



eurocare

European Alcohol Policy Alliance

Brussels, 17 October 2018

**Irish Alcohol Bill welcomed as a ground-breaking measure by European health community.**

The Irish Public Health (Alcohol) Bill presents a set of measures to prevent alcohol related harm, which follow latest evidence base in the field of alcohol policy and recommendations of the World Health Organization.

Both World Health Organization *Global strategy to reduce harmful use of alcohol* and the World Health Organization *European action plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol 2012–2020* encompass measures proposed by the Irish Bill.

Moreover, the Sustainable Development Goal 3, Goal 3. Target 3.5, with which the European Union has an obligation to comply, calls for strengthening of the prevention efforts in the area of alcohol related harm.

Europe is still the highest drinking region in the world, it should come as no surprise that a European country has taken a global lead on alcohol policy. Over the last 40 years Ireland has been among the heaviest drinkers in Europe.

*“European doctors welcome the new Irish Public Health (Alcohol) Bill. It will be an important piece of legislation tackling the damage that alcohol may cause, with an emphasis on protecting children from alcohol related harm. We also support the introduction of cancer warnings on the labels to inform people about the dangers of alcohol and its proven relation to several types of cancer. These measures can serve as a good example also to other countries”* said Annabel Seeböhm, Secretary General of the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME).

Alcohol Bill introduces minimum unit price for alcohol; labelling of alcohol products and notices in licensed premises; restrictions on advertising and sponsorship of alcohol products; structural separation of alcohol products in mixed trading outlets and regulations of the sale and supply of alcohol products (promotions).

“The Irish Bill provides a comprehensive, well-considered and audacious response to a grave public health issue. We are convinced it will be a source of inspiration for other European countries, and act as another indication that tackling alcohol harm must remain high on the European Union’s agenda.”  
Sascha Marschang, Acting Director of the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

One of the most debated provisions is the obligation to provide information regarding alcohol and cancer on labels and advertisements of alcohol products. First conclusive links between alcohol and cancer were established back in 1987, yet 25 years later only 36% of EU citizens are aware of it. The message in relation to alcohol consumption in the new European Code Against Cancer is: *If you drink alcohol of any type, limit your intake. Not drinking alcohol is better for cancer prevention.* There is no level of alcohol consumption that is safe as far as cancer is concerned.

*‘We wholeheartedly congratulate Ireland on adopting the Bill, just like was the case with tobacco, Ireland has shown courage and resilience against industry lobbying. It came as a great disappointment to see alcohol industry following the footsteps of the tobacco industry and at times trying to deny the link between alcohol and cancer. We sincerely hope that no company or country will now sue Ireland for trying to protect the health of its citizens’* said Mariann Skar, Secretary General of European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare).

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

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)

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World Cancer Research Fund International is a leading authority on cancer prevention research related to diet, weight and physical activity. We translate the science into evidence-informed policy recommendations to help governments and policymakers around the world take effective action to reduce preventable cases of cancer and other non-communicable diseases.

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

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European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) started as a small group of 70 hepatologists from 15 European countries who came together to share best medical practice in April 1966. 50 years later EASL has evolved into a major European Association with international influence dedicated to the liver and liver disease. EASL has over 4,000 members from all over the world and provides an annual platform, The International Liver Congress™, for 11,000 liver experts to meet and discuss latest scientific research. EASL has given rise to many international clinical trials and research

collaborations to the benefit of patients all over the world.

[www.easloffice.eu](http://www.easloffice.eu)

United European Gastroenterology (UEG) is a professional non-profit organization combining European scientific societies concerned with digestive health. In addition to promoting high-quality clinical care, scientific research and training, UEG creates awareness of gastrointestinal diseases amongst the greater public and decision-makers.

[www.ueg.eu](http://www.ueg.eu)

European Association of Cancer Leagues (ECL) is a pan-European umbrella organisation of national and regional cancer leagues. For over 30 years, we have been providing a unique and important platform for cancer societies. From Iceland to Turkey, ECL is represented by leagues in the extended Europe. Together, we are "making a Difference in Cancer Prevention and Control!"

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

ECL@europeancancerleagues.org

European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) is a change agent - Europe's leading NGO alliance advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals and disease groups, working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe.

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

[epha@epha.org](mailto:epha@epha.org)

@EPHA\_EU

Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. CPME is committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU institutions and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.

[www.cpme.eu](http://www.cpme.eu)

@CPME\_EUROPA

The European Union of Medical Specialists (Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes – UEMS) is a non-governmental organisation representing national associations of medical specialists in the European Union and in associated countries.

[www.uems.eu](http://www.uems.eu)

The European Union of General Practitioners (UEMO) established in 1967, the principal objectives of UEMO are: (i) to study and promote the highest standard of training, practice and patient care within the field of general practice throughout Europe; (ii) to defend the role of general practitioners in the healthcare systems; (iii) to promote the ethical, scientific, professional, social and economic interests of European general practitioners, and to secure their freedom of practice in the interest of their patients.

[www.uemo.eu](http://www.uemo.eu)

The European Medical Students' Association – Association Européenne des Étudiants en Médecine (EMSA) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation representing medical students from all across Europe. It is the only voice of students within the European Medical Organisations. EMSA is recognised by the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the United Nations. Its activities gather around Medical Education, Medical Ethics and Human Rights, Health Policy, Public Health, Medical Science and European Integration and Culture.

[www.emsa-europe.eu](http://www.emsa-europe.eu)

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The European Liver Patients' Association (ELPA), established in 2005, works to promote the interests of people with liver diseases. ELPA currently has 37-member groups from 30 countries. ELPA and its members are dedicated to multi-level lobbying initiatives involving European Union and national policymakers, liver specialist associations and public health experts in pursuit of a world without liver disease.

[www.elpa.eu](http://www.elpa.eu)

Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network (NordAN) was established in September 2000 as a network of non-governmental, voluntary organizations who all worked to reduce the consumption of alcohol and other drugs and who supported a restrictive alcohol and drug policy and who did not receive contributions from the commercial alcohol industry. Acting on these principles NordAN today have grown to have 90 non-governmental, voluntary member organisations in all the eight Nordic and Baltic countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden), all active in the alcohol and drug field.

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

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The Alcohol Policy Youth Network (APYN) is a network of youth organizations that work towards the prevention and reduction of alcohol-related harm. APYN develops and supports effective alcohol policy to assure healthy lifestyles and environments for young people.

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

The European FASD Alliance (EUFASD) was founded in February 2011 to meet the growing need for European professionals and NGOs concerned with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders (FASD) to share ideas and work together.

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

European Centre for Monitoring Alcohol Marketing (EUCAM) collects, exchanges and promotes knowledge and experience about alcohol marketing and alcohol marketing monitoring throughout Europe.

[www.EUCAM.info](http://www.EUCAM.info)

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