

## **Calls to improve labelling of alcoholic beverages**

Today in the European Parliament, MEPs and health campaigners called for the alignment of alcoholic beverages with other food products.

*“People have a right to know what is really in the products they buy. The EU legal framework must ensure that consumers can make truly informed and easily comparable choices for all alcoholic beverages, just as they can for other products. Therefore, we should close the current loophole in the Food Information to Consumers regulation so that the content in all alcoholic beverages is provided per 100ml”* said MEP Jytte Guteland, who hosted today’s event.

In 2011 the European institutions passed Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 that requires food and soft drinks, including fruit juice and milk, to label nutritional information and ingredients. However, after heated debates alcoholic beverages were exempted from this obligation. Currently, when a consumer drinks alcohol it is highly unlikely that they know exactly what they are drinking.

In March 2017, the European Commission published a report clearly stating that no objective grounds were identified which would justify the absence of information on ingredients and nutritional information on alcoholic beverages. Furthermore, it states that there is no reason for differentiated treatment for some alcoholic beverages, including flavoured alcoholic beverages such as “alcopops”. The European Commission gave the alcohol producers 1 year to deliver a self-regulatory proposal that would cover the entire sector of alcoholic beverages.

Listing ingredients contained in a beverage alerts the consumer to the presence of any potentially harmful substances. More importantly, providing nutritional information such as energy content allows consumers to monitor their diets better, and makes it easier to keep a healthy lifestyle.

Alcohol labelling has traditionally been opposed by some producers, especially in the wine sector and amongst small and medium-sized producers. The organisers of today’s event emphasised that they aim to ensure that consumers have easily accessible information about the products at the point of sale, rather than create obstacles for SMEs.

*“We recognise the concerns of small and medium-sized producers. However, the EU has in its repertoire tools that could ease that burden. Currently, the Common Agricultural Policy spends nearly €250 million a year on wine promotion. Surely some of that money can be used to produce labels that would provide consumers with information on calories and ingredients”,* said Mariann Skar, Secretary General of European Alcohol Policy Alliance.

###

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)  
Mariann Skar                      Secretary General  
Email                                [mariann.skar@eurocare.org](mailto:mariann.skar@eurocare.org)  
GSM                                 [+32 \(0\) 474 830 041](tel:+3220474830041)  
Website                            [www.eurocare.org](http://www.eurocare.org)

Jytte Guteland, MEP S&D  
Contact via press officer Albin Nordin  
Email:                                [albin.nordin@ep.europa.eu](mailto:albin.nordin@ep.europa.eu)  
GSM:                                 +32 (0) 488 27 44 05

**The European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)** is an alliance of non-governmental and public health organisations advocating prevention and reduction of alcohol related harm in Europe. Member organisations are involved in advocacy and research, as well as in the provision of information and training on alcohol issues and the service for people whose lives are affected by alcohol problems.

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