

**Request to maintain the consideration of effective advertising self-regulation
as part of the policy options recommended to Member States**

**ICAS submission to the WHO consultation on the first draft of the updated Appendix
3 of the WHO Global NCD action plan 2013-2030**

This submission is provided by the International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation ([ICAS](https://icas.global)). ICAS is a global platform which promotes responsible advertising through effective advertising self-regulation. It brings together a network of Advertising Standards Bodies, or so-called Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs) from Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and North & South America, regional associations such as the European Advertising Standards Alliance¹, as well as global associations representing the advertising industry (The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA), the International Advertising Association (IAA), the European Publishers Council (EPC), and WOO, the World Out of Home Organization) as well as experts on global advertising and marketing laws, the Global Advertising Lawyers Alliance (GALA).²

*Countries with a Self-Regulatory Organization in ICAS and
EASA membership*



The Advertising Standards Bodies / SROs in our membership **are independent bodies³** and are **responsible for ensuring that advertising on all media is legal, decent, honest, and truthful**. They do **proactive work to avoid irresponsible advertising**, and **act on complaints to tackle harmful, misleading, or offensive ads**. Their **systems involve a wide range of stakeholders**, not only the advertisers, but also advertising agencies and the media making this self-regulatory system **an effective and ‘collective’ regulatory system for advertising, which is unparalleled when compared to other forms of industry self-regulation**. There are **multiple checks and balances** in place to ensure **the system is transparent and accountable**, which is why the benefits of the self-regulatory system for advertising **have been recognized by public authorities and international organizations**.

¹ The [European Advertising Standards Alliance \(EASA\)](https://easa.europa.eu/) is the European counterpart of ICAS and brings together 28 independent advertising self-regulatory organizations (SROs), which enforce advertising self-regulatory codes of conduct at national level, and 14 stakeholders representing the advertising ecosystem (advertisers, agencies, media and digital platforms) which are all committed to ensuring responsible advertising.

² List of ICAS members: <https://icas.global/about/members/>. An interactive map of ICAS members can be found [here](https://icas.global/about/members/).

³ SROs operate independently. They administer and enforce the codes and standards independently from the government, specific interest groups, and the advertising industry.

Summary

ICAS welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the [first draft of the updated Appendix 3 of the WHO Global NCD action plan 2013-2030](#) by providing information about the important work advertising self-regulatory organizations are doing to ensure responsible advertising and protecting the public from harmful marketing.

We would like to highlight that we support the goal of the WHO to **reduce the preventable and avoidable burden of morbidity, mortality and disability due to noncommunicable diseases** by means of **multisectoral collaboration** and **cooperation at national, regional and global levels**. We also appreciate that the draft Appendix is intended to offer to Member States a menu of policy options and “cost-effective” interventions for prevention and control of major noncommunicable diseases. While the Appendix offers a wide range of policy options, **the submission of ICAS is limited to those options that consider advertising as our role and remit is focused on the promotion of responsible advertising through effective advertising self-regulation.**

As stated in the Global NCD Action Plan, there is a vital need for multisectoral collaboration and cooperation to achieve the objectives of the action plan. In this spirit, we would like to argue that it **would be essential for public authorities, civil society, and the industry to work together. When it comes to marketing, these collaborations can build on the already existing and effective self-regulatory systems for advertising in many countries. These collaborations would be also one of the most cost-effective because advertising self-regulation comes at no cost to the taxpayers while being fully independent from the industry in its enforcement. As the collective self-regulatory system for advertising has also proven to be effective, we believe that self-regulatory mechanisms for advertising should be considered when developing policy options at the national level.**

Our key message is thus to maintain in the appendix the recommendation to Member States to consider effective advertising self-regulation (or co-regulation⁴ where locally applicable) when considering and implementing policy options and to build and/or strengthen a dialogue with Self-Regulatory Organizations in their country.

