



European Alcohol Policy Alliance

Eurocare Press Release

### **What's NOT on the bottle?**

Eurocare response to vote of the EP on 'Food Information to Consumers'

Brussels, 16 June 2010

Eurocare (European Alcohol Policy Alliance) is extremely disappointed with the shape of the Food Information to Consumers legislation which exempts alcoholic beverages from obligation to list its content. This is despite the fact that alcohol is high in calorie content, carbohydrates and certain ingredients used in its production can cause allergies or intolerances.

We strongly believe that we all have the right to make informed choices and the current proposal will mean that one will know what is in a bottle of a fruit juice but not in a bottle of alcoholic beverage.

Providing information (about ingredients, energy value, units or total grams of pure alcohol per 100ml) would allow consumers to assess the quality of the beverages and keep track of their calorie and alcohol intake.

An overwhelming majority of Europeans wants to be informed about consequences of drinking; 79% supports warning health messages on bottles and 82% are in favour of such warnings on advertisements (Eurobarometer 2009)<sup>1</sup>

Marian Skar, Secretary General of Eurocare, says: *'Not requiring alcoholic drinks to provide information on their labels is yet another missed opportunity not only to reduce the level of harm caused by alcohol in Europe but also to help consumers make choice about their diet and health'*

The European Parliament's decision is a bitter reminder of the great extent of the industry's influence on politicians as it is completely ignoring not only the health and choices of people but it is also not in line EU's previous declarations.

As stated in the EU Alcohol Strategy launched in October 2006: 'Citizens have the right to obtain relevant information on the impact, and in particular on the risks and consequences related to harmful and hazardous consumption of alcohol, and to obtain more detailed information on added ingredients that may be harmful to the health of certain groups of consumers'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/docs/ebs\\_331\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/docs/ebs_331_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006\\_0625en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0625en01.pdf)

Notes to editors:

**EUROCARE** (The European Alcohol Policy Alliance) is an alliance of organizations working on the prevention and reduction of alcohol related harm in Europe. Member organisations are involved in research and advocacy, as well as in the provision of counselling services and residential support for problem drinkers, the provision of workplace and school based programmes and the provision of information to the public.

Eurocare advocates the prevention of alcohol related harm in Europe through effective evidence based alcohol policy.

Contact:

Mariann Skar, Secretary General

**EUROCARE**

96, Rue des Confédérés  
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

[www.eurocare.org](http://www.eurocare.org)

Tel: +32 2 736 39 76

GSM +32 (0)474 830 041