



ANNUAL REVIEW

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EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



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EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



Foreword



CHARO FERNANDO MAGARZO

A word from EASA's chairwoman

2022 was very special for EASA as our Alliance celebrated its 30th anniversary. It was a unique opportunity to undertake exceptional actions to complement EASA's daily work and move to the next level. I would like to especially mention two initiatives.

The first key milestone was the signing, in Madrid, of the declaration 'for proactive and effective advertising self-regulation and the enhancement of socially responsible advertising in Europe' in the presence of high-ranking Spanish and EU Officials. This declaration not only meaningfully re-stated our constituents' belief in the *raison d'être* of our Alliance – defending strong nationally-based advertising self-regulation – but it outlined paths for further development. These include digital transformation – with the aim of having more digital players investing in ad SR

and the bolstering of tech-driven ad monitoring – as well as the exploration of pan-European solutions where relevant, and the support of the advertising industry in addressing societal issues, such as sustainability, diversity, inclusion or protection of minors. This Declaration, signed by all our members, demonstrates once again, the agility of collective self-regulation and its ability to adapt and be relevant in an ever-changing environment. It will serve as a basis for EASA's next action plan.

The second achievement was the successful leveraging of EASA's 30th anniversary. It put the Alliance in the limelight helping further position ad SR, the Alliance and its members, at the centre of the policymakers' radar as an essential piece of the regulatory puzzle. This was achieved thanks to an unprecedented communications campaign and an exceptional anniversary event.

EASA ran an online and outdoor communications campaign promoting the work done by EASA's network, which generated media coverage and solid online traction. It focused on several topical issues that ad SR is effectively tackling: misleading advertising, green claims, and disclosure of influencers' commercial posts.

Moreover, EASA organised a high-level anniversary event in Brussels on 'Ensuring responsible marketing for the green transition' featuring keynote addresses by the European Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders, and MEP Biljana Borzan, as well as a panel discussion with the European Commission, EASA industry, SRO and digital pure-play company members. The Commissioner praised ad SR for its *"impressive results"* in ensuring *"companies advertise products and services responsibly whilst staying clear from greenwashing"* and stated that regulatory and self-regulatory instruments are complementary to one another.

All the actions undertaken by EASA in 2022 helped build strong foundations for the further promotion of advertising self-regulation. With space to thrive and a direction of travel – together with its members' unfailing support – EASA and the collective advertising self-regulatory systems it stands for, are well equipped, I am convinced, to successfully address the challenges that lay ahead of us, in 2023 and beyond.

CHARO FERNANDO MAGARZO
Chairwoman



ANGELA MILLS WADE
Vice-Chair



In 2022, our 30th anniversary year, we celebrated what can be achieved through working together – whether from industry, or from self-regulatory organisations, we want the same thing, and we commit the time and effort into achieving our goal - of responsible advertising through effective, and responsible self-regulation, which is respected by policymakers.

ORLA TWOMEY
Vice-Chair



Advertising self-regulation does not operate in a vacuum. It complements regulation and, as part of the regulatory mix, can offer effective solutions; this is why EASA has developed contacts with numerous policymakers and authorities, including the Irish audiovisual regulator.

CONOR MURRAY
Treasurer

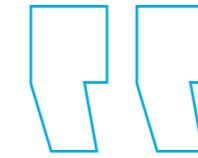


Thanks to its committed members, EASA's financial situation is robust, despite the current economic situation. This is paramount for the Alliance's sustainability and independence.

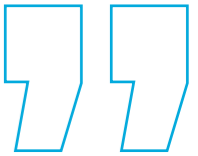
A word from EASA's Director-General



LUCAS BOUDET



EASA's aim throughout the year was to be faithful to the true meaning of the word "Alliance", supporting and engaging with its members for their common benefit.



To a large extent, 2022 was exceptional for EASA. First, in terms of events, EASA organised a record-high number of 28 webinars and online sessions, thanks to its partnership with ICAS, the International Council for Ad Self-regulation. These online events covered a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from policy issues, such as the update of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive Guidance, to more topical ones such as advertising of crypto assets and gambling.

These sessions were designed to complement in person meetings, which we were finally able to hold again. Among these, I can mention top-notch biannual meetings in Ireland and in Spain, which provided EASA members with a wealth of knowledge and networking opportunities. The spring meetings in Dublin featured a strong digital focus with an immersive conference organised at Google's Safety Engineering Center and a session on 'Ensuring responsible advertising online' with the participation of major digital players. The autumn meetings in Madrid were full of highlights; two of them were without any doubt the signing of EASA's 30th anniversary declaration and the splendid Best Practice Awards ceremony showcasing the bold, innovative, and smart initiatives undertaken by self-regulatory organisations.

When it comes to members' interactions, EASA was active in supporting and helping strengthen the SR network. EASA ensured the smooth routing of cross-border complaints and information requests; it worked on updating three of its Best Practice Recommendations. Moreover, relying on the firm lead of pioneering SROs, EASA facilitated the adoption of data-driven monitoring tools

thanks to human and financial support, increasing its dedicated investment by over 35%. In 2022, an additional 12 SROs undertook initiatives using technology to monitor online ads at scale; this represents a three-fold increase over the year.

EASA was also part of key policy debates, defending collective advertising self-regulation and helping secure its place in the policy mix. At the 30th anniversary event, which featured high-level representatives from the EU institutions, EASA further deepened its ties and interactions with policymakers in Brussels as well as regulators such as the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) and—insofar as it is relevant to its mission—the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI).

EASA regularly monitored regulatory developments; it actively followed a dozen files and responded to numerous consultations. EASA shaped and voiced a position on many initiatives such as the fitness check on consumer law, adapting out-of-court dispute resolution to digital markets, or the proposals for a Directive on empowering consumers for the green transition and for a Regulation of the transparency and targeting of political advertising, just to name a few.

Finally, EASA actively participated in ICC's Commission on Advertising and Marketing. It was involved in the preparatory work for the 11th revision of the ICC Advertising and Marketing Communications Code which was officially launched in December and shall continue involving its members in the process.

I won't reveal any more, and hope you will enjoy discovering the content of this Annual Review. I hope you'll enjoy reading this report which will uncover the details of our actions as well as statistics related to our network's enforcement activities. I should rather say "your actions"; I would like to hereby sincerely thank all EASA's members and team who are the true actors that bring to life our vivid Alliance through their commitment, dynamism, expertise, and foresight.

LUCAS BOUDET
Director General



EASA's Board of Directors and Executive Committee

EASA's Board of Directors is responsible for the administration of EASA. The current Board members continued their appointments following elections held during the General Assembly in Dublin in May 2022.