Our members have worked over decades to ensure responsible advertising, including for food & beverages as well as for alcohol beverages through effective systems of ‘collective’ regulation in many countries across the globe. In a nutshell:

- **Self-Regulatory Organizations are independent organizations that monitor and enforce robust advertising codes or standards at the national level;**
- **They provide an additional layer of consumer protection and, in some instances, not only complement but expand on legal frameworks;**
- **Self-Regulatory Organizations keep track of key concerns with regard to advertising and take steps to address them when needed;**
- **Self-Regulatory Organizations provide a quick, efficient and impartial complaint resolution system, which is cost-free for consumers, consumer associations and public administrations;**
- **Self-Regulatory Organizations take the protection of children, minors and vulnerable groups extremely seriously.** Applicable advertising codes concerning the marketing communications for HFSS foods or alcoholic beverages and the **rigorous enforcement of these codes or**

⁴ Co-regulation is a system of regulation combining statutory and self-regulatory elements.

standards can provide strong protections tailored to work with the individual nations' economic and legal systems;

- The applicable codes/standards are sensitive to the product category and generally restrict advertising for alcoholic beverages to appropriate adult audiences;
- Self-Regulatory enforcement measures are transparent and effective;
- Enforcement measures are increasingly focused on digital marketing, especially advertising on social media platforms, such as influencer marketing⁵. Self-Regulatory Organizations are developing sophisticated technological tools using avatars or AI to monitor the compliance of online advertisements⁶. This shows the speed and efficiency with which self-regulation can adapt to changes in digital advertising;
- The econometric and social benefits of effective and meaningful advertising self-regulation for consumers, businesses as well as national governments have been recognized by public authorities and international organizations,⁷ and in a number of countries the national legislative frameworks already refer to the independence and complementary role of the self-regulatory system.

We strongly believe that to effectively achieve the goals of the NCD Action Plan strong partnerships and collaboration are needed between public authorities, civil society and the industry and we thus would welcome a dialogue and co-ordination of Member States at national level with existing self-regulatory initiatives.

ICAS and our members stand ready to discuss the best way we could work together to help ensure that marketing for products such as HFSS foods or alcohol is appropriate, and that children and minors are protected from harmful advertising and marketing practices.

Below, we explain the core principles of advertising self-regulation and what Self-Regulatory Organizations are doing, how it applies to marketing of alcoholic beverages or food and finally, the benefits of the system.

What is advertising self-regulation and what are SROs doing?

The self-regulatory approach developed by the advertising industry is unparalleled when compared to most other forms of “industry self-regulation”. The advertising self-regulatory approach is a **comprehensive system** that is **well-balanced and extensive**, featuring **high advertising standards**⁸, a **system for adoption, review and application of these standards and independent bodies that**

⁵ See a list of all ICAS members that have developed influencer marketing guidelines to ensure transparent disclosure of ads by social media influencers: <https://icas.global/advertising-self-regulation/influencer-guidelines/>

⁶ See for example the work the Advertising Standards Authority in the UK is doing to measure children's exposure to age restricted ads: <https://www.asa.org.uk/news/measuring-exposure-a-research-perspective.html>

⁷ The benefits of advertising self-regulation are recognized by international organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). See pages 7-8.

⁸ In most countries, advertising standards are based on the [Advertising and Marketing Communications Code](#) of the International Chamber of Commerce (the 'ICC Marketing Code'). National adjustments are however often made to take into account legal, social, cultural and economic features of the country. Where the codes contain specific provisions, those provisions are typically agreed upon by an independent standards-making body within the SRO, and subsequently updated on a regular basis. The main standards are also often accompanied by sectoral guidelines addressing the marketing of specific products or services (e.g., alcohol, cosmetics...) or by issue-specific guidelines (e.g., on interest-based advertising, on advertising to children, on influencer marketing, etc.), or by detailed case-specific guidance on the applicable self-regulatory standards.

enforce the standards. The systems are designed to ensure that standards are collectively agreed upon, known, understood, and applied by all the operators in the ecosystem and that those that breach the standards deliberately can face sanctions.

The self-regulatory systems also feature iterative improvements processes with feedback loops through which standards are regularly updated to quickly respond to societal and technological transformations. **Thanks to the broad participation of all members of the industry and the collaboration with other stakeholders, such as civil society, and informed by the learnings from monitoring exercises and the analysis of complaints, these systems allow the capture of and the ability to act upon identified issues.**

Among many distinctive features, the comprehensive advertising self-regulatory system of the advertising industry is unique in that it includes self-regulatory organizations (SROs) which provide for the following:

Independence: SROs operate independently from the industry, they administer and enforce the codes and standards independently from the government, specific interest groups, and the advertising industry.⁹

Universality and comprehensive coverage: SROs cover all forms of commercial communications and bring together a wide range of actors of the advertising industry, including advertisers, agencies, media/publishers and increasingly digital platforms.

