

Alcohol in all policy areas

- Audiovisual Directive
- Excise duty and travellers allowances
- Common Agricultural Policy

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The Audio Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD), May 2007

- 2005/6 process of updating the TV without Frontiers Directive to address the digital media environment
- Article 15 of TVwF covers alcohol advertising. It was implemented mainly through self-regulatory codes at national level. No independent evaluation was made by the Commission to assess whether it works.
- In practice self-regulation is ineffective. The development of self-regulatory systems is inconsistent across the EU. Independent people are not always involved in the creation of the code, complaints and adjudication systems. Self-regulation does not have the same enforcement options as binding law.

In theory, alcohol advertising must not...

- *be aimed at minors or show them drinking;*
- *link alcohol to driving or physical performance;*
- *link alcohol and social or sexual success;*
- *claim that alcohol has therapeutic qualities or a means of resolving personal conflicts;*
- *encourage immoderate consumption or be negative about non drinking;*
- *highlight positively the alcoholic strength of drinks.*
- But in reality... many alcohol adverts clearly do not adhere to these rules

What is the result in the AVMS Directive?

- Covers all forms of commercial communications in new audiovisual platforms. Covers 'linear' (scheduled) and 'non-linear' (watch when you want) programmes
- Member States encouraged to use self-regulation
- No change to Article 15, no quantitative restrictions on alcohol marketing
- Amendment to limit alcohol ads on TV before 21.00 failed
- European Centre for Alcohol Monitoring (EUCAM)
- <http://www.stap.nl/eucam/home/home.html>

What can we do to make the policy more effective?

- MS have until December 2009 to implement the Directive from May 2007, so there is time to dialogue with national authorities.
- Monitor alcohol advertising and keep EUCAM informed about developments at national level.
- Prepare for the mid-term report (2010) on the implementation of the Directive with examples of how children are protected and implementation of limits of alcohol adverts.

Minimum excise duties

- The EU is a **customs union**. Duty-free sales between EU countries were abolished in 1989. Tax and excise duties have to be agreed by MS in unanimity.
- As part of the internal market, the goal would be a single, harmonised excise duty, but no agreement could be found. Instead, in 1992 a **minimum** rate was set for spirits, beer, intermediate products and wine.
- Despite studies showing that large differences in excise duties distorts the internal market and encourages fraud, no new agreement has been found. In 2006, the Council and Parliament rejected Commission proposals to increase the minimum excise duty by the level of inflation since 1992.

Travellers Allowances within the EU

- Individuals are allowed to purchase and transport themselves for their **personal use** a certain amount of excise goods - alcohol, tobacco. To assess personal use vs commercial use, 'indicative amounts' have been set. For alcohol, this is 230 litres
 - 10 Litres of spirits
 - 20 Litres of fortified wine (i.e. port or sherry)
 - 110 Litres of beer
 - 90 Litres of wine
- The Commission is proposing to remove these and to liberalise movement of alcohol. In contrast, the travellers allowance for tobacco is just 200 cigarettes, and may be tightened further to 40 cigarettes.

What can we do to make the policy more effective?

- Monitor closely the new draft COM Directive on monitoring movements of excise goods under duty suspension as it goes to Council and Parliament (consultation only).
- Advocacy to highlight that liberalising movement of alcohol undermines efforts of national authorities to reduce consumption of alcohol, contradicts the European Commission Alcohol Strategy. Highlight the contrast between tighter controls on tobacco and relaxing rules on alcohol, both of which are harmful for health.
- Identify which countries might be most affected by the removal of indicative amounts (e.g high tax countries with neighbouring lower tax countries) and encourage networking and shared information.

ReCAP of the EU and wine

- World's leading exporter and biggest wine market
- > 2.4 million farms producing wine, covering 3.6 million hectares, or 2 percent of EU agricultural area.
- Represents 5 % of the value of EU agricultural output.
- For a decade imports have grown by 10 % per year but exports are only increasing slowly. On current trends, excess wine production will reach 15 % of annual production by 2010/11.
- Total budget of 1.3 billion €, of which 500,000 million € is currently spent on crisis distillation for unsold wine.

EU Wine Reform as agreed, 12/2007

- No change to overall budget. Phasing out of funds for distillation and 'crisis distillation' over 4 years
- National envelopes to be spent by MS, including promotion in third countries, restructuring and conversion of vineyards
- 3 year voluntary 'digging up' scheme to cover 175,000 hectares. MS or Commission can stop the process if too successful (e.g if too much land involved)
- Planting restrictions to be phased out by 2015 or 2018
- Simpler labelling rules and Commission will have new powers to approve new wine-making methods
- Vineyards to be eligible for the Single Farm Payment and other rural development measures

What can we do to make the policy more effective?

- Advocacy to highlight that wine is both an agricultural product and an alcoholic beverage and therefore needs to be addressed in measures to reduce alcohol related harm.
- Advocacy towards clear labelling of wine to include the number of units in each bottle and complete list of ingredients.
- Advocacy towards health warnings rather than just moderation messages.
- Monitor the promotion campaigns for wine organised by the Ministries of Agriculture at national level.