Marketing and alcohol Factsheet
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Marketing: Introduction

Alcohol is one of the most significant ‘fast moving consumer goods’ (FMCGs) marketed today. It is estimated that each year more than £800 million is spent on advertising alcoholic beverages in the UK, with the global estimate approximating $1 trillion. Alcohol marketing is prevalent in traditional media such as TV adverts and billboards and, increasingly, in new media such as online social networking sites, and also through sponsorships and point of sale promotions.

There is much debate about alcohol marketing and the extent to which it should be controlled. Research shows that exposure of children and young people to alcohol marketing materials leads them to drink at an earlier age and to drink more than they otherwise would.¹ The World Health Organisation states: “the extent and breadth of commercial communications on alcohol and their impact, particularly on young people’s drinking, should not be underestimated”.²

Alcohol advertising in the UK is already subject to controls that seek to prevent advertisers targeting and appealing to young people. The controls cover broadcast, print and online advertising and are a mix of co-regulation (with OFCOM) and self-regulation, administered by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and the Portman Group. The Portman Code covers marketing such as sponsorship, promotion and product packaging. The current regulatory system and codes of conduct have been criticised for failing to protect children and young people from exposure to alcohol marketing and many health groups have called for greater restrictions to be introduced, such as those that are in place in France under the 'Loi Evin'.

¹
²
What is alcohol marketing? The four Ps

The term Marketing is defined as “the action or business of promoting and selling products or services”.

Marketing is a broad term that covers a wide range of activities and disciplines including, but by no means limited to, advertising in traditional media outlets such as print, television and radio, promotional activities in online and social media, and sponsorship of sporting and music events. A common term used to define the key aspects of marketing is the “marketing mix”, which is made up of the “four Ps” – namely Product, Price, Place and Promotion.

Alcohol marketing utilises all four Ps of the “marketing mix”. Alcohol marketers are able to exploit large-scale opportunities arising from the design of the product itself – for instance sweetened beverages or ‘alcopops’; use price promotions as a means to drive sales; apply tactics at the place of sale, for example attractive supermarket promotions and employ a wide range of sophisticated promotion tactics across new media and through sponsorship of sporting and cultural events. Examples of the four Ps are discussed in further detail below.

Product

Research has shown that the design of certain alcoholic drinks appeal more to adolescents than they do to an adult audience. The packaging used for ‘alcopops’, designer drinks or Ready to Drink (RTD) beverages were shown to have higher palatability amongst adolescents than adults in an Australian study, which also showed that alcopop packaging had a higher palatability amongst females. In a more recent Australian study, one third of adolescents reported they would be more likely to purchase an alcohol product
with energy ingredients, and almost half would be more likely to purchase a product that
looked like a soft drink.\textsuperscript{2}

A study carried out for the UK regulatory authorities in 2004 suggests that alcopops make
alcohol taste reliably pleasant and, therefore, make it more accessible to adolescents.
While there have long been drinks that include mixers which effectively mask the taste of
alcohol – rum and coke, gin and tonic, etc. – alcopops give such mixes a more unitary
identity and link them with brand images which are appealing to adolescents in their own
right. For example, Bacardi is perceived as signalling sophistication. The report also
suggests that the brand values of alcopops are strikingly attuned to adolescence: they
celebrate mocking the older generation and getting away with things, and that the
packaging is designed to appeal to teenagers and young people by using animals and
animation.\textsuperscript{3}

**Price**

Price discounts and promotions can be a key marketing tool for alcohol producers and
retailers. It is well established that consumers purchase greater quantities of goods when
they are subject to price discounts on volume based offers. A study conducted by Alcohol
Focus Scotland found that supermarket promotions and discounts on alcohol increased
sales by 20 – 25\%.\textsuperscript{4}

