



The Consumer Voice in Europe

Alcohol Labelling: Consumers' Right to Know

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European Parliament

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What is the current situation?



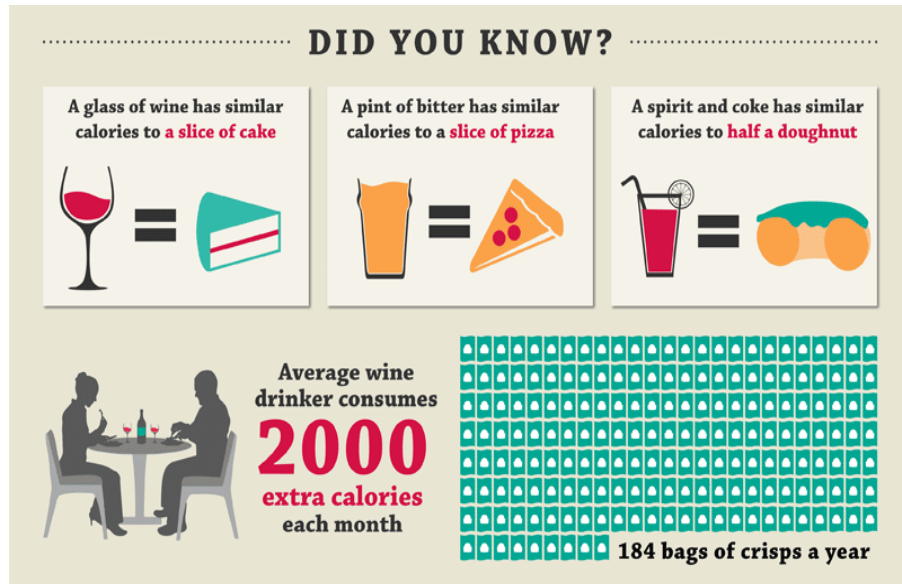
	Per 100g
Energy	1500kJ/356kcal
Fat	7.4g
of which: saturates	1.1g
Carbohydrates	58.1g
of which: sugars	16.8g
Protein	9.9g
Salt	0.1g



- EU law: requires nutritional declaration (per 100ml/g) and ingredients for all food and beverages
- Alcoholic beverages are currently exempted
- European Commission report: March 2017
 - “... **the Commission has not identified objective grounds**’ to justify the exemption
- Alcohol companies given a year to come up with a self-regulatory proposal → published March 2018

Alcohol Labelling and Nutrition

- Europe has the highest levels of alcohol consumption globally
- Alcohol is very calorie intense (7kcal/per gram of alcohol)
- For those who drink, 10% of daily calorie intake can come from alcohol
- Calories in alcohol have no nutritional value ('empty calories')



Source: <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk>

Sugar



31 g of sugar



**10 cubes
of sugar**



35g of sugar

- The WHO recommends that the daily intake of sugars should be reduced to less than 10% of total energy intake – and ideally further reduced to 25g per day for additional health benefits
(WHO Guideline: Sugars Intake for Adults and Children, 2015)

- Alcoholic beverages can contain **significant amounts of added sugar**. In the UK, approximately 11% of added sugar intake is derived from alcohol products (www.drinkaware.co.uk).

Consumers in the Dark



Our semi skimmed milk contains

Energy	193KJ / 46Kcal
Proteins	3.15g
Calcium	120mg (15% of RDA)
Carbohydrates	4.8g
Fat	1.55g
(of which saturates)	1g
Fibre	0.0g
Sodium (less than)	0.05g

(per 100ml)



- **Low consumer awareness of alcohol nutritional content**
- **Consumers have more information when buying a bottle of milk or fruit juice than when buying a bottle of alcohol**
- **Consumers are not able to know that a large glass of wine contains 170 calories, more than a cookie**



Alcohol Labelling and Ingredients

• Consumer Right to Know

- EU legislation allows 50+ different flavourings, additives, preservatives and agents to be added to alcoholic beverages
- No list of ingredients → consumers can't know which ones are present

• Allergens

- EU regulations only require the labelling of the most common allergens

Alcohol Industry's Self-Regulatory Proposal



- **Not harmonized**
 - Three different sector-specific annexes
- **Different positions on ingredients and nutritional information requirements**
 - Eg. Spirits Annex: 100ml information = 'less prominent'
 - Wine Annex: limited ingredients list
- **Off-label information**
 - QR codes, web links, bar codes

BEUC Position: Ending the Exemption

- **Information needs to be on the label**

- Scanning QR codes or bar codes – unacceptable for consumers
 - Time-consuming
 - Can't easily compare between bottles
 - Smartphone ownership ≠ use in a supermarket environment

- **Nutritional Information and Ingredients**

- No justification for 'special treatment'



Conclusions



- **Self-regulation has failed to deliver**
- **There are no reasons why alcoholic beverages should be treated differently from other beverages**
- **The Commission should reject the industry proposal and move to end the exemption**





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