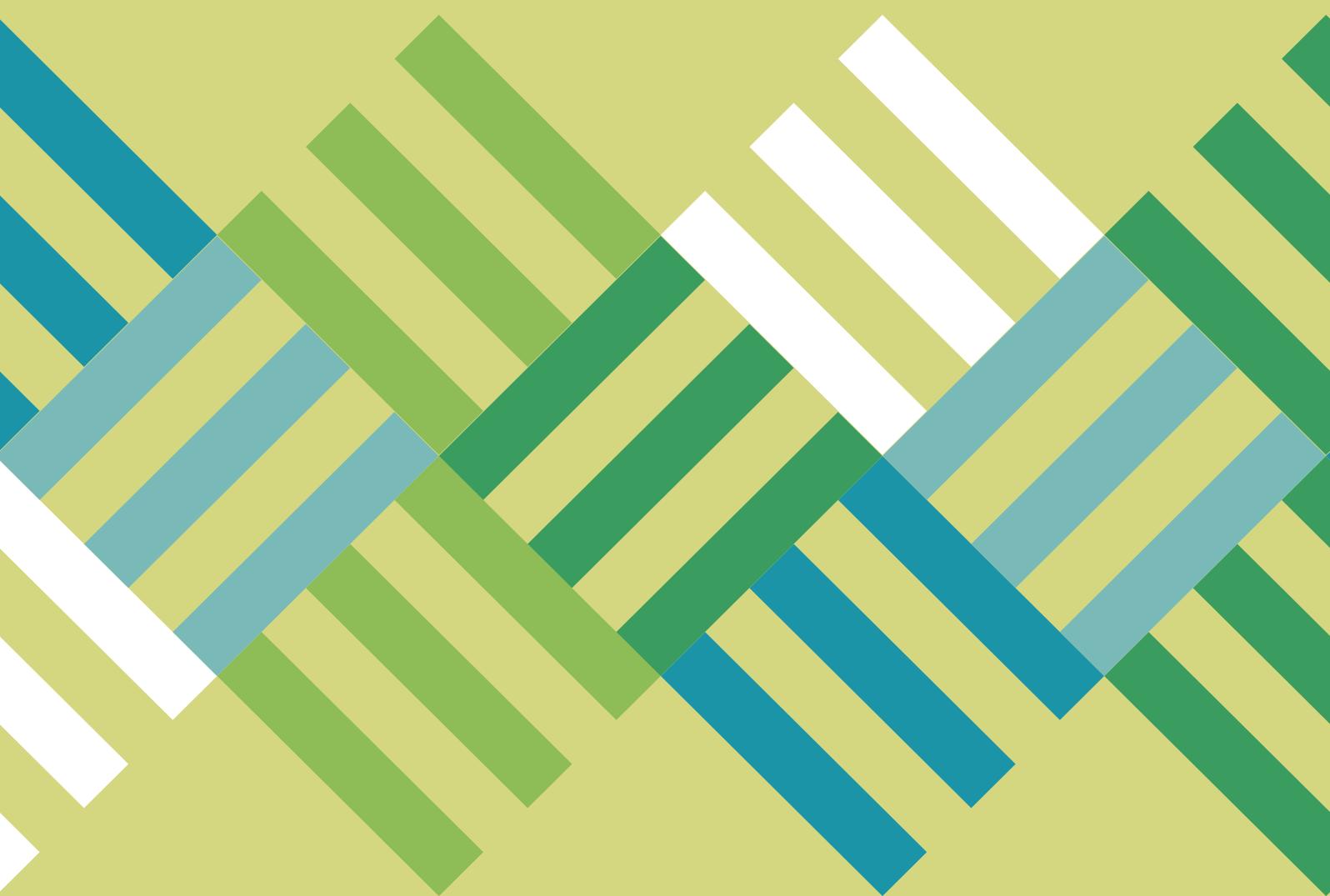


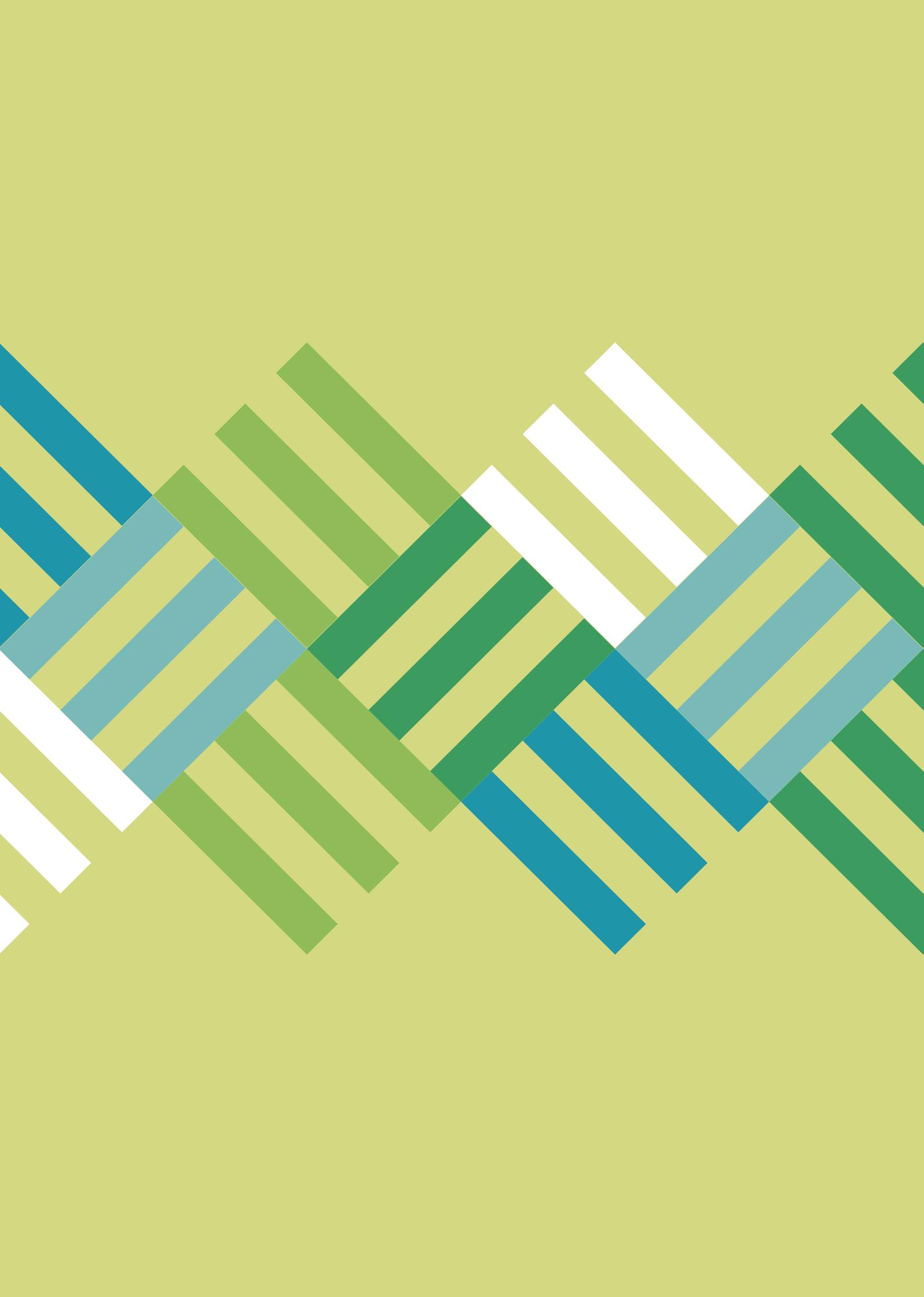


**AlcoholAction**  
Ireland

Advocating to Reduce Alcohol Harm



**Annual Review 2018**



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Alcohol Action Ireland (AAI) is a non-governmental organisation who act as an expert independent voice for policy change on alcohol-related issues, advocating to reduce levels of alcohol harm in Ireland and improve public health, safety and wellbeing.

We campaign for the burden of alcohol harm to be lifted from the individual, community and State, and have a strong track record in advocacy, campaigning and policy research.

Our work involves providing information to a variety of stakeholders – educationalists, media, political actors, public bodies and policy researchers on alcohol-related issues, creating awareness of alcohol-related harm and offering policy solutions with the potential to reduce that harm, with an emphasis on the implementation of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018.

Alcohol Action Ireland adheres to the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance that “the alcohol industry has no role in the formulation of alcohol policies, which must be protected from distortion by commercial or vested interests”, and Health Service Executive (HSE) guidance that “there is an inherent conflict associated with the alcohol industry playing a role in providing public health advice”. Therefore, we decline to work with the alcohol industry or its funded groups.

AAI provided, on a contractual basis, an Interim lead to the HSE Alcohol Programme, informing strategic alcohol initiatives as an instrument of public health planning.

We acted as secretariat to an Oireachtas Cross-Party Group on Alcohol Harm, and Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland, which we co-founded in 2015 with the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland.



## Foreword from the Chair

2018 has been a most significant year for Alcohol Action Ireland. After a very long and sustained effort over many years, this year we witnessed the Oireachtas pass the Public Health (Alcohol) Act.

This represents the culmination of ten years work, which began with the establishment in 2009 of the Steering Group for the National Substance Misuse Strategy, chaired by the Department of Health's Chief Medical Officer, Dr Tony Holohan.

Its report provided the foundation for a historical step for reducing the harm caused by alcohol to be addressed, for the first time, as a matter of public health. Important steps along the journey to enactment were reached in 2013 with government approval to draft legislation, in 2015 the publishing of draft legislation and its scrutiny by an Oireachtas Committee, and finally its introduction to the Oireachtas as the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 before Seanad Éireann on 10th December 2015.

This legislation has had many political champions along the way and in that regard, I wish to acknowledge the specific contribution of the current, and previous, Minister & Ministers of State at the Department of Health, for their steadfast support to advancing this crucial legislative framework since 2009.

