



What is the European Beer Consumers Union?

Guide for applying organisations

Version 2.6

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*A BIG Thank You for your
interest in our
organisation.*

*This document outlines
what EBCU is all about
and how we can work together.*



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This publication is a guide for any organisation interested in becoming a member of the European Beer Consumers Union (EBCU). While every effort has been made to ensure that information is correct at the time of its release, EBCU recommends contacting the Executive for any details concerning membership submissions on executives@ebcu.org

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1. WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN BEER CONSUMERS UNION (EBCU)?

1.1. DESCRIPTION

EBCU is the independent voice of beer drinkers across Europe, representing the rights and interests of the European beer consumer.

EBCU is a non-partisan organisation, that was formed to co-ordinate the European activities of the European national beer consumer organisations. EBCU is a volunteer organisation, is fully independent and has no financial interests in the beer industry, it exists solely to represent the interests of the beer consumer.

WELCOME

EBCU welcomes membership from any organisation who are willing to support EBCU's aims and objectives

(as outlined in EBCU's Constitution):

- To represent the interests of beer consumers
- The promotion and preservation of Europe's beer culture
- The promotion and preservation of traditional beer styles
- The promotion and protection of diversity and consumer choice
- To enhance the image of beer in Europe
- To support traditional brewing
- To support the introduction of progressive beer duty across Europe
- To encourage the appreciation of beers from other countries and traditions
- To encourage socially responsible drinking in a licensed environment
- To establish and promote networking, exchange of knowledge and expertise between member organisations

1.2. EBCU HISTORY AND FOCUS

Beer drinking has long been an essential part of European culture. For centuries Europeans have brewed and traded beer, developing a variety of styles and adapted their methods to the latest developments in technology.

As Europe became increasingly politically integrated and with the advent of the European Parliament, the need for a consumers' union representing beer consumers at the European level became apparent.

EBCU was formed at a beer festival in 1990 with the aim of bringing together organisations representing beer drinkers and consumers from across Europe. Originally, EBCU consisted of just three organisations - CAMRA (UK), founded in 1971 - PINT (Netherlands), founded in 1980 - and OBP (Objective Beer Tasters, Belgium), founded in 1984.

Since then, EBCU has grown and now enjoys membership from 21 organisations from 18 countries.

The early years focused on attracting more members, writing EBCU's constitution, defining what goals to achieve, achieving financial independence, and developing campaigning activities at the European level. Now EBCU enjoys a wider membership and focuses on campaigning for greater rights for consumers.

In 2023 EBCU became an official non-profit international organisation under Belgian law. This further enhanced our role as the voice of the European beer consumer.

1.3. EUROPEAN RULES & REGULATIONS

The regulatory agenda for the coming years is filled with various relevant issues for beer consumers: International trade agreements, consumer information for alcoholic beverages compared to other food products, distribution schemes for retail and online sales, and food legislation that may affect specific beer styles. Joining EBCU will therefore give your organisation greater influence on European decision making and provide your organisation the opportunity to shape future policy.

A typical example is EU Regulation 1169/2011, covering the provision of food information to consumers, including what could, or should not, be on the label, including those of alcoholic drinks. Another example is the PWPR, covering packaging and packaging waste regulation inside the European Union.

A third example might also be taxation, and (in particular) excise rates, where a minimum rate has been decided for beer at European level, at a higher level than other alcoholic beverages.

These are areas which EBCU is currently campaigning on. For more information about these campaigns, please visit: **www.ebcu.org**

1.4. ECONOMIC RATIONALE

The world of beer is changing rapidly. Much of this change has been positive; we have witnessed an explosion of new independent breweries emerge across Europe in recent years. There are now a greater number of breweries in Europe than for a century or more. On the other hand, by the end of 2016, one-third of all the world's beer will be made or commissioned by a single company. This will have negative consequences for beer consumers. EBCU has identified three principal aims of interest to all beer drinkers:

Cost: ensuring beer prices are fair - including taxation and ingredients and method of production

Diversity: preserving beer styles and cultures - from Reinheitsgebot to craft Gose, IPA and Gruit beers

Information: ensuring the consumer is provided with correct facts about the beer's content and origin

1.5. HELP AND SUPPORT NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

National organisations also have an important role to play in upholding these aims. EBCU facilitates support between member organisations through organising frequent membership meetings which allow the sharing of best practices on issues ranging from the use of social media and engaging your volunteer base.

