



Report

Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcoholic beverages – a review of practices in Europe

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Summary

This report, a part of the PROTECT project, is a review of current practices in Europe of health warnings on labels of alcoholic beverages.

During the last five years, an increasing number of actions on labelling of alcoholic beverages were observed across Europe. Most of the actions were conducted by the alcohol industry on a voluntary basis. Only a few National Governments – in France, Germany and in Russia - implemented legal regulations on labelling of alcoholic beverages containers. An exception is the UK, where the labelling activities are voluntary and based on an agreement between the government and the alcohol industry. It seems that European countries are hesitating to implement legal regulations on health warnings on alcoholic beverages.

The messages currently observed concern the respect of legal age limits when purchasing alcoholic beverages, health warnings for target groups like pregnant women as well as general health warnings. The alcohol industry mainly uses responsible drinking messages on alcohol drinks. A number of manufacturers use pictograms to reach pregnant women as well as 'drinking and driving' logos, as a part of their "Don't Drink and Drive" campaigns. An increasing number of actions around legal age limits are observed among alcoholic beverages producers.

Labelling alcoholic beverages with health information could be an important tool in a comprehensive strategy to reduce alcohol related harm. Health warnings and information raise awareness and could influence social norms, for instance on alcohol use during pregnancy.

1. Introduction

Alcohol is a common good which is sold and consumed across Europe. Over the centuries, Europe became the region with the heaviest alcohol consumption in the world (11 litres of pure alcohol per capita per year). The costs covering the consequences of harmful alcohol consumption are estimated to be 125 billion Euros per year. 7.4% of all disability and premature death in the European Union are linked to alcohol. Therefore, alcohol is not an ordinary commodity but an important health determinant. The toxic effects of alcohol (ethyl alcohol, ethanol) can cause a wide range of diseases and acute as well as chronic disorders (Anderson & Baumberg, 2006). Consumers require proper information about the health consequences of alcohol consumption.

The EU Alcohol Strategy supports such demand by stressing the necessity to inform, to educate and to raise awareness on the impact of hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption (European Commission, 2006). Labels on containers with information about the impact of hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption could be an effective measure to raise awareness of the health risks of alcohol consumption. However, this has to be embedded in a holistic alcohol prevention program.

Labelling of foodstuffs is governed by EU Directive 2000/13/EC (European Union 2007). It deals with product information (e.g. product name), information on ingredients and warning statements relating to specific ingredients (e.g. sulphite). Labelling of alcoholic beverages is governed by the EU Directive 87/250/EEC (European Union, 1987).

There is currently no EU legislation requiring health warnings on alcoholic beverages or other forms of information such as alcohol content in standard units. In Germany labels on alcopops are mandatory (see chapter 3.2.2). France is the only EU Member State which introduced legal regulations on labelling alcoholic beverages with health information. In France, labels on alcoholic beverages are mandatory to warn pregnant women about the risks to the foetus when drinking alcohol during pregnancy. It can be presented as a text or a pictogram (see figure 1).



Figure 1: French pictogram

Alcohol has been in the European health agenda for a few years now, especially since the European Strategy on Alcohol was adopted in 2006. Since then, activities around labelling issue increased enormously all over Europe. More particularly, the alcohol industry reinforced its activities on this issue and introduced different labels.

This report gives a current and overall overview of labelling initiatives, on a legal and a voluntary basis, by governments as well as by the industry across the EU and in the Russian Federation. Labelling on alcoholic drinks advertisements was also covered. Additionally, examples of best practices from outside Europe are briefly described.

Chapter 2 contains the description of the different methods of data collection, which were used for this report.

The main results of the review and survey are reported in chapter 3.

Chapter 4 focuses on the impact and effectiveness of warning labels on alcoholic beverages. The results of several studies are shown. Additionally, suggestions of health warning labels are given by an alcohol manufacturer and by an European non-governmental organisation (NGO).

The tables in chapter 5 summarize all collected data on labelling of alcoholic beverages (on containers and advertising), within the EU-MS and one other European country.

Conclusions are written in chapter 6.

2. Methods

The data collection focussed on information and warning messages on containers and bottles of alcoholic beverages, covering:

- General health warnings;
- Specific health warnings (specific diseases, for example liver cirrhosis);
- Information about units;
- Drinking guidelines;
- Legal age limits for purchasing alcoholic beverages;
- Messages about drinking in moderation;
- Drinking and driving;
- Operating machinery;
- Harm to others (family members and other third parties).

In order to complete the pictures of labelling activities in Europe, labels on alcohol advertising were also included (e.g. on billboards or commercials).

The collected data is not limited to mandatory actions implemented by National Governments. It also includes voluntary labelling actions by the alcohol industry. Their messages mainly focus on responsible drinking.

Two methods were used to collect data for this report:

- A survey among European consumer's organizations using a questionnaire.
- A literature review of labelling activities in different European countries.

The research team looked especially for youth specific messages on alcoholic beverages.

2.1 Survey

In the scope of the survey, a questionnaire (see annexe 1) was developed. This questionnaire was sent by email to 39 consumer organisations in 30 European countries, covering all EU Member States. Additionally, two candidate countries (Croatia, Iceland) and one Non-EU country (Switzerland) were included. Most of the consumer organisations were members of the European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC) or cooperate with the Centre de Recherche et d'Information des

Organisations de Consommateurs (CRIOC). EUROCARE, a European organisation on alcohol policy as well as an alcohol expert were also interviewed about the best labelling practices in Europe.

2.2 Review

Six reports were reviewed during the investigation process (see table 1). These documents come from the European Commission, EUROCARE, the German Centre for Addiction Issues (DHS), the International Centre for Alcohol Policies (ICAP), the European Spirits Organisation (CEPS) and the Campden BRI Group. ICAP and CEPS are alcohol industry related organisations. Campden BRI Group offers science, technology and information for the food, drink and allied industries worldwide.