Charo Fernando Magarzo (AUTOCONTROL) serves as the Chairwoman of EASA, alongside three Officers: two Vice-Chairs, Angela Mills Wade (EPC) and Orla Twomey (ASAI), as well as Conor Murray (egta), EASA's Treasurer.

EASA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of 12/05/2022

SELF-REGULATORY ORGANISATION MEMBERS

- **Charo FERNANDO MAGARZO**, Chairwoman, AUTOCONTROL, Spain
- **Orla TWOMEY**, Vice-Chair, ASAI, Ireland
- **Jennifer BEAL**, WBZ, Germany
- **Markus DEUTSCH**, ÖWR, Austria
- **Eleni DONTA**, SEE, Greece
- **Ulya DURAN**, RÖK, Turkey
- **Ildikó FAZEKAS**, ÖRT, Hungary
- **Vincenzo GUGGINO**, IAP, Italy
- **Otto VAN DER HARST**, SRC, the Netherlands
- **Piotr KWIECIEŃ**, RR, Poland
- **Niamh McGUINNESS**, Clearcast, UK
- **Stéphane MARTIN**, ARPP, France
- **Miguel MORAIS VAZ**, ARP, Portugal
- **Bernd NAUEN**, DWR, Germany
- **Paula PALORANTA**, LTL, Finland
- **Guy PARKER**, ASA, UK
- **Ana PREDOVIČ**, SOZ, Slovenia
- **Eva RAJČÁKOVÁ**, SRPR, Slovakia
- **Sandrine SEPUL**, CC-JEP, Belgium
- **Elisabeth TROTZIG**, Ro, Sweden

INDUSTRY/DIGITAL PURE PLAY COMPANY MEMBERS

- **Angela MILLS WADE**, Vice-Chair, EPC
- **Conor MURRAY**, Treasurer, egta
- **Rebecka ALLÉN**, WFA
- **Alexis BLEY**, EACA
- **Tamara DALTROFF**, EACA
- **Sue EUSTACE**, AIG
- **Francesca FABBRI**, AER
- **Townsend FEEHAN**, IAB-Europe
- **Enrico GIROTTO**, FEDMA
- **Mark HOWE**, Google
- **Ilias KONTEAS**, EMMA
- **Stephan LOERKE**, WFA
- **Joy de LOOZ-CORSWAREM**, ENPA
- **Rui DOS SANTOS**, WFA (P&G)
- **Richard SATURLEY**, WOO
- **Dagmara SZULCE**, IAA
- **Wout VAN WIJK**, NME

Invited participating member for consultative purposes:

- **Laura FRUNZETI**, (CEE/SR Development Council Leader - RAC, Romania)

The Executive Committee is responsible for EASA's management and policy decisions between two meetings of the Board. Members of the Executive Committee (50% of which shall be representatives from self-regulatory organisations) are elected every two years.

SELF-REGULATORY ORGANISATION MEMBERS

As of 12/05/2022



Charo FERNANDO MAGARZO,
Chairwoman, AUTOCONTROL



Orla TWOMEY,
Vice-Chair, ASAI



Markus DEUTSCH,
ÖWR



Ildikó FAZEKAS,
ÖRT



Vincenzo GUGGINO,
IAP



Otto VAN DER HARST,
SRC



Stéphane MARTIN,
ARPP



Bernd NAUEN,
DWR



Guy PARKER,
ASA



Anders STENLUND, Ro
*Invited for consultative
purposes*

INDUSTRY AND DIGITAL PURE PLAY COMPANY MEMBERS



Angela MILLS WADE,
Vice-Chair, EPC



Conor MURRAY,
Treasurer, egta



Tamara DALTROFF,
EACA



Sue EUSTACE,
AIG



Townsend FEEHAN,
IAB Europe



Rebecka ALLÉN,
WFA



Ilias KONTEAS,
EMMA



Enrico GIROTTO,
FEDMA



Wout VAN WIJK,
NME



Mark HOWE, Google
*Invited for consultative
purposes*



EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



About EASA

Members

The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) is the single authoritative voice on advertising self-regulation in Europe. The Alliance represents and coordinates the advertising collective self-regulatory systems across Europe which help ensure advertising is legal, decent, honest, truthful and prepared with a sense of social responsibility.

In December 2022, EASA's network counted 41 members (see below)

EUROPEAN SELF-REGULATORY ORGANISATIONS (SROs)

27

Covering **25** countries which ensure the enforcement of advertising self-regulatory and co-regulatory codes of conduct at national level

INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS

13

Representing the advertising value chain (advertisers, agencies, media)

