



Roinn an Taoisigh  
Department of the Taoiseach

**Working Group on Regulating Sponsorship by Alcohol  
Companies of Major Sporting Events**

**Questions for Consultation**

***Department of the Taoiseach***

***16 May 2014***

## **Background**

In October 2013 the Government agreed to tackle alcohol misuse through a package of measures encompassing pricing, marketing and advertising, structural separation, labelling, enforcement powers and sports sponsorship.

In the case of sports sponsorship in particular the Government agreed:

- to place the existing voluntary code that governs sport sponsorship on a statutory footing;
- that a working group, to be chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach, would consider the value, evidence, feasibility and implications (including the public health consequences for children and young people and the financial impact on sporting organisations) of regulating sponsorship by alcohol companies of major sporting events. The Group would also consider alternative sources of funding for sporting organisations to replace potential lost revenue arising from any such regulation.

The interdepartmental Working Group has been set up and comprises officials from the Departments of the Taoiseach (Chair), Health, Public Expenditure and Reform, Finance, Social Protection, Education and Skills, Transport, Tourism and Sport, Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and Children and Youth Affairs.

In accordance with the Government's decision, the Group's Terms of Reference are to:

- Consider the value, evidence, feasibility and implications (including the public health consequences for children and young people and the financial impact on sporting organisations) of regulating sponsorship by alcohol companies of major sporting events;
- Consider alternative sources of funding for sporting organisations to replace potential lost revenue arising from any such regulation;
- Report to the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy within twelve months.

As a first step, the Group decided to carry out an initial scoping exercise to examine relevant information and data available to the Group and to identify information gaps and areas on which further evidence\input is required.

A list of the material already available to the Working Group is at Appendix 1. In addition the Group is seeking input from interested parties who can provide additional

information in response to the questions set out in this paper so that it can take these into account in its deliberations.

The Working Group is seeking **written, evidence-based submissions** at this stage but may have follow up meetings, if necessary, to clarify certain points.

Responses should specifically address some or all of the questions posed below and be limited to a maximum of fifteen pages.

Responses should be submitted to [consultation@taoiseach.gov.ie](mailto:consultation@taoiseach.gov.ie) by Friday 6 June 2014.

Please be advised that submissions received will be subject to Freedom of Information legislation and may be made publicly available.

*Department of the Taoiseach  
16 May 2014*

## **Questions for consideration**

Based on an initial review of available information, the Working Group is inviting evidence-based responses to the questions listed under each issue below.

### **Impact of sports sponsorship as a standalone marketing tool and as an integral part of other marketing and promotion activities**

The majority of research carried out appears to examine the issue of sports sponsorship as part of an integrated marketing communications tool.

The WHO defines marketing as ‘any form of commercial communication or message that is designed to increase, or has the effect of increasing, the recognition, appeal and/or consumption of particular products and services. It could comprise anything that acts to advertise or otherwise promote alcoholic beverages.’<sup>1</sup>

The Code of Practice for Sponsorship by Alcoholic Drinks Companies defines sponsorship as “A commercial agreement by which a sponsor, for the mutual benefit of the sponsor and sponsored party, contractually provides financing or other support in order to establish an association between the sponsors image, brands or products and a sponsorship property in return for rights to promote this association and/or for the granting of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits”.

- Q1. Is it possible to distinguish clearly between sports sponsorship and other sports-related marketing\advertising activities?**
- Q2. What is the evidence of the specific impact of sponsorship on its own?**
- Q3. What evidence is available on the impact of sports sponsorship as part of integrated marketing tool to promote alcohol consumption?**

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation (2010) *Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol*

### **Impact of sports sponsorship on alcohol consumption levels**

A range of factors can impact on alcohol consumption, including by young people, such as socio-economic status, peer influences, social norms and social media.

**Q4. What evidence is available on the causal relationship between sports sponsorship on alcohol consumption, including by young people?**

### **Alcohol and Public Health**

The Government has agreed to tackle alcohol misuse through a package of measures encompassing pricing, marketing and advertising, structural separation, labelling, enforcement powers and, in the case of sports sponsorship, to consider regulating sports sponsorship by alcohol companies.

**Q5. What impact would further regulation of the sponsorship of sport by alcohol companies have on public health and related costs to the Exchequer of alcohol misuse?**

**Q6. What evidence is available on the impact of a ban/restriction on sports sponsorship by alcohol companies in other countries?**

### **Value of alcohol sponsorship to sporting organisations**

There seems to be limited information regarding the amount of sponsorship by alcohol companies to sporting organisations which makes it difficult to quantify the potential lost revenue arising from any regulation.

**Q7. What evidence is available on the financial value of alcohol sponsorship to sporting organisations? Can this be broken down across different sports and types of activity?**

**Q8. What impact would the loss of this funding have on the sports sector/organisations/events/international events?**

### **Alternative funding**

**Q9. What evidence is available on alternative sources of sponsorship for the sports sector?**

**Q10. What other funding supports could be used to help sporting organisations instead of sponsorship?**

### **Options for regulation which fall short of a ban**

There is already a voluntary Code of Practice for Sponsorship by Alcoholic Drink Companies which the Government has decided should be placed on a statutory footing.

This raises the question of what alternative options for regulation exist, and what would be the impacts\costs.

**Q11. What further options could be considered for regulating/restricting alcohol sponsorship?**

**Q12. What regulatory models have worked well in other countries?**

**Q13. Are there ways to make the existing voluntary Code of Practice more effective?**

## Appendix 1

Alcohol Action Ireland (Sep 2010) Have we bottled it? Behaviour and attitudes survey. Presented at the Have We Bottled It? Alcohol Marketing and Young People Conference, Dublin

Alcohol Action Ireland (Sep 2013) How much are we really drinking?