Organisation	Title of the report
EUROCARE	Labelling initiatives – A brief summary of health warning labels on alcoholic beverages, August 2009a http://www.eurocare.org/resources/policy_issues/labeling
European Commission	Consumer labelling of alcoholic beverages Current situation in the EU and options for further voluntary action, November 2009a Presentation: http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/events/ev_20091112_en.htm
European Spirits Organisation (CEPS)	Charter on responsible alcohol consumption. Third year progress report (2008). http://www.europeanspirits.org/documents/ceps_charter_report_2008_final1.pdf
German Centre for Addiction Issues (DHS)	Documentation of innovative Practices, Programmes and Projects within the topic consumer information (2008). http://www.dhs.de/makeit/cms/cms_upload/dhs/phpdocumentationconsumerinfo.pdf
International Centre for Alcohol Policies (ICAP)	Health Warning Labels. (Last update: February 2010) http://www.icap.org/Table/HealthWarningLabels/tabid/249/Default.aspx Beverage Alcohol Labeling Requirements by Country. (Last update: December 2007) http://www.icap.org/Table/AlcoholBeverageLabeling
Campden BRI	Labelling legislation in the EU affecting the beer industry http://www.campden.co.uk/campdenbri-day/pdfs/2010_brew2.pdf

Table 1: Organisations and documents

In all these reports, mandatory as well as voluntary actions of labelling alcoholic beverages with health warnings and responsibility messages are listed. Data contained in these reports is not limited to Europe but also countries around the world (e.g. Australia, South Africa, etc.). This report focuses on examples found in the European area.

3. Results

3.1 Results of the survey

Questionnaires (see annexe 1) were sent by email to 39 consumer organisations across Europe. Seven organisations filled in the questionnaire and send it back. The response rate was 18%. Only three filled in questionnaires contained examples of best practices, shown in chapter 5. Two organisations reported that examples of practices were not available. Two others described activities on alcohol issues not directly linked to labelling. Two consumer organisations stressed that they had initiated several political activities on labelling but they were never successful. They concluded that they needed more external support and examples of best practice to convince political decision makers for being active on this issue. Based on these results, it appears that, in some countries, consumer organisations have a lack of information on labelling, especially on health warnings.

3.2 Results of the review

The review enabled the investigators to complete the picture of labelling practices across Europe. The documents give a comprehensive overview of mandatory and voluntary labelling regulations. Health warnings, drinking guidelines and governmental guidelines for purchasing alcoholic beverages are rare within the EU and other European Countries. Only France, Germany and the Russian Federation - as a non-EU country - implemented mandatory labelling regulations and other guidelines on health warnings.

3.2.1 Governmental actions

The French Government implemented a legal regulation on labelling in October 2007. The warning stresses the risk of damaging the foetus by drinking alcohol during pregnancy. It could be presented as a pictogram or as a text (see chapter 5). Experiences show that producers only use the pictogram and examples of textual warning are difficult to find. After the adoption of the European Alcohol Strategy, some of the alcohol producers and distributors decided to place the 'pregnant woman' logo on the back of their products (see example in figure 4). Several alcoholic beverages showing this pictogram could be bought in all 27 EU-Countries but more detailed information around such practices is currently not available.

The German Government introduced mandatory labels on alcopops¹ only. The message is to not sell this type of alcoholic beverage to minors (see chapter 5).

The Russian Federation government introduced mandatory general information and health warnings for different target groups in 2007 (see chapter 5).

In Slovenia, all foodstuffs containing alcohol have to be labelled, specifying it contains alcohol.

In the United Kingdom, the Government concluded an agreement with the alcohol industry in 2007. The agreement consists in expressing, on a voluntary basis, the alcohol content in terms of units, in combination with drinking-guidelines. A unit is equivalent to 10 ml or 8 grams of pure alcohol. This concept has been used since the 1990s. The idea behind this labelling scheme is to simplify calculations for consumers in order for them to better monitor their alcohol consumption and stay below the recommended limits.

¹ Alcopops by German law are spirits-based drinks mixed with fruit juice and other soft drinks

Outside the EU, several countries introduced legal regulations on health warnings as well as information labels. A table and a report of health warnings have been drawn up by ICAP in 1997 (updated in February 2010) and by EUROCARE in 2009. These documents give a general overview worldwide of mandatory and voluntary labelling activities (ICAP, 2010, EUROCARE, 2009a). In the United States for instance, warning labels on alcohol beverages were introduced in 1989. Since then, alcohol containers carry a government warning related to pregnancy, driving, operating machinery and general health (see figure 2).

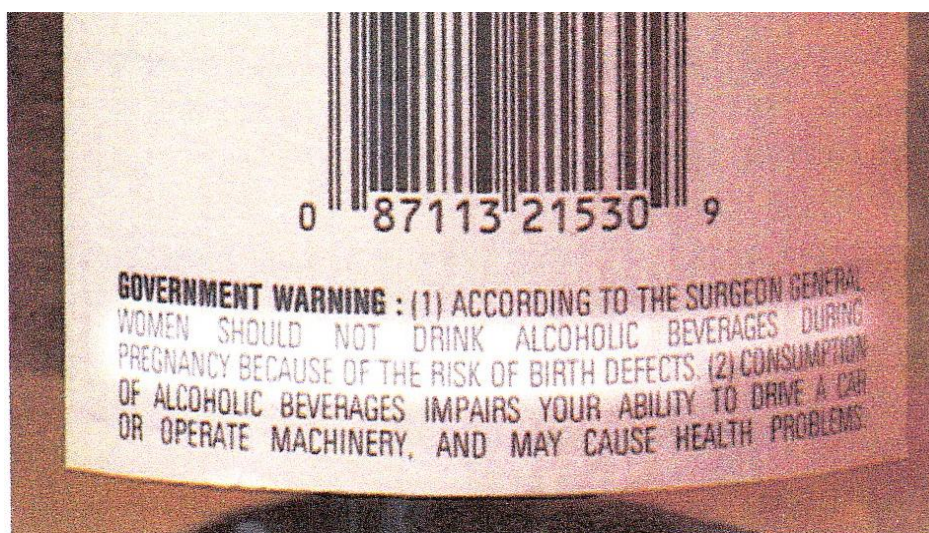


Figure 2: US Warning label on alcoholic beverages (Anderson, 2008)

Another example is South Africa: It is among the latest countries to introduce mandatory health warnings on containers with alcoholic beverages in 2007. It is also among the few countries, which uses a system of rotating warnings (South African Government, Department of Health, 2007).

