



News Report

from Philip Bradbourn MEP

*for the West
Midlands*

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World Health Organisation proposes ban on sale of Duty-Free alcohol

Local MEP Philip Bradbourn has spoken out in outrage at proposals by the World Health Organisation to ban the sale of duty-free alcohol in countries who are members of the World Health Organisation, as a measure to combat alcohol abuse, and is urging the European Commission against implementing such policy within the European Union.

Mr. Bradbourn has angrily pointed out that there have been no attempts to link the sale of duty-free alcohol, something which is already heavily regulated through stringent customs restrictions, with levels of alcohol abuse leading to an impact on health.

Speaking from Brussels this morning, Mr. Bradbourn said:

“While I welcome any attempt to combat the health and social problems caused by alcohol abuse, the World Health Organisation’s proposal is preposterous and there is no research showing a correlation between the sale of duty-free alcohol and the alcohol abuse.

The sales of duty-free wines and spirits in Europe alone resulted in a €3billion total in 2008 and we simply cannot afford to lose this revenue based on a misguided attempt to address an issue which has far more complex roots. The damage to UK brands and businesses who rely on duty-free sales worldwide would be irreparable and would inevitably lead to a loss of jobs in an already trying economic environment.

I am urging the European Commission to completely reject these ludicrous and unnecessary proposals which are typical of the “Nanny-State” approach adopted far too often within the EU. Businesses and UK citizens are being told what to do, and what they can and cannot buy or consume, and when customs regulations already enforce the quantity of duty-free wines and spirits travellers can purchase, there is absolutely no need for a complete ban. ”

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