

# EUROPEAN ALCOHOL AND HEALTH FORUM

5<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting

BRUSSELS, 12 November 2009

## SUMMARY REPORT

The meeting was chaired by Robert Madelin, Director General, DG Health and Consumers.

### 1. Welcome

- The Chair welcomed all participants (*cf. List in Annex 1*). He informed the Forum that there were still no indications as to whether or how the on-going transition to a new Commission would impact on the EU Alcohol Strategy or the EAHF.
- The Chair drew member's attention to (1) a paper on minimum pricing by C. Record and C. Day (2009) *Clinical Medicine* as an example of a thought-provoking piece of work; and (2) the summary of views of the 10 points arising from the Stockholm Workshop.
- The Agenda was approved.

### 2. Procedural Issues

#### a) Member requests

- Membership requests have been received from the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Association of European Football Leagues (EPFL), Deutsche Fussball Liga GmbH (DFL), and the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL)
- Given that these organisations fulfil the criteria for membership set out in the Forum Charter, the Forum decided to accept them as members.
- This brings the total number of Forum members to 65

#### b) Open Alcohol Forum

- The Chair referred to the satisfaction survey of last year's Open Forum as a basis for guidance on how to further develop the event. The debate highlighted that the event should be an opportunity to meet stakeholders and therefore be structured to promote interaction.

- The Chair, as a conclusion, stated that a small group could be set up to contribute to drafting the programme of the next Forum, and invited interested members to volunteer. The Chair invited members to send further ideas for the next Open Forum by the end of the year.
- The Commission services would have a draft programme for the 2010 Open Forum ready for the next Plenary (11 March).

### **3. Report from the Science Group**

- The Commission services updated participants on recent meetings of the Science Group (SG) in the absence of its Chair and Deputy Chair.
- At its June meeting, the SG peer reviewed two studies: (1) the RAND Europe report on alcohol affordability and (2) a Czech study on affordability and alcohol consumption. In both cases, the study methodology was critiqued according to standard format of peer review (study design strengths and weaknesses, extent to which the existing body of evidence had been taken into account, the extent to which the study's conclusions were robustly based on its findings etc). The Science Group comments on both papers are summarised in the report of the meeting.
- At the October meeting, the SG re-elected the Chair (Professor Ian Gilmore) and the Deputy Chair (Dr. Jacek Moskalewicz). At this meeting, the SG also explored future topics for work. Five topics were considered (Alcohol in the workplace; alcohol accessibility and harm; the development of quality criteria for projects to be included in the Clearing House on projects on alcohol and youth health; poverty, homelessness and alcohol, and FASD). The first two topics were considered by the Group to have most promise.
- Points made by the Forum participants included:
  - The issue of alcohol in the workplace also includes harm to others and productivity aspects; in some Member States companies are gathering data around this issue; occupational health services could play a role and in some Member States guidelines on this have been developed through broad-based cooperation; both private and public sectors should be covered as well as high-risk sectors or professions, including risk from intoxicated clients; rather than focusing on statistics or new research, the Science Group's work should link back to the Forum's work including to orient commitments.
  - Other possible topics were raised, such as effective elements of education for young people; this topic was further discussed under item 5.
  - Some aspects of the functioning of the Science Group were queried (requirement for a certain number of meetings a year; the adequacy of the range and scope of expertise for the specific topics addressed.)
- The Chair highlighted the role of the Forum to decide on the SG's working topics in order that these feed into the Forum's own working areas. He concluded that there were sufficient topics to capture the science-related aspirations and needs

of the Forum, and noted the broad interest to develop further a task around alcohol in the workplace.

#### 4. Marketing Communication

##### a) The Chair's Conclusions from the Taskforce and the Mapping Reports

Final versions of the three mapping reports have been available on DG SANCO website since July. The Chair presented his conclusions and next steps from the 3 marketing reports.