3.2.2 Manufacturers actions

Some producers of alcoholic beverages use the French pictogram to label their products. There are also examples of labels which point out the minimum age to purchase alcoholic beverages. Some alcohol manufacturers use responsible drinking messages on their bottles and containers as well as units with regard to the alcohol content.

Some examples:

- In Denmark, the Danish Brewers' Association expresses since 1995, on each container, the alcohol content in terms of units, equivalent to 12 grams of pure alcohol. The association revised its units labelling in 2009. Since then, the alcohol content is given by a precise number of units per bottle. Example: a 75 cl bottle of beer with 6% Alcohol by Volume contains 3 units (see chapter 5).
- In 2004, a Dutch brewer introduced a responsible drinking message on its products, inviting consumer to visit a website. On this website, the consumers can find information on health and alcohol as well as on other alcohol issues (see chapter 5).

- In Germany, the German Brewers' Association developed three logos in the scope of a nationwide campaign. These logos are used on their products since 2006. One logo reminds the consumers about the age limits (“*Beer? Sorry, only at 16 years!*”). A ‘don’t drink and drive’ message is written on the second logo, referring to a drink-drive prevention campaign. Such “Drinking and driving Campaigns” exist since 1993 in Germany, on the initiative of German brewers. The third logo shows a responsible drinking message “*Bier Bewusst Geniessen*” (“*Enjoy beer consciously*”, see figure 3). The spirits, wine and sparkling wine industries are partners of the “Don’t Drink and Drive”-campaign in Germany. They use the labels in different ways: most of the spirits manufacturers use the “Don’t Drink and Drive” logos on their advertisements or commercials.



Figure 3: Labels introduced by German Brewers and used partly by the other alcohol industries

In the past 3 to 4 years, alcoholic beverages manufacturers (wine, spirits etc.) from all over Europe voluntarily introduced different logos and messages on their products. Most of these messages focus on responsible or moderate drinking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy (see figure 4). One alcohol manufacturer decided in 2006 to place the French pictogram on the back label of all its brands distributed in the EU.

A comprehensive overview of all different labelling activities of the alcohol industry in Europe is not available at the present time.



Figure 4: Examples of labels (“Enjoy With Absolut Responsibility” & pictogram, EnjoyHeinekenResponsibly)

3.2.3 Youth specific labels

Age limits for purchasing alcoholic beverages are set in all EU Member States. An overview is given in table 2. Alcoholic beverages are labelled with legal age information in two countries only. Messages containing more detailed information can be found on alcopops in Germany and on spirits and wine in the Russian Federation (see chapter 5).

	Selling		Serving	
	beer & wine	spirits	beer & wine	spirits
Austria	16	16/18	16	16/18
Belgium	No limit	18	16	18
Bulgaria	18	18	18	18
Czech Republic	18	18	18	18
Cyprus	18	18	18	18
Denmark	18	16	18	18
Estonia	18	18	18	18
Finland	18	20	18	18
France	18	18	18	18
Germany	16	18	16	18
Greece	No limit	No limit	16	16
Hungary	18	18	18	18
Ireland	18	18	18	18
Italy	No limit	No limit	16	16
Latvia	18	18	18	18
Lithuania	18	18	18	18
Luxembourg	16	16	16	16
Malta	17	17	17	17
Netherlands	16	18	16	18
Norway	18	20	18	20
Poland	18	18	18	18
Portugal	16	16	16	16
Romania	18	18	18	18
Slovak Republic	18	18	18	18
Slovenia	18	18	18	18
Spain	18	18	18	18
Sweden	20	20	18	18
Switzerland	16	18	16	18
United Kingdom	18	18	16	18

Table 2: Minimum age for selling/serving alcohol in EU, Norway and Switzerland (European Commission 2009b)

Most of German beer brewers voluntarily label their products with minimum age requirements (16 years, see figure 3). The Association of Breweries in Lithuania started an alcohol prevention campaign in November 2010. The corresponding logo, shown in figure 5, is part of a nationwide campaign (see chapter 5).



Figure 5: Label for beer bottles in Lithuania introduced by the brewers

3.2.4 Advertising and labelling

The table in chapter 5 (5th column) lists the different labelling initiatives on alcohol drinks advertisements in Europe. In 7 EU-MS, labels on alcohol advertisements are mandatory (e.g. France, Sweden and Latvia). Figure 6 shows a French alcohol advertisement with a general health warning on alcohol.



Figure 6: Health warnings on French alcohol advertising

During the last five years, the alcohol industry increased its efforts to label advertisements and commercials with responsible or moderate drinking messages. Currently most of wine, beer and spirits manufacturers use these messages. Very often, they combine these messages with web addresses containing general information on alcohol issues (see figure 7).



Figure 7: Combination of responsible drinking message and web address

The European Spirits Organisation (CEPS) published in its “Third year progress report” an overview of responsible drinking messages on alcohol advertising within the EU (November 2008).

