

*Press release,*

*Utrecht, September 23<sup>th</sup> 2019*



## **Successful international conference on digital alcohol marketing in Amsterdam**

### ***Participants impressed with research results.***

Thursday, September 19, the conference "Digital Alcohol Marketing in the Spotlight" took place in Amsterdam. The conference was organised by the University of Amsterdam, The European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare) and the European Center for Monitoring Alcohol Marketing (EUCAM). Nearly 75 participants from a total of 15 European countries listened to new research pertaining to the recent rise in alcohol advertising via social media. The research of Dr. Hanneke Hendriks (Amsterdam University), Dr. Nathan Critchlow (University of Stirling, Scotland) and Alina Willoh (University of Twente, the Netherlands) about the role of young so-called 'influencers' and alcohol industry sponsorship, showed that there is a rapid expansion of alcohol advertising targeted at young people in these channels.

### **Effective policy has yet to get going in many European countries**

Despite the clear evidence presented that alcohol advertising in digital media increases alcohol consumption among minors, it appeared that few countries have taken measures to effectively regulate it. The presentation by Aleksandra Kaczmarek (Eurocare) showed that confidence in the effectiveness of the existing European minimum marketing regulations (AVMSD) and the largely comparable self-regulation by the alcohol industry is minimal. Researcher Emmi Kauppila from the University of Helsinki was able to demonstrate on the recent regulation of digital alcohol advertising in Finland has had positive effects in moderating advertising content online. Speakers from Norway, Hanna Cecilie Widnes Msc, IOGT Norway, and Lithuania, Nijole Gostautaite Midttun, NTAKK Lithuania, indicated that the total bans on alcohol advertising in their countries were effective also when it came to reducing youth exposure to alcohol advertising in social media channels.

### **Comprehensive alcohol advertising restrictions are more effective**

On the basis of the following panel discussion on regulation, it was concluded that encompassing restrictions such as Norway's and Lithuania's total bans, are the most effective when it comes to protecting minors. Developments in advertising are so fast that more limited restrictions quickly risk becoming outdated. There were also indications that enforcement improves when countries move to such comprehensive bans. It can be expected that more policymakers will delve into the complexity and rapid growth of digital forms of alcohol advertising in the coming years and hopefully the research and policy-learning presented at this conference can feed into that work.

On behalf of the organisers,  
Ir. Wim van Dalen  
President of EUCAM

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EUCAM collects, exchanges and promotes knowledge and experience about alcohol marketing and alcohol marketing monitoring throughout Europe.