There is evidence to suggest that when people purchase greater quantities of alcohol
through volume-based price promotions, they increase their consumption levels.\textsuperscript{5} The UK
Government recently launched a public consultation on the introduction of a minimum price
per unit (MUP) of alcohol sold and a ban on multi-buy discount promotions (For more
information on pricing policies, please go to the Price section of the Alcohol Knowledge
Centre). Research from the University of Sheffield research indicates that a ban on multi-
buy promotions would increase the efficacy of MUP: Modelling shows that MUP combined
with a ban on off licensed trade discount bans in Scotland would show greater reductions
in levels of alcohol consumption, alcohol related hospital admissions and alcohol related
deaths.\textsuperscript{6}

**Place**

The place where alcohol is sold can have an impact on the number and volume of alcohol
purchases. We know that more and more outlets selling alcohol for longer periods of time
throughout the day has increased the availability and accessibility to alcohol, which has
had an impact on consumption levels. It is also likely that the placement and positioning of
alcohol products within stores, such as front of store and end of aisle promotions in
supermarkets and shops encourages people to buy more drink than they intended to.

**Promotion**

The promotion of alcoholic beverages covers a wide range of activities, including
advertising and sponsorship. In the UK, alcohol drinks companies were the second largest
source of sponsorship funding from 2003 to 2006, behind the financial services sector.\textsuperscript{7}
Increasingly, alcohol is being promoted more and more in new media and online social
networking sites. For example, in 2011, drinks giant Diageo signed a multimillion-pound
deal with Facebook to advertise on the social networking site.\textsuperscript{8}
Case study: WKD

The table below outlines how integrated marketing tactics can be used to promote alcoholic beverages.

Source: Hastings, Gerard, Anderson, Susan, Angus Kathryn, 'The devil doesn’t just have all the best tunes – he has the best symphony', Institute of Social Marketing, Stirling and the Open University
Alcohol marketing: The debate

The alcohol and advertising industries argue that as alcoholic drink is a legal product it should be legally possible for it to be advertised, and that bans on alcohol advertising would have adverse effects on the alcohol market and on the media. They also argue that bans are not justified as advertising is concerned with promoting sales of individual brands and there is no evidence of a causal link between advertising and the overall level of alcohol consumption or the amount of alcohol-related harm.

The main counterarguments are that as well as promoting brands, advertising is also concerned with recruiting new drinkers and increasing sales among existing, and especially heavy consumers. Intensive advertising and promotion of alcohol appears to sanction and legitimise use of a product which causes high levels of damage to individuals and society. By definition, alcohol advertising is one-sided, avoiding any reference to the negative aspects of alcohol consumption. In today’s circumstances, it is also necessary to enable alcohol to compete against other alternative drugs as well as soft drinks. There is in fact some evidence that bans on alcohol advertising can have beneficial effect on the level of harm, at least in the longer term.

The arguments regarding alcohol advertising are in most respects parallel to those concerning tobacco advertising. An analysis of internal documents from advertising agencies working for tobacco companies exposed as highly disingenuous the standard tobacco (and alcohol) industry arguments that advertising is only about expanding or protecting brand share, not total consumption, and that if there are any problems industry self-regulation is the answer.

The analysis concluded that:

- The aim was to increase consumption as well as brand share. Individual brands gain from market expansion and therefore deliberate plans were made to encourage it
- Other industry strategies included undermining government policy and evading regulation – for example, resisting and circumventing restrictions on advertising and tax increases on tobacco products
- Voluntary, self-regulatory codes were treated cynically, the advertising agencies playing cat and mouse with the regulatory body, pushing to the limits and avoiding the rules whenever possible
- The young were a key target, and the imagery used in the advertising was designed to attract them, although for public consumption, care was always to refer to the young adult market. The lifestyles, motivations and aspirations of young people were continuously assessed. It was concluded that young people smoked for emotional reasons and that the branding could meet their needs by adding aspiration, coolness and 'street cred' to the products. This in itself was counter to the regulatory code which stipulated that cigarette ads should not suggest that smoking was associated with social success or play on the susceptibilities of the emotionally vulnerable, especially the young
- The issue was marketing, not just advertising alone. All aspects of marketing such as price, distribution and other commercial communications such as point of sale material and direct mail were brought into play to maximise the uptake and
continuance of smoking and thus to increase sales

- Advertising and sponsorship became one, performing the same key task of promoting the all important brand images that appeal to young smokers.