4. Impact and effectiveness of health warnings and unit labels

4.1 Surveys and studies

In many studies, the impact of alcohol warning labels on drinking behaviour is shown to be insignificant (Grube & Nygaard, 2001; Agostinelli & Grube, 2002). However, all studies, especially concerning the US warning labels, show that a greater awareness of the risks highlighted in the warnings was identified (Stockwell 2006). In contrast to these findings, warnings on tobacco packages are more effective and have the potential to strongly influence the decision making process to quit smoking (Wilkenson & Room, 2009; Willemsen, 2005). The effectiveness of the health warning labels on tobacco products based on different items: The size and the placement of the message labels are clear determined by the directive. This avoids minimizing and misplacement of the messages. Short and easy understanding messages. Different and rotating messages which cover the most harmful health impact of smoking (European Union, 2001).

Different target groups, like teenagers (McKinnon et al., 2000) and pregnant women, were examined in the scope of different studies conducted in the US and in Europe. Evidence of awareness and recall of the messages was again found among these target groups (Hankin et al., 1993; Guillemont & Léon, 2008). Telephone surveys conducted in 2004 (before the implementation of the French warning label) and in

2007 (after the introduction) showed that this label increased risk awareness. Additionally, the social norms supporting abstinence during pregnancy increased (Guillemont & Léon, 2008).

In Germany, one study conducted by the Federal Institute for Health Education (BZgA) took into consideration the impact of the age limit label for purchasing alcopops. It showed that 17% of the 12 up to 17 year-old alcohol consumers renounced to buy alcopops because of this label (BZgA, 2005).

In Australia, alcohol unit labelling (10 grams pure alcohol) of alcoholic beverages became mandatory in 1995. Tracking research found evidence of increasing awareness of the concept of a “standard drink” since the introduction of the labels (Loxley et al. 2004). This was also a result of another recent study, but additionally the find out that the standard drink label helps young people to choose the strongest drinks for the lowest costs (Jones & Gregory, 2009).

In the UK, in the scope of an alcohol harm reduction strategy, the alcohol manufactures were encouraged to provide alcohol content information by units on the containers of alcohol beverages. The concept of units (one unit: 8 grams pure alcohol) should help the alcohol consumers to increase their awareness of the amount of consumed alcohol. Additionally lower risk drinking guidelines are recommended by the Chief Medical Officers. The alcohol consumers find detailed information about these guidelines on a website, which address could be placed also on the label (Department of Health, 2008) (see figure 8). Until now, there is no research available investigating the impact of such labels on drinking behaviour in the UK.

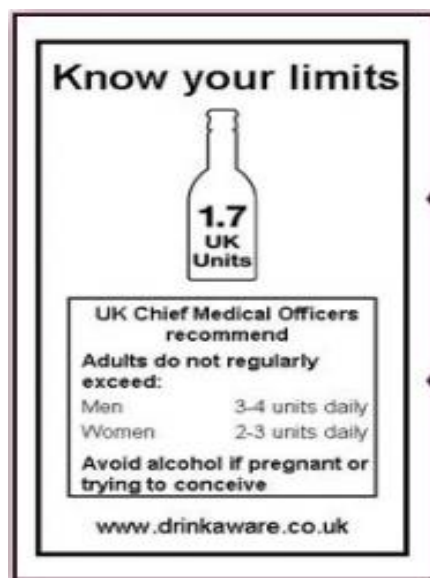


Figure 8: UK example of labelling alcoholic beverages with health information

In the European context it is not easy to find a standard definition of standard drink, which is an equivalent of unit. Turner (1990) concluded in his study, based on an analysis of 125 studies, that one standard drink in Europe contains commonly 10 grams pure alcohol. The use of standard drinks could simplify the assessment of alcohol consumption not only in the primary health care settings as well as for alcohol consumers (Anderson et al., 2005).

4.2 Effective design and placement

In the US, series of experiments were conducted to analyse factors affecting the perception as well as noticeability of warning labels (Laughery et al., 1993). The results of these experiments stressed the following key features:

- Label clutter: warning labels should not be obscured by surrounding information.
- Location: warnings on the front of alcohol container are more noticeable than those in any other place.
- Orientation: horizontal placement increases noticeability.
- Contrast: a strong foreground-background contrast is more effective in drawing attention.
- Colour: the specific colour used is less important than the colour combination.
- Pictorials: they attract attention. If paired with written warnings, they may be better remembered.
- Signal icons: the red triangle for instance helps to identify warning- related information. The text “Government warning” functioned as a signal helping to identify the warning. Texts with a shorter signal (such as “warning” as a single word) are less noticeable.
- Border: the area should be large enough to ensure that the text could be read.
- A combination of salience features is likely to improve noticeability, more than using a single feature

In Australia, an on-going qualitative study conducted by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth, 2009), the following most relevant results were found:

- At the beginning, health warnings should be factual and informative.
- Labels most likely to be effective are those linked with existing media campaigns.
- If images are included, they would be more effective if they are linked with other elements of a social marketing campaign.
- Messages should not tell the consumers what to do. Participants who had personal bad experiences in relation with their drinking behaviour are especially reluctant to these types of messages.
- “Health Warning” was the most preferred wording.

4.3 Suggestions of “Health Warnings” on alcoholic beverages

In this paragraph, proposals of “Health Warning” labels of two stakeholders are shown. In 2009, EURO CARE published the first draft library of alcohol health information and warning labels. The sample labels were developed by FUEL (a Belgium graphic and communication agency) and EURO CARE (EURO CARE, 2009b).

Labels for the following topics are proposed: pregnancy, driving, harm to others, operating machinery, young people, sexual health, general population/dependence, physical health, mental health, medicine.

