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Health & Consumers

Alcohol, Health and Optimal Regulation

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Expert Conference on Alcohol and Health
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A European issue

- **Consumption levels fairly stable across Europe - but Europe still is region with highest alcohol consumption in the world**
- **Moreover, decrease in consumption is levelling off with some countries now seeing a rise**
- **Most countries in EU face similar problems (*"convergence of harm"*):**
 - **under-age drinking**
 - **drink-driving**
 - **binge drinking ("South" as well as "North")**



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A key health determinant

- **7,5% of all ill health and early death in EU**
- **195,000 premature deaths per year in EU**
- **alcohol is a contributory factor for 60 acute or chronic diseases**
- **in 15-29 year olds: 25% of male deaths and 10% of female deaths are caused by excessive alcohol consumption**

Alcohol Strategy

- **adopted by Commission in October 2006**
- **endorsed by**
 - **Council Conclusions November 2007**
 - **EP Report August 2007**
- **goals:**
 - 1) **Protect **young people**, children and the unborn child**
 - 2) **Reduce injuries and deaths from alcohol-related **road traffic** accidents**
 - 3) **Prevent alcohol-related harm among adults and reduce the negative impact on the **workplace****
 - 4) **Inform, **educate** and raise awareness on the impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption, and on appropriate consumption patterns**
 - 5) **Develop, support and maintain a common **evidence** base**



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Eurobarometer survey (2007)

- **citizens support action to address alcohol harm:**
 - **44%** of EU citizens believe that **public authorities** have to intervene in order to protect individuals from alcohol related harm
 - **77%** agree to put **warnings** on alcohol bottles and adverts with the purpose to warn pregnant women and drivers of dangers of drinking alcohol
 - **73%** agree to **lower blood alcohol level** (0.2 g/l) for young and novice drivers
 - **80%**: agree that “**random police alcohol checks** would reduce alcohol consumption before driving”
 - **87%** agree that **selling and serving** alcohol to people under the age of 18 years should be banned
 - **76%** agree that alcohol **advertising** targeting young people should be banned

