

PRESS RELEASE



spiritsEUROPE's statement on EU plans to reduce harmful alcohol consumption in the context of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan

3 February 2021 – TODAY, the European Commission published Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, an initiative that aims to promote healthy lifestyle choices, reduce the burden of cancer disease, and address health-related inequalities between Member States. As part of the Plan, the EU also envisages greater support to implement best practices and capacity-building activities to reduce harmful alcohol consumption in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Reacting to the publication of this flagship initiative, Ulrich Adam, Director General of spiritsEUROPE, said:

"We welcome the European Commission's initiative and fully support targeted policy recommendations that are proven to reduce the harmful consumption of alcohol.

Alcoholic beverages should only be enjoyed in moderation, as part of a balanced lifestyle, by those adults who choose to drink. The spirits sector has long promoted this goal and will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders to achieve it.

We are heartened to see that the Commission plans to encourage self- and co-regulatory initiatives related to marketing, an area in which our sector has long delivered on ambitious standards and targets – as we have also done in the area of labelling with our Memorandum of Understanding on consumer information.

For the upcoming debates, it will be important to consider the relationship between alcohol consumption and health (including physical, mental and social well-being) in the round. It will also be important to promote broader understanding of risk factors for cancer, including genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors.

The best evidence shows that light to moderate consumption can be part of a balanced lifestyle. It is therefore harmful patterns of drinking which must be further targeted. Doing so effectively will ensure that the positive trend of declining harmful consumption in Europe will continue and accelerate in the years ahead.

Once again, spiritsEUROPE supports the overall ambition of the Commission's Plan and are ready to share our resources, expertise, and experience with policymakers to reach our common goal, which is to develop and implement targeted, evidence-based policy recommendations that will truly tackle the problem of harmful drinking in Europe."

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- spiritsEUROPE proudly represents the EU spirits sector, 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. More information can be found at our [website](#).
- Compliance [monitoring](#) from the World Federation of Advertiser's Responsible Marketing Act shows that our sector successfully controls the placement of advertisement.
- [Memorandum of Understanding on consumer information](#) signed on 4 June 2019.
- Examples of spiritsEUROPE's long-term commitment to reducing alcohol-related harm and promoting responsible drinking can be found at www.drinksinitiative.eu as well as in our [Annual Report 2019](#).
- Consumer information on responsible drinking can be found at www.responsibledrinking.eu.