Alcohol Beverage Federation of Ireland (2012) Minority Report on the National Substance Misuse Strategy

Alcohol Beverage Federation of Ireland – The Facts about Alcohol Sponsorship

Alcohol Concern ((January 2011) An unhealthy mix? Alcohol industry sponsorship of sport and cultural events

Alcohol Measures for Public Health Research Alliance (Dec 2012) Report on the impact of European alcohol marketing exposure on youth alcohol expectancies and youth drinking

Anderson P & Baumberg B, UK Institute of Alcohol Studies (June 2006) Alcohol in Europe: A public health perspective, Report for the European Commission

Australian Medical Association (2012) Alcohol Marketing and young people: Time for a new policy agenda

British Medical Association (Sep 2009) Under the Influence: The damaging effect of alcohol marketing on young people

Center on Alcohol and Marketing Youth (2004) Alcohol industry and non-alcohol industry sponsorship of sportspeople and drinking Alcohol and Alcoholism 2011;46:210.13

CJP Consultants Limited (Sep 2013) The Efficacy of Minimum Unit Pricing, Fiscal and other Pricing Public Policies for Alcohol

Code of Practice for Sponsorships by Alcohol Drinks Companies

Collins, RL, Ellickson PL, McCaffrey D & Hambarsoomians K (2007) Early Adolescent Exposure to Alcohol Advertising and its Relationship to Underage Drinking

Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2012) State of the Nation's Children in Ireland

Department of Health – Evidence Note on Marketing and Advertising of Alcohol

Department of Health (Feb 2012) Report of the National Substance Misuse Strategy Steering Group

Department of Health (June 2010) Report of the Working Group on Sports Sponsorship by the Alcohol Industry

Drinkaware.ie (2012) Drinking in Ireland – The Facts

ELSA (Enforcement of National Laws and Self-Regulation on Advertising and Marketing of Alcohol) Project (2007) The Impact of Alcohol Advertising

EPSAD Report (2011) Substance Abuse Among Students in European Countries

Eurocare – European Alcohol Policy Alliance – Alcohol Marketing and Young People

European Centre for Monitoring Alcohol Marketing (June 2013) Research shows that alcohol marketing is not harmless

European Commission (24 October 2006) Communication - An EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm, COM(2006) 625

European Council Recommendation (5 June 2001) on the drinking of alcohol by young people, in particular children and adolescents (2001/458/EC)

Federation of Irish Sport (April 2012) Submission to Minister Varadkar on the National Substance Misuse Strategy Steering Group Report

Gee S, Jackson S J & Sam, M – Health Promotions Agency (August 2013) The culture of alcohol promotion and consumption at major sports events in New Zealand

Gordon R, Moodie C, Eadie D and Hastings G (2010) Critical Social Marketing – The Impact of alcohol marketing on youth drinking: Qualitative Findings. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 15:267-275

Hastings G (2010) Alcohol Advertising: The Last Chance Saloon. *BmL*, 340:b5650

Health Research Board Ipsos MRBI (2012) Report on Alcohol: Public Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviours

Hoek J (1999) Sponsorship: An Evaluation of Management Assumptions and Practices, *Marketing Bulletin*, 1999, 10, 1-10, Article 1

Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport and Communications (2013) Report on Sponsorship of Sports by the Alcohol Drinks Industry

Jones S C (2010) When does alcohol sponsorship of sport become sports sponsorship of alcohol? A case study of developments in sport Australia

Kypri K, O'Brien K & Miller P (Dec 2009) Time for precautionary action on alcohol industry funding of sporting bodies, *Addiction*, Vol 104, Issue 12, 1949–50

Lin E-Y, Caswell, S, You, R and Huckle, T (2012) Engagement with alcohol marketing and early brand allegiance in relation to early years of drinking, *Addiction Research & Theory*, 20(4): 329–38

Miller P, Deakin University Research Communications (Feb 2011) Alcohol industry sponsorship associated with more hazardous drinking among sportspeople

Mongan D, Health Research Board – Paper on the impact of advertising on alcohol consumption amongst teenagers and young adults (unpublished)

National Suicide Research Foundation (Sep 2013) Second Report on the Suicide Support and Information System



OECD Factbook 2013 – Alcohol Consumption

PS... Services (August 2010) Alcohol and Sport: What is the nature of the relationship and is there a problem?

Richards R, Australian Sports Commission (Dec 2013) Alcohol sponsorship and advertising in sport

Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Policy Group on Alcohol (April 2013) Reducing Alcohol Health Harm

Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (Feb 2014) Alcohol Sponsorship Notes

Sawyer A et al (2012) Alcohol sponsorship of community football clubs: the current situation, Health Promotion Journal of Australia 23(1) 70-2

Science Group of the European Alcohol and Health Forum (2009) Does marketing communication impact on the volume and patterns of consumption of alcohol beverages, especially by young people?

Smyth BP, Kelly A, Cox G. (2011) Decline in age of drinking onset in Ireland, gender and per capita alcohol consumption, Alcohol & Alcoholism 46: 478-484

Snyder LB, Milici FF, Unger JB, Dent CW, (2004). "Exposure to televised alcohol ads and subsequent adolescent alcohol use", American Journal of Health Behaviour, 28(6), 498-509

Sponsorship Today (February 2013) Beer global sponsorship analysis

Submission by the Federation of Irish Sport on the National Substance Misuse Strategy Steering Group Report to Minister Varadkar – 18th April 2012

Winpenny, E et al (2012) Assessment of young people's exposure to alcohol marketing in audio-visual and online media.

World Health Organisation (2004) Global Status Report: Alcohol Policy

World Health Organisation (2010) Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol