



**European Commission
Alcohol and Health Forum**

Eurocare Commitments in the Alcohol and Health Forum



Eurocare Secretariat

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Foreword

The European Commission's 'Alcohol and Health Forum', launched in June 2007 and chaired by DG Sanco, constitutes the backbone of the Commission's "EU Strategy to Support Member States in Reducing Alcohol Related Harm". Released in October 2006, this strategy finally saw the day after years of mounting pressure to tackle the harm done by alcohol, which now costs the EU €125 billion every year due to ill health, accidents and injuries, crime and lost productivity.

Modelled on the EU Platform for Diet, Physical Activity and Health, this multi stakeholder platform brings together actors pledging to concrete actions to reduce alcohol related harm in Europe, now the heaviest drinking region in the world.

The Forum now counts 59 members – economic operators as well as NGOs, including Eurocare, and several of its national members. European Institutions, the World Health Organisation, and EU Member States, participate as observers. A Committee on National Policy and Action, a structure separate of the Forum, will allow Member States to coordinate national alcohol policies, whilst the Forum remains a platform for voluntary action. This separation is fundamental, as Eurocare believes public health policies should be formulated without the interference of commercial interests.

Eurocare is also represented in both Task Forces of the Forum: Youth- specific Aspects of Alcohol and Marketing Communication, and will continue to engage its members in future task forces. Eurocare also welcomes the Science Group of the Forum, in which several affiliated scientists are participating; we look forward to the conclusions of the Group on their first task, to investigate "The impact of marketing communication on the volume (and patterns) of consumption of alcoholic beverages, especially by young people".

Eurocare as the only NGO network working exclusively on alcohol policy issues at EU level, is investing considerable resources in the EU Alcohol and Health Forum, seeing it as an opportunity to further raise awareness of alcohol issues in Europe. The Forum will certainly test the economic operator's ability to face their responsibilities and commit to actions aimed at reducing alcohol related harm.

Eurocare, European Alcohol Policy Alliance is a founder member of the Alcohol and Health Forum.

The following national organisations participate in the Forum as Associate Members:

Alcohol Action Ireland, Ireland

Agence Nationale de Prévention en Alcoologie et Addictologie (ANPAA), France

AVE Estonian Temperance Union, Estonia

Deutsche Hauptstelle für Suchtfragen e.V (DHS), Germany

Eurocare Italia, Italy

Institute of Alcohol Studies, United Kingdom

IOGT-NTO, Sweden

Nordic Alcohol and Drug Alcohol and Drug Policy Network (NORDAN), Denmark

Stiching Alcoholpreventie (STAP) Netherlands

EUROCARE (The European Alcohol Policy Alliance) is an alliance of some 50 voluntary and non-governmental organizations across 20 European countries working on the prevention of alcohol related harm in Europe. Eurocare is the only major European network that focuses exclusively on alcohol policy issues. **Eurocare** has a Secretariat in Brussels, which acts as the central contact point for member organisations as well as other bodies concerned with alcohol related issues, including national and international press.

Eurocare's overall goal is to: Raise awareness among European, national and regional decision makers of the harms caused by alcohol (social, health and economic burden) ensuring that these are taken into consideration in all relevant EU policy discussions and Promote the development and implementation of evidence-based policies aimed at effectively preventing and reducing this burden.



Title of Commitment: Raise awareness of the dangers of drinking during pregnancy.

Description of Commitment: Eurocare wishes, in partnership with member organizations, as well as other networks of NGOs, to increase the awareness of dangers related to drinking alcohol during pregnancy. In particular, an event will be held in the European Parliament on 9th September 2008, in order to mark International Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day.

Background to Commitment: Drinking alcohol in pregnancy remains a significant public health issue in Europe. Prenatal exposure to alcohol is a leading preventable cause of birth defects and developmental disorders, and the only one which is 100% preventable. Unfortunately, many women are not aware that, throughout pregnancy, even at low levels of exposure, alcohol interferes with the normal development and can seriously damage the unborn child.

The umbrella term Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) describes the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These can include physical, mental, behavioural and or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications. Individuals born with FASD often fail in the education system, and come into difficulties with criminal justice system.

Update: Eurocare hosted a successful Evening Reception in the European Parliament on 9th September 2008. Hosted by MEPs Ms Mairead McGuinness (EPP, IE) and Ms Catherine Stihler (PES, UK), the Event was attended by over 30 people, including a number of MEPs.