These measures and regulations when implemented coherently and cohesively, will begin to address a whole-of-population reduction in alcohol consumption across Irish society.

This shift will not be easy or quick but more likely generational. And while the current Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD, has begun the commencement of certain sections of the Act, it is very important that major instruments such as Minimum pricing for alcohol products and Content of Advertisements are commenced as quickly as possible.

This year has also seen a major advancement on a new Alcohol Action Ireland initiative: 'Silent Voices', which I believe will be a significant contributor to highlighting the impact parental alcohol misuse has on the emotional and psychological needs of children now and into their adult years.

In conclusion, I wish to thank my Board colleagues for their advice and strategic support for the work of our organisation. Regrettably, this year saw the departure of our CEO, Suzanne Costello, who since 2013 has led our team with tremendous courage and vision. We thank her for her commitment to the mission and objectives of Alcohol Action Ireland.

I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank our funders who have supported our programmes.

**Carol Fawsitt**  
Chair



# Policy Development and Research

In 2010, the World Health Organisation endorsed the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol, urging Member States to adopt and implement the global strategy as appropriate.

The 'European Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2012 – 2020' was endorsed by 53 European Member States including Ireland in September 2011.

These strategic initiatives continue to act as the principal policy guidance to Alcohol Action Ireland.

### **Our work at an EU level**

*Building alliances with EU Institutions, NGO and wider civic society groups to reduce consumptions and the related harms.*

In 2018, Alcohol Action Ireland continued its programme of outreach to the institutions of the European Union with a view to advancing two important policy matters relevant Ireland's legislative proposals, namely to *AudioVisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)* and Labelling of alcohol products.

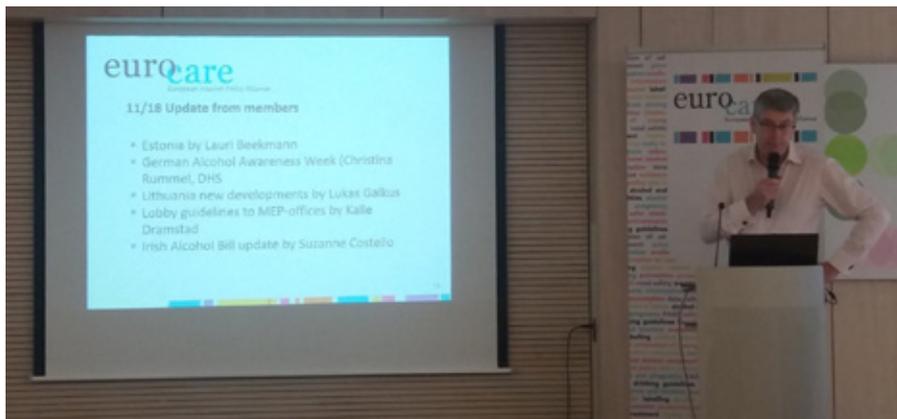
In this work, AAI work closely with its European partners, **Eurocare** – European Alcohol Policy Alliance and the **EPHA** - European Public Health Alliance both based in Brussels.

*Notification Detail - Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 (in so far as it relates to the 3 additional specifications to labelling, advertising and broadcast watershed) [January 2018].*

According to Directive (EU) 2015/1535 Member States must inform the EU Commission of any draft technical regulation prior to its adoption. Starting from the date of notification of the draft, a three-month standstill period – during which the notifying Member State cannot adopt the technical regulation in question – enables the Commission and the other Member States to examine the notified text and to respond appropriately.

Under this Directive, Ireland was obliged to inform the Commission, again, of the amended Bill, as passed by Seand Éireann (December 2017).

AAI sought the support of its peer network during the further Notification Process. Crucially, during the standstill period and the close of the process, seventeen Public Health organisations across Europe and beyond made submissions to the Commission supporting Ireland's endeavour to reduce alcohol consumption and related harms.



*AAI address to the Eurocare General Assembly.*



**Policy Development and Research**

*AudioVisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)*

From the outset of the review of Directive 2010/13/EU in 2015, a component of the EU Commission’s evolving Digital Single Market strategy, AAI, working with our European partners, sought for effective regulations to limit children’s exposure to marketing of unhealthy products will better protect children and help empower parents in their efforts to educate children about healthy lifestyles.

While the 2010 AVMS Directive had many positive aspects such as the recognition of exposure to alcohol commercial communications as problematic, it relied on weak policy measures like self-regulation, and failed to provide effective protection of children from commercial communications.

In April 2018, following debate on the Commission proposals through 2016-2017, the European Parliament negotiators and the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU agreed on substantial rules for AudioVisual media services, including digital platforms. The revised legislation will apply to broadcasters, but also to video-on-demand and video-sharing platforms, such as Netflix, YouTube or Facebook, as well as to the live

streaming on video-sharing platforms. European Parliament negotiators claim to have secured enhanced protection for children, stricter rules on advertising, and at least 30% of content in programmes of TV channels and VOD platforms must be European.

Following this informal agreement, the text was agreed by the Culture and Education Committee, who led the negotiations, in September.