Critics of the alcohol industry see many parallels here with the case of alcohol advertising and promotion.

**Analysis of alcohol industry internal documents**

In 2009, the House of Commons Health Select Committee launched an inquiry into the conduct of the UK alcohol industry. As part of this investigation, the Committee gained access to internal marketing documents from both producers and their advertising agencies.

An analysis of these documents presented the following findings:

- There are major shortcomings in the self-regulatory codes for alcohol advertising, which mean the codes do not protect young people
- Young people are a clear target for alcohol advertisers
- Producers are well aware that segments of their market do drink irresponsibly and analyse this behaviour for market opportunities
- Advertisers seek to promote social success as a key element of brand campaigns
- Advertisers regularly appeal to masculinity and femininity
- Sponsorship is a large and powerful part of alcohol promotion
- New media are a fast growing channel for alcohol advertising, however the rate of innovation and volume of user generated content makes regulation very difficult
Alcohol marketing and children

Much of the debate around alcohol advertising concerns the possible effects on children and young people. The Advertising Codes prohibit the specific targeting of minors, but the ubiquity of alcohol advertising ensures that they can hardly miss it.

Evidence shows that exposure to alcohol marketing encourages children to drink at an earlier age and in greater quantities than they otherwise would. The Science Committee of the European Alcohol and Health Forum concluded in 2009 that “alcohol marketing increases the likelihood that adolescents will start to use alcohol, and to drink more if they are already using alcohol”.¹

Indeed, the evidence is that even young children are aware of alcohol advertisements and tend to remember them. Manufacturers further reduce the chances of young people failing to get the message by sponsorship of sports teams and events and music concerts having particular appeal to the young.

There is also evidence that underage drinking and the likelihood of alcohol problems in later life are closely related to positive expectations of benefit for alcohol use, precisely the expectancies advertising is designed to encourage.²

American studies have found that children and teenagers respond particularly positively to TV advertisements featuring animals, humour, music and celebrities. It is suggested, therefore, that policy makers should ensure that advertisements should focus on product-related characteristics, using content less appealing to children and teenagers.³

An American study found that heavy advertising by the alcohol industry in the US has such considerable influence on adolescents that its removal would lower underage drinking in general and binge drinking in particular. The analysis suggested that the complete elimination of alcohol advertising could reduce monthly drinking by adolescents from about 25% to about 21%, and binge drinking from 12% to around 7%. However, these estimated reductions were substantially less than those which the analysis suggested would result from significantly increasing the price of alcoholic drinks.⁴

Another American study found that youth who saw more alcohol advertisements drank more on average, each additional advertisement seen increasing the number of drinks consumed by 1%. Also, youth in markets with greater alcohol advertising expenditures drank more, each additional dollar spent per capita increasing the number of drinks consumed by 3%. Youth in markets with more alcohol advertisements showed increased drinking levels into their late 20s whereas drinking plateaued in the early 20s for youth in markets with fewer advertisements.⁵

A study of the impact of alcohol advertising on teenagers in Ireland found:⁶

- Alcohol advertisements were identified as their favourites by the majority of those surveyed
- Most of the teenagers believed that the majority of the alcohol advertisements were targeted at young people. This was because the advertisements depicted scenes – dancing, clubbing, lively music, wild activities – identified with young people
The teenagers interpreted alcohol advertisements as suggesting, contrary to the code governing alcohol advertising, that alcohol is a gateway to social and sexual success and as having mood altering and therapeutic properties.

A review of 7 international research studies concluded that there is evidence for an association between prior alcohol advertising and marketing exposure and subsequent alcohol drinking behaviour in young people. The forms of exposure included both direct exposure to advertising using broadcast and print media, and indirect methods such as in-store promotions and portrayal of alcohol drinking in films, music videos and TV programmes.