DIGITAL PURE - PLAY COMPANY

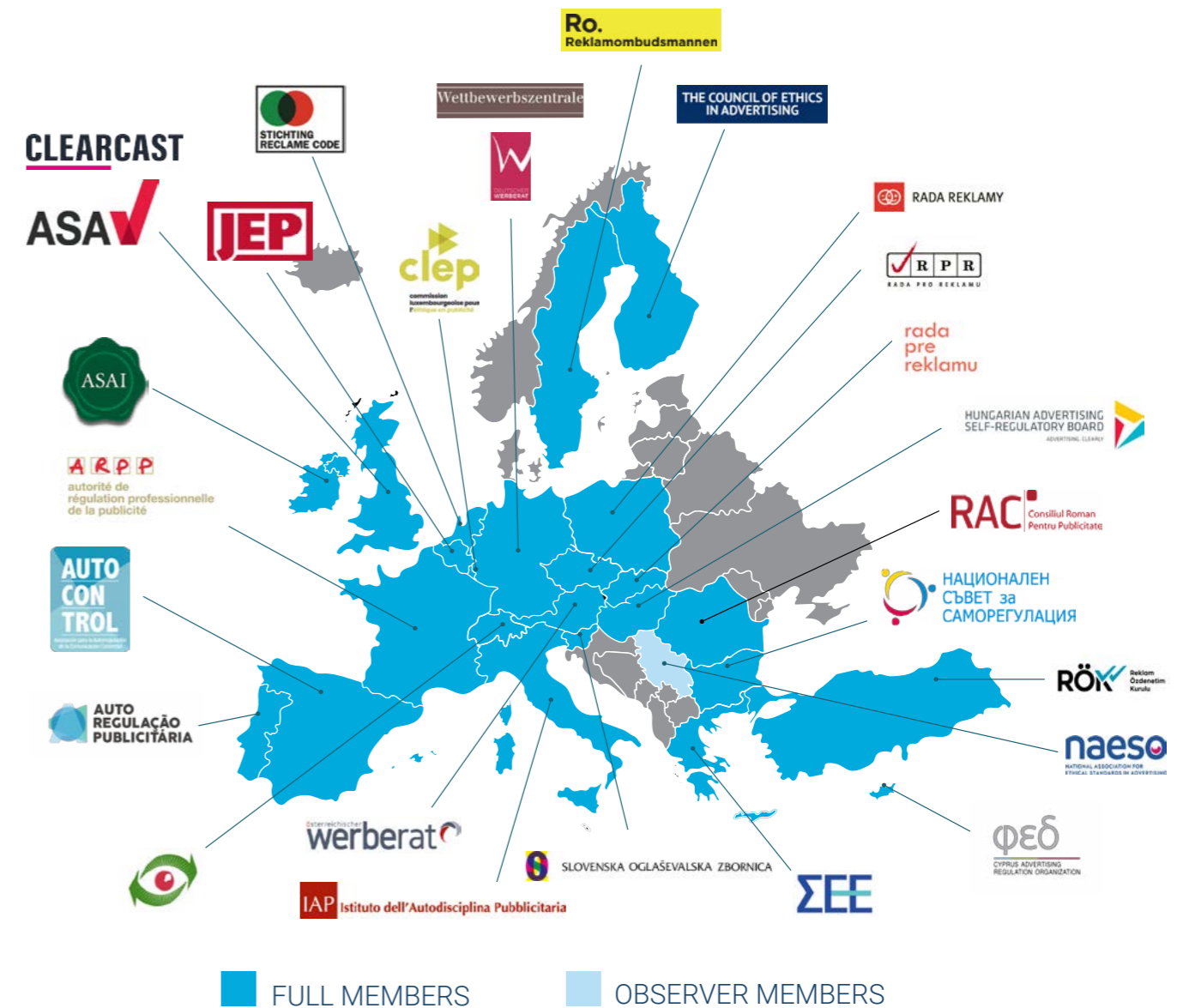
1

EASA's industry members are associations representing the entire advertising value chain: advertisers, agencies and media.

EASA's digital pure play members are companies with a commercial presence across European and world markets, deriving a significant annual turnover from advertising running on their owned and operated digital properties. They are all strongly committed to responsible advertising. EASA's SRO members promote, administer and enforce national advertising standards. They contribute to ensuring that advertising across Europe is responsible.

SELF-REGULATORY ORGANISATION MEMBERS

As of 31/12/2022



INDUSTRY AND DIGITAL PURE PLAY COMPANY MEMBERS

As of 31/12/2022



EASA's secretariat

Based in Brussels, the Secretariat is responsible for the daily operation of EASA, ensuring it delivers against the objectives set by its members and representative bodies. EASA supports its members in advertising self-regulation matters, coordinates committees and task forces, develops Best Practice Recommendations, organises webinars and key event such as the biannual meetings. It coordinates sectoral monitoring exercises, and monitors developments in advertising self-regulation. It also voices EASA position and nurtures the Alliance interaction with European institutions.

STAFF MEMBERS

As of December 2022



Lucas Boudet,
Director General



Inés Ollero Candau,
Project Officer



Delphine Muller,
Office Manager



Alexandre Dérobert,
Public Affairs and
Policy Officer



Estere Upmace,
Communications
Officer



Tudor Manda,
Self-Regulation
Development Officer



Mikael-Arman Ahrari,
Project & Compliance
Assistant

We would like to thank for their valuable work two former colleagues that were part of EASA's team in 2022: Orestis Kouloulas and Kasparas Kudzevicius.

Key statistics

EASA collects complaints and copy advice statistics from its advertising self-regulatory organisation (SRO) members each year. The annual statistical reports are published online and contain analyses of complaints, copy advice requests and pre-clearance.

In 2021, EASA's SRO network received and dealt with a total of

61,883

complaints* related to **29,684** ads

the number of complaints increased by 14% from the previous year, reaching a new record since 2017

On average,

SROs RESOLVED

44% of received complaints within the first week

67% in two weeks

82% within one month

ADS PRE-CLEARED

by the SROs providing this service to the industry

84,764

The number of **COPY ADVICE** services provided increased to a record

103,588

requests for copy advice were submitted across 24 SROs.

Nearly all copy advice requests handled within **72** hours

41%

200 cross-border complaints were registered in 2021, decreasing by 41% compared to 2020

The number of complaints increased by

14%

from the previous year, reaching a new record since 2017

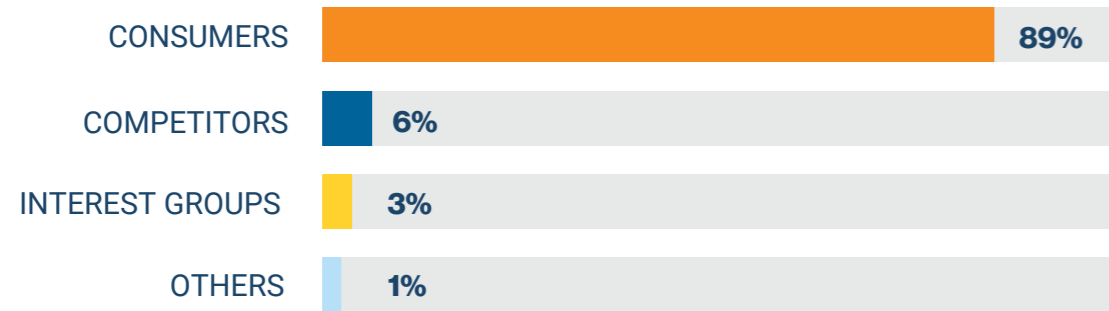
In total, 218,036 ads were reviewed in 2021 (a sum of copy advice requests, pre-cleared ads, and complained ads).

EUROPEAN AD COMPLAINTS - 2021 STATISTICS

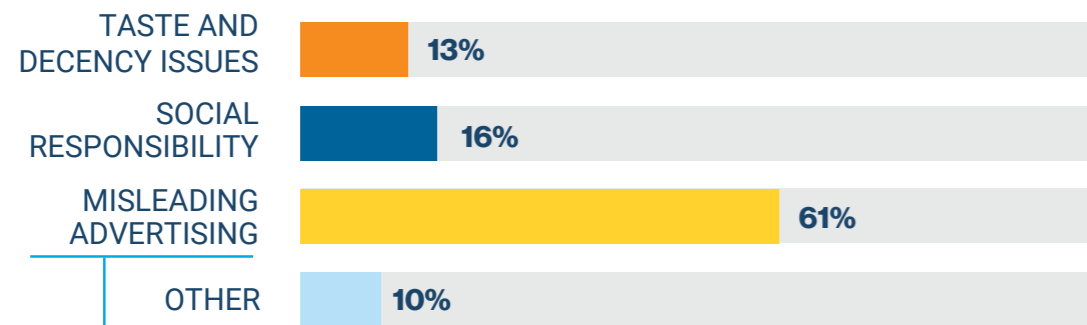
HIGHLIGHTS

- Misleading advertising remained the predominant issue complained about 61%**, followed by social responsibility issues (16%)
- The majority of complaints were lodged by consumers**
- Over 4 in 10 complaints were handled in less than one week**, and 2/3 in two weeks
- Online advertising remained the medium with the most complaints at about 44%**, followed by television at 39%, whilst outdoor advertising saw a decrease to 3%
- Ads for retail (18%), health & beauty services and products (16%), and leisure (15%) services were the most complained about sectors**

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY SROs WERE FROM...

