

## **STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF CODEX NEW WORK ON ALCOHOL LABELLING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC WORKING GROUP (EWG)**

5 May, 2026

The European Health Alliance on Alcohol (EHAALog), a coalition of 28 European medical societies and health organisations representing over 2 million medical professionals and healthcare providers, strongly **supports the proposal submitted to the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL49) to initiate new work on the labelling of alcoholic beverages and to establish an Electronic Working Group (EWG)**. EHAALog further emphasises the need for this work to adopt a broad, horizontal scope, ensuring that revisions comprehensively address gaps across all relevant Codex texts and reflect the specific risk profile of alcohol.

### **WHY HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SUPPORT THIS WORK**

From a clinical perspective, improving alcohol labelling is a matter of patient safety, informed decision-making, and basic standards of care. Across healthcare settings, we are confronted daily with patients with conditions where alcohol is a key contributing factor. A recurring and concerning pattern is that many patients are unaware of the extent to which alcohol has contributed to their condition.

This reflects a structural gap. Unlike other food products, alcohol is not consistently accompanied by clear, accessible, and actionable information at the point where purchase and consumption decisions are made.

#### ***Enabling informed decisions at the point of consumption***

For clinical advice to be meaningful, patients must be able to translate it into real-life choices. This requires access to clear and standardised information such as alcohol by volume (ABV), standard drink content, energy (calorie, sugars) information, allergens, other food additives (colors, preservatives) and visible health warnings. In their absence, we are effectively asking patients to make decisions without the basic information they need to do so.

Labelling is a critical complement to our clinical care. It supports more effective conversations with patients.

From a health systems perspective, this translates into reduced avoidable burden on services and improved health outcomes.

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR INITIATING NEW WORK AND ESTABLISHING AN EWG**

At its core, the mandate of the Codex Alimentarius Commission is twofold: to protect the health of consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade. In this context, addressing alcohol labelling is fully aligned with Codex's mandate. Improving the clarity, consistency, and relevance of alcohol labelling strengthens consumer protection while supporting regulatory coherence across markets.

EHAALog fully supports:

- The **establishment of an inclusive EWG**, chaired by Tanzania, to advance this work

- **The initiation of new work to revise relevant Codex standards and guidelines**

**EHAA further urges CCFL to ensure that the EWG is mandated with a broad, horizontal scope**, so that the work addresses all relevant Codex instruments in an integrated manner.

This applies to revisions across foundational texts, including: General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CXS 1-1985); Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (CXG 2-1985); and Guidelines for Use of Nutrition and Health Claims (CXG 23-1997).

A horizontal approach is essential to ensure internal coherence across standards; consistent terminology and definitions (e.g. ABV, standard drink), and avoidance of regulatory gaps or contradictions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Representing over 2 million medical professionals and healthcare providers across Europe, EHAA stands united in strong support of this initiative. As health professionals, we see first-hand the consequences of inadequate risk communication on alcohol and recognize the critical role that effective labelling can play in prevention. **EHAA therefore encourages Codex Members to support the establishment of the EWG and the initiation of this work**, and to ensure that it proceeds with the breadth and ambition required to deliver meaningful public health impact.

### **Members of European Health Alliance on Alcohol (EHAA)**

European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL)  
 European Renal Association (ERA)  
 United European Gastroenterology (UEG)  
 European Psychiatric Association (EPA)  
 European Geriatric Medicine Society (EuGMS)  
 European Medical Students' Association (EMSA)  
 World Family Doctors - WONCA Europe  
 European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)  
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