3 studies showed that onset of drinking in adolescent non-drinkers at baseline were significantly associated with exposure. One study showed that for each additional hour of TV viewing per day the risk of starting to drink increased by 9% during the following 18 months. Another found that youth with higher exposure to alcohol use depicted in popular movies were more likely to have tried alcohol 13 to 26 months later. Yet another showed that exposure to in-store beer displays significantly predicted drinking onset two years later.

Two studies demonstrated dose response relationships. In one, in Flemish school children, increased frequency of TV viewing and music video viewing was highly significantly related to the amount of alcohol consumed while going out. In the other, of individuals aged 15 to 26 years, for each additional advertisement seen the number of drinks consumed increased by 1%, and for each additional dollar spent per capita on alcohol advertisements the number of drinks consumed increased by 3%.

In their report “Calling Time”, The Academy of Medical Sciences presented the following graph, showing a high correlation between alcohol consumption by 11-15 year-olds and amount spent on advertising in current prices (i.e. actual number of pounds spent).
UK advertising expenditure at current prices and correlations with alcohol consumption 11 to 15 year-old children: 1992–2000

However, this correlation is vulnerable to changes in the years covered and also the choice of measure used. Including more recent data, so that the range of years covered is from 1992 to 2004, the correlation drops to 0.68. Furthermore, if expenditure is expressed in constant prices (adjusted for inflation, also known as ‘real’ prices), the correlation drops to -0.01, for the extended time period.⁹
Policies to regulate alcohol marketing

Alcohol advertising in the UK is subject to controls that seek to prevent advertisers targeting and appealing to young people. The controls cover broadcast, print and online advertising and are a mix of co-regulation (with OFCOM) and self-regulation, administered by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and the Portman Group. The Portman Code covers marketing such as sponsorship, promotion and product packaging (see the Current codes of practice section of the factsheet for more details).

Criticisms of the current regulatory system

The current regulatory system and codes of conduct have been criticised for failing to protect children and young people from exposure to alcohol marketing. As part of its 2009 investigation into the conduct of the UK alcohol industry, the House of Commons Health Select Committee obtained access to internal marketing documents from both producers and their advertising agencies. The subsequent report concluded that there are: “major shortcomings in the current self regulatory codes covering alcohol advertising. Specifically, the codes do not, as they are supposed to, protect young people from alcohol advertising; prevent the promotion of drunkenness and excess; or the linking of alcohol with social and sexual success. Nor do they even attempt to address sponsorship, and the documents show this is being systematically used to undermine rules prohibiting the linking of alcohol with youth culture and sporting prowess. Finally, the codes are extremely weak in their treatment of new media which are rapidly becoming the biggest channel for alcohol promotion”.

Calls for greater regulation: The Loi Evin

Many health groups have called for greater restrictions on alcohol marketing to be introduced in the UK, such as those that are in place in France under the ‘Loi Evin’.

The articles relating to alcohol advertising in this French law may be summarised as follows:

A clear definition of alcoholic drinks is given:

All drinks over 1.2% alcohol by volume are considered as alcoholic beverages

Places and media where advertising is authorised are defined:

No advertising should be targeted at young people
No advertising is allowed on television or in cinemas
No sponsorship of cultural or sport events is permitted
Advertising is permitted only in the press for adults, on billboards, on radio channels (under precise conditions), at special events or places such as wine fairs, wine museums

When advertising is permitted, its content is controlled:

Messages and images should refer only to the qualities of the products such as degree, origin, composition, means of production, patterns of consumption
A health message must be included on each advertisement to the effect that “l'abus
WHO Global Alcohol Strategy – Marketing Recommendations

The WHO Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol was published in 2010. This Strategy, which was endorsed by all 193 Member States of the WHO, identified Marketing as a key policy area that required action at the national level inorder to reduce the harm caused by alcohol.