MS Mairead McGuinness, MEP hosted the event



Guests attend the Evening Reception

Title of Commitment: Support the creation of an Alcohol Policy Youth Network (APYN) (Joint with European Youth Forum)

Description of Commitment: The Alcohol Policy Youth Network - APYN is a direct outcome of the work developed by the European Youth Forum in partnership with EUROCARE during 2005 - 2006. This project aims at finding a solution and develops a set of tools to assist the European Youth Forum Member Organisations in tackling the weaknesses and needs they have identified throughout the work developed in both the Working Group on Alcohol Policy and the Advocacy School on Alcohol Policy. The idea is to set up a capacity building network, providing training courses, advocacy schools, seminars and training for trainers, all specifically designed around alcohol policy, in order to empower youth organisations allowing them to be active and valid actors in this field and by thus being relevant in the definition, implementation and evaluation of alcohol policies and programmes at the local, national, European and International levels.

Update: The Alcohol Policy Youth Network was officially established during the first Constitutive Meeting in on 28th March 2008 in Budapest. APYN was accepted as a member of the Alcohol and Health Forum, as a European Umbrella organisation, during the Second Plenary Meeting of the Forum, on 16th April in Brussels.



APYN Constitutive Meeting in Budapest



Title of Commitment: New Eurocare website

Description of Commitment: Eurocare intends to build a consistent strategy for web-based communication, in order to maximise coherence, outreach and impact for all those seeking information on, and analysis of EU political developments in areas of relevance to alcohol policy. The web site will serve as a crucial tool to improve the visibility of the organisation, by allowing Eurocare to showcase its policy and advocacy work, disseminate relevant information (scientific research, briefing and position papers), promote involvement in European projects and networks, as well as advertise events. The new website will be built around a more interactive and user-friendly interface, with a strong focus on news, both from EU institutions and Member States. It will feature a wide range of cross sector policy topics relevant to Eurocare's work, such as the EU Alcohol Strategy, the Alcohol and Health Forum, Labeling, Drink Driving, Workplace, Young People, etc. The website is intended to be a 'one stop shop' for policymakers, NGOs, journalists, students, and public at large.

Update: The new Eurocare website was launched during the Eurocare Annual General Meeting on 26th September in Paris; it is regularly updated with news and policy developments from the EU and Member States, Strategy, Labeling, Taxation, Commercial Communications etc.

Website: www.eurocare.org

Contact Person: Mariann Skar, Secretary General **Email:** mariann.skar@eurocare.org



Agence Nationale de Prévention en Alcoologie et Addictologie (ANPAA), France

ANPAA is a national agency working in the fields of advocacy and prevention, education and training and treatment.

Title of commitment: Enforcement of the "Loi Evin"

Description of commitment: An alcohol policy law ('loi Evin') was voted in France in 1991 in order to control alcohol advertising. Since the law came into force, ANPAA has been monitoring the existing adverts, mainly in the written press (newspapers and magazines) and on billboards, and taking adequate legal action when such advertisements were in breach of the Loi Evin. ANPAA will continue this monitoring work and further develop it by including more media.

Background to the commitment: Since 1991, many advertisements infringing the law have been condemned by the French courts of justice. Since 1991, a total of 25 advertisements were brought to the courts by the French NGO ANPAA. 22 adjudications were in our favour, and only 3 judgments did not uphold our complaint. As a consequence, since 1991 we have observed a real shift in alcohol advertising, in the sense that the legislation modified the 'language' and 'symbolism', which are no longer as 'seductive' as they used to be. Advertisements are no longer able to portray drinkers and drinking environments, which used to form an important part of the positive portrayal of alcoholic beverages in general.

Website: www.anpaa.org

Contact person: Claude Rivière, Head of European and International Affairs, **Email:** clriviere@anpa.asso.fr



Alcohol Action Ireland

Alcohol Action Ireland is a non governmental national organisation working to raise awareness of harm from alcohol misuse and how this harm impacts on families, communities and individual men, women and children.

Title of commitment: A New Alcohol Action Ireland Website

Description of commitment: Alcohol Action Ireland intends to create a new website, as part of the development of a communications strategy to increase the impact and visibility of the organisation. This website will provide access to a comprehensive set of resources around alcohol and alcohol policy measures. This will extend from evidence base to policy briefings and from press releases to advocacy tools/resources. The purpose is to become a trusted source of information for those who have questions about alcohol. In order to achieve this, the organisation aims to develop a well-structured web-based presence, through which users can access information on alcohol related issues.