It should be a basis for a more elaborate library. EURO CARE hopes that this proposal initiates further needed discussions on this issue. The aim is to persuade the European Commission to develop such library and adopt a framework regulation for its use. EURO CARE stressed that the written and pictorial messages need further development. One example is shown in figure 9.



**1 IN 4 OF ALL ROAD DEATHS
INVOLVE ALCOHOL**



Figure 9: Examples of pictograms and a written message for drinking and driving (EUROCARE, 2009b)

Concerning commercial communication, SABMiller, one of the world's largest brewers, drafted alcohol responsible message guidelines, including alcoholic beverages labelling (SABMiller plc, 2010). The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a general framework to all their companies, in order to fulfil their obligation to include alcohol responsibility messages in commercial communication. SABMiller defines commercial communication as advertising in all media (incl. internet, text messaging), packaging, promotions, product placement, merchandising, sponsorship and research. They will combine the messages with an alcohol responsibility website (see figure 9).

The messages focus on three topics: a) drinking and driving, b) legal purchasing age of alcoholic beverages, c) Alcohol and pregnancy.

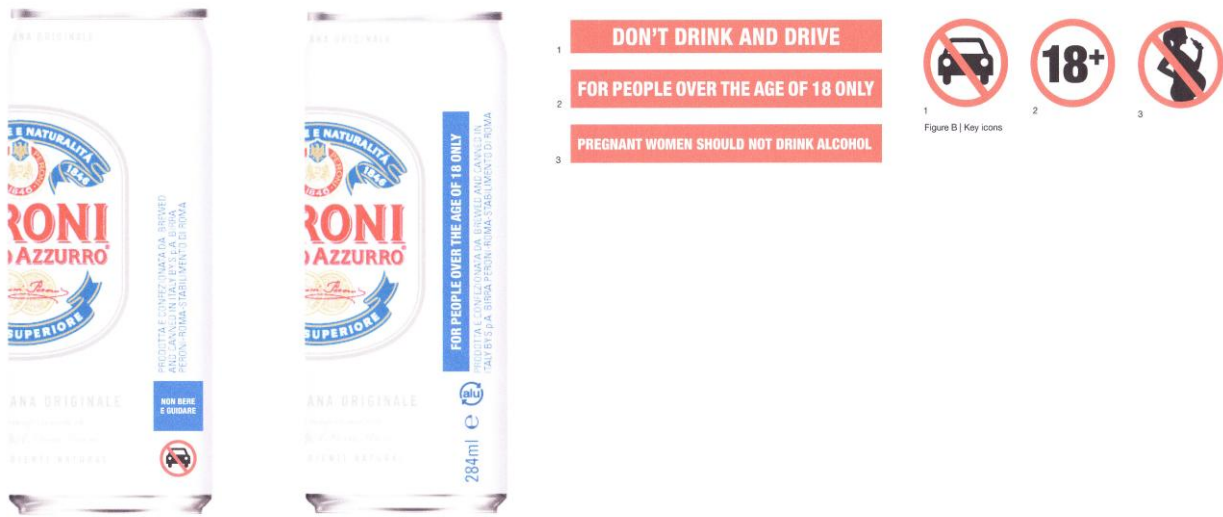


Figure 10: Messages and pictograms as well as recommendations for cans (SABMiller plc, 2010)

5. Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcoholic beverages within the EU

The examples in the following tables are based on the literature review and survey conducted by the KatHo (see chapter 2.). The examples given by the survey are marked with *.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Austria	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Voluntarily applied by some brands.
Belgium	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, agreement of drinks producers, distributors, etc. to label any advertising on alcohol with responsible drinking messages.
Bulgaria	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly with the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Voluntarily applied by some brands.
Cyprus	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Voluntarily applied by some brands.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Czech Republic	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Voluntarily applied by some brands.
Denmark	Yes	<p>Since 1995, members of the Danish Brewers' Association label each alcohol container with units of alcohol, equivalent to 12 grams pure alcohol. In 2009, the Association revised its unit labelling. The label shall contain the precise number of alcohol units per bottle.</p> <p>Source: Bryggerierne lancerer genstandsmaerkning (April 2009) http://www.bryggeriforeningen.dk/default.asp?pid=191&visnyhed=328</p>	<p>Voluntary by national agreement;</p> <p>Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)</p>	Voluntarily applied by some brands.
Estonia	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, by law, a health warning message must be placed on alcohol advertisements.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Finland	No	An already adopted law on health warning label on drinking during pregnancy and a general health warning was withdrawn from the Finnish Government. This was due to the Commissions negative assessment during the notification procedure as well as internal political changes.	Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Some manufactures are using responsible drinking messages on a voluntary basis.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
France	Yes	<p>France is the only and first EU Member State, which requires since October 2007 warning labels on all alcoholic beverages. The warning points out the risk for the foetus of drinking alcohol during pregnancy. It can be shown as a text or as a pictogram (see figure 1). Most manufacturers use the pictogram.</p> <p>“La consommation de boissons alcoolisées pendant la grossesse, même en faible quantité, peut avoir des conséquences graves sur la santé de l’enfant.” (Consumption of alcoholic beverages during pregnancy, even in small amounts, may have serious consequences on the child’s health.)</p> <p>Source: French Government (2006) http://www.vins-bourgogne.fr/connaitre/la-terre-de-bourgogne/l-etiquetage/gallery_files/site/321/360.pdf</p> <p>This action has been evaluated in 2007. Positive impact on awareness, recall and social norms on alcohol consumption during pregnancy has been found (see chapter 4.1).</p> <p>Source: Guillemont, J., Léon, C. (2008). Alcool et grossesse: connaissances du grand public en 2007 et évolutions en trois ans. Évolutions, 15. http://www.inpes.sante.fr/CFESBases/catalogue/pdf/1117.pdf</p>	Mandatory	By law since 1991, all alcoholic beverages have to carry a health warning: “The abuse of alcohol is dangerous for health.”