Below are the recommendations made by WHO in the Strategy.\(^2\)

Area 6. Marketing of alcoholic beverages

29. Reducing the impact of marketing, particularly on young people and adolescents, is an important consideration in reducing harmful use of alcohol. Alcohol is marketed through increasingly sophisticated advertising and promotion techniques, including linking alcohol brands to sports and cultural activities, sponsorships and product placements, and new marketing techniques such as e-mails, SMS and podcasting, social media and other communication techniques. The transmission of alcohol marketing messages across national borders and jurisdictions on channels such as satellite television and the Internet, and sponsorship of sports and cultural events is emerging as a serious concern in some countries.

30. It is very difficult to target young adult consumers without exposing cohorts of adolescents under the legal age to the same marketing. The exposure of children and young people to appealing marketing is of particular concern, as is the targeting of new markets in developing and low- and middle-income countries with a current low prevalence of alcohol consumption or high abstinence rates. Both the content of alcohol marketing and the amount of exposure of young people to that marketing are crucial issues. A precautionary approach to protecting young people against these marketing techniques should be considered.

31. For this area policy options and interventions include:

(a) Setting up regulatory or co-regulatory frameworks, preferably with a legislative basis, and supported when appropriate by self-regulatory measures, for alcohol marketing by:

i. Regulating the content and the volume of marketing;
ii. Regulating direct or indirect marketing in certain or all media;
iii. Regulating sponsorship activities that promote alcoholic beverages;
iv. Restricting or banning promotions in connection with activities targeting young people;
v. Regulating new forms of alcohol marketing techniques, for instance social media;

(b) Development by public agencies or independent bodies of effective systems of surveillance of marketing of alcohol products;
(c) Setting up effective administrative and deterrence systems for infringements on marketing restrictions
Current codes of practice

The possibility that alcohol advertising can have socially adverse effects is recognised in the special rules drawn up in relation to how, where and when alcoholic drinks can be advertised. Currently, the UK Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is responsible for all advertising standards and consumer complaints, both broadcast and non-broadcast. As a result, all alcohol advertisements must adhere to the self-regulatory UK Code of Non-Broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (CAP code), and the co-regulatory UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (BCAP code), that is overseen by OFCOM.*

The drinks industry funded body the Portman Group regulates all other forms of drinks producer marketing including naming, packaging, and promotion of alcoholic drinks. A fifth edition of the Portman Code was announced in November 2012 and is due to be launched in May 2013.

From March 1st 2011, the CAP Code has applied in full to marketing messages online, including the rules relating to misleading advertising, social responsibility and the protection of children. Journalistic and editorial content and material related to causes and ideas are excluded from the remit. Previously, our remit online was limited to paid-for ads (such as pop-ups and banner ads) and sales promotions wherever they appeared.

The new remit will cover:¹

- Advertisers’ own marketing messages on their own websites
- Marketing communications in other non-paid-for space under the advertiser’s control, such as social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter
- Marketing communications on all UK websites, regardless of sector, type of businesses or size of organisation

* You can download the following documents from each advertising agency below:
  - The CAP code section on alcohol
  - The BCAP code section on alcohol
  - The Portman Group code on advertising
Alcohol advertising in the European Union

There are a variety of national restrictions and controls across Europe and mixtures of the statutory and the self-regulatory marketing systems. In terms of EU-wide legislation, this began with the Television Without Frontiers Directive (TWF) which was originally issued in 1989, has been incorporated into national laws. This was designed to harmonise regulations so that cross border transmissions would not contravene national regulations.

The current EU Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of laws and regulations concerning the provision of audio visual media, sets out criteria that television advertising of alcohol must comply with. These include that the advertising must not be aimed at minors or depict minors drinking; it must not link alcohol with enhanced physical, sexual or social performance; and it must not encourage immoderate consumption.