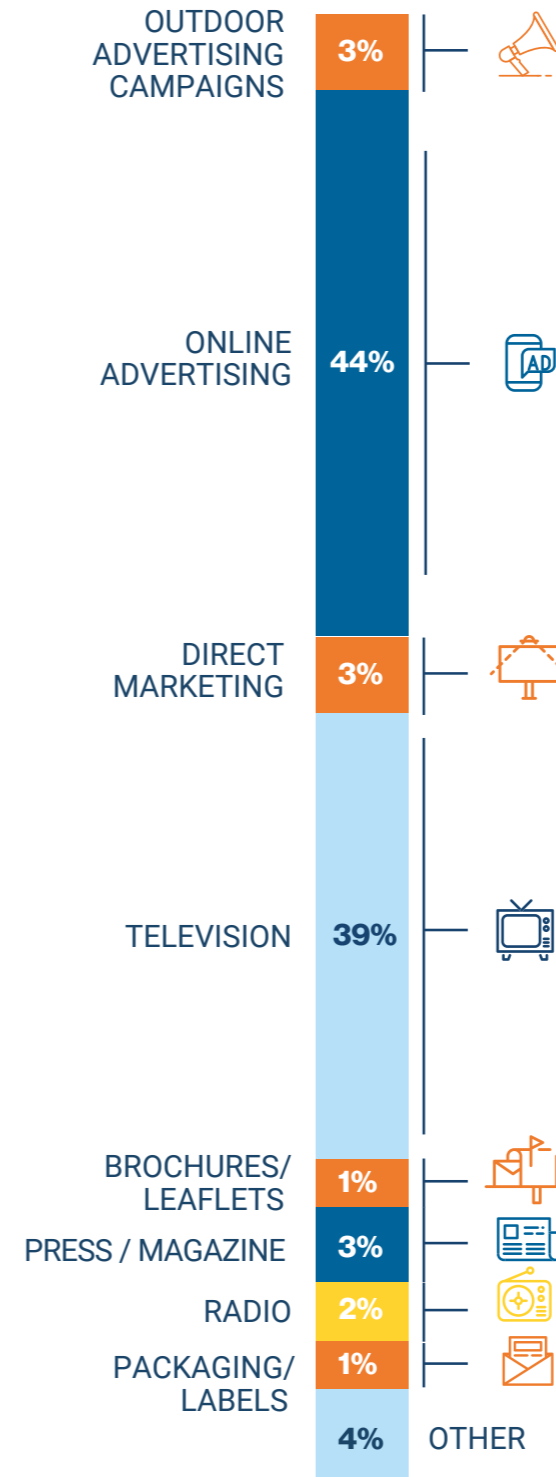


MOST COMPLAINED ABOUT ISSUES WERE...

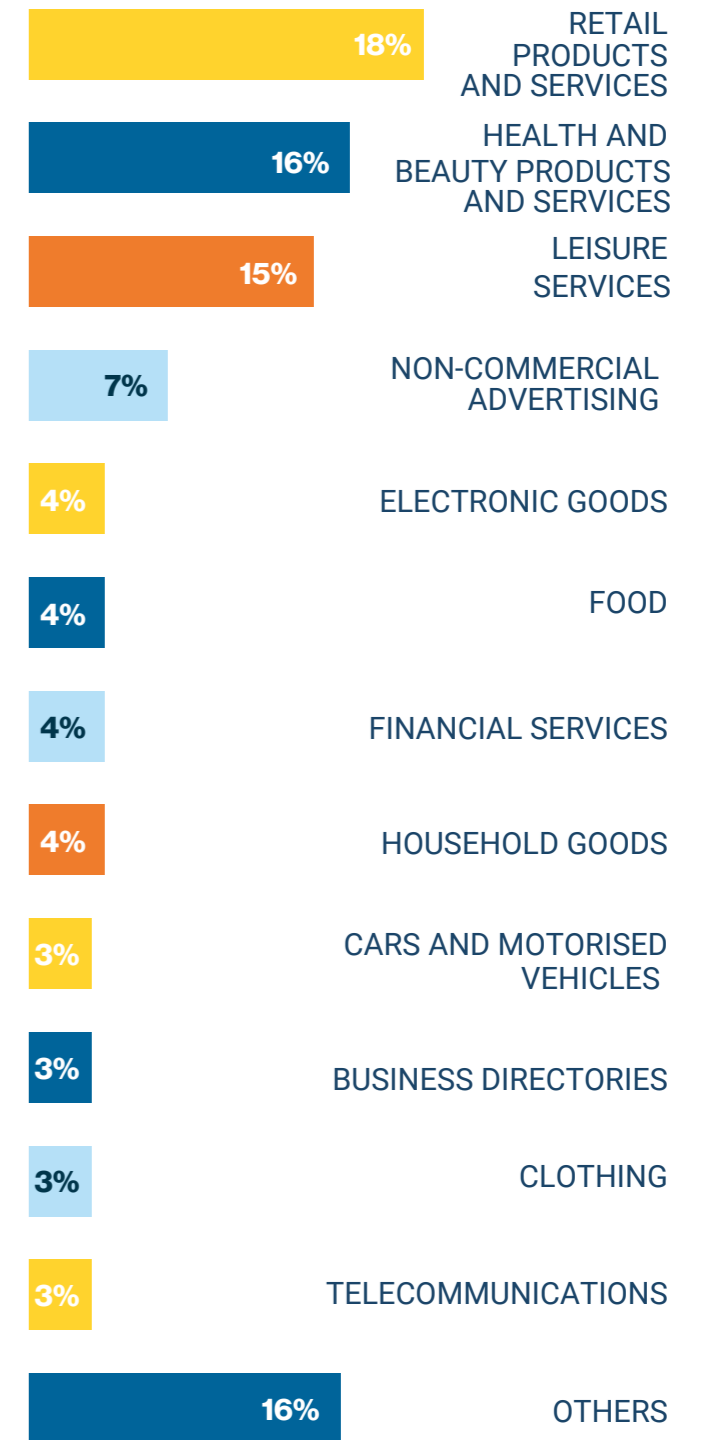


- 25% Price claims
- 15% Environmental claims
- 30% Health claims
- 29% Availability claims
- 1% Unverified testimonials

COMPLAINTS SPREAD ACROSS THE MEDIA



THE LARGEST SHARE OF CONSUMER COMPLAINTS PER PRODUCTS / SERVICES...