In October, the European Parliament plenary session approved the revised AudioVisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). The new rules, though largely self-regulatory, the Commission believe ‘pave the way for a fairer regulatory environment for the entire AudioVisual sector, including on-demand services and video sharing platforms. They promote European AudioVisual productions and guarantee the independence of AudioVisual regulators, strengthen the protection of minors and reinforce the battle against hate speech in all AudioVisual content.’

AAI view this new Directive as a failed opportunity to establish effective regulations to protect minors but recognise its provisions are a minimum harmonisation directive and that Member States as such can advance their own regulations.

## Self-regulation is not a suitable regulatory mechanism

The European Commission has tried but the alcohol industry has failed.

### Time to regulate

#### *Health Labelling for Alcohol products:*

In 2017, the EU Commission under the provisions of Reg (EU) 1169/2011, published its report on alcohol labelling, which essentially stated that no objective grounds had been identified that would justify the absence of information on ingredients and nutritional information on alcoholic beverages. In the spirit of their desire to ensure all solutions are co-regulatory and industry led, the Commission gave industry one year to establish a self-regulatory proposal that would cover the entire alcoholic beverage sector.

In March 2018, the alcoholic beverage industry submitted a self-regulatory proposal to the Commission, which proposed each sector: Beer, Wine, Spirits and Cider to adopt separate provisions.

AAI viewed these self-regulatory proposals as insufficient and crucially, the individual sectoral approach, as a further tactic to confuse the consumer and deny access to the necessary information.

In a response, Eurocare, stated that in assessing the industry's self-regulatory proposal the European Commission must prioritise the consumer's right to know over the Industry's potential difficulties with implementation of EU (Reg) 1169/2011.

Eurocare urged the European Commission to dismiss this proposal as it did not follow the spirit of Reg (EU) 1169/2011 on provision of food information to consumers.

The Commission and DG Sante's Commissioner Andriukaitis have yet to determine a conclusive course of action but continue to engage with industry.

Alcohol Action Ireland's new CEO, Dr. Sheila Gilheany, is a Member of the Board of European Alcohol Policy Alliance, while Eunan McKinney, Head of Communications, sits on the Eurocare - Alcohol Labelling Advisory Working Group.



**Policy Development and Research**

*Awareness Week on Alcohol Related Harm: 19-23 November 2018.*

This year’s theme was: “Harm to Others” #awarh18

This was the 6th Awareness Week on Alcohol Related Harm.

The aim of the Week was to raise awareness among EU policymakers of the harms caused by alcohol.

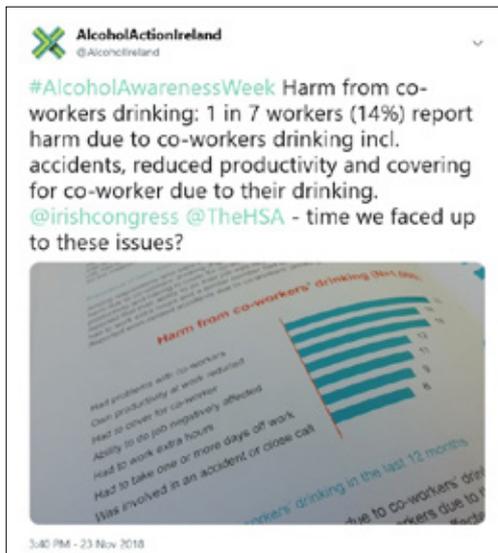
Our focus for #awarh18 was to highlight the significant impact of alcohol in the workplace, and that one in seven workers every day report harm due to co-workers drinking including accidents, reduced productivity and covering for co-worker due to their drinking.

**North-South Alcohol Policy Advisory Group - NSAPAG**

The Steering Group Report on a National Substance Misuse Strategy (2012) made a specific recommendation to strengthen collaboration and coordination on alcohol on a North-South basis. In the context of this policy mandate, Chief Medical Officers in both jurisdictions requested that the Institute of Public Health facilitate enhanced North-South collaborative working on alcohol.

The NSAPAG was established in 2013 and Alcohol Action Ireland is a contributing Member.

AAI attended both NSAPAG 2018 meetings held in June and November.





**17 Public Health  
organisations across  
Europe and beyond made  
submissions to the EU  
Commission supporting  
Ireland's endeavour to  
reduce alcohol consumption  
and related harms.**



# Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships



### AAI Pre-Budget Submission.

Alcohol Action Ireland published its 2019 Pre-Budget submission in August 2018.

The submission outlined three principal considerations for the Minister of Finance:

- The dilution of the flow of Exchequer subsidy to a flourishing alcohol industry
- Establish a set of responsibility levies on specific aspects of the domestic alcohol market to raise revenues for preventative and treatment activities:
  - Initiative One: Healthy Children
  - Initiative Two: Supporting Recovery, and
- The immediate commencement of 'Minimum price for alcohol products' on the enactment of the Public Health Alcohol Act.