However, levels of regulation of marketing vary between Member States. A WHO European Status Report on Alcohol and Health 2010 identified 3 WHO European Region countries that had no legally binding regulations of any kind for alcohol advertising, while 14 countries had no legally binding regulations for product placement.
The main features of national regulations are summarised below..xxv

Austria
Legal ban on advertising of spirits on TV and radio; on broadcast advertisements linking alcohol with children, driving or sport, or promoting alcohol abuse, and on sponsorship of TV and radio programmes by companies primarily concerned in alcohol production. Otherwise, self-regulatory code under auspices of the Austrian Advertising Council which prohibits advertising encouraging abuse, targeted at children or adolescents, associating alcohol with success or containing allusions to stimulating or therapeutic effects of alcohol. Advertisements are not allowed to depict alcohol consumption or people in a drunken state.

Belgium
No commercial advertising on State TV; and legal ban on spirits advertising on Comercial TV. No alcohol advertising on radio. In other media, voluntary guidelines prohibit the encouragement of ‘drinking to excess’ and advertisements targeted at the under 21s.

Denmark
Until 2003 there was a legal ban on alcohol advertising on Danish TV and radio channels but this was rescinded. The self-regulatory code governing content was agreed in 2000 and follows the normal guidelines eg advertisements must not be directed at minors, suggest that alcohol is good for health or improves mental or physical capacities. The code also prevents alcohol being associated with sport, alcohol sponsorship of sport and sports grounds not being allowed, nor advertising in sports magazines.

Finland
Legal ban on all alcohol advertising until 1994 when the Alcohol Act allowed advertising of alcoholic beverages up to 22% abv. The law prohibits targeting minors and imposes the usual restrictions on content – eg no depiction of excessive consumption, claims in regard to therapeutic properties or being necessary for social or sexual success, etc. In addition, advertising must not promote the idea that alcohol is refreshing.

France
The Loi Evin, which came into operation in 1993, bans the advertising of all alcoholic beverages over 1.2% abv on TV and in cinemas and also prohibits sponsorship of sport or cultural events by alcohol companies. Radio advertising of alcohol is not permitted between 5pm and midnight. As well as forbidding the targeting of minors the law also effectively outlaws ‘lifestyle’ advertising of alcohol products, advertisements only being allowed to refer to the actual characteristics of the product such as its brand name, ingredients, provenance, how to prepare and serve the drink etc.

Germany
By voluntary agreement most spirits are not advertised on TV. On other media, a voluntary code is in operation similar to that in the UK. Other than the Television Without Frontiers Directive the system is self-regulatory, the Code on Alcoholic Beverages Advertising dating from 1976, extended in 1998 to cover teleshopping.

Greece
As well as the TWF there are restrictions on the number of alcohol advertisements per day on each television and radio station.

Ireland
A legal ban on spirits advertising on TV and radio, and alcohol advertisements may not be shown before sports programmes. The same advertisement may not appear more than twice per night on any one channel. On other media a voluntary code is in operation.

Italy
A voluntary code similar to the UK’s governs content. The 2001 Alcohol Act introduced a ban on TV and radio advertising of alcohol between 6pm and 9pm. The Act also proscribes alcohol advertising to minors across all media, and prohibits alcohol advertisements from being shown on TV within 15 minutes before or after children’s programmes. The Act also requires a self-regulatory code to be provided jointly by media companies, advertising agencies and advertisers to govern alcohol advertising.

Luxembourg
Other than the Television Without Frontiers Directive the system is self-regulatory.

Netherlands
Other than the Television Without Frontiers Directive the system is self-regulatory.

Portugal
The first law regulating alcohol advertising dates from 1981. A law in 1983 prohibited alcohol advertisements being broadcast between 6pm and 10pm. In 1995 this was amended to 7pm to 10.30pm. TWF was implemented in 1990. Advertising of beer and spirits is not permitted in cinemas or on billboards, in educational institutions or in magazines aimed at minors, or during sports or cultural events. The alcohol industry has its own self-regulatory code.

Spain
Under a law of 1990, alcoholic beverages over 20% abv cannot be advertised on TV. TWF was implemented in 1994. Regional governments have also imposed their own legislation. In Catalonia, alcohol advertising above 20% abv is also banned in streets, highways, on public transport and in cinemas, and no broadcast advertising is allowed before 9.30pm. Self-regulatory codes are also in operation.

Sweden
Under the Swedish Alcohol Law, advertising of spirits, wine and beer above 2.25% abv is prohibited except at the point of sale and in trade journals. Foreign magazines are also allowed to carry alcohol advertisements. The compatibility of the restrictions with European Union law has been challenged. In 2003 Sweden’s Market Court upheld an earlier judgement of the Stockholm District Court that a ban on all alcohol advertising is incompatible with the European Commission Treaty, though the judgement related only to press advertising. Currently, therefore, there is uncertainty about what is permitted.
The ELSA Project

The ELSA Project (Enforcement of National Laws and Self-regulation in Advertising and Marketing of Alcohol), a two-year project funded by the European Commission, examined the enforcement of national laws and regulations in all EU member states, the applicant countries and Norway. xxvi

The main conclusions of the study were:

1. Alcohol advertisements are related to positive attitudes and beliefs about alcohol amongst young people, and increase the likelihood of young people starting to drink, the amount they drink, and the amount they drink on any one occasion
2. There is no available scientific evidence which shows that the non-statutory regulation of commercial communications impacts on the content or volume of advertisements
3. There is great variety in regulations related to the advertisement of alcoholic products in the European Member States
4. There is very little documentation on adherence to the existing regulations
5. The most appealing alcoholic beverages and alcohol advertisements to young people use elements associated with youth culture
6. There is no informative body which systematically monitors the impact of regulations on alcohol marketing and its adherence

The main recommendations of the study were:

Article 95(3) of the Treaty of the European Union requires the Commission, in its proposals for the establishment and functioning of the Internal Market concerning health, to take as a base a high level of protection. An approximation of the European countries’ advertising laws, including statutory regulations and a ban in certain media would protect young people, reduce the risk of dependence and reduce the risk of untimely death, a proposal that is in line with European case law which has noted that it is in fact undeniable that advertising acts as an encouragement to consumption and that restrictions on the volume of advertising are appropriate to protect public health.

1. Europe wide and country based policy on alcohol marketing should address the advertising and promotion of alcohol products through all media and the sponsorship of arts, cultural, musical and sporting events
2. Europe wide and country based policy on alcohol marketing should be based on the scientific evidence of what works, and on public health principles that protect vulnerable populations
3. In order to protect young people and other vulnerable groups, alcohol marketing restrictions at European and country levels should be strengthened
4. European and country based regulations on alcohol marketing should
be aimed at:

a) restricting the placement of alcohol marketing to reduce exposure to young people
b) limiting alcohol marketing that is misleading about the characteristics or effects of alcohol
c) prohibiting alcohol marketing that appeals to minors and other vulnerable groups
d) including information that alcohol is not a risk free product

The latter objectives may be realised by restricting marketing to information about the product and only referring to the origin, composition, strength (% alcohol) and means of production.

5. Statutory agencies, which should operate independently from the alcohol and marketing industries, should be designated responsible for enforcement of marketing restrictions at the country levels to ensure that:

a) violations do not occur
b) violations are dealt with as quickly as possible
c) effective penalties are incurred for violations

6. The European Union and countries should work together to:

a) explore agreements and mechanisms to restrict the marketing of alcoholic beverages at the European level, ensuring a standard and equal system across Europe
b) develop standards based on the best available evidence to reduce exposure and ensure that content does not influence the drinking expectancies and behaviour of young people
c) develop technologies and other means necessary to regulate cross-border marketing, including the internet and mobile phone use
d) recognise that countries which have a ban on certain forms of alcohol marketing have the sovereign right to maintain such a ban

7. Systems at country and European levels should be established to provide sustainable monitoring and surveillance of alcohol marketing including:

a) documenting and tracking all existing regulations on alcohol marketing practices
b) monitoring media use and exposure to young people
c) monitoring young people’s perceptions to alcohol marketing practices
d) monitoring new technologies and types of media
e) monitoring cross border marketing
documenting violations of existing

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