Background to the commitment: Alcohol Action Ireland is non-governmental organisation which was formed in response to the increasing levels of alcohol related harm. The objective of the organisation is to call for the protection of the health, well-being and quality of life of Irish citizens through the adoption of policies and strategies that have been proven to tackle alcohol related harm effectively. AAI's goal is to build internal and external capacity for advocacy, in order to place alcohol harm reduction firmly on the government's agenda. A new website will form part of the strategy to increase AAI's profile and interact with a larger and more visible audience.

Website: www.alcoholactionireland.ie

Contact Person: Fiona Ryan, Chief Executive, **Email:** info@alcoholactionireland.ie



AVE, Estonian Temperance Union, Estonia

AVE was created in 1989 as a successor to the first Estonian Temperance Union, active since 1922. AVE's main areas of work are prevention among children and young people, organizing cooperation among NGO-s and influencing alcohol policy.

Title of commitment: Alcohol free Cafe in Tallinn

Description of commitment: The Estonian Temperance Union is opening the first alcohol-free Cafe in Estonia. The goal is to create a youth friendly environment that is 100% alcohol and smoke free. As the WHO European Alcohol Charter states, every young person and child has a right to grow up in an environment that is free from negative results of alcohol. It also encourages the creation of spaces where young people can spend their time without the pressure being expected to consume alcohol. The project is based on the 'peer to peer' principle; most of the team-members are high school students, and they have a key role in decision-making. We hope that the cafe with its activities is creating an alternative youth culture where alcohol has no place. This is a pilot project and similar projects have already been developed in other towns across the country. The aim is to open at least 5 youth 'alcohol free cafés' by 2010.

Background to the commitment: According to the ESPAD survey, there are an increasing number of alcohol problems among young people in Estonia, and notably among young girls. Unfortunately, there is no 'alcohol strategy' at national level in Estonia to tackle these problems, nor is there any official programme aimed at curbing underage drinking. There are very few 'alcohol free' leisure environments for young people, which is why it is hoped that the 'alcohol free café' concept will be further developed.

Website: www.ave.ee

Contact Person: Lauri Beekmann, President, **Email:** lauri@ave.ee



Deutsche Hauptstelle für Suchtfragen e.V. (DHS), Germany

DHS was created 1947 to provide a platform for all the associations and charities active in helping addiction sufferers throughout the country. DHS provides information and support for substance users, and is also involved in research.

Title of commitment: Support capacity and competence building

Description of Commitment: The commitment "Support capacity and competence building" refers to the Commissions priority theme "Inform, educate and raise awareness on the impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption". By publishing a Fact Sheet Series on alcohol related problems and effective interventions, DHS build capacity among professionals in the fields of addiction, youth and health promotion and inform the general public and the target group of young people.

Background to the commitment: Illicit drugs have been the focus of public interest and policy activity for many years in Germany. DHS as an NGO representing all charitable associations and their organisations active in the field of outpatient counselling and treatment, in-patient care and selfhelp wants to answer an increasing demand of information about alcohol related problems and how to tackle them.

Website: www.dhs.de

Contact Person: Bartsch, Gabriele, **Email:** bartsch@dhs.de



Eurocare Italia, Italy

Eurocare Italia is an NGO working in the field of information, prevention, research and advocacy; it works at regional and national level.

Title of commitment: Translation and Dissemination of "Alcohol in Europe" Short Report

Description of commitment: The edited version of the *Alcohol in Europe* report, commissioned by DG Sanco and published by the Institute of Alcohol Studies, represents an easy-to-read and comprehensive tool covering the economic, health and social impact of alcohol across Europe. To reach a wider audience, it is still crucial to make the report available in Italian and customise it to the national cultural context. The translation and dissemination aim at raising awareness of the current status of alcohol related harm in Europe, reaching a wider audience; promoting existing research, raise awareness of best practice as well as policy recommendations; allowing the organisation, at national level, to disseminate information about alcohol to non specific alcohol NGO's and to governmental institutions at national, regional and local level; enabling coalition building.

Background to the commitment: There is the need to make evidence-based information on alcohol available to a wider audience in order to raise awareness, to provide correct and complete information to policy-makers and to build alliances with significant stakeholders.

Website: http://www.eurocare.org/about_us/membership/eurocare_italia

Contact person: Tiziana Codenotti, Director, **Email:** eurocare@dada.it



Institute of Alcohol Studies, United Kingdom

The Institute of Alcohol Studies is an independent organization of the broad aim of increasing awareness of alcohol related issues in society. The IAS advocates the use of scientific evidence in policy-making to reduce alcohol-related harm

Title of Commitment: European Alcohol Data Map

Description of Commitment: The 'European Data Map' is designed as an interactive web tool for researchers wishing to carry out secondary analysis of alcohol data. The aim is to encourage further alcohol research, with a view to developing a more robust evidence base at EU level. The aims of the Data Map will be to identify existing sources of EU wide quantitative data, and data sets relevant to strategies to reduce alcohol related harm.