Consumers in the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland and France accounted for **95%** of lodged complaints





EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



30th Anniversary



EASA's 30th anniversary

In 2022, EASA celebrated its 30th anniversary – 30 years of ensuring responsible and compliant promoting advertising self-regulations as a means to help ensure responsible advertising.

EASA's journey started in May 1992. EASA was created in response to EU Vice-President and Commissioner for Competition Policy, Sir Leon Brittan, who challenged the advertising industry to seek a self-regulatory solution to the challenges raised by the advent of the Single Market. At the time, it had 15 SRO members from 13 different European countries and administered the first cross-border complaints system to protect consumers in Europe. Since then, EASA never ceased to promote high ethical standards in commercial communications and has truly become the single authoritative voice on advertising self-regulation in Europe.

Since 1992, many things have changed: society, technology, as well as advertising itself. EASA has continually adapted to these changes to offer relevance and value, advocating for advertising self-regulation as a mean to help foster consumer trust in an ever-changing world. Thanks to its resilience, EASA and ad SR are well-suited to address the challenges of tomorrow and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.



EASA's 30th anniversary declaration

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary, EASA members from the advertising industry, digital pure-play companies, and advertising self-regulatory organisations signed the declaration *'For proactive and effective advertising self-regulation and the enhancement of socially responsible advertising in Europe'*, composed of five key goals reaffirming their collective commitments and establishing new ones to maintain and develop effective and independent advertising self-regulation across European markets - all in accordance with the principles outlined in the EASA Charter.

Representatives from the Spanish government and the European Commission attended the signing ceremony and delivered keynote speeches. By signing the declaration, EASA members committed to enable a common European approach, support independent and locally rooted advertising self-regulation, promote a technology-enabled advertising self-regulation, and more. To ensure these commitments are met, EASA will serve as a forum and a focal point where members can share ideas, develop solutions and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, non-member organisations, civil society, and academia.



The declaration's five commitments

PROMOTE ROBUSTLY FUNDED COLLECTIVE ADVERTISING SELF-REGULATION

1. Support ad SR systems and the participation of all advertising industry actors including digital pure-play companies, recognising that advertising self-regulatory systems cover all forms of advertising and all practitioners, as well as support appropriate forms of adequate and sustained funding by all the actors of the advertising industry

PROMOTE TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED ADVERTISING SELF-REGULATION

2. Promote the use of data-driven solutions where relevant, acknowledging the potential value of technology-enabled solutions in monitoring online ads at scale

SUPPORT INDEPENDENT AND LOCALLY ROOTED ADVERTISING SELF-REGULATION

3. Support national advertising self-regulatory systems recognising the unique value of locally rooted, independent, consumer-facing self-regulatory organisations

ENABLE A COMMON EUROPEAN APPROACH

4. Consider, explore, and implement European-wide solutions to emerging challenges where relevant. These shall foster harmonisation while enabling adequate adaptation to local markets and enforcement by local advertising self-regulatory organisations

SUPPORT RESPONSIVE, INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE, AND NIMBLE ADVERTISING SELF-REGULATION

5. Support the industry in enhancing advertising as a force for good, recognising that advertising has the capacity to contribute to promoting attitudes and behaviours that help respond to global challenges such as sustainability, diversity, social inclusion or equity, etc. including: (i) Providing visibility to these issues within the advertis-

ing industry, (ii) Promoting awareness and training to companies and (iii) Sharing examples of good practices

High-level anniversary event

2022 has been a year of celebrations, which officially began in May at the joint EASA and ICAS meetings in Dublin, continued with the Best Practice Awards in October (more in chapter 4), and ended with a Brussels-based event in November, in the splendid venue of the Palace of Charles of Lorraine.

The event in November was joined by key speakers such as Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders. The event, whose focus was on the role of advertising self-regulation for a sustainable future, was a unique occasion for all the responsible players of the advertising eco-system and members of EASA to discuss initiatives related to the green transition, as well as to reflect on how this complex issue can be further addressed by working together in the future.

In his keynote address, Didier Reynders explained the Commission's ambitions to empower the consumer in the green transition, outlining the related policy initiatives. He highlighted the pivotal role advertising self-regulation plays in accompanying efforts from the industry towards more trustworthy advertising, saying:



DIDIER REYNDERS

Commissioner for Justice,
European Commission



Your self-regulatory approach to ensure that companies advertise products and services responsibly whilst staying clear from greenwashing has impressive results. [...] Legislation alone cannot solve all our problems. [...] Let me reaffirm that I see both regulatory and self-regulatory instruments as complementary to each other.





EASA's 30th anniversary communications campaign

In occasion of its 30th anniversary, EASA has launched an awareness campaign, to shine a spotlight on the work advertising self-regulatory organisations do, helping to protect consumers from irresponsible advertising for decades.

The campaign focused on three topical issues policymakers and the greater public can relate to and in which advertising self-regulation is active and effective: greenwashing, influencer marketing and misleading advertising. The campaign ads have been displayed on leasing Brussels press outlets, social media as well as in billboards in the EU quarter in Brussels. The campaign on social media gained over 349,800 impressions across EASA's channels (Twitter and LinkedIn).

Furthermore, as part of the communication efforts related to the 30th anniversary, EASA's Director General Lucas Boudet took part in a thought leadership interview with EURACTIV.