1.6 CODE OF CONDUCT

EBCU has adopted a Code of Conduct to affirm our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. All members, staff, and volunteers are expected to adhere to these principles:

- **Respect and Dignity:** Treat everyone with respect, recognizing and valuing our differences.
- **Inclusive Environment:** Foster an environment where all feel welcome and respected.
- **Non-Discrimination:** Oppose all forms of harassment, discrimination, and exclusion based on identity.
- **Positive Interactions:** Engage constructively, resolving conflicts positively and speaking out against violations of this code.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Respect the personal privacy of others.

This Code of Conduct binds all present and future member organisations and their interactions with third parties. EBCU commits to enforcing these standards and addressing any violations through appropriate measures.



2. WHAT DOES EBCU DO?

2.1. REPRESENTATION AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

The political decisions taken on the European level have a direct impact on beer consumers across Europe. EBCU allows the various national beer consumer groups of Europe to more effectively campaign and lobby the European Commission and European Parliament.

This is done via the following channels:

- Monitoring of different European Union activities
- Lobbying activities, via meetings with European Commission officials, European Parliament members and/or their staff, European Economic and Social Committee members, etc.
- Contacts with relevant European associations such as The Brewers of Europe and BEUC (Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs)
- Membership to relevant organisations such as ECAS (European Citizen Action Service)
- Regular attendance at consumer policy and citizenship related meetings and events, organized by various European institutions and civil society organisations
- Host a popular reception every year in Brussels attended by European Commission officials, European Parliament members, Permanent Representations representatives and industry bodies.

2.2. RESONATE THE VOICE OF THE EUROPEAN BEER CONSUMER

Beyond meetings and events, EBCU also shares its views via other activities and social media actions, such as:

- EBCU Manifesto
- The EBCU website: www.ebcu.org and the beer styles website: beer-styles.ebcu.org
- Press releases
- Twitter, Facebook
- LinkedIn thematic group
- Campaigning and information material
- Frequent meetings with industry bodies and parliamentarians

2.3. COORDINATE MEMBER MEETINGS

Meetings take place twice a year to bring together the different membership organisations of EBCU. The meetings are to host workshops led by industry professionals, share best practices and to discuss and launch campaigns.

The meetings have been taking place in Brussels and various European countries, allowing the attending delegates to obtain relevant knowledge, increase partnerships and develop their understanding of other European beer cultures. In addition to the bi-annual physical meetings extra informal meetings are also held online.

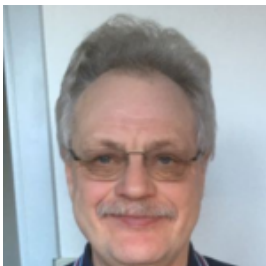
3. HOW ARE WE ORGANIZED?

EBCU has an informal structure. Its members are national organisations, which benefit from working within EBCU to coordinate their European level campaigns.

General Meetings are held twice a year, with each of the member organisations represented by a determined number of delegates.

EBCU's day-to-day activities are managed by the EBCU Secretary and Executive. The Executive is composed of five members, each with a specific role, who take care of EBCU activities on a voluntary, unpaid basis.

EBCU Executive

				
André Brunnsberg Chairman	Rianne Joosse Treasurer	Chris Welsh	Hans Peter Jepsen	Magdalena Bergmann
(Finland)	(Netherlands)	(United Kingdom)	(Denmark)	(Poland)

Alongside the regular General meetings, EBCU member organisations work together to provide information on individual campaigns and share best practice. This is encouraged by the Executive to ensure that members make the most from their membership.

Members are granted access to a document repository system, which contains all the relevant resources for the organisation.

4. EBCU BENEFITS FOR NATIONAL / LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

- Our lobbying at European level (we are part of European Transparency Register)
- More easy access (or contact) with European Parliament members of your country
- Support from EBCU concerning national laws, regulations and legislation
- Usage of the tools and instruments and material of EBCU and fellow national organisations,
e.g. Beer-O-Meter (electronic voting machine), etc.
- Raising your profile as member of a European organisation
- Support of the European level on the national level, achieving a bigger weight and thus more easy access to people and press
- Increase networking and learning possibilities
- A lot of support and ideas from the other members (during the meetings and our website)
- Reciprocal benefits in between members (e.g. free beer tokens at national festivals, ...)
- Participation in conferences or learning programmes from related partners