Advice and training: SROs are the focal point between the design of the standards and their enforcement; therefore, SROs have a unique expertise regarding the proper implementation of these self-regulatory standards. They provide third-party training and advice to all members of the industry who seek to ensure the compliance of their ads, not only to advertisers, but also to the agencies, the media or influencers. Their services are quick¹⁰ and are a key preventive feature ensuring ads are legal, decent, honest and truthful.

Effective, independent, and impartial dispute resolution at local level: SROs provide efficient and quick complaint handling at no cost to the consumers, consumer associations and public administrations. Being locally based, these consumer-facing entities handle complaints and queries in (the) local language(s) and are mindful of local cultural sensitivities.¹¹

Effective sanctions and enforcement: Non-compliance of industry actors are subject to a staggered scale of sanctions¹². Ultimately, self-regulatory bodies may refer a situation where an advertiser

⁹ Although Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs) are primarily funded by the advertising industry, they operate independently. There are several safeguards in place to ensure that complaints on individual ads are dealt with independently and impartially, and decisions are usually made publicly available to ensure maximum transparency. To find more about how SROs are financed, please read our publication: https://icas.global/wp-content/uploads/2018_10_01_SRO_Funding_Overview.pdf

¹⁰ In Europe, almost all requests for copy-advice are handled in 48h.

¹¹ In Spain for example the SRO's jury has obtained public recognition as an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) body under European law. Spanish legislation is also requiring companies to go through the SRO's ADR system before going to court.

¹² Most advertisers voluntarily comply with SRO decisions by changing or withdrawing an ad or claim which has been determined as in breach of the standards. Should they refuse to do so, in some regions, SROs ask the media to refuse to publish/run or air the campaign. Ultimately, self-regulatory bodies may refer a situation where an advertiser refuses to comply with a decision or to participate in the self-regulatory process to the appropriate statutory authorities. Options available to the self-regulatory body will depend on the procedures of the Self-Regulatory Organizations, its remit and the

refuses to comply with a decision or to participate in the self-regulatory process to the appropriate statutory authorities.¹³

Accountability and transparency: To ensure accountability and transparency, SROs also generally publish their decisions, or detailed summaries, online. The list of decisions (sometimes called ‘rulings’) or summaries is typically available on the SRO’s website.

Technological innovation: To keep pace with changes in the media and the corresponding advertising landscapes and to effectively regulate advertising, including online advertising, an increasing number of SROs across the globe are investing in technology including automation and artificial intelligence.

Inclusivity and openness: SROs regularly communicate and often involve other interested parties such as civil society and public authorities.

The core principles for an effective advertising self-regulatory system detailed above are enshrined in [the ICAS Charter](#) which was adopted on 7 May 2021 by all ICAS members. The principles in the ICAS Charter correspond to the requirements of integrity pointed out by researchers and authorities.¹⁴

Advertising Standards and Alcohol Advertising

Ensuring responsible marketing communications for alcohol beverages has been a long-standing priority for Advertising Self-Regulatory Organizations across the globe. Especially when it comes to the protection of minors, national advertising codes and guidelines are strict and detailed. Standards usually include provisions specifying that advertising for alcoholic drinks should not be aimed at minors, should not show minors or young people appearing to be younger than 25 consuming alcoholic beverages, and should not be placed in media, or sponsor events, where a significant percentage of the audience is underage.

Many SROs enforce national programs and standards which reflect the principles of the [Marketing and Advertising Code of the International Chamber of Commerce](#) and its related framework, [the ICC Framework for Responsible Marketing Communications of Alcohol](#).

The industry has also developed further guidelines, principles, sector specific codes and initiatives such as the [Digital Guiding Principles](#) developed by IARD, the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking, and the [Responsible Marketing Pact](#) of the World Federation of Advertisers. The goal of these initiatives is to ensure more transparency and responsibility in the marketing of alcohol beverages, limit underage exposure to alcohol ads, to ensure alcohol ads do not appeal to minors and to ensure minors’ online experience is free from alcohol ads.

existing legal framework. All have proven to be effective in promoting high levels of compliance with self-regulatory decisions.

¹³ SROs are entitled to act against their own members in case of non-compliance. In general, advertisers that are not in SRO membership, who refuse to accept the self-regulatory procedure and the adjudication of the jury, can also be sanctioned or the SRO can refer the case to the relevant authorities.