- Social marketing: there is varying activity on **social marketing** in the Member States; its impact on behaviour is hard to evaluate; social marketing is more than just communication; quality criteria still need to be refined. Possible next steps: development of social marketing approaches could be pursued using the Clearing House resource, or through the Public Health Programme.
- Targeting/Not Targeting Youth: there is broad agreement that young people need to be protected; and increasing consensus that advertising influences youth alcohol consumption (although no consensus on the size of that influence); there is a variable mix of statutory and voluntary rules across EU; more evidence is needed on effective approaches. Possible next steps: Public Health Programme may provide scope to move forward; economic operators could agree to move towards a common threshold principle.
- Self Regulatory Mapping exercise: the development of systems for self regulation is variable across the EU; there is limited information and more detail and criteria needed on how to strengthen systems; need to continue to fill information gaps and develop an emphasis on effectiveness. Possible next steps: Public Health Programme could be a source of funds for further action providing projects fall within its scope; raise awareness of this work among Member States, for example with a presentation to CNAPA.
- The Chair proposed that a revised version of the Self Regulation Mapping Report would be produced for the autumn 2010, and invited participants to send report updates to the Commission services by the summer 2010 (end of July).
- Comments from the floor included: concerns about the lack of independent data used to compile the current reports; the potential benefits of developing a data collection system that would allow long term trends to be observed.
- Two potential project ideas were raised, relating to 1) the value of a EU wide collection and mapping of the data on young people's exposure to alcohol and marketing, and 2) the drivers of underage drinking. The Chair proposed that Commission services could explore the possibility of further work in this area, in liaison with interested Forum Members.

b) Follow up to Special Workshop on Marketing Communication Taskforce at the Presidency Expert Conference on Alcohol and Health in Stockholm on 22 September 2009:

- The Chair observed that the 10 points that emerged from the Special Workshop on Marketing Communication in Stockholm could bridge the gap between the Taskforce activities to date and the next stage of the Forum's response to the need to better protect children and young people from alcohol marketing.
- The Chair invited Members of the Forum to send feedback to the Commission on the 10 points from Stockholm paper.

c) Guidance to retailers to reduce alcohol related harm:

- Henrieke Crielaard presented EuroCommerce's work to support retailers across the EU to sell alcohol products responsibly. HOTREC have also prepared guidance for national associations. Forum members were referred to the paper on the HOTREC website for more detail.
- Comments from the floor included: Congratulations to the Alcohol Forum for having brought these organisations more visibly into the debate and action, and the potential this has to develop new partnerships; this is a good overview of work being done with retailers; Delivering a standardised message that young people see wherever they try to buy alcohol is an important step forwards; the necessity to take into account legal requirements in each country and cultural differences. EuroCommerce highlighted that in the Netherlands, NGOs conduct regular monitoring with under-age mystery shoppers who try to buy alcohol in retail outlets.
- The Chair thanked EuroCommerce for their action and presentation. He proposed that both HOTREC and EuroCommerce could update the Forum on their experiences in a year's time (the November 2010 Plenary). The Chair proposed that the national contacts lists of both organisations be shared with the Member States at the next CNAPA meeting in January to facilitate awareness at government, and their support if needed.

## 5. Youth

### a) Effective School Based Education

- Georgina Cairns, University of Stirling and Open University presented a report on Effective School Based Alcohol Education which reviewed published evidence in this field between 2005 and 2009. The report concludes that the most promising approaches are family based approaches and life skills training.
- Comments from the floor included: there is a lot of activity around education but little evidence of effect on behaviour; behaviour change is not the main outcome of these programmes; education is important but part of a wide range of interventions; the education of parents is important, as well as inclusion of parents in formulating school policy and activity.
- The Chair thanked the authors for the report. He observed that the study underlines the difficulty in developing effective interventions in this area, and noted that more research was needed.
- The Chair noted that there is no evidence base to guide commitments on education. The Alcohol Youth Policy Network may be well placed to contribute to future developments and progress.

- He invited Forum members to give feedback to the authors over the next 10 days, following which the paper could be finalised.

#### b) Clearing House

- The Commission Services updated participants on the development of a Clearing House on initiatives on alcohol and youth health. Following the first meeting of an Advisory Group, a prototype database now exists, and is available for demonstration during the lunch break. The next steps are to:-
  - continue to refine the internet resource, share proposals for name and visual identity; pilot with projects; further develop quality criteria.

