

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@spirits.eu>
Sent: vendredi 22 janvier 2021 13:23
To: [REDACTED] (CAB-KYRIAKIDES)
Cc: [REDACTED] (CAB-KYRIAKIDES)
Subject: FW: Upcoming Publication of the Europe Beating Cancer Plan

Importance: High

Dear [REDACTED],

Further to the letter we sent to the Commissioner yesterday, I would appreciate the opportunity of a brief call to discuss the below issue further.

We fully understand these are extremely busy times for you and the team and the Plan is about to be finalised.

Based on public SANTE statements in December on potential aspects to be included in the Plan, we would like to comment on the following 3 elements:

1. **Compatibility of potential policy line on mandatory consumer information/labelling of alcoholic beverages with current joint MoU approach:** since 2019, and in common understanding with DG SANTE based on our joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), we have pursued & invested heavily into an ambitious multiannual label-change programme involving 1) energy information on-pack & 2) the development of a bespoke, state-of-the-art digital e-label platform. We understand that the Plan might propose that a different, and primarily legislative/mandatory approach regarding the labelling of alcoholic beverages could be pursued as of 2023.
In the spirit of cooperation and mutual good practice of implementing self-regulation between the Commission and our sector, we would greatly appreciate a discussion with you and the colleagues covering food law at the earliest convenience to understand what any potential calls for a new legislative labelling approach in the Plan would mean for the current implementation of the MoU approach and if they would constitute a policy shift that would deviate from the common understanding with the Commission so far enshrined in the MoU (which could negatively affect its rollout).
2. **DG TAXUD review of recommended non-binding guidance amounts regarding cross-border private purchases of alcoholic beverages:** DG SANTE mentioned this aspect could be included in the Plan. This measure would seem questionable from a Better Regulation point of view: if the measure would be expected to exert a marked effect on the ground, it could risk, conceptually speaking, to collude with one of the fundamental freedoms guaranteed in the Internal Market (of which the Commission is meant to be the prime guardian). If it is not expected to exert a marked effect on the ground, it might not be considered a relevant, evidence-based, proportionate tool for harm reduction. We would urge that these fundamental aspects be adequately considered prior to the launch of the Plan.
3. **Evidence referenced** – according to available evidence, it would seem that alcohol-attributable cancer mortality rates are structurally higher for men than for women and have substantially declined in the EU between 2000 and 2016, with estimates ranging between 3-8%.

Many thanks and looking forward to your kind reply.

[REDACTED]
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 January 2021 13:59
To: [REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu
Cc: [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu) <[REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu>; [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu) <[REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu>; [REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu;

Subject: Upcoming Publication of the Europe Beating Cancer Plan

Importance: High

Dear Commissioner Kyriakides,

spiritsEUROPE is the trade association representing the spirits sector at EU level. Our sector is proud of the innovation, tradition and rich cultural heritage we represent. We are also proud of our sense of responsibility – we have long encouraged those that choose to enjoy our products that they be enjoyed in moderation.

The work of the European Union, and its impact on the lives of Europeans, has never been more important. This is especially true when it comes to the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

We understand that the European Commission is about to publish a Plan which will guide the Union in leading the fight against cancer. We further understand that some recommendations will be made as regards the reduction of harmful alcohol consumption in the area of prevention. We would like to communicate our support for policy recommendations that have as their goal a reduction in the harmful consumption of alcohol.

Alcoholic beverages can be enjoyed responsibly – in moderation – as part of a balanced lifestyle. This is reflected in the national guidelines for alcohol consumption across the EU. According to Eurostat, the vast majority of consumers in the EU enjoy alcoholic beverages responsibly. Furthermore, recent WHO Europe data has shown that heavy-episodic drinking and alcohol-related mortality and disease have experienced far more significant declines than per capita consumption – showing that Europeans are drinking better, and not necessarily drinking more.

We do recognise, however, the potentially detrimental impact the harmful consumption of alcohol can have on the health of consumers. We are therefore committed to supporting efforts to reduce the harmful consumption of alcohol in partnership with all relevant stakeholders.

In recent years, **the spirits sector has pioneered efforts to “stimulate the uptake of healthier and sustainable consumption patterns”**, in particular by investing in **Responsible Drinking Initiatives (RDIs)**. The purpose of these initiatives is to promote responsible behaviour in a positive manner, showing the benefits of this behaviour and encouraging consumers to be more mindful about their consumption. The European Alcohol and Health Forum, which until 2018 brought together all stakeholders with policy-makers, was an important platform to explain this work and contribute to reducing the harmful consumption of alcohol. While the Commission has not convened the Forum in recent years, spiritsEUROPE has continued the good practice of publishing annual reports on these RDIs, reporting on their impact and effectiveness across Europe. The most recent edition of the [Implementation Report](#) can be found [here](#).

Further **examples of successful and effective self- or co-regulation** can be found in a number of our core areas – from energy labelling to reducing minors’ exposure to our marketing and advertising – and this work continues to this day: The spirit sector’s [Memorandum of Understanding](#) on **THE PROVISION OF NUTRITION INFORMATION & INGREDIENTS LISTING OF SPIRIT DRINKS SOLD IN THE EU** represents important progress, and we welcome the Commission’s support as we come to the first of our three targets in our aim to roll out on-pack calorie labelling and develop bespoke digital labelling solutions in the EU for spirits. When it comes to responsible marketing, compliance monitoring from the [Responsible Marketing Pact](#) shows that we are successfully controlling the placement of our ads and ensuring they neither reach nor appeal to minors while continuously evolving our commitments.

Not only does this align with the responsibility of our sector, but it also reflects the UN High-Level Declaration on NCDs of 2018, which *recognise(d) the need to bring together civil society and the private sector to mobilize all their available resources”* in the fight against NCDs.

In this spirit, we are more than willing to share our resources, expertise and experience with you, and to contribute positively in any way we can to the development and implementation of such policy recommendations that will form part of this Plan. We firmly believe that evidence-based, targeted partnership approaches are the most effective in tackling harmful consumption of alcohol.

We remain at your disposal should you wish to discuss this further via video call.

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

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**In his capacity as permanent representative of SPRL ADLOR Consulting*

spiritsEUROPE proudly represents one of Europe's most valuable agri-food export sectors and, with it, the interests of 29 associations of spirits producers as well as 10 leading multinational companies.

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