¹⁴ The principles enshrined in the ICAS Charter correspond to the requirements of integrity pointed out by researchers and authorities. See the following documents for reference:

- “UNCTAD. Manual on consumer protection, 2018”. “Box. 5. Checklist for Self-regulation and corporate social responsibility”, Page 44. Available at: https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditccplp2017d1_en.pdf.

- “OECD Report – alternatives to traditional regulation”. 2002. Pages 59 – 60 Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/42245468.pdf>

The alcohol industry commissions regular independent monitoring exercises against their sectoral codes or principles. International Self-Regulatory Organizations often play a key role in such monitoring exercises. They have monitored, for example, the compliance of beer, wine and spirits producers in their ambition to prevent minors from seeing alcohol marketing. In 2019, 14 SROs across the globe, [monitored](#) 2088 online items against the Digital Guiding Principles and the Responsible Marketing Pact, finding an increase in compliance compared to the previous year¹⁵.

SROs also review complaints from consumers and from competitors. With regards to alcohol advertising, some SROs are pre-clearing alcohol advertising to ensure all ads are compliant before they are published or broadcast¹⁶, while others, such as Ad Standards Canada, have a 'compliance plus' program for the spirit sector.¹⁷

SROs, such as the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in the UK, also review ads on their own initiative. The ASA recently [published findings](#) from a landmark project, in which they collaborated with five major platforms popular with children, to identify trends in the targeting of ads by alcohol brands in logged-in social media.

This was the latest of [several reports](#) which seek to minimize children's exposure to age-restricted ads and forms part of the ASA's ongoing commitment to proactively protect children by having [More Impact Online](#).

Advertising Standards and Marketing of HFSS Foods

Advertising food to children is also an area of significant public concern and debate. The self-regulatory rules or standards in place are often restrictive in order to ensure that food is advertised responsibly, specifically for foods classified as HFSS. Children deserve especially careful treatment by marketers in any marketing communications directed to them which is why specific provisions on marketing communications to children are included in national self-regulation codes, including the ICC code.

Many SROs implement the principles of the [Marketing and Advertising Code of the International Chamber of Commerce](#) and the updated [Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communications](#). Bringing together relevant articles from its International Codes of Advertising Practice and of Sales Promotion, the Framework provides a clear interpretation of existing rules for advertising food and beverages.

Additionally, there are further industry-led initiatives related to food and beverage marketing, such as [the EU Pledge](#) and the US [Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative](#).

The [EU Pledge](#) is a voluntary initiative by leading food and beverage companies to change the way they advertise to children. Launched in 2007 as a World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) commitment to the [EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health](#), the EU Pledge

¹⁵ Major international and Europe-wide monitoring exercises are coordinated by EASA. For more information see: <https://www.easa-alliance.org/products-services/monitoring-projects>

¹⁶ In Spain, for example, the Spirits Code provides for mandatory and binding Copy Advice for cinema, TV, print, outdoor and radio ads and the Brewers Code and Wine Code foresee mandatory and binding Copy Advice for tv ads. For more information on pre-clearance see <https://www.easa-alliance.org/easa-activities/pre-clearance>

¹⁷ For more information see [Spirits Canada's Code of Responsible Advertising and Marketing Complaint Procedure \("Complaint Procedure"\)](#)

commits member companies either to only advertise better-for-you products to children under 13, subject to common nutrition criteria; or not to advertise any products to children under this age at all. The EU Pledge is a framework commitment; individual [companies' commitments](#) can and often do go beyond.¹⁸ Based on extensive annual third-party audits, the EU Pledge has been able to report [high levels of compliance](#) and a [significant impact on children's exposure](#) to audiovisual communications for these foods and beverages, notably **an 83% reduction in children's exposure in and around children's programs, and a 48% reduction in children's exposure overall**, across all programs. The program also includes an [accountability mechanism](#), which allows citizens and interested parties across the EU to make complaints. These are channeled to an **independent panel of experts** administered by the [European Advertising Standards Alliance](#) (EASA), which delivers rulings. These are [published](#) on the EU Pledge website. Member companies that are found in breach must take corrective measures as directed by the panel's ruling.