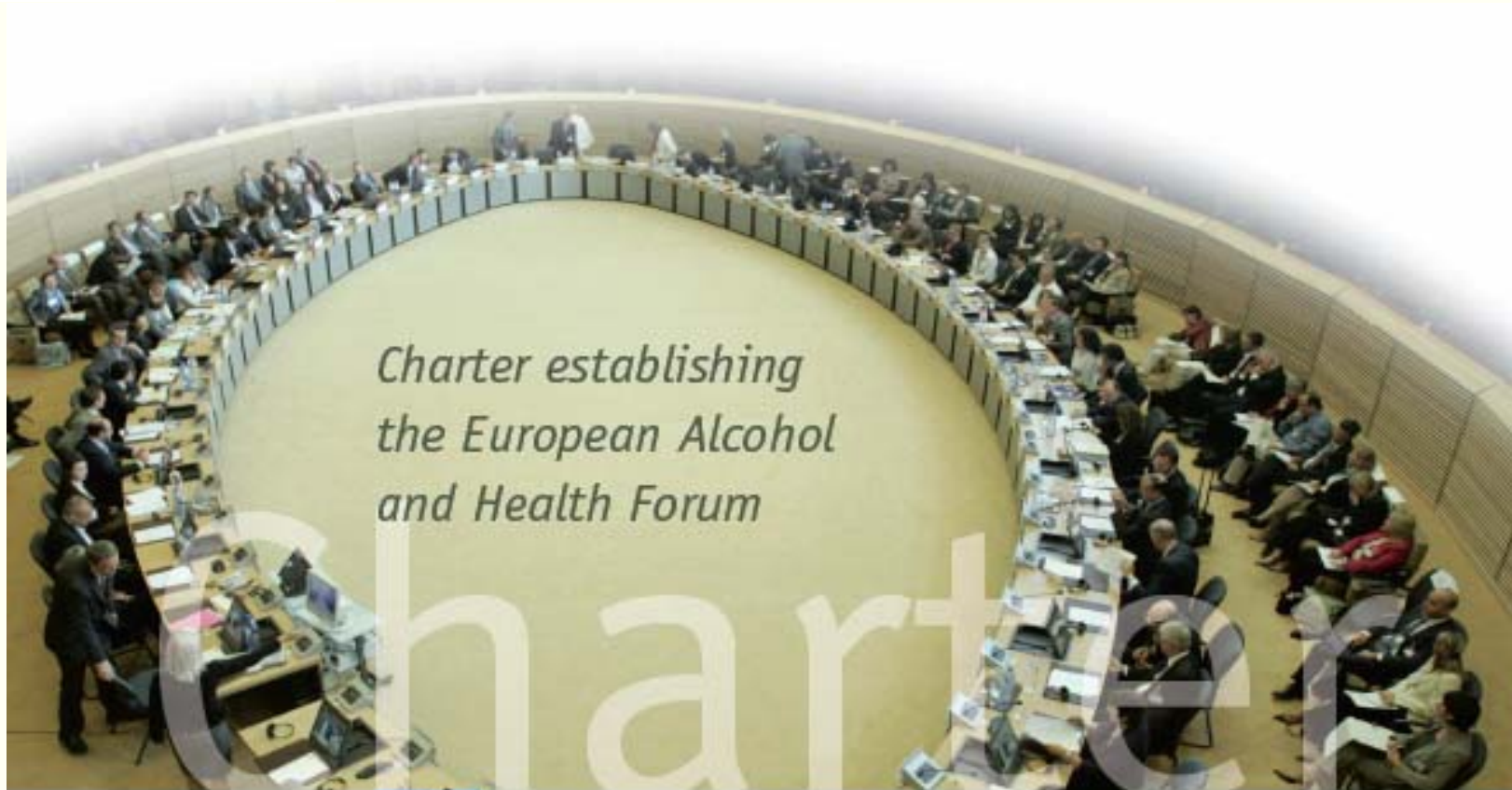


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