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Germany*	Yes	<p>In the scope of the Protection of Minors Act, the German Government introduced in 2004 a mandatory labelling for spirit-based alcopops. It prohibits the sale of alcopops for young people below 18 years. The label has to be placed on the front side of the bottle and has to be written in the same size as the brand name. In parallel to the introduction of this law, a special tax on spirits-based alcopops was implemented.</p> <p>“Abgabe an Personen unter 18 Jahren verboten, § 9 Jugendschutzgesetz.” (Not for supply to persons under 18 years, clause 9 Protection of Minors Act.) Source: German Government (2004). http://www.bmfsfj.de/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Abteilung5/Pdf-Anlagen/gesetz-gegen-alkohol-tabak.property=pdf.bereich=.rwb=true.pdf</p> <p>The impact of the label on purchasing alcopops by minors has been evaluated in 2005, but it was not very strong (see chapter 4.1). Source: Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) (2005). Development of Alcohol Consumption Among Young People. http://www.bzga.de/forschung/studien-untersuchungen/studien/?sub=19</p> <p>The German Brewers label their products with logos to remind about age limits or to promote their drink and drive prevention campaign (see figure 3). Some of the spirits producers also use the logo of the “DON’T DRINK AND DRIVE” campaign. Some of the German wine producers also use the French pictogram.</p> <p>Source: Campaign “Don’t Drink and Drive” http://www.ddad.de/ Deutscher Brauer-Bund http://www.bier-erst-ab-16.de/</p>	<p>Mandatory</p> <p>Voluntary (<i>Note: It could be that in some EU-MS such logos are used for similar campaigns. Comprehensive data is not available yet.</i>)</p>	<p>Voluntarily applied by some brands.</p>

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Greece	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, agreement between the industry and the Greek Government, all alcohol advertising must carry: "Enjoy responsible".
Hungary*	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, voluntarily, the Hungarian Spirits Association use a responsible drinking message since 2007: "Quality not Quantity".
Ireland	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, voluntarily, Members of the companies and the traders use the following message since 2005: "Enjoy (brand name) sensible."
Italy	No		Voluntary and voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, voluntarily applied by some brands.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Latvia*	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, by law, a health warning must appear on advertising.
Lithuania*	Yes	<p>The voluntarily campaign “18+” started on 23rd November 2010. The campaign is conducted by the alcohol producers in Lithuania, mainly by the brewers. Within the scope of the campaign commercials are shown in TV, radio, internet, etc. In the spots, famous national sports idols and other idols, which are very popular among young people, are shown. Additionally, 2 million beer bottles will be labelled with the “18+” logo (see figure 5). The intention is to raise the awareness that alcohol is not allowed for minors.</p> <p>One of the video clips is available under the following web link:</p> <p>http://www.videopasaulis.lt/video/30357/riciardas-berankis-lietuvos-aludariu-gildijos-socialine-kampanija.html</p>	Voluntary by the brewers association and voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, by law, warnings have to be on outdoor advertising (billboards).
Luxembourg	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, voluntarily applied by some brands.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Malta	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, by some brands on voluntary basis.
The Netherlands	Yes	<p>Some of the manufactures use labels on voluntary basis. One Dutch brewer uses a label on responsible drinking habits and invites the consumers to visit a website which contains information on alcohol and health and other alcohol related issues (see figure 4).</p> <p>Source: http://www.enjoyheinekenresponsibly.com</p>	Voluntary and also voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	<p>Yes, the STIVA Code requires the use of a responsible drinking message on all broadcast commercials and print advertising: “Enjoy, but in moderation”. 100% of all spirits adverts are covered by this label.</p> <p>Additional a message for young people under 16 years are used: “Alcohol below 16, certainly not”.</p>
Poland	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, by law, health warnings should be displayed on billboards and in all off-and on-premise outlets.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Portugal	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, all alcohol advertising label with the following sentence: "Be responsible. Drink moderately".
Romania	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, voluntarily by some brands.
Slovak Republic	No		Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, voluntarily by some brands.
Slovenia	Yes, but only for foodstuffs	The warning "not suitable for children" is displayed on containers as well as packages of all foodstuffs, which contain alcohol.	Mandatory for foodstuffs; Voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands French pictogram (see figure 1)	Advertising ban for spirits.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
Spain*	Yes	Warnings can be labelled on voluntary basis.	Voluntary, and also voluntary use of labels by a number of (imported) brands, mainly the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, the Spanish spirits producers agreed to label spirit advertising with the message “Enjoy responsible drinking” in 2008.
Sweden	No		Voluntary (by some imported alcoholic beverages), the French pictogram (see figure 1)	Yes, by law, all alcohol advertisements have to be labelled with health warning messages.

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Health warnings and responsibility messages on alcohol advertisements
United Kingdom	Yes	<p>The UK Government agreed with the alcohol industry to encourage manufacturers to label alcoholic beverages with information about alcohol in terms of “units”, along lower-risk drinking guidelines. The labels include the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol content in units. • The lower-risk drinking guidelines: ‘UK Chief Medical Officers recommend men do not regularly exceed 3-4 units daily and women, 2-3 units daily.’ • The website address of the Drinkaware Trust (www.drinkaware.co.uk) • One of the following messages as a heading: “Know Your Limits”, “Enjoy Responsibly” or “Drink Responsibly” • Additionally, manufacturers are asked to include the CMO pregnancy message. <p>Source: Department of Health (2008). Safe. Sensible. Social. The next steps in the Alcohol National Strategy. (p. 43-44) http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_075219.pdf</p> <p>The implementation of this action by the industry has been evaluated in 2008 (see chapter 6). Source: Campden & Chorleywood Food Research Association Group (CCFRA) (2008). Monitoring implementation of of alcohol labelling regime (including advice to women on alcohol and pregnancy). http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Healthimprovement/Alcoholmisuse/DH_085390</p>	<p>Voluntary</p> <p>Also voluntary (by some imported alcoholic beverages), the French pictogram (see figure 1)</p>	<p>Yes, industry-wide agreement to display messages (responsible drinking) on alcohol advertisement, additionally a consumer friendly website was launched: www.drinkaware.co.uk .</p>

