

OUR POSITION ON ALCOHOL MARKETING

- The drinks industry is committed to the responsible marketing of its brands.
- The current rules on alcohol marketing are robust and effective.
- The introduction of more marketing restrictions will have a negative impact on the market and inhibit innovation and competition. Whilst the impact will be felt across the sector, it will be greater for small companies and those new to the market, impeding the potential of one of Scotland's most vibrant sectors.
- The negative knock-on effect will also be felt across interdependent sectors such as hospitality, tourism, advertising, the creative industries and suppliers, who are already struggling to recover given ongoing economic challenges

OUR INDUSTRY

Scotland's drinks industry produces some of our most iconic brands which are exported across the world, attracting tourism and enhancing "brand Scotland". World famous drinks brands and thousands of small brewers and distilleries operate across Scotland from its islands and rural communities to major cities.

The industry contributes to the culture of Scotland and brings huge economic benefits. In 2019, the production and sales of alcohol generated £1.6bn of Gross Value Added (GVA) and supported 88,700 jobs in Scotland. Staff spending generated a further £760m of GVA and supported 11,300 jobs.



Contributing
£1.6bn in GVA



We employ
**88,700
people**

TRENDS IN CONSUMPTION AND HARMS



The industry takes its role in promoting moderation and tackling harmful consumption very seriously. The increase in alcohol-specific deaths in 2020 is concerning. This was against a backdrop of a reduction in per capita consumption. We know that this was driven by people who already drank at harmful levels drinking more during the lockdown period. The vast majority of drinkers drank the same or less over the same period. This clearly indicates that more specific targeted action to support those drinking to harmful levels is required, rather than a focus on whole population measures. It is also important to acknowledge the positive steps that have already been made in changing Scotland's relationship with alcohol.



Of adults in Scotland either do not drink or drink within the Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines.

(Scottish Health Survey (SHS), September 2020)



Alcohol consumption peaked in 2007 and has been declining since; **consumption is now 19.6% lower and at its lowest level for 26 years.** (MESAS Monitoring Report 2021 – Alcohol sales)



Scottish Government data suggest that **binge drinking reduced by 28%** between 2009 and 2020. (SHS, September 2020)



The proportion of children reporting drinking in the last week has declined over time, **falling from 23% in 2002 to 4% in 2015 for 13-year-olds and from 46% in 2002 to 17% in 2015 for 15-year-olds.** The most recent data suggest that this decline has stalled. (MESAS Annual Report 2021)

RESPONSIBLE ADVERTISERS

Responsible marketing is a key deliverable and commitment for the industry. We have in place an effective self/co-regulatory system run by OFCOM, Advertising Standards Authority and the Portman Group to regulate alcohol advertising across all media including digital and sponsorship.

Under the current rules, marketing communications for alcoholic drinks are not aimed at people under 18 and do not imply, condone or encourage immoderate, irresponsible or anti-social drinking. Alcohol is promoted in a socially responsible manner and only to those aged over 18. The current rules protect children and young people by both reducing the likelihood that they will see alcohol ads and, if they do, by ensuring the ads will not appeal strongly or particularly to them. For instance, drinks companies must not use individuals who are, or look, under the age of 25 in any marketing materials; and only sponsor events where at least 75% of attendees are aged 18 or over. Such avenues remain a crucial means by which the industry can promote responsible drinking messages and alcohol-free extensions of popular brands.



75%

of the audience must be 18+

RESPONSIBLE ADVERTISERS



Through the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD) the industry is working with the social media platforms on technological solutions that are incorporated to protect minors from seeing or interacting with alcohol adverts and to give consumers the choice to block alcohol marketing if they do not wish to see it. Details can be found [here](#). Working with the social media platforms means that such measures will have a global reach as the safeguards are built into the technology of the platforms.

According to research conducted by Nielsen for the World Federation of Advertisers 0.82% of all adverts seen online by all ages are for alcohol. The research also stated that an underaged person would potentially see one alcohol advertisement per 420 websites visited (a rate of 0.23%) or one advert per 18 hours and 41 minutes spent online. ([WFRA](#), 31 March 2022). Between 2010 and 2021, Scottish children's exposure to alcohol advertising on TV decreased from an average of 3.4 ads per week in 2010 to 0.9 ads per week in 2021, falling at a faster rate than children's exposure to all TV adverts ([ASA](#), May 2022). This is testament to the effectiveness of the industry's efforts and the current system of self-regulation.



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UNDERAGE DRINKING



As with many issues, young people's attitudes towards alcohol are influenced by multiple societal factors. The key factors associated with underage drinking are neither caused by advertising nor can be remedied by its absence. Effective action demands localised interventions, using awareness raising and enforcement to target where the problem is.

In addition to funding the independent alcohol education charity Drinkaware which runs successful, targeted campaigns to encourage moderation and highlight the dangers of over consumption. We are also supporting Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) across Scotland which are focused on tackling underage drinking. CAPs in Scotland has seen an average 65% reduction in regular drinking for 13-16s from an average of 25.7% at baseline falling to 9% after interventions had been delivered. In addition, to strict compliance with 'no proof , no sale', Challenge 25 and initiatives such as our proxy purchase campaign 'It'll Cost You' reduce the accessibility of alcohol to children and young people.

We take these steps because we fundamentally believe that they are the right thing to do, and we'll continue to work with partners to further promote a positive attitude towards alcohol.

A large orange circle containing the text "65%" in white, representing the percentage reduction in regular drinking for 13-16s in Scotland.

Reduction in regular drinking for 13-16s in Scotland thanks in part to Community Alcohol Partnerships



OUR COMMITMENT

SCOTTISH
ALCOHOL
INDUSTRY
PARTNERSHIP

We believe it is possible to tackle alcohol misuse without simultaneously undermining Scotland's most successful industry, and the jobs and investment that depend upon it. We want to work with government, healthcare bodies, charities and wider society on a collaborative, evidence based and targeted approach to promote a positive relationship with alcohol based on moderation and addressing harmful drinking.

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WHYTE & MACKAY



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