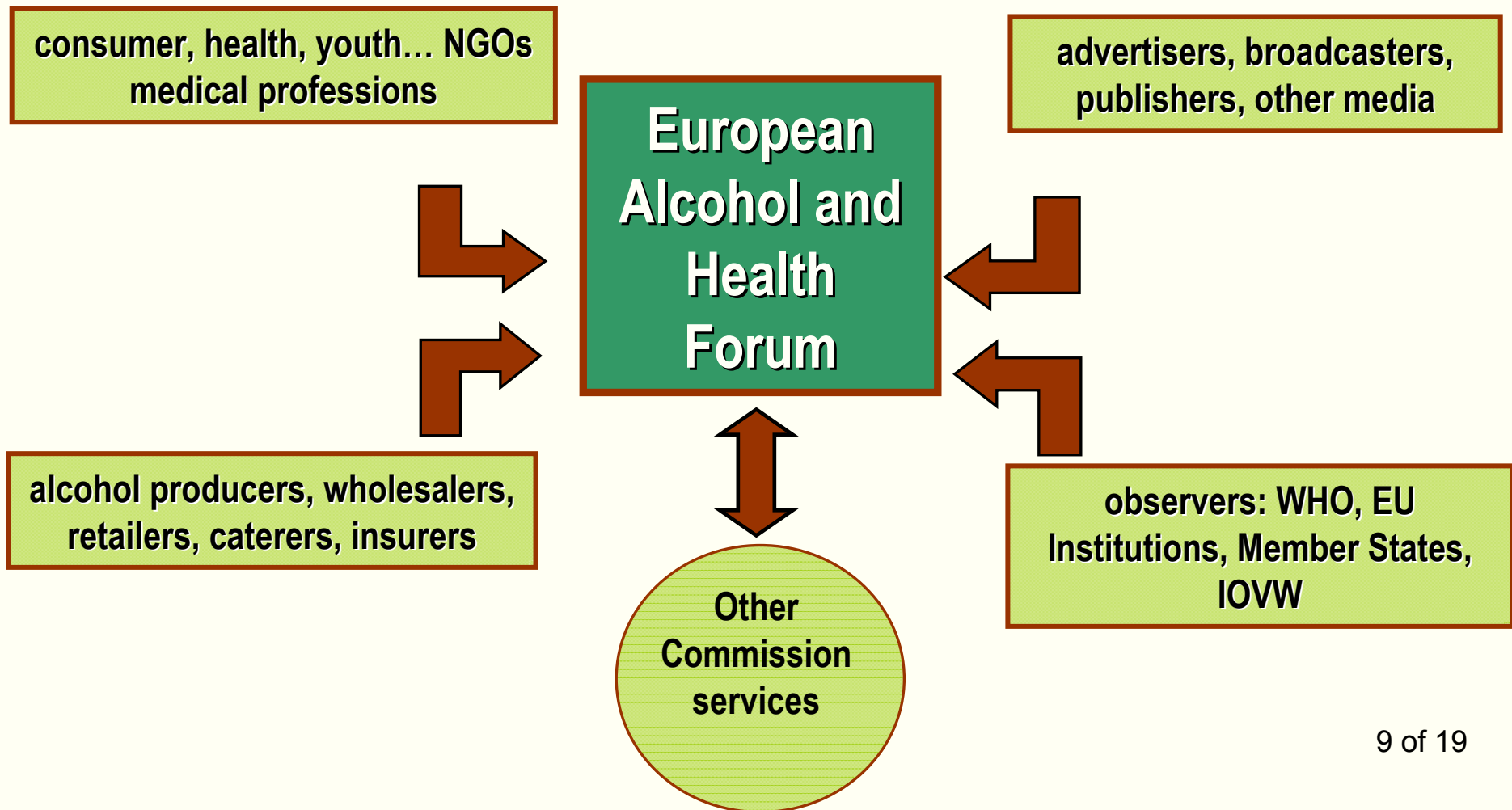
European Alcohol and Health Forum

- **Overall objective:**
 - **provide common platform for all interested stakeholders at EU level willing to step up actions aimed at reducing alcohol harm**
- **Main areas to be addressed:**
 - **under age drinking**
 - **information on effect of harmful drinking**
 - **responsible drinking/promote behavioural changes**
 - **consumer information**
 - **commercial communication**



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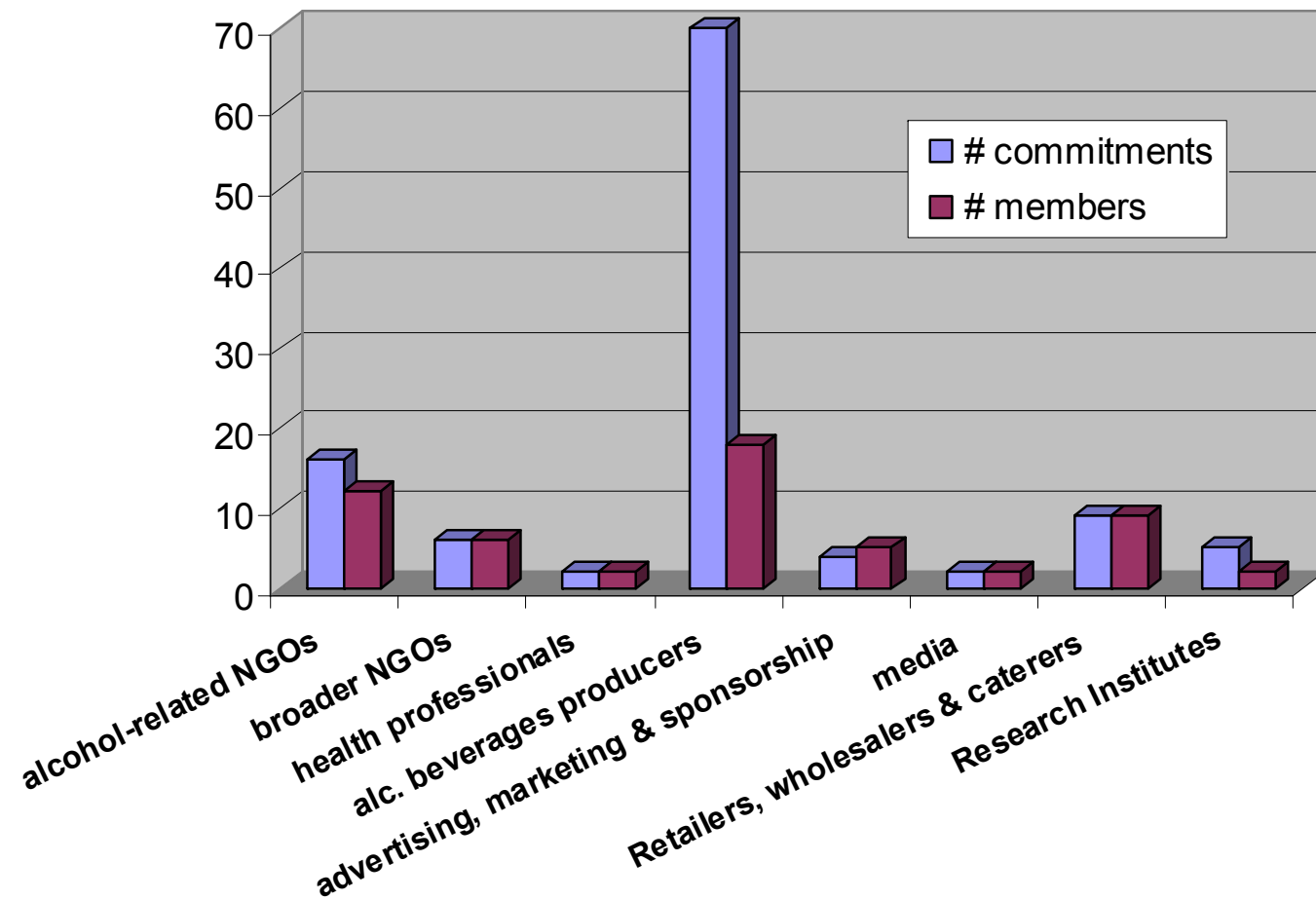
European Alcohol and Health Forum: commitments