5.1 Practices on health warnings on alcoholic beverages in countries inside and outside Europe

Country	Regulation on labelling (e.g. health warnings)	Content	Voluntary / Mandatory	Labels on advertising
Russian Federation	Yes	<p>Health warning labels on wine and spirits, especially vodka, are required by law. The following warning is mandatory:</p> <p>“Alcohol is not for children and teenagers up to age 18, pregnant and nursing women, or for persons with diseases of the central nervous system, kidneys, liver and other digestive organs.”</p> <p>Source: USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (2007) Gain Report. http://www.calwinexport.com/files/Russia%20-%20Requirements%20for%20Exporting%20to%20Russia%202007.pdf</p>	Mandatory	Not known.
South Africa	Yes	<p>The South African Government, Department of Health adopted in 2007 regulations relating to health messages on container labels of alcoholic beverages. The regulation determines for instance the size and other important aspects. The following health messages are listed in the regulation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alcohol reduces driving ability, don't drink and drive 2. Don't drink and walk on the road, you may be killed 3. Alcohol increases your risk to personal injuries 4. Alcohol is a major cause of violence and crime 5. Alcohol abuse is dangerous to your health 6. Alcohol is addictive 7. Drinking during pregnancy can be harmful to your unborn baby <p>Source: South African Government, Department of Health (2007). Regulations relating to Health Messages on Container labels of Alcoholic Beverages. http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=72307</p>	Mandatory	Not known

6. Discussion

The collection of best practices on labelling across Europe has shown that only a few national governments implemented mandatory regulations.

Within the EU, only France and Germany introduced mandatory regulations on labelling or other relevant information. Russia is the only European country outside the EU which implemented such a law. It seems that the other European Countries, especially EU-MS, are hesitating to increase their commitment to the development or the implementation of labelling on alcoholic beverages. The best example is Finland: The adoption of a law on the regulation of health warnings on drinking during pregnancy and a general health warning placed on containers with alcoholic beverages was withdrawn. This was due to the European Commissions negative opinion during the notification procedure as well as internal political changes in Finland (EUROCARE, 2009a).

More favourable to voluntary actions, the UK Government chose agreed with the alcohol industry to implement voluntary regulations on labelling. Experience showed that most of the manufactures did not follow the agreed format and content of the labels. Only 2.4% of the samples carried the Chief Medical Officers (CMO) lower risk guidelines in the agreed format (CCFRA, 2008). 'Alcohol Concern' (UK national agency on alcohol misuse) conducted a survey on labelling of alcoholic beverages in the UK. The results are worrying and show the limited interest of a considerable number of producers on this issue. Alcohol Concern concludes: *"Current labelling is counter intuitive, falls short of government's expectations and does not sufficiently protect public health"* (Alcohol Concern, 2009, p. 18). The progress of UK actions seems to be slow down because a considerable number of producers of alcoholic beverages are not using the agreed content and format.

A considerable number of manufacturers across Europe are using labels to communicate on alcohol issues, around for instance responsible alcohol consumption or alcohol use during pregnancy. Additionally, websites are developed to inform consumers about responsible drinking guidelines. We have no information about the impact on consumers of these labelling activities, because the results of independent research are not available until now. To note also that it isn't easy to recognize the messages and pictograms, because their visibility and legibility is poor. From a Public Health point of view, the activities of the industry are two-edged because the border between prevention and promotion of alcoholic products are blurred: the brands labels and names are very often in the centre of attention. "Enjoy Heineken responsible" or "Enjoy With Absolut Responsibility" are examples of such action (see figure 4).

The developments in the alcohol policy sector during the last ten years and the adoption of the European Alcohol Strategy forced the alcohol industry to become more active on labelling initiatives. These actions are commendable, but one can doubt that the industry is really interested in implementing voluntary effective visible and legible labels with messages which aims at really reducing the alcohol consumption. Increased involvement of consumer organisation is an option to support the labelling issue. They would need however more support from NGOs, generally more experienced in the alcohol policy issue.

All in all, mandatory regulations should be the best way to use health warning labels and other information on alcoholic beverages effectively, because of the following aspects:

- They ensure widest possible reach of the population;
- They ensure a design that enhances visibility, e.g. they should determine the minimum size and the placement of the health warnings on the labels;
- They ensure the relevance of the content of the messages, which really closing the gaps of knowledge among the consumers, e.g. drinking guidelines based on the current stage of science;
- They provide the opportunity to support and reinforce warning messages on alcoholic beverages with similar messages on alcohol advertisement;
- They ensure accessibility of specific target groups, e.g. pregnant women, young people.

Labelling alcoholic beverages with health information is an important tool to inform consumers about the impact of alcohol consumption appropriately.

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Annexe 1

Project PROTECT

Alcohol labelling policies to protect young people

Member State experiences

Responsible: German Institute for Addiction and Prevention Research (DISuP)
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General information

The purpose of this task is to collect examples of practices, projects or policies (PPP) on consumer warnings and labelling of alcoholic beverages, especially focussed on young people. The results will be shared among all interested organizations, institutions, etc. across Europe. The examples will be placed on the PROTECT project website.