### 6. Member Commitments

#### a) Stock take of Member Commitments

- The Commission services provided a stock take on the status of Forum member commitments. Of the 115 commitments currently in the database, only 55 are active and ongoing. There are currently 28 Forum members without an active commitment. By 1 January 2010, unless new commitments are made, there will be only 43 active commitments.
- The Chair stressed that having active commitments is a requirement for membership of the Forum. He requested that all organisations without an active commitment, should introduce one by 15 December 2009, or reconsider their membership in the Forum.

#### b) Monitoring Exercise

- RAND Europe presented the Forum's first Monitoring Progress Report based on a quality assessment of the information contained in the commitment monitoring reports submitted by Forum members.
- The Commission services will send members' individual scores in the next few days, along with feedback from Rand Europe to each member. Questions on the individual feedback should be sent to both RAND Europe and the Commission services.
- The Chair indicated that the Forum would now move towards a system of annual reporting. For 2010, the deadline for submission of annual monitoring reports will be set at the end of April. This will allow the Second Monitoring Progress Report on commitments for the year to be presented at the November Plenary.

### 7. Labelling of alcoholic beverages

The Commission Services presented an overview paper on consumer labelling of alcoholic beverages as background for discussion. Mariann Skar of Eurocare presented their preliminary work to establish a library of warning labels.

- Eurocare has developed drafts for pictorial health warnings for alcoholic beverages and appealed to the Forum for feedback with a view for further

development. They invited input by 1 February 2010, and hoped that the chosen pictures will be tested in spring 2010. The Chair asked that Forum members give advice and suggestions directly to Eurocare.

- Responses from Forum Members included the suggestion that part of the rationale for labelling alcoholic beverages is that consumers have a right to full information on what they are consuming; if the purpose is to influence problem drinkers, labelling was considered an ineffective method; pictorial warnings such as those presented by Eurocare could demonise alcohol for responsible consumers.
- The Chair highlighted that alcohol labelling is not included in the on-going revision of the foodstuffs labelling directive. On the question of effectiveness, the Chair suggested that the Forum should have an operating assumption that consumer labelling for alcohol will be at least as effective as that for fat, salt and sugars – however this operating assumption is open to review in light of any new evidence brought to the Forum.

## **8. Reporting from the Committee on Data Collection, Indicators and Definitions**

- The Commission services updated participants on the work of this Committee, which has proposed three indicators: (1) Total per capita (15+) consumption of alcohol, (2) Harmful drinking and (3) Alcohol-attributable years of life lost. The next steps will be share with Member States and disseminate available data. The Commission services invited Members to propose sources of data for the additional indicators for which a data source has not yet been identified

## **9. Forum timeline, next meetings**

- 11 March 2010 - Forum Plenary
- 22 April 2010 - Open Forum

## **10. Any Other Business**

- A group of economic operators raised concerns about the direction of the Alcohol Forum, referring to their letter sent to the Chair in advance. They proposed that future Plenary meeting maintain an emphasis on focus and communication, particularly relating to the 6 priorities of the charter.
- The Chair agreed with this approach, and proposed that programme for the March Plenary would be developed with these ideas in mind: in particular building on the Forum commitments.
- There was some concern from other Members of the Forum that the Plenary should not become simply a series of updates about commitments, but should continue to have the flexibility to discuss wider topics pertinent to the alcohol debate.
- With regards to reporting on compliance monitoring, EFRD invited any comments/reporting on breaches of their code of conduct both on line and off line.