This will also help identify existing gaps in the data, and hopefully generate coordinate, cross cultural and comparative research. The project will also help to ensure that future data collection on alcohol consumption and harm complements existing data sets rather than duplicating them. It is envisaged that the project will be complementary to, and, it is hoped, a contribution towards, the ECHIM programme.

Background to the commitment: A pilot mapping exercise for the UK found that 36 studies comprising in total 200 publicly available data sets contained UK data on alcohol. However, a parallel review found relatively few examples of peer reviewed secondary analysis of the major data sets. Since then, IAS has produced a DATA MAP for the UK which is now being disseminated through the alcohol research and policy communities. The full situation regarding EU wide data sets is unknown. However, the situation in the EU is likely to differ European Alcohol and Health Forum: Overview commitments received significantly from that in the UK with substantially less data being available. The project is thus in its initial stages exploratory. It may well be that an important aim of this project, unlike its forerunner in the UK, will be explicitly to seek to identify gaps in knowledge as well as providing a single, publicly available map of what already exists.

Website: <http://www.ias.org.uk>

Contact Person: Russell Bennetts, Research and Policy Officer, **Email:** rbennetts@ias.org.uk



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ALCOHOL PREVENTION (STAP), Netherlands

STAP (National Foundation for Alcohol Prevention) is a national, independent non-profit organisation that advocates effective alcohol control policies and works towards public awareness of the risks of alcohol.

Title of commitment: Overview European Alcohol Marketing Regulations & Overview Research on Effects Alcohol Marketing

Description of commitment : STAP together with **IOGT-NTO, Eurocare Italia, NAD, Landsraadet, AV.OG.TIL** and Actis have initiated in July 2007 a pilot project named **European Centre for Monitoring Alcohol Marketing (EUCAM)**.

EUCAM is set up to collect, exchange and to promote knowledge and experience about alcohol marketing throughout Europe. EUCAM has two main objectives, namely:

- **Promote Monitoring of Alcohol Marketing:** EUCAM aims to create opportunities and to promote monitoring of alcohol marketing in Europe in order to gather reliable information about the volume and content of alcohol marketing and about the functioning of the existing procedures related to the regulation of alcohol marketing.
- **Promote and disseminate impact research:** EUCAM aims to be an easy accessible source of current information and knowledge about the impact of alcohol marketing in European countries.

With the above mentioned objectives as a basis, EUCAM plans to deliver the following concrete products as a commitment in the Alcohol and Health Forum:

- **Providing an overview of marketing regulations in Europe**
- **Providing an overview of research findings related to the impact of alcohol advertisement and alcohol sponsorship**



Website: <http://www.alcoholpreventie.nl/>

Contact person: Avalon De Bruijn, EUCAM Coordinator, Email: AdeBruijn@stap.nl



IOGT- NTO, Sweden

IOGT-NTO is a non - governmental Organisation in Sweden and counts around 46.000 members. Created over 100 years ago, the main areas of work involve advocacy for a restrictive alcohol and drug policy, the prevention of alcohol and drug problems and social work.

Title of commitment: Participation in European Alcohol Marketing Regulations & Overview Research on Effects Alcohol Marketing (see above)



Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network NORDAN, Denmark

NordAN was established in September 2000 as a network of voluntary organizations who work to reduce the consumption of alcohol and other drugs, who support a restrictive alcohol and drug policy and who do not receive contributions from the commercial alcohol industry.

Title of commitment: Building a network supporting evidence based alcohol policies in the Baltic states

Description of commitment:

- Expanding the NordAN membership in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania by recruiting more NGOs to become members and support evidence based alcohol policies
- Informing decision makers at national, regional and local levels about evidence based alcohol policies
- Trying to strengthen public opinion in the Baltic States in favour of evidence based alcohol policies

Background to the commitment: NordAN is an umbrella organisation of voluntary organisations in the Nordic states (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) and the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) in the alcohol and drug field. In all our countries, alcohol related harm is a serious problem. Our membership, and the support for evidence based alcohol policies, needs to be strengthened particularly in the Baltic States, since the development of alcohol consumption and alcohol related harm has been very unfavourable there.

Website: www.nordan.org

Contact Person: Gabriel Romanus, Chairman, **Email:** Gabriel@romanus.se