



**IARD**  
INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR  
RESPONSIBLE DRINKING

# Report on Tackling the Harmful Use of Alcohol

COMMUNICATION ON  
ENGAGEMENT FROM THE  
INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR  
RESPONSIBLE DRINKING (IARD)  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
GLOBAL COMPACT, 2024

**A**s Chief Executive Officer of the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD), I am proud to reaffirm our commitment to advancing responsible drinking worldwide. IARD's mission and that of its members is to collaborate with governments and civil society to reduce the harmful use of alcohol, promote informed choices for consumers, and thus support the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Next year's High-Level Meeting on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) presents a crucial opportunity to solidify progress toward the UN's 2030 goals, including addressing the harmful use of alcohol. The collaboration of public and private sectors in this whole-of-society approach has already led to significant progress, as reflected in the WHO's Global Status Report showing a 20% reduction in alcohol-related deaths globally between 2010 and 2019. This progress is most notable in regions like Europe, where a reduction of over 29% was recorded.

The UN has recognized the critical role of the private sector, tasking companies with concrete actions such as eliminating alcohol marketing to minors, a responsibility that IARD's members have embraced. Since the 2018 High-Level Meeting, our members have made meaningful strides in:

- *Digital Marketing: Introducing global standards to restrict alcohol marketing online, with major digital platforms like Google and Meta committing to enhanced safeguards.*
- *Online Sales: Implementing standards to prevent the sale of alcohol to minors through collaborations with platforms such as UberEats, Deliveroo, and JD.com.*
- *Retail and Hospitality: Creating a Global Standards Coalition with partners like Walmart and SPAR to prevent underage alcohol sales.*
- *Product Information: Placing age restrictions and warnings on billions of product labels annually.*

This collective effort reflects the private sector's dedication to complementing government and civil society efforts to reduce harmful drinking and achieve global health goals. As we approach 2025, IARD stands ready to continue its role in achieving these shared objectives, ensuring we meet the UN's 2030 targets.



Julian Braithwaite  
IARD President / CEO



## ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE DRINKING (IARD)

IARD<sup>1</sup> is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to addressing harmful drinking worldwide. IARD is supported by leading global beer, wine, and spirits producers, who have come together



Associate member



for a common purpose: to be part of the solution to reduce the harmful use of alcohol. To achieve this, we work with public sector, civil society, and private stakeholders. IARD actively supports international goals to reduce harmful drinking, including the targets in the WHO's Global Alcohol Action Plan 2022–2030 and United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.5<sup>2</sup>.

## KEY ACTIONS SINCE LAST COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

IARD and its member companies remain committed to contributing to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and particularly to reducing the harmful use of alcohol. The Political Declaration of the 3rd High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in 2018 called upon the private sector – specifically economic operators in the area of alcohol production and trade – to contribute to reducing the harmful use of alcohol. Furthermore, it specified our sector should take concrete steps towards eliminating the marketing, advertising, and sale of alcoholic products to minors.

We have been dedicated to delivering upon that challenge over the past six years and have made substantial progress, particularly during the last two years.

### The Global Standards Coalition: harnessing the power of partnership to help reduce the harmful use of alcohol

In 2023, IARD launched its groundbreaking Global Standards Coalition, bringing together leading retailers, business organizations, e-commerce and digital platforms, and advertising associations to further accelerate reductions in the harmful use of alcohol. Alongside IARD's members, signatories include industry leaders such as Walmart, SPAR International, Meta, and Uber Eats.

Today, the Global Standards Coalition has over 90 members. It aims to create a positive movement that globally drives initiatives to help reduce harmful drinking and promote moderation among those who choose to drink. To achieve this, the Coalition focuses on proactive measures to:

- ▶ Further prevent sales to those underage or intoxicated
- ▶ Curb marketing and advertising to those underage
- ▶ Provide training and guidance that empowers staff to deny sale, service, and delivery of alcohol where necessary
- ▶ Respect the choices of those who choose not to drink alcohol
- ▶ Elevate industry standards to help reduce the harmful use of alcohol

<sup>1</sup> [www.iard.org](http://www.iard.org)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iard.org/science-resources/detail/Partnering-for-Progress>

## Partnerships with digital platforms towards preventing underage exposure to online alcohol advertising

IARD's last Communication on Engagement highlighted our partnership work with leading digital platforms to further prevent minors from seeing alcohol marketing online, as well as giving adults greater control and choice over whether they see alcohol-related marketing online. In 2024, IARD expanded this global partnership with more [leading global digital platforms and further commitments to enhance online safeguards](#). Partners now include Google, Meta, Pinterest, Snap, TikTok, and X. This ongoing collaboration has led to the implementation of age-screening technologies across online platforms, complimented by specific platform-appropriate technology, to help ensure alcohol marketing targets only those of legal purchasing age.