### AAI Market Review & Price Survey

Alcohol Action Ireland's *Market Review and Price Survey 2018* – carried in July and published in August 2018, demonstrated yet again the clear affordability of alcohol in Ireland, and just how little monies need be expended to reach the weekly low-risk guideline limits:

- It is possible for a woman to reach her weekly low-risk limit of 11 standard drinks for €5.49.
- It is possible for a man to reach his weekly low-risk limit of 17 standard drinks for €8.49.

The review highlighted the sophisticated pricing model for alcohol across the Irish market that enhance affordability at all levels of retail experience, and the scale of the Irish Off-Trade shared amongst a small number of major retail operators.

The survey conducted over seven days, 22-29 July, across four nationwide locations, two urban and two regional/ rural centres highlighted that cider products remain the cheapest, strongest alcohol products available to the off-trade consumer. Beer products were the second cheapest just ahead of Wine and Spirit products, such as Gin and Whiskey.



## Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships

The review also highlighted the sophisticated retailing model deployed nationwide – urban, regional and rural – by the alcohol industry and their retail partners, that maximises the yields from alcohol sales to all retail partners.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) most recent data from the National Income and Expenditure Annual Results 2017, published in July 2017, has determined the total expenditure of Personal Income on Alcohol Beverages (incl. pubs) was €7.306 billion, a 7.39% increase on 2016.

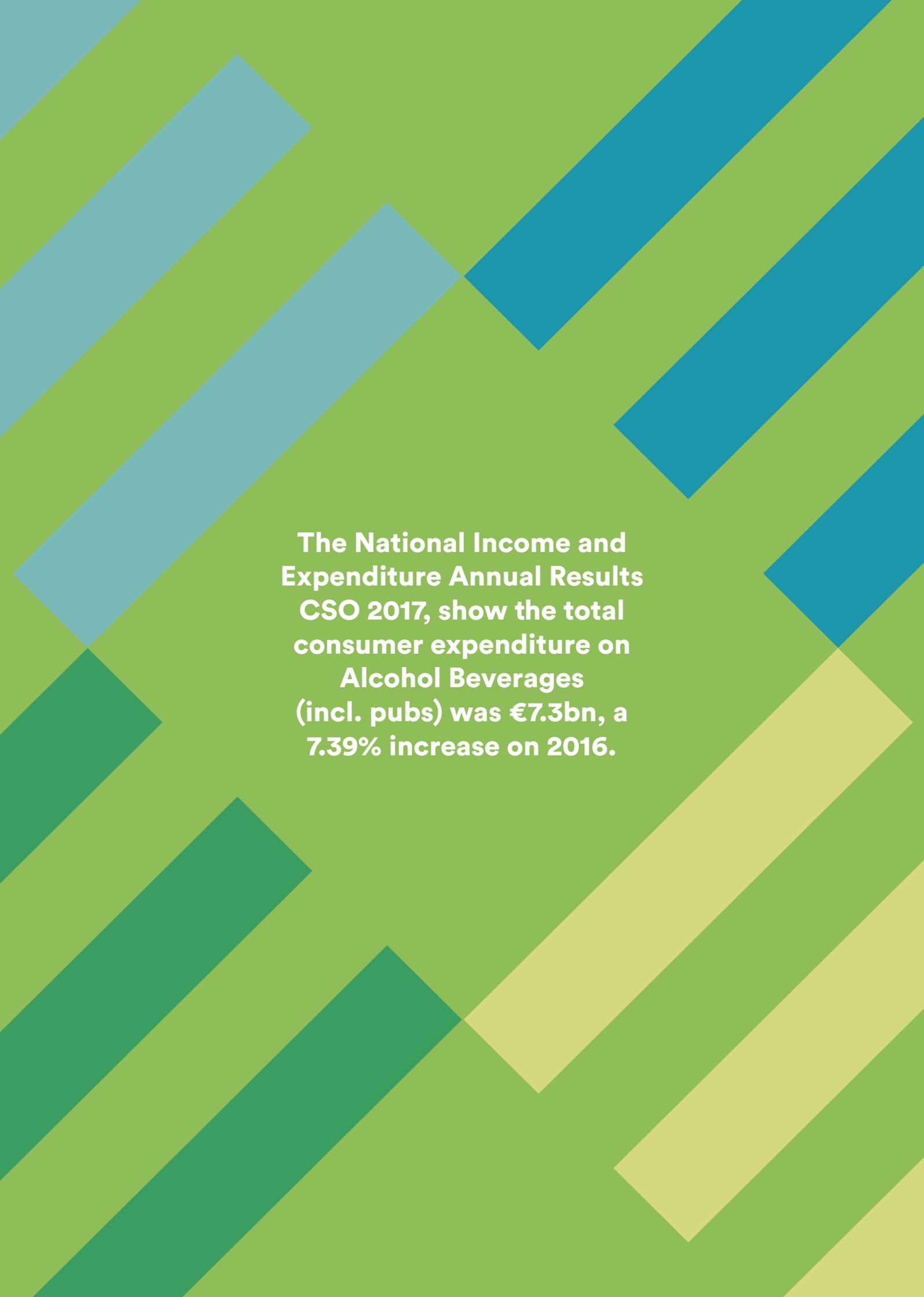
The Household Budget Survey 2015 to 2016 provides an insight into average weekly household expenditure. The total weekly expenditure on Alcoholic drink and tobacco – €28.00, illustrates that €10.56 was on ‘Drink consumed at home’ while €10.06 was on ‘Drink consumed out’ with the remainder spent on tobacco products.

