

# Booze calorie counts get EU parliament backing

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European Union lawmakers called Wednesday for all alcoholic drinks including beer, wine and spirits to have labelled calorie counts in a bid to tackle obesity and other health problems.

The European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, voted overwhelmingly in favour of a resolution urging the European Commission, the executive arm of the EU, to draw up legislation by the end of 2016.

They also urged the Commission to consider adding a label to warn pregnant women not to consume alcohol and highlight the dangers of drink-driving.

"We've sent a strong message to the Commission today and I hope they'll listen," said Glenis Willmott, a Labour MEP from Britain who has led the labelling campaign.

"Consumers have a right to know that a glass of wine has the same number of calories as a slice of cake."

Alcoholic beverages were exempted from a 2011 law that resulted in all non-[alcoholic drinks](#) sold in the 28-nation EU having nutritional details on their labels.

Wednesday's resolution faced opposition from right-wing MEPs but a bid by an Italian member from the European People's Party to limit the labels to so-called alcopops was defeated.

The move comes amid growing concern in many European countries about the health effects of alcohol and backers believe labels would dissuade some female drinkers in particular.

Spotting the trend, top brewers Carlsberg, Heineken, AB Inbev and SABMiller last month all backed a plan to voluntarily list the calorie count and other nutritional information of their beers.

Spirits makers have however opposed the move saying to compare their product to beer on this count is misleading.

Brussels estimates that alcohol abuse burdens the European Union with some 155 billion euros (\$164 billion) a year in social and health costs.

Even though people consume less alcohol after the peak in the 1970s, Europeans remain the biggest drinkers in the world.

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