In the US, the [Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative \(CFBAI\)](#) was created to improve the landscape of food advertising to children under age 13. It is administered by BBB National Programs, which also oversees other advertising self-regulation programs including the Children's Advertising Review Unit.¹⁹ Under CFBAI, participants voluntarily commit that, in advertising primarily directed to children, they will either not advertise foods or beverages to children at all or advertise only products that meet CFBAI's strict Uniform Nutrition Criteria. Participants also do not advertise in elementary schools and do not engage in advertising primarily directed to children under age 6. Since CFBAI began in 2007, participants have reduced nutrients to limit, like added sugars or sodium, and added more food groups or important nutrients like calcium and Vitamin D in foods advertised to children. Some participants do not advertise to children at all. The CFBAI participants account for 70% of advertising on children's television²⁰.

CFBAI monitors and evaluates the participants' compliance with their pledge commitments, and companies also submit annual self-assessments. CFBAI publishes an [annual report](#) on compliance and progress. These annual reports have noted instances of non-compliance but generally found excellent compliance over the years.

The progress CFBAI is making in improving the children's food advertising landscape has been recognized by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and others.

¹⁸ Additionally to the EU Pledge, there are also national pledges e.g. in Belgium, Portugal, and Switzerland. In June 2022, the local food companies in Greece have signed the Greek Pledge committing to adhere to the EU Pledge commitments. This initiative is carried out by the Hellenic Food Industry Association (SEVT) in collaboration with the Hellenic Advertisers' Association (SDE) and the monitoring will be conducted by the independent, national self-regulatory body, SEE.

¹⁹ CARU's Children's Advertising Guidelines, which apply to all food advertisers, prohibit: depicting excessive food consumption; discouraging or disparaging foods provided by parents or schools or recommended by the U.S. Dietary Guidelines; and depicting snack foods as substitutes for meals.

²⁰ A 2017 report from the University of Connecticut's Rudd Center for Food Policy & Health found a 50% decline in food ads viewed by children on children's TV programming in the ten years since CFBAI's launch. (Report available at <https://uconnruddcenter.org/research/food-marketing/facts/>.) A 2018 Rudd report noted an 18% decline in children's exposure to food advertising overall since the start of CFBAI. See [Trends in TV advertising: 2017 update reports food-related TV advertising viewed by children and teens from 2002 to 2017.pdf](#). Brief Report. May 2018. A 2018 U.S. study regarding advertising on apps intended for children under age five found virtually no foods ads, although almost all apps contained at least one type of ad. Meyer, M. et al, Advertising in Young Children's Apps, A Content Analysis, Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics (Oct. 29, 2018), available at https://journals.lww.com/jrnlbbp/Abstract/publishahead/Advertising_in_Young_Children's_Apps_A_Content.99257.aspx.

The Benefits of Advertising Self-Regulation and its International Recognition

The core principles of advertising self-regulation as detailed above and the work done specifically around food and alcohol advertising and the protection of minors, show that the self-regulatory system has numerous benefits for policy makers, consumers, marketers, and society as a whole.

For policy makers: Self-regulatory ad standards provide an additional layer of consumer protection that complements the legal framework. National advertising self-regulatory bodies help educate and thus avoid problems before they happen by providing training and copy advice. They keep track of key concerns about advertising and take steps to address them when needed. Self-regulation is also more efficient and faster than the legal process to adapt to technological and societal changes.

For marketers: It is often estimated that one-third to one-half of a company's market capitalization is represented by its brand reputation²¹, which is why consumer trust in the brand is crucial to corporate success. Advertising self-regulation, through the promotion of responsible advertising, helps build consumer trust in brands. Maximized returns on long term investments on advertising benefit not only advertisers but also agencies and media, who will see a higher demand for creative yet responsible advertising. Advertising self-regulation also ensures an impartial and level-playing field for brands.

For consumers: Self-regulation provides an effective, inexpensive (typically cost-free), fast and efficient solution to handle consumer complaints. An efficient and meaningful self-regulatory system makes sure that advertising remains responsible and thus ensures a high level of consumer protection.