From this data we extrapolated that of the monies expended on alcohol, 51.2% is focused on the Off-Trade (‘Drink consumed at home’).

In this context and citing the CSO’s National Income and Expenditure Annual Results 2017 (a methodology shared with industry commissioned economic analysis), we believe it is reasonable to estimate the value of the 2017 Off-Trade market in Ireland at €3.74 billion.

### Complaints to Industry’s Self-Regulatory Voluntary Codes

Throughout the year, AAI has submitted complaints to both the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland and the *Responsible Retailing of Alcohol in Ireland* on both the promotion and retail presentation of alcohol in Ireland.



**The National Income and  
Expenditure Annual Results  
CSO 2017, show the total  
consumer expenditure on  
Alcohol Beverages  
(incl. pubs) was €7.3bn, a  
7.39% increase on 2016.**



*Vivienne Evans OBE, Chief Executive, Adfam, with Eunan McKinney, AAI, at the launch of the 'Families First' strategy in the UK House of Commons.*

## Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships

### STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

#### Alcohol Health Alliance UK

AAI is a Member of the Alcohol Health Alliance UK. This is an alliance of more than 40 non-governmental organisations who work together to promote evidence-based policies to reduce the damage caused by alcohol misuse. Other Members of the AHA include medical royal colleges, charities, patient representatives and alcohol health campaigners.

#### Alcohol & Families Alliance UK

AAI is an Associated Member of the Alcohol & Families Alliance. In July 2018, the Alliance launched its strategic document 'Families First' in the UK House of Commons and was supported by the All-Party Policy Group on Alcohol Harm and on Children of Alcoholics. AAI continued to co-operate with the AFA throughout 2018, as the 'Silent Voices' initiative developed towards its launch in January 2019.

AAI also has an affiliate relationship with Adfam – Families, Drugs and Alcohol, and open dialogue with NaCoA UK - The National Association for Children of Alcoholics, and the RfK Children's Action Corp., Boston, USA.

#### Irish Cancer Society's Cancer Prevention Committee

AAI sits on this Advisory Committee of the Society to provide advice and oversight on services, policy and research for improving cancer prevention and early detection in Ireland. The Committee met on three occasions this year: February, June and November.

#### Local and Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

Throughout the year, AAI has provided specialist alcohol policy advice and guidance to a number of Local & Regional Task Forces throughout Ireland.



*Maureen McGlame, Director COASA, Robert F Kennedy Children's Action Corp, Boston, Mariette Murphy MD, Pediatrics/ Adolescent Medicine with Eunan McKinney, AAI.*



**Men's Health Forum Planning Group - Men's Health Week 2018**

AAI sits on the Men's Health Forum planning group that organises this annual All-Island awareness event.

Men's Health Week ran from 11-17 June 2018, under a theme banner of 'One small step for man; one giant leap for men's health'

Each day of the Week lead with a specific theme, and 15 June focused specifically on issues of alcohol: 'What's your small step going to be?: Rethink Alcohol'.

AAI led a social media campaign to highlight the day, which had a reach that day of nearly 10,000 audience views.



**AlcoholActionIreland @AlcoholIreland**  
**#MensHealthWeek** - what's your small step going to be: Rethink alcohol?  
 One small step to be inform - know the calorie count of your drinks. One standard drink will add between 68-96 calories.  
 Further info: <http://askaboutalcohol.ie>  
[pic.twitter.com/riO9NXpRW](http://pic.twitter.com/riO9NXpRW)



**AlcoholActionIreland @AlcoholIreland**  
**#MensHealthWeek** - what's your small step going to be: Rethink alcohol?  
 One small step to ensure no Harms to Others – stay within low-risk weekly drinking guidelines. Further info:  
<http://askaboutalcohol.ie>  
[pic.twitter.com/uBgemYhvdV](http://pic.twitter.com/uBgemYhvdV)



**AlcoholActionIreland @AlcoholIreland**  
**#MensHealthWeek** - what's your small step going to be: Rethink alcohol?  
 One small step to inform yourself - know your limits, count your standard drinks. One pint: two standard drinks. Further info:  
<http://askaboutalcohol.ie>  
[pic.twitter.com/uG3yeyvDKJ](http://pic.twitter.com/uG3yeyvDKJ)

Carol Fawsitt, Marion Rackard and Barbara Whelan - the three founding voices.



## Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships

### Silent Voices

Throughout 2018 AAI, together with a pioneering group of founders, began the preparatory work to develop an initiative the three founding voices, that would specifically highlight the hidden harms that alcohol misuse has on relationships, particularly within children and family relationship. The ambition was to develop an advocacy platform on behalf of children impacted by parental alcohol misuse and to break the silence and stigma carried by many adult children who experienced parental alcohol misuse.

Parental alcohol misuse encompasses harmful drinking /and alcohol dependence by any adult with parental care responsibility. Parental alcohol misuse can lead to harm (social, physical, emotional and psychological) to both the user and their family.

Given the historical pattern of alcohol misuse in Ireland, where 1.35 million people are assessed as having a harmful relationship with alcohol (HRB, 2016), AAI believe it probable that 400,000 people are adult children from alcohol impacted families. Recent data from the HSE (*The Untold Story, 2018*), indicates that a further 200,000 children, today in Ireland, are likely experiencing Hidden Harm – living with and impacted by parental alcohol misuse.

A working group evolved over thirteen meetings to become an Advisory Group (the three founding voices, an Academic and Clinical advisers) and some tentative media engagement on the initiative was developed, along with a web presence and social media channels.

The launch of the Initiative was scheduled for January 2019 with Fergal Keane OBE, BBC Africa Editor as a guest speaker.





**Over 200,000 children,  
today in Ireland, are likely  
experiencing Hidden Harm –  
living with and impacted by  
parental alcohol misuse.**



# Campaigning

*Leading campaigners and political champions on the evening the Bill concluded its parliamentary considerations.*



**The Public Health (Alcohol) Bill – enacted in 2018.**

After one thousand and forty-two days (1042) consideration before the Houses of the Oireachtas, the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill was enacted on the 17th October 2018.

The Act contains a range of measures designed to work together to reduce alcohol consumption in Ireland, so lessening alcohol related harms. Implemented together, they will provide a reasonable, pragmatic means to achieving the ambition of this progressive public health initiative.

At the close of 2017, the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill had concluded all stages before Seanad Éireann and the government had signalled its intention, through the Minister for Health, to proceed through the lower House as quick as possible.

In January 2018, the Government submitted the principal amendments of the passed Seanad Éireann Bill to the European Commission (as obliged under directive EU2015/1535) for further

consideration. This commenced a further round of scrutiny under the TRIS process, which closed in April, and latterly in July 2018. While some Member States expressed Comment and Opinion, the Commission did not express a negative opinion. This enabled the Bill to advance to conclusion through the Irish parliament.

The Bill’s Second Stage reading in Dáil Éireann saw a sustained and renewed attack on the Bill by a number of parliamentarians which, while accepting that ‘something needed to be done’, they were more ‘concerned’ for the interests of the alcohol industry.

Despite a lengthy delay at Second Stage, the Bill did reach Committee Stage in June 2018, where significant lobbying from industry sources sought to delay its passage. This time the primary focus was the proposed labelling provisions.

Proceeding through Committee Stage without any significant amendment, the Bill did not return to the House until the Autumn session, and over two further delayed sessions in September, the Bill passed all stages in Dáil Éireann on the 27th September 2018.

As the Bill had commenced in the Seanad in 2015, and been amended in Dáil Éireann, the amended Bill had to be brought again before Seanad Éireann for Report and Final Stage. This was completed on 10th October and issued to the President for signing, which President Higgins completed on 17th October 2018 so enacting this historic piece of legislation.



*Ann & John Higgins being recognised by the RCPI with President, Prof Mary Horgan.*



## Campaigning

### Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland

AAI has acted as secretariat to the Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland since its inception in 2015, and provided strategic direction to its advocacy and campaigning.

The Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland was established by Alcohol Action Ireland and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI), and brought together over 50 NGO's, Charities and public health advocates and campaigners whose mission is to reduce the harm caused by alcohol.

Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland provided a strong voice and an opportunity for its members that more could be achieved together than the one constituent organisation could achieve by acting alone.

The strength of that voice throughout the long campaign to enact the Public Health Alcohol Act was crucial.

The enactment of the legislation, and the generational shift now begun, will be its lasting legacy.

The conclusion of its role in the legislative process and the contribution of its Members, especially those who guided its steering group – Irish Cancer Society, Irish Heart, College of Psychiatrists of Ireland, Dental Health Foundation, No Name Club, Environmental Health Association of Ireland alongside the RCPI and AAI – was marked at a brief lunchtime ceremony in November. At this event, John & Ann Higgins, Ballina, Co. Mayo, were recognised for their significant personal contribution as volunteers to an effective campaign.

*Suzanne Costello, former CEO*



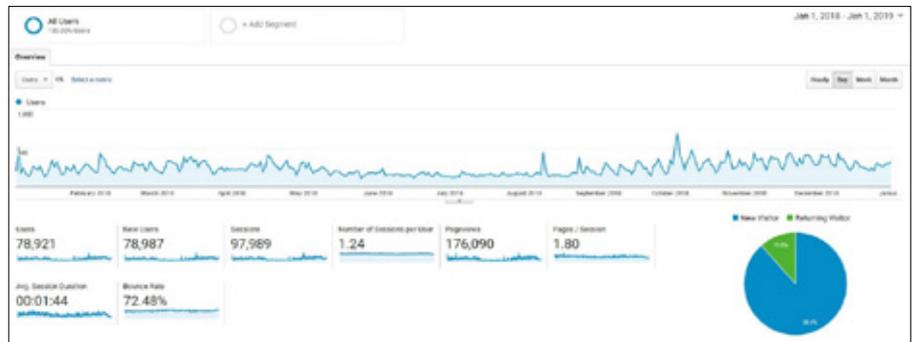


**AAI media communications**

The Alcohol Action Ireland website continues to be a very popular and useful portal for a variety of stakeholders both from a media and policy research perspective.

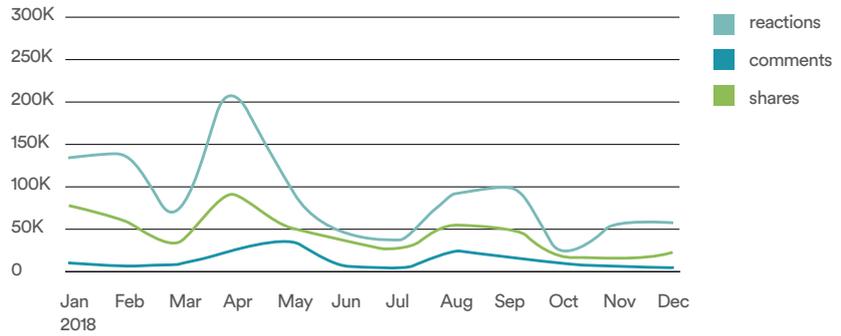
In 2018, the site had over 78,000 users, who in turn had 182,000 pageviews, with ‘How much do we drink?’ proving the most popular page with nearly 19,000 views.

The ‘Make your Voice Heard’ campaign page (disabled since the enactment of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill in Oct. 2018), which enabled visitors to issue a letter of support for the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill to their local Oireachtas representatives (determined by a selected geography), generated nearly 3,000 individual letters in 2018.



## Campaigning

### Facebook Impressions



### Traditional Media presence:

Broadcast: **85** contributions to local and national radio and television;

Press: **93** contributions, quotes and/or comments to both local and national press, with an estimated monetary value of €418,000 and estimated audience reach of 3,498,198 readers.

**Facebook** activity overview – 128,921 impressions; 1,734 engagements, 13,474 clicks.

Total fans: 15, 107. Fan gain: -1.7%. Postings: 63.

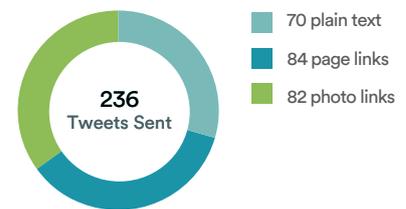
AAI also began activity on **Instagram** in 2018.

### Social media profile:

**Twitter** activity overview – 510,189 impressions; 10,512 engagements, 1,765 link clicks.

Total followers: 3,245. Follower gain in 2017: 12.3%. Tweets Issued: 236.

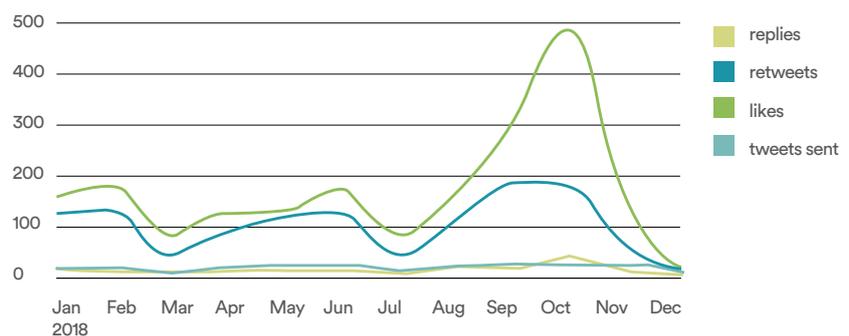
### Twitter Sent Message Content



### Your Tweeting Behaviour



### Twitter Engagement





**Our local and national press coverage in 2018, had an estimated audience reach of 3,498,198 readers.**

## Other information

### The Board members of Alcohol Action Ireland

**Carol Fawsitt** (Chair), Solicitor

**Professor Joe Barry MSc, MD, FRCPI, FFPHM**, Public Health Specialist

**Dr Declan Bedford**, Specialist in Public Health Medicine and former Acting Director of Public Health with the HSE

**Catherine Brogan**, Mental Health Ireland

**Pat Cahill**, former ASTI President

**Prof. Frank Murray**, Consultant in Hepatology & Gastroenterology. M.B., B.Ch. B.A.O., M.D., F.R.C.P.I., F.R.C.P. (Ed).

**Dr Bobby Smyth**, Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

**Tadhg Young**, Senior Vice President, Chief Operations Officer, State Street Global Services

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U: [alcoholireland.ie](http://alcoholireland.ie)

For further information on our most recent audited accounts see: Alcohol Action Ireland's Report and Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2017 at <http://alcoholireland.ie/about/funders/>

The Board met on seven occasions throughout 2018 including an Annual General Meeting.