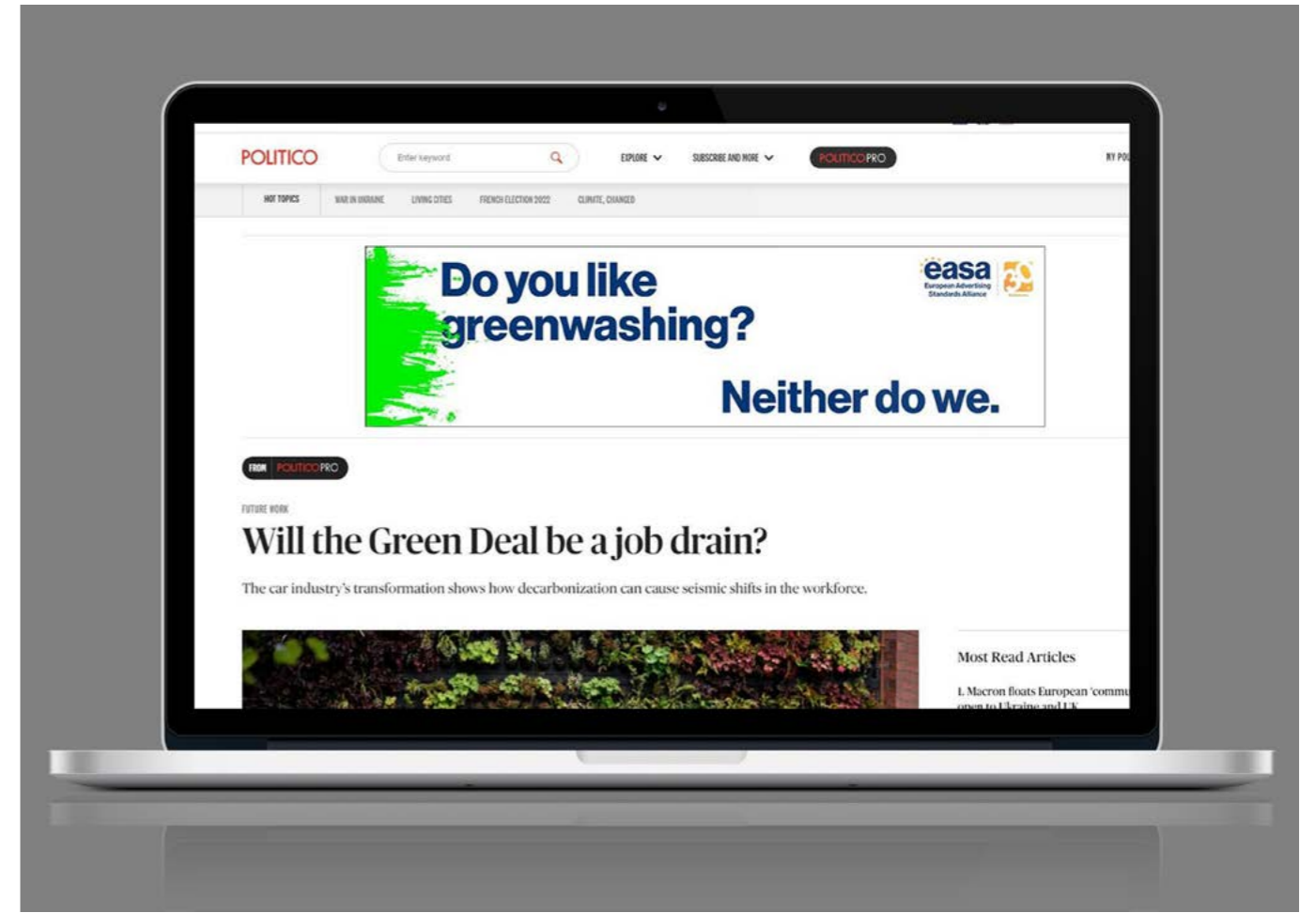
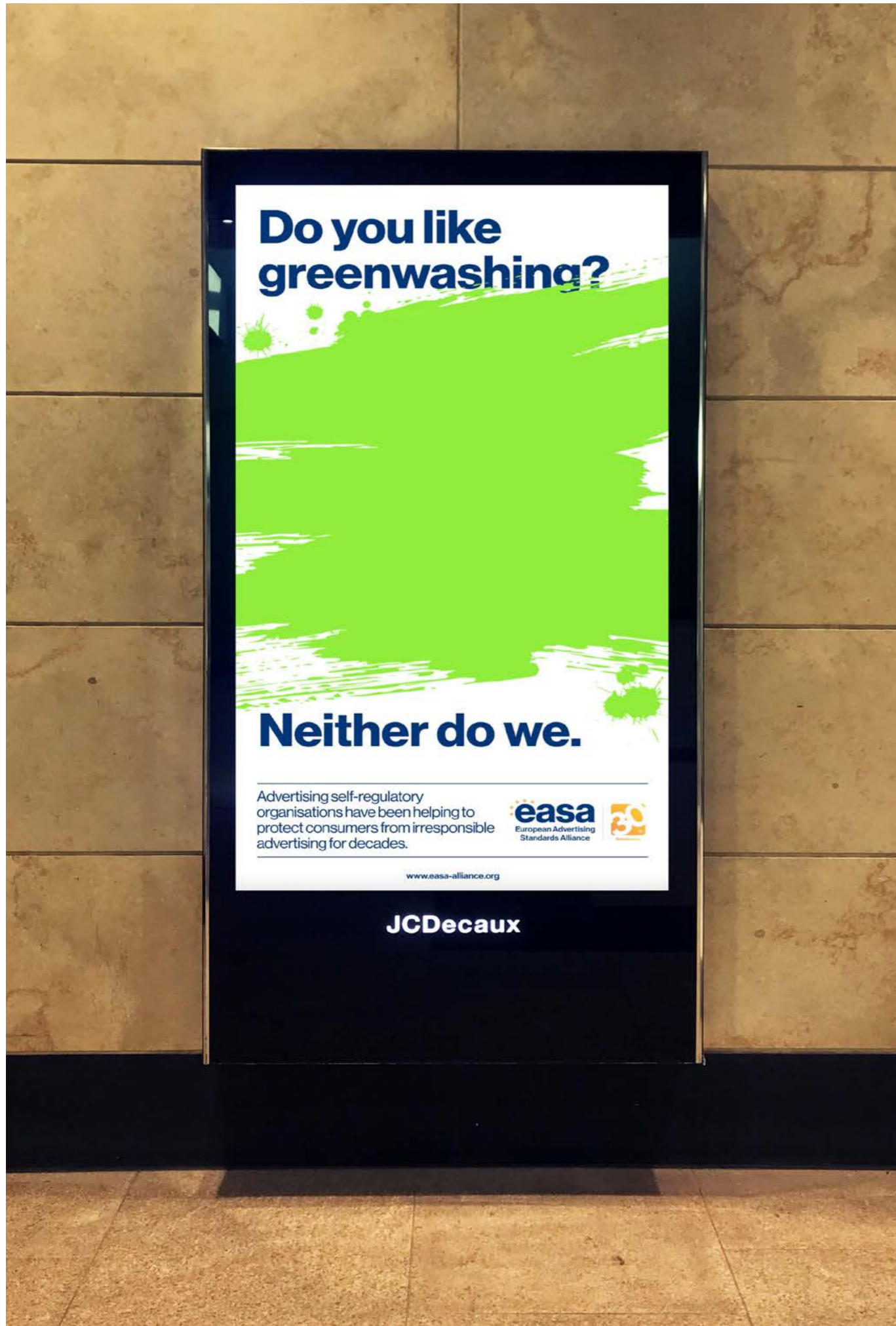
Do you misleading advertising?

Neither do we.

Advertising self-regulatory organisations have been helping to protect consumers from irresponsible advertising for decades.