## Annex 1: Participants List

ORGANISATION	SURNAME	NAME
EUROCARE-DHS	BARTSCH	Gabriele
EUROCARE-Estonian Temperance Union	BEEKMANN	Lauri
EPHA-RCP	BELCHER	Paul
The Brewers of Europe	BERGERON	Pierre-Olivier
WHO	BIJU-DUVAL	Bertrand
Bundes Liga	BLASK	Holger
EFRD	BRIGAUDEAU	Carole
ZAW/WKO	BUSSE	Julia
EUROCARE-ANPPA	CRAPLET	Michel
EUROCOMMERCE	CRIELAARD	Henriette
ESA	DAY	Helen
STAP	DE BRUIJN	Avalon
CEPS-Moët Hennessy	DE GUITAUT	Guillaume
PDC	DOMMEL	Lutz
NYCI	DOORLEY	James
CEPS-The Scotch Whisky Association	EVANS	Campbell
CEEV	FERNANDEZ	José Ramón
CEPS	FORTESCUE	Jamie
CEPS-Bacardi-Martini	FRESI	Stefano
EPHA	FUCHS	Doriane
The Brewers of Europe-SABMiller	GARAMSZEGI	Gabor
Alcohol Beverage Federation of Ireland	GARTH	Rosemary
AB InBev	GIANINO	Amie
CEPS-Bacardi-Martini	GILLIARD	Catherine
The Brewers of Europe-Heineken International	GOETHART	Rutger
ESIP-REIF	GOUËLLO	Martine

EASA	GRAY	Olivier
ACT	HAUK	Maxim
Pernod Ricard	HEMARD	André
CEGROBB	HERREBOSCH	Walter
ReLeaf	HOLVOVA	Natalia
EPHA	JEWELL	Jo
EPHA	KOSINSKA	Monika
ICAP	KRYGIEL-NAEL	Aleksandra
IREB	LEYMARIE	Nicole
CEPS-V&S Group	LUKSEP	Peeter
CEPS-Diageo	LUPPINO	Joseph
EACA	LYLE	Dominic
EPC	MILLS WADE	Angela
Alcohol Action Ireland	MURPHY	Cliona
Department of Health UK	NICOL	Jean
Carlsberg	NIELSEN	Krud Hedeager
EUROCARE-IOGT-NTO	ODIN	Susanna
EUROCARE-IAS	OWEN	Owain Aneurin
EMNA	PALMESINO	Ennio
AICV	PRICE	Robert
HOTREC- British Beer and Pub Association	RAWLINGS	Martin
Landmark Europe	RENALDI	Rocco
Institute on Drug and Drug Addiction Portugal	RIBEIRO	Christina
CPME	RIBON	Sandra
CEPS	RICARD	Sandrine
EMA	RIJNINKS-VAN DRIEL	G.C.
EUROCARE-ANPAA	RIVIERE	Claude
APYN	RODRÍGUEZ MCCULLOUGH	Nathalie A.

O.I.V.	RUF	Jean-Claude
EUROCARE	RUIZ	Ruth
Egta	SBOARINA	Laura
HDE	SCHNEIDER	Miriam
Nordic Alcohol and Drug Policy Network	SCHNEIDERMANN	Hasse
DIAGEO	SCOTT	Wilson
HOTREC	SEQUARIS	Marguerite
EPHA-RCP	SHERON	Nick
EUROCARE	SKAR	Mariann
Freshfields o.b.o. Brown-Forman	SMITS	Christiaan
Brewers of Europe	SPILLANE	Simon
CEPS-Moët Hennessy	VAES	Eric
EASL	VALLA	Dominique
HOTREC	VALLINI	Marco
CPME	WILKS	Michael
ECL	YARED	Wendy
EFRD	ZWIRN	Gregor

<b>OBSERVERS</b>		
EASA	ALEXANDRE	Laure
University of Stirling	CAIRNS	Georgina
RAND Europe	DIEPEVEEN	Stephanie
University of Stirling	DIXON	Diane
EPFL Association of European Football Leagues	MACEDO DE MEDEIROS	Emanuel
RAND Europe	VAN STOLK	Christian
<b>EUROPEAN COMMISSION</b>		
DG SANCO C4	MADELIN	Robert

DG SANCO C4	HÜBEL	Michaël
DG SANCO C4	DE CONINCK	Pieter
DG SANCO C4	MONTONEN	Marjatta
DG SANCO C4	THOMPSON	Ceri