 

 

 

## New online resources to help prevent sale and service of alcohol to minors

In 2023, IARD launched online interactive resources for in-store and server staff; these support anyone selling alcohol beverages to do so responsibly and in accordance with the law: [Responsible Retailing of Beverage Alcohol](#) and [Responsible Service of Beverage Alcohol](#).

These free open-source tools are available in several languages, and empower staff to deny sale where necessary, which is a core element of selling alcohol lawfully and responsibly. The online courses cover:

- ▶ The importance of verifying a customer's age and sobriety during in-store purchases
- ▶ The consequences of selling alcohol to those underage and intoxicated people

- ▶ Communication techniques to handle difficult situations
- ▶ Methods server staff can use to better promote and support responsible choices
- ▶ Advice on appropriate ways to respond if server staff are asked directly for drinking advice

These resources are part of IARD's growing suite of tools to help online retailers, delivery services, and hospitality venues ensure that alcohol is not purchased by those under legal purchase age or those that are intoxicated.

## Supporting the development of alcohol in the workplace policies

Four in five employers (79%) do not have alcohol in the workplace policies in place, according to new research by the Work Foundation at the U.K.'s Lancaster University and Survation<sup>3</sup>. Across many sectors, alcohol can often be present as part of business dinners, networking events and engagements; there is also specific resonance for the many businesses that work directly with alcohol beverages, including cafes, restaurants, bars and retailers.

Alongside this, there are now four different generations working together in the workplace for the first time<sup>3</sup>; this means that new expectations regarding employee health and wellbeing have emerged, and inclusive work cultures have become even more important.

In response, [IARD released new resources](#) in 2024 that support employers to develop modern alcohol in the workplace policies; this includes guidance for those who choose to drink at work events, and covers the importance of supporting the choices of those who do not. These resources include [a guide for senior managers on the importance of Workplace Alcohol Policies](#) and an online module [Alcohol in the Workplace: Line Manager Resources](#), which organizations can use to give their line managers the tools to recognize signs of alcohol misuse and manage situations sensitively and effectively.

<sup>3</sup> The Work Foundation at Lancaster University and the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD) commissioned Survation to carry out a nationally represented survey of 1,167 senior business leaders across Great Britain. The fieldwork took place online between 29 April and 7 May 2024.

## MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

IARD and its members recognize the importance of regular monitoring of commitments and standards executed across the many markets worldwide. Implementation and monitoring are executed by local partners in different ways, according to context. Below, IARD describes some important ways our initiatives have grown over the past two years.

### Digital Guiding Principles

IARD first developed Digital Guiding Principles for the online marketing of beer, wine, and spirits in 2018. Subsequently IARD has pursued independent monitoring through external partnerships to ensure these standards have been fully incorporated by IARD Members. In 2023, 92.6% of profiles (brand websites or social media accounts) included age-affirmation mechanisms, a forward advice notice, a responsible drinking message, and a transparency message to make clear their commercial purpose<sup>4</sup>.

### Preventing underage exposure to online alcohol advertising

As mentioned previously, IARD expanded its work with digital platforms in 2024 to include more partners and new commitments to further enhance online safeguards.

As part of this, digital companies have shared transparency reports that summarize their platform-specific safeguards, particularly the policies and practices that they have in place to assure age<sup>5</sup>. IARD's members and these partners have committed to further strengthening safeguards, where necessary, by 2025 so all stakeholders can

be confident that age-assurance methodologies on digital platforms are robust, as we strive to ensure online advertising only reaches those above legal purchase age.

### Growing suite of online resources to help ensure the responsible sale, service, and delivery of alcohol

IARD has established [an online hub of free resources](#) to help online retailers, delivery services, and hospitality venues ensure that alcohol is not purchased by those under legal purchase age or those intoxicated. There are also new resources that support employers to develop modern alcohol in the workplace policies, and an online module that organizations can use to give their line managers the tools to recognize signs of alcohol misuse and manage situations sensitively and effectively.

### Progress on labeling commitments

IARD's members are on track to deliver their commitment that symbols or written age restrictions will be added to labels globally on their alcohol drinks, also on their alcohol-free extensions of alcohol brands, by end 2024. This is intended to reinforce that these products are not for minors.

### IARD welcomes LOTTE Chilsung Beverage as an associate member

In 2024, IARD announced leading Korean alcohol producer LOTTE Chilsung Beverage as a new associate member, and first Korean producer. LOTTE Chilsung Beverage joins the world's leading wine, spirits, and beer producers in their ambition to reduce harmful drinking, promote a better understanding of responsible drinking, and further their robust responsibility standards.

<sup>4</sup> [https://iard.org/getmedia/be6b02fb-f592-49dd-b676-45cf6b0648b2/Digital-Guiding-Principles\\_DGP\\_2023\\_18Dec-2.pdf](https://iard.org/getmedia/be6b02fb-f592-49dd-b676-45cf6b0648b2/Digital-Guiding-Principles_DGP_2023_18Dec-2.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://iard.org/IARD/media/Documents/06052024-Digital-Statement-of-Intent-June-2024.pdf>