1 Alcohol and Workplace
- ALHAMBRA Task 2 – Study on alcohol online advertising and marketing in new media
- ALHAMBRA Task 4 – Study on alcohol health information/warning messages on and off labels

Low level of knowledge in Europe on the link between alcohol and cancer

1. Experts have known since 1987 that alcohol can cause cancer
2. Research in Europe has shown that 1 in 10 Europeans do not know about the connection, and that 1 in 5 do not believe that there is a connection between cancer and the drinks (Eurobarometer 2010).
3. A survey in France has shown that only 23% of respondents identify it as the second risk factor for cancer after smoking.
4. Actis Rusfeltets Samarbeidsorgan in Norway has been doing surveys in 2014, 2018 and 2020 and the awareness and knowledge has been decreasing on the harmful effect alcohol can have on the unborn child and cancer in this period.

What is our call for action?

1. Health promotion and prevention should be given a high priority in the new EU4Health program
2. Eurocare fully supports the need to focus on inequalities within and between Member States
3. An increase in operating grants for civil society working at EU level.
4. Better data collection and monitoring at EU level. A common set of indicators should be defined and tracked by the EU.
5. Increased funding should be made available for European research on alcohol, both as health and as a social issue.

6. Alcohol related targets should always be published in European Commission work on SDGs
7. European Alcohol Monitoring centre should be established.
8. When new legislation is adopted at regional, national and European level standardised evaluation should be performed.
9. Promotional funds from the EU should not be given to harmful products for the health, and when they are – the use of them should be closely monitored.
10. Cross border trade, excise duties and price are important issues regarding prevention of health. More knowledge on developments in Member States are needed.

Public Awareness

- Allocation of funding for campaigns (either national or European) to increase awareness about the connection between alcohol and cancer.
- Gathering information regarding citizens' knowledge about alcohol and cancer (the latest Eurobarometer asking that question is a decade old).
- Gather information regarding prevalence of alcohol-related cancers in the EU-27.
- Good practice examples from Member States on methods to increase awareness and reduce prevalence (this could be part of State of Health of the EU review series).

Commercial communication

- regulating the content and volume of marketing
- regulating sponsorship activities that promote alcoholic beverages
- restricting or banning promotions in connection with activities exposing young people
- regulating new forms of alcohol marketing techniques, for instance social media



- ❖ There is an urgent need for better monitoring of the developments of alcohol marketing that not only deals with the content, but also the exposure of alcohol marketing to young people.
- ❖ Especially the digital agenda – how are young people being influenced online?
- ❖ Digital tools are a welcomed development of the recent years, but Eurocare would like to point out that prevention efforts can be complemented by digital tools and not being primarily dependent on them.
- ❖ Access to digital tools relies heavily on the individual actively engaging with them, making a choice to be informed. This can result in increased disparities among EU's citizens in terms of knowledge. Research in this area is needed.
- ❖ Alcohol messaging must be included in healthy lifestyle messages. More can be done especially in the youth sport club areas.

Calling for better labelling from 2008



Eurocare recommendations – consumers right to know



Containers should be required to provide the following information:

- Their ingredients
- Substances with allergenic effect
- Relevant nutritional information (energy values, kcal)
- Introduction of health information on containers of alcoholic beverages

- Alcohol labelling should be a **more prominent topic in the field of public health**. Lack of research in this area jeopardises the advocacy efforts.
- Better alcohol labelling would **contribute to the shift of paradigm**, increase the knowledge and change the perception of risks associated with alcohol consumption.



Every year, third week of November, <http://www.awarh.eu/> 15-19 November 2021

Partners:

European Association for the Study of the liver (EASL)

European Brain Council (EBC)

European Patients Liver Association (ELPA)

European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI)

European federation of Addiction Societies (EUFAS)

United European Gastroenterology (UEG)

European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)



#AlcoholA

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Alcohol and **CANCER**

A background image featuring a clear glass filled with golden beer and a pink ribbon wrapped around it, symbolizing the connection between alcohol consumption and cancer prevention.

UPCOMING
**Cancer prevention in the 2020s -
finding sustainable solutions**

Monday 22 February 2021 | 12:30 – 15:30 CET

Thank you for your attention



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**IF YOU DRINK ALCOHOL
OF ANY TYPE,
LIMIT YOUR INTAKE.
IT WILL REDUCE YOUR RISK
OF CANCER**