5. EBCU MEMBERSHIP

5.1. MEMBERSHIP RULES

In order to join EBCU, member organisations must:

- Have aims and objectives compliant to EBCU's aims and objectives
- Have a national presence
- Publish a regular newsletter or otherwise be in touch with their membership on a regular basis
- Have an established financial base / demonstrate financial viability

Organisations not yet fulfilling those conditions can join as Associate Members

5.2. MEMBERSHIP TYPES

Membership	Full	Associate	Corresponding
Organisation	National	Sub-national, regional, per language, etc.*	Sub-national, regional, per language, etc.* with a limited membership base.
Per country	One	One or more	One or more
Information	All	All	All
Rights	All	Virtually all, except voting rights.	Guests at meetings, no right to vote or speak.
Fixed costs	€ 175	€ 175	€ 100
Non-Fixed costs	€ 0,12 per individual member	€ 0	€ 0
Benefits	Various, e.g. reduced reduction fees for entry to beer festivals, free tokens at festivals, etc. Access the delegate part of the website.	Only networking and access the delegate part of the website.	Only networking

**Distinction according to each country particularities, traditions, and practices*

5.3. CURRENT MEMBERS / NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR STATUS

Country	Organisation	Status	
Austria	BierIG	Full	www.bierig.org
Belgium	ZYTHOS (successor to OBP)	Full	www.zythos.be
Czech Republic	SPP - Sdružení Přátel Piva	Full	www.pratelepiva.cz
Denmark	Danske Ølentusiaster	Full	www.ale.dk
France	FNABRA	Full	www.fnabra.org
Finland	Olutliitto	Full	www.olutliitto.fi
Germany	GBCU - Germany Beer Consumers Union	Full	www.gbcbu.de
Iceland	Björmenningarfélag Íslands	Full	www.bjormenning.is
Ireland	Beoir	Full	www.beoir.org
Italy	Unionbirrai	Full	www.unionbirrai.com
Italy	MoBI	Associate	www.movimentobirra.it
Netherlands	PINT	Full	www.pint.nl
Netherlands	Beer Geeks	Corresponding	www.facebook.com/groups/beergeeksnl
Norway	Norbrygg	Corresponding	norbrygg.no
Poland	Polskie Stowarzyszenie Piwowarów Domowych	Full	www.pspd.org.pl
Poland	Bractwo Pivne	Associate	www.bractwopivne.pl
Spain	ACCE	Full	www.cerveceros-caseros.com
Spain	CELCE	Associate	www.celce.org
Sweden	SÖ - Svenska Ölfrämjandet	Full	www.svenskaolframjandet.se
Switzerland & Lichtenstein	GFB - Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Biervielfalt	Full	www.biervielfalt.ch
UK	CAMRA - Campaign for Real Ale	Full	www.camra.org.uk



6. EBCU'S EXPECTATIONS FROM NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

6.1. EXPECTATIONS

By joining,

- EBCU's geographic scope is extended
- EBCU's weight is increased, through representation of more countries and thus individual members
- The number of national organisations increases that share best practices, support one another, and that benefit from EBCU's knowledge and endeavours, etc.

Achieving

- We all achieve more clout / power, i.e. we strengthen one another;
- More easy talks at all levels in Europe.

6.2. IMPACT

EBCU expects:

- Financial contribution: sound finances is a “must”
- Active participation at the half-yearly meetings
(costs to be borne by national organisation and/or individuals)
- English speaking representative(s): EBCU's main language is English
- Follow EBCU discussion and contribute to it
- Take part in EBCU work groups on determined topics
- Distribute further the EBCU press releases and messages (limited to a few times a year)
- Participate at EBCU's reception in Brussels (with a representative from the organisation, with beer delivery from the country, with outreach to present officials or politicians)
- Follow up on beer and consumer related matters in local politics and share relevant information
- Support lobbying activities on a European level when required

7. JOIN US!



All the participants in the 69th Delegate Meeting in Vienna 2024.

Photo: BeerBrotherHood Media <https://www.behance.net/beerbromedia>

Please join EBCU and make us a stronger voice for beer drinkers across Europe. If you require further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us on:

executives@ebcu.org

We look forward to working with you.

Your EBCU Team

André Brunnsberg
Chairman, December 2024

Brussels - Kortrijk - Saint Albans - Frederikshavn - Helsinki, 2024