The benefits of advertising self-regulation are recognized by international governmental organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

- The **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)**²² and the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**²³ have both recognized advertising self-regulation's important role and called for greater capacity building of such systems.
- The **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** states in the 'Guidelines for consumer protection'²⁴ that Member States should encourage the formulation and implementation of codes of marketing and other business practices to ensure adequate consumer protection.
- In **Europe**, effective advertising self-regulation is promoted as a complementary policy tool to general legislation within several policy and regulatory initiatives, such as the Audiovisual

²¹ [World Intellectual Property \(WIPO\) Report Brands – Reputation and Image in the Global Marketplace](#), WIPO, 2013
In Canada, 96% of consumers believe that it is 'somewhat' to 'very' important for advertisements to have a set of rules and regulations that advertisers must follow. [Ad Standards Canada Consumer Research](#), Ad Standards, Canada, 2019

²² [Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation \(APEC\) Joint Ministerial Statement](#), APEC, 2017

²³ Industry Self-Regulation: ROLE AND USE IN SUPPORTING CONSUMER INTERESTS, OECD (2015-03-01), OECD Digital Economy Papers, No. 247, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5js4k1fjqkwh-en>. "Toolkit for protecting digital consumers". (OECD) 2018. The Report recognizes the benefits of effective Self-Regulation, "particularly relevant to the characteristics of the digital economy". Pages 59 and 60 <https://www.oecd.org/going-digital/topics/digital-consumers/toolkit-for-protecting-digital-consumers.pdf>

²⁴ UNCTAD Guidelines for Consumer Protection, 2015. https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditccplpmisc2016d1_en.pdf, item 31; UNCTAD Manual on Consumer Protection, 2018. Page 45 https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditccplp2017d1_en.pdf

Media Services Directive (AVMSD). The revised AVMSD expressly encourages self-regulation and the use of codes of conduct in relation to alcohol marketing.²⁵

- The **European Union's Better Regulation package**²⁶ commends principles for effective self-regulation and its inclusion in the policy toolkit and regulatory impact assessment.
- In the US, the regulatory authority primarily responsible for oversight of advertising and marketing practice, the **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)**, recognizes the role and efficacy of advertising self-regulation, and actively promotes participation by members of the advertising ecosystem. FTC guidance has spurred evolution of self-regulatory requirements, such as the Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative, FTC-approved industry safe harbor programs pursuant to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, and the Digital Advertising Accountability Program, regarding interest-based advertising,²⁷ and the Direct Selling Self-Regulatory Council, offering a first line of compliance enforcement, reducing the burden on regulators. In addition, the FTC has issued several reports on self-regulation in the alcohol industry.²⁸ The FTC has specifically noted that self-regulation is an appropriate response to concerns about the impact of alcohol advertising on youth, given the substantial protections the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution affords to advertising.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we strongly recommend maintaining the recommendation to Member States to also consider effective advertising self-regulation when considering and implementing policy options. We also believe that Member States should be encouraged to build and/or strengthen a dialogue with Self-Regulatory Organizations in their country.

Resolving the big societal and health issues at global level will require strong local, regional and global partnerships and co-operations between public authorities, civil society and the industry. When it comes to advertising these partnerships can build on the strong self-regulatory systems that already exist in most developed and bigger economies across the globe.

²⁵ Article 4a of the Directive (EU) 2018/1808 concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) establishes that "Member States shall encourage the use of co-regulation and the fostering of self-regulation through codes of conduct adopted at national level in the fields coordinated by this Directive to the extent permitted by their legal systems". In addition, Recital 29 of the Directive states. In addition, recital 29 of the [Directive \(EU\) 2018/1808 concerning the provision of audiovisual media services \(Audiovisual Media Services Directive\)](#) states: 'Similarly, Member States should be encouraged to ensure that self- and co-regulatory codes of conduct are used to effectively reduce the exposure of children and minors to audiovisual commercial communications for alcoholic beverages. Certain self- or co-regulatory systems exist at Union and national level in order to market alcoholic beverages responsibly, including in audiovisual commercial communications. Those systems should be further encouraged, in particular those aiming at ensuring that responsible drinking messages accompany audiovisual commercial communications for alcoholic beverages.'

²⁶ [European Union's Better Regulation Package](#), European Commission, 2015

²⁷ See Federal Trade Commission Staff Report: Self-Regulatory Principles For Online Behavioral Advertising: Tracking, Targeting, and Technology, <https://www.ftc.gov/reports/federal-trade-commission-staff-report-self-regulatory-principles-online-behavioral>

²⁸ See [Self-Regulation in the Alcohol Industry: Report of the Federal Trade Commission \(March 2014\) \(ftc.gov\)](#).

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