European Advertising Standards Alliance

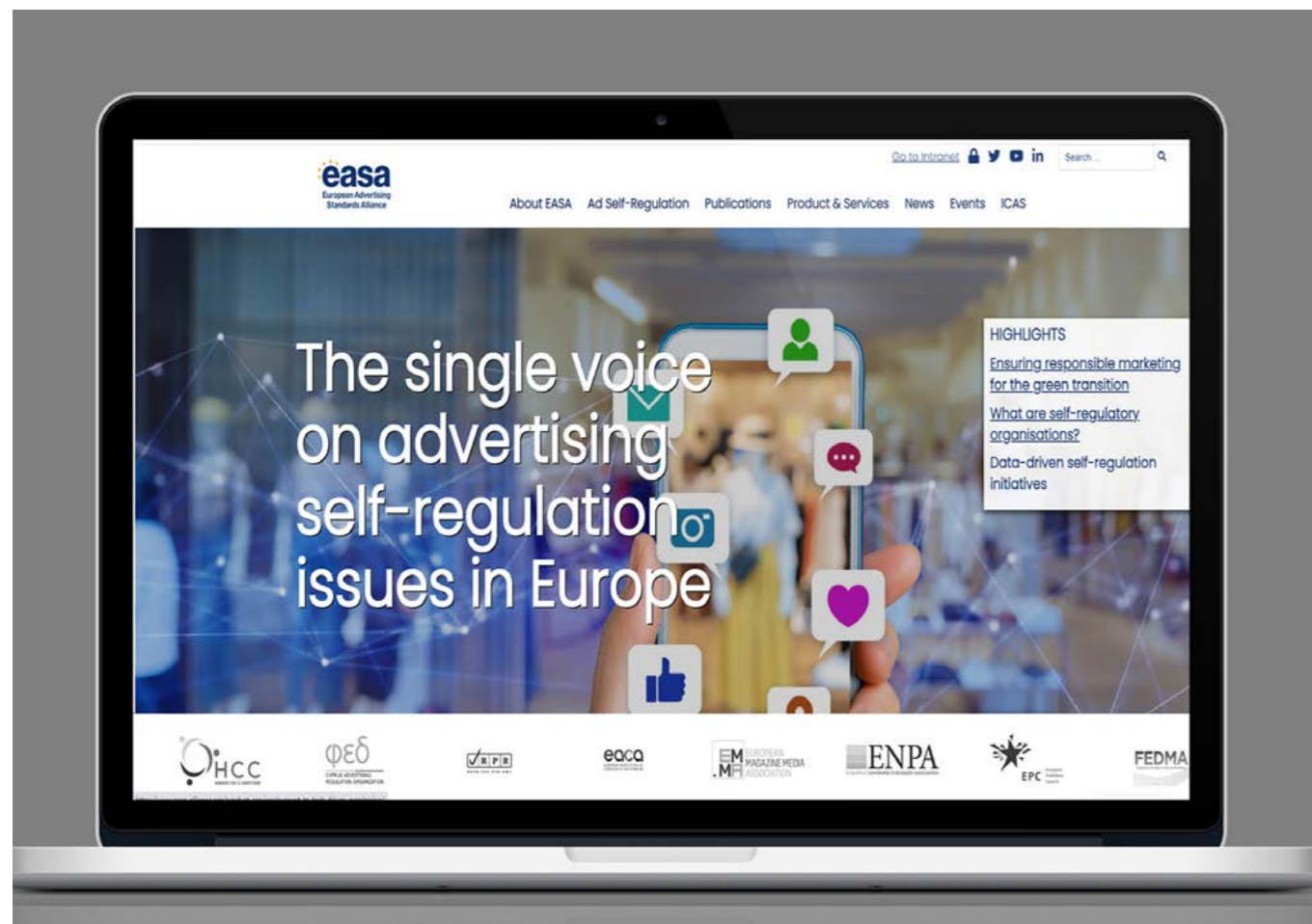
www.easa-alliance.org



EASA's branding revamp

EASA has also introduced a new logo, with a refreshed and more contemporary look, and closer to the acronym the Alliance is commonly referred to. The new visual identity reflects EASA's ability to constantly evolve and keep pace with an ever-changing world.

EASA also released a new website and Blue Book platform, both benefitting from a crisp and sleek new look and feel. The new website is more dynamic, therefore allowing to emphasise specific news items. In addition to this, user interface and functionalities were enhanced.





EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



Developing EASA and its Network

Information and best practice sharing

Info requests

EASA promotes information sharing among its members by disseminating information requests across its network, gathering relevant data on topics of high interest for its members. Overall, 21 info-request were launched in 2022 across the EASA and ICAS networks, of which:

from SRO's

11

from EASA or ICAS secretariats

10

In 2022, no info-request were launched by industry



EASA webinar series

In 2022, with the Covid-19 restrictions gradually being lifted, EASA has been able to hold again face-to-face meetings, while keeping online sessions and webinars- which reached a record number of 28. Several webinars and online sessions have been organised in partnership with ICAS, the International Council for Ad Self-regulation.

organised by EASA

10

informal catch-up calls with EASA and ICAS members

11

sessions in collaboration with ICAS

7

2022 Timeline



Biannual meetings

In 2022, EASA'S members finally had the opportunity to join in-person biannual meetings, a key moment for our community. The biannual meetings bring together EASA's members, partners and stakeholders from the advertising and self-regulatory world, and represent a unique opportunity to gather insights on the most topical issues related to advertising self-regulation. The spring biannual meeting in Dublin was a joint one organised in partnership with ICAS, and hosted by our SRO member ASAI, while the autumn one in Madrid was hosted by our Spanish SRO member AUTOCONTROL.

Biannual Meetings in Dublin co-organised with ICAS and hosted by ASAI, May 2022



Biannual Meetings in Madrid, hosted by AUTOCONTROL, October 2022



Biannual Meetings in Dublin co-organised with ICAS and hosted by ASAI, May 2022



Biannual Meetings in Madrid, hosted by AUTOCONTROL, October 2022

EASA Best Practice Awards

2022
EASA
BEST
PRACTICE
AWARD

Since 2004, EASA Best Practice Awards are organised every two years to reward self-regulatory organisations that have most effectively implemented an element of the EASA Best Practice Model (a set of operational standards for advertising standards bodies and EASA's advertising self-regulation charter).

The Best Practice Awards 2022 were held during the autumn biannual meeting in Madrid. All the projects submitted by EASA's SRO network were deeply innovative and valuable, and they featured AI-powered monitoring tools, educational programmes and certificates that recognise responsible advertising – to name a few.

