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## Spirits industry to support EU alcohol strategy

The European Spirits Organisation - CEPS, broadly welcomes the European Commission's Communication on 'An EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm' and looks forward to playing an active and constructive role in the proposed 'Alcohol and Health Forum'.

By targeting alcohol misuse, rather than alcohol *per se*, and recognising the huge diversity of local drinking cultures within Europe, the Commission Communication represents a balanced approach to addressing alcohol related harm and an appropriate role for the EU.

"I'm sure that all stakeholders will find elements in this Communication which raise concerns and the spirits industry is no exception. On balance however, we believe that the strategy offers a positive way forward. We welcome the recognition the Communication gives to the role the alcohol industry can play in reducing alcohol related harm, most notably in terms of promoting responsible consumption, and we for one will play our part in its implementation" said Jamie Fortescue, Director General of the European Spirits Organisation. "The five priority themes proposed are entirely consistent with CEPS' Charter on Responsible Alcohol Consumption and the proposed strategy provides a welcome impetus to the Charter's ongoing implementation."

The European Spirits Organisation - CEPS, adopted its Charter on Responsible Alcohol Consumption in November 2005. The EU spirits industry's commitments include:

- 75 % of advertising to carry responsible drinking messages by 2010;
- Full adherence to updated standards on Responsible Marketing by 2010;
- Recognition of the fact that, while innovation in the spirits industry is essential, special care needs to be taken on the attractiveness of innovation for vulnerable groups like young people;
- Extension of drink driving programmes and server training schemes;
- Co-operation with all relevant stakeholders to combat underage drinking;
- Agreeing clear definitions on sensible drinking and communicating them widely;
- Publicly reporting on progress on implementation every year.

The first annual report on implementation will be published on 22 November 2006.

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### For more information:

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**Note to editors:** The European Spirits Organisation – CEPS is the representative body for the spirits industry at the European level. Its membership comprises 38 national associations representing the industry in 29 countries, as well as a group of leading spirits producing companies.