- **members formally and publicly commit to concrete action (“*commitment*”)**
- **commitments to indicate level of relevant current activities as baseline**
- **members to devote increasing level of effort beyond baseline to commitments**
- **commitments to indicate measurable objectives**
- **all commitments, including reporting on monitoring/implementation, feed into public data base**



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Commitments by category of Forum members



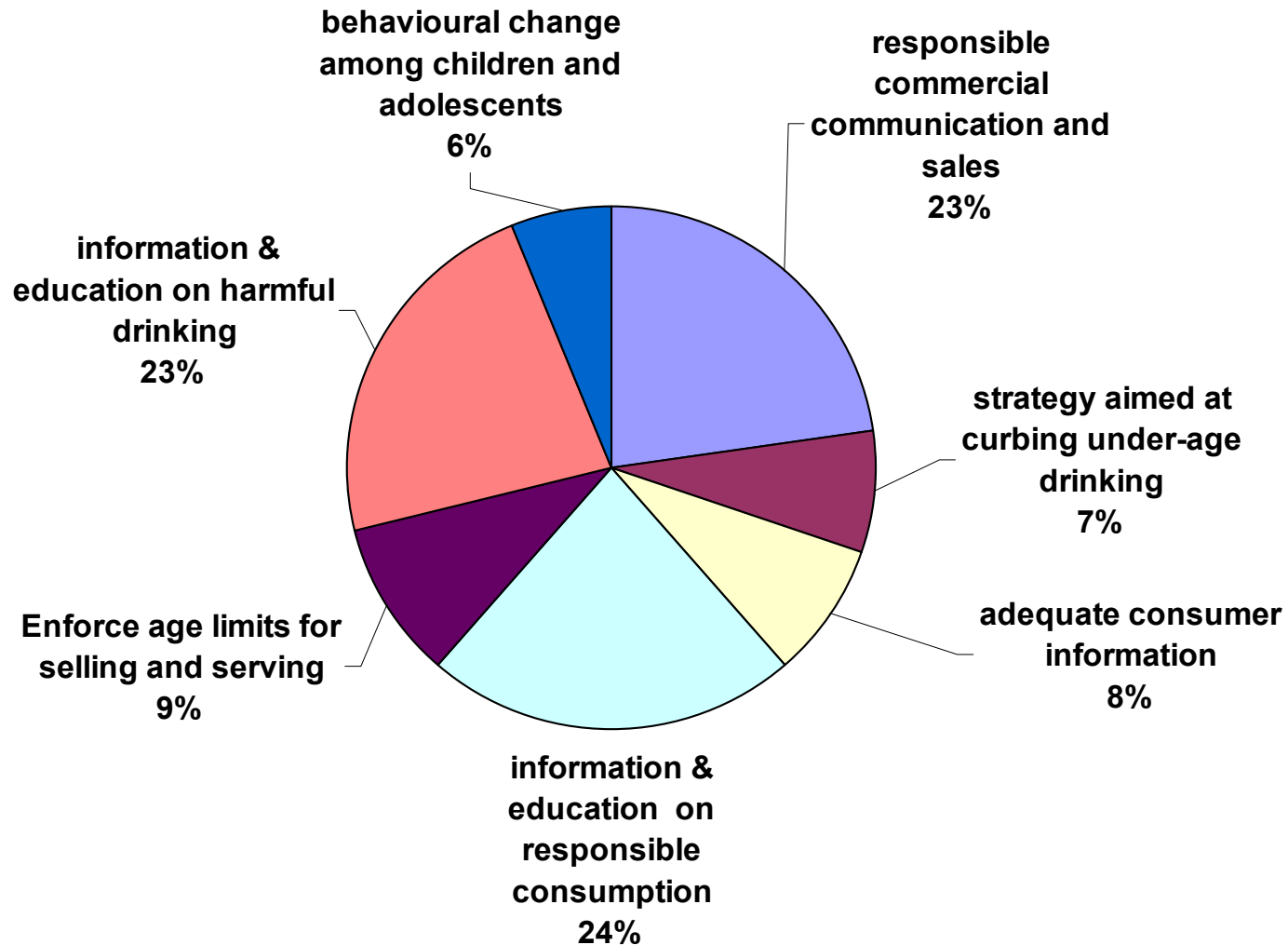


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Forum commitments by priority area





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Forum commitments: partnerships

- **within the 100/120 current commitments, most partnerships are between members belonging to the same category of stakeholders (e. g. producers...)**
- **also some co-operations between producers of alcoholic beverages and Forum members belonging to 'advertising, marketing and sponsorship'**
- **currently no partnerships between Forum members representing economic operators and those representing NGOs**
- **however, some Forum members have established cross-sector multi-stakeholder partnerships at national level (e. g. alc. producers with medical professions and public authorities)**



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Access the European Alcohol &
Health Forum commitment
Database:

**[http://ec.europa.eu/eahf
/index.jsp](http://ec.europa.eu/eahf/index.jsp)**



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more action needed...

- **reduce exposure of children and young people to alcohol advertising and sponsorship**
 - **Science Group opinion: *"Alcohol marketing increases the likelihood that adolescents will start to consume alcohol, and to drink more if they are already consuming alcohol."***
- **ensure that SROs become more transparent and open:**
 - **members of relevant NGOs, medical associations, parents and youth organisations should be involved**
- **stop cut-price promotions for alcoholic beverages:**
 - **happy hours, two-for-one, drink-all-you-can, loss-leaders in retail...**
- **crucial question:**
 - **Will commitments contribute to a change of focus in commercial communications so that we can see change in the exposure of young people, or in the messages and images conveyed by alcohol advertising?**



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Conclusions

- **Restrictions are needed**
- **Societies deliver restrictions in a variety of ways**
 - **Social norms, self regulation, education, statutory regulation all play a role**
- **Greater industry resources are needed to ensure maximum success for non-legislative solutions**

Strategy Progress Report

Assessment tools

- **Date: September 2009**
- **A first stock-take of progress**
 - **Inputs from across the Commission**
 - **Two surveys**
 - **EC baseline (2007)**
 - **WHO/EC update (2008)**
 - **National updates in Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action (CNAPA)**
 - **Monitoring of Forum actions**
- **Next progress report: 2012**



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The National Agenda

- **A full explicit policy**
- **HIAP / RBT, excise, age enforcement**
- **Together for Health**



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Merci!
Thank you!

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