



**Most Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities of the addiction industry are not evaluated; those evaluations that do exist are not methodologically sound; and the very small numbers of relatively better-designed evaluations show negative impacts**

**impact  
evaluation  
CSR**  
addiction industry

This area of work in ALICE RAP draws on new documentary and interview-based evidence, including 83 direct interviews with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) professionals in different addictive product sectors (alcohol, tobacco, gambling and high fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) foods); 31 documentary reports from published corporate CSR documents; and searches of the academic and grey literature, including a systematic analysis of all final CSR reports from the [EU Alcohol & Health Forum](#).

We found a variety of CSR activities that predominantly fit into a discourse of ‘encouraging the responsible consumer’. However:

- **Many CSR activities are not evaluated** - we obtained relatively few evaluations from our interviews. Within the EU Alcohol & Health Forum, 21 of 41 final commitment reports contained no outcome or impact measures.
- **Those evaluations that do exist are not convincing in terms of key outcomes** - some evaluations show that the activity had not been carried out properly; while others show that the activity was successfully carried out, but provide no robust data on impacts.
- **The very small number of relatively convincing evaluations show negative impacts** - we found very few studies with valid methodology or appropriate outcomes, but: (i) one study found that parent-focused anti-tobacco advertising was associated with *reduced* anti-smoking attitudes and *increased* odds of having smoked in the past month, and (ii) one randomised controlled trial found that Drinkaware posters led to an *increase* in consumption among undergraduate students in a simulated bar environment.

The recommendation coming out from this work is that policymakers should pay attention only to CSR activities that are both *based on the best evidence* on activities that are likely to work, and *robustly evaluated* against valued outcomes; and that professed ‘good intentions’ should not carry any weight in the absence of further evidence.

## READ MORE

B. Baumberg, V. Cuzzocrea, S. Morini, P. Ortoleva, E. Disley, M. Tzvetkova, C. Harkins, M. Schlögl, D. Miller, E. Petrilli and F. Beccaria (2014): *Corporate Social Responsibility*. Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project (ALICE RAP): [Deliverable 11.2](#)