The jury evaluated 13 initiatives launched between January 2020 and June 2022. A diverse group of EASA industry members, advertisers, agencies, data and marketing, out-of-home media and digital pure-play companies served as the jury, and a total six awards, including two special mentions, were presented in Madrid.



The Dutch SRO, Stichting Reclame Code (SRC) developed an AI tool that can identify, monitor, and report on online advertising and breaches of the code.



The UK SRO, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) with its crypto-currency project developed principles for cryptocurrency advertising and drafted industry guidance, enforcing compliance across the market.



The Spanish SRO, AUTOCONTROL's Free Online Educational Project offered consumers and advertising industry practitioners basic training on advertising regulation and self-regulation, ADR and data protection regulation.



The French SRO, Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la publicité (ARPP) developed with its Responsible Influencer Certificate, ARPP provides influencers with key principles and rules on advertising, ensuring they are aware of the legal and ethical framework.



- CONSILIUL ROMÂN PENTRU PUBLICITATE (RAC) Romania, for its 'Ethical stamp'
- REKLAM ÖZDENETİM KURULU (RÖK) Turkey, for its AI Project to Monitor Influencer Ads

Collaborating with partners



The European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA)'s principal purpose is to provide the 'AdChoices Icon' to companies involved in data-driven advertising (or OBA) across Europe. The AdChoices Icon is a consumer-facing, interactive symbol that links consumers to an online portal (www.youronlinechoices.eu), where consumers can, in a very user-friendly way, find out more about their online ad choices, how online advertising is used to support the sites and services they use, and how they can safeguard their privacy. 120 companies are actively participating in the Programme, using the AdChoices Icon and/or integration on the YourOnlineChoices Platform, which is available in 33 countries and 27 languages, with an average of millions of visitors each year.

THE NEW REGULATORY LANDSCAPE FOR EDAA AND DATA-DRIVEN ADVERTISING

Last year marked the 10th anniversary of activity for EDAA. In 2012, the European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance was created, thanks to the common efforts of the industry - leaders from companies, industry associations and SROs -, which had been challenged by the European Commission to deliver self-regulatory standards. Since that moment, companies have been providing tools and resources to equip consumers with greater transparency and control over their online advertising preferences. Over this decade, EDAA has successfully developed solutions that have truly empowered European internet users and have kept pace with rapidly evolving market and social dynamics. Most recently, we have seen the Digital Services Act approved in the European Institutions, once more raising the bar for the industry in the field of advertising transparency.

In the past months, EDAA has been working on a solution that will meet the new transparency requirements of the DSA, as laid out in Article 26. In doing so, EDAA is leveraging the core pillars of its work, particularly the advertising transparency one, and further developing its toolkit, particularly the well-recognised "AdChoices Icon", to consolidate a new and exciting offer for businesses and internet users alike.

YOUR ONLINE VOICES CONSUMER RESEARCH

In March 2022, EDAA launched an innovative consumer research in collaboration with the international agency Clever Together to disclose the needs, ideas and expectations of consumers when it comes to digital advertising and in particular data-driven advertising. For the very first time, consumers have been asked their opinions on a deliberative platform, with over 1100 consumers contributing from five European markets (England, France, Germany, Belgium and Latvia), which generated over 25000 data points to analyse.

Consumers expressed their concern about being spied on, as well as having their personal data stolen from them. The results of the survey has shown how the users' level of trust is low, in particular when it comes to ads displayed on social media. Generally, consumers tend to trust more ads from known brands and publishers. Some people claimed that data-driven advertising could be useful, although they would like it to be more transparent and they would like to have better control over it. Findings of the consumer research are available in EDAA YOY External Report.

EDAA SUMMIT 2022

The EDAA Summit 2022 – From choices to voices: Transparency in action took place in London on 15 November 2022 and welcomed over 110 attendees. We had the pleasure to have as our speakers 27 stakeholders that came together to discuss the most relevant topics in digital advertising. The regulatory and self-regulatory developments in Europe and beyond have been analysed together with the new consumer research, data ethics and the EDAA programme developments. Once again, the EDAA Summit proved to be a hugely successful staple event for the whole digital advertising sector.

RELATIONSHIP WITH EASA & SROS

Drawing on the success of the ubiquitous AdChoices Icon, EDAA reinforces real-time, contextual and meaningful information towards consumers as to how they can be empowered with choice and control. Through recognition and understanding, EDAA is determined to bridge the trust gap by promoting greater consumer favourability through meaningful industry best practice. From an operational perspective, EASA and its network continues to support EDAA through the carrying out of an annual OBA complaints report, highlighting the involvement of 12 European SRO members which have extended remit to cover OBA as consumer-facing entities addressing enquiries and complaints.



ANGELA MILLS WADE

EDAA Chair

EDAA is an organisation that is **inclusive**, listening to all stakeholders. It is **value-driven**, promoting standards for a brighter future. It is **respectful**, bridging consumer and business needs. And it is **highly relevant**, adapting to the changes and challenges we all face.



GUY PARKER

ICAS President



The International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation (ICAS), of which EASA is a founding member, promotes advertising standards and responsible marketing practices at the global level.

In 2022, ICAS focused on key issues relevant to the advertising industry, regulators and society as a whole: sustainability, diversity, equity, inclusion and changing advertising and marketing techniques in evolving virtual spaces. It also strengthened its partnership with its members, stakeholders, and increased its advocacy efforts.

Looking back, one of the most important achievements was the ICAS-EASA collaboration to deliver the first-ever global guidance on environmental claims for the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) to help marketers and agencies worldwide ensure that environmental claims are trustworthy. All of this with the support from the UK Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), and in consultation with key experts from SROs around the globe.

ICAS and EASA also continued to deliver a considerable number of joint webinars and sessions for the benefit of their collective membership, and, most noteworthy, organised successful in-person meetings in Dublin, Ireland, bringing together over 60 participants from around the world.

At the global level, and to complement EASA's work, ICAS focused increasingly on advocacy. In 2022, ICAS became an ally of the Unstereotype Alliance, joining this important industry coalition led by UN Women and supporting their mission to end bias and stereotypes in advertising.



Good cooperation between ICAS and EASA is essential. Both organizations have a similar mission and complement each other really well. While EASA promotes effective ad self-regulation towards EU stakeholders and engages with EU institutions, ICAS is often the contact point for global stakeholders, fostering relations with international and intergovernmental organisations outside of Europe, such as UN bodies or the OECD. It is great to see how EASA and ICAS have been working closely together in recent years and have helped each other grow.



A collaboration with the OECD on their evaluation of the proliferation of dark patterns online led to the OECD positively assessing the role of effective ad self-regulation in protecting consumers from dark patterns. Furthermore, ICAS engaged with the WHO and responded to three consultations in the context of their Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, advocating for the consideration of effective ad self-regulation when considering and implementing policy options