[IE] New Codes on Alcohol Advertising

IRIS 2006-2:1/24

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In December 2005, new codes were launched on alcohol advertising on radio and television, in the cinema and in outdoor media. The codes, which are voluntary, were agreed between the Department of Health and Children, the drinks industry, the association of advertisers and representatives of the media. The purpose of the codes is to address Department of Health concerns in relation to alcohol advertising and young people.

A monitoring body to oversee the implementation of the codes was also established. It will report annually to the Minister for Health and, if it becomes apparent that the system is not working effectively, the Government has said it will bring in legislation. The monitoring body will include representatives of the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland, which already has statutory duties in relation to advertising codes (see IRIS 2001-4: 9) and will have access to a wide range of relevant research, including the reports of the Irish Film Censor. It can also commission its own independent research, which will be funded by the Department of Health.

The codes do not extend to sponsorship by drinks companies. All advertisements for alcohol on television, in the cinema and in outdoor media must carry a stamp of approval. Television advertisements may not be aired at a time when more than one third of the audience is under 18 or when a programme is specifically aimed at young people. Cinema ads may not feature strong alcohol. Advertisements for non-strength alcohol brands may not account for more than 40% of total advertising minutage and may only be shown with films which have audiences at least 75% of whom are over 18. Outdoor advertising may not be placed within 100 meters of schools, on bus shelters, individual buses, trains, light rail or taxis. There are also provisions in relation to radio and radio presenters may not glamorize the consumption of alcohol. The Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland (ASAI) also operates industry codes relating inter alia to alcohol and applicable to all media.

Text of codes

http://www.dohc.ie/press/releases/2005/voluntary_alcohol_20051215.html

Broadcasting codes

http://www.bci.ie/

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ASAI codes

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