Objectives

The EC-funded PROTECT project will build capacity at the European, country and local levels by providing information of the experience, evidence base and need for consumer labelling of alcoholic beverages, particularly to create a supportive environment to help prevent the harmful use of alcohol amongst young people. With regard to this objective of the project it is beside other tasks necessary to gather experience and best practices, programmes as well as policies (PPP) on consumer labelling, especially for young people. PROTECT will contribute to the objectives of the Commissions Communication on alcohol to share best practice across countries. PROTECT will also support adding labels to alcohol containers to help establish social understanding that alcohol is a special and hazardous commodity, leading to enhanced protection of young people, reduced alcohol-related accidents, and increased consumer information on the potential risks of alcohol. To reach this aim we need your support by collecting such examples of local, regional and national level.

It would be very helpful, if you could send us PPPs, which are implemented or carried out in your country. Thank you very much in advance for supporting our data collection!

Guidelines and Instructions

- The PPP can include a wide range of activities:
 - Laws and policies that deal with existing labelling and packaging of alcoholic beverages, or that require health or other warnings to be placed on the packaging and containers of alcoholic beverages;
 - Activities that relate to consumer information that must given on alcohol

advertising;

- General educational messages or campaign that is directly tied to a new policy or activity on consumer warnings and labelling of alcoholic beverages (For example, if new warning labels are introduced, then this could be supported by a public education campaign);
- Although the data collection is focussed on activities which are targeted young people, we need all practices, programmes and policies, because we take the fact as a basis that general warnings or information for the whole population or other specific target groups also affects young people (For example young girls affects the warning do not drink during pregnancy)
- Practices, projects and programmes can include those funded by the public and private sectors, and can include alcohol industry funded projects (For example in some European countries the alcohol industry uses labels on alcoholic beverages on voluntary basis).
- We would be very pleased if you could send us one or two PPP. Please use one questionnaire for each PPP.
- If you are in a network with other organisations, we would like encourage you to distribute the questionnaire among your network partner organisations.
- The easiest way to send us the filled in questionnaire is by email; it is also an option to send the questionnaire by fax or by regular post.
- On the following pages, please answer the different items related to consumer warnings and labelling of alcoholic beverages in your country up to the last **10 years**. If there are practices, programmes or policies that were introduced more than **10 years ago**, it is fine to include it.
- The PPP can be implemented at country, regional or municipal level.
- It is quite possible that there have been no PPP related to consumer warnings and labelling of alcoholic beverages in your country in the last 10 years. If this is the case, please mark 'o' in item no. 6 and return the form.
- Please send the filled in questionnaires by email by **30th August 2010** to
w.farke@katho-nrw.de

Address:

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50668 Köln
Germany

Fax: +49 (0) 221 7757 – 180
Tel.: +49 (0) 2925 976889

- **If you have any questions or queries, please contact me.**
Thank you very much again for your cooperation in advance!

Organisation Details

1. Contact person

Name: . Work title: .
Email: .
Telephone: .
Fax : .
Country: .

2. Name of the organisation/institution/company: .

3. Type of organisation/institution/company:

- Governmental organisation
- Non-governmental organisation
- University
- Company in the private sector
- Company in the public sector
- Others, please specify: .

3. Address of the organisation/institution/company: .

4. Website: .

5. Main tasks of the organisation/institution/company (*More than one answer is possible*):

- Education (e.g. campaigns)
- Production (e.g. alcohol)
- Service (e.g. counselling customers)
- Treatment
- Research
- Others, please specify: .

6. There have been implemented PPP related to consumer warnings and labelling of alcoholic beverages in your country during the last 10 years?

- Yes*
- No
- I do not know

*if you answer with Yes, please continue with item 7

Practices/projects/policies

7. Number of Practice/Project/Policy (PPP) _____

8. What is the name of the PPP? _____

9. What is the level of the PPP?

- International
- National
- Regional
- Local

10. Who is the target group of the PPP?

- Pregnant women
- Whole population
- Special age groups (e.g. old people, young people)
- Diabetics
- Drivers
- Gender specific (e.g. young girls)
- Persons suffering from an allergy
- Others, please specify:

11. Why have you chosen to describe this PPP?

12. Do you know the reason for the implementation of this PPP?

13. What are the main aims and objectives of the PPP? (brief description)

14. Who implemented the PPP?

- National Government
- Companies
- Others, please specify:
- I do not know

15. Who funded the PPP?

- Government
- Industry
- Industry and Government
- Others, please specify: .
- I do not know

16. When has the PPP been started?

- Before 1995
- 1995 – 2000
- 2000 – 2009
- Actually in planning stage
- I do not know

17. How was the PPP developed?

- It did start as a pilot PPP in one part of the country.
- It was implemented countrywide.
- It was transferred from another country.
- In another way, please specify: .

18. What are the main elements of the PPP? (*More than one answer is possible*)

- General health warnings (e.g. alcohol could cause health problems)
- Warnings for specific target groups (e.g. drivers, young people)
- Helplines or websites are named for more detailed information or counselling services
- The information/warnings on the containers are integrated into general campaign on alcohol
- Others, please specify: .

19. Has the PPP been evaluated?

- Yes
- No is being intended (please continue with item 22)
- I do not know (please continue with item 22)

20. Is an evaluation report drawn up?

- Yes, but is inaccessible for the public (e.g. within the Ministries)
- Yes and is accessible for the public
- No
- I do not know

21. What has been evaluated?

- Comprehensibility of the messages
- Impact of the messages on behaviour (e.g. drinking less alcohol)
- Do the messages reach the target groups
- How many people are reached
- Acceptance of the information on the alcohol containers
- Lastingness of the messages
- Do people remember the messages
- Others, please specify:
- I do not know

22. What are the main results of the evaluation? (brief description)

23. What would you say were the pre-conditions for the success for this PPP?

24. What you say are the main lessons to be learnt from this PPP?

25. Please list a website/contact organization/person to find out more information about PPP:

26. Please give full reference details of any published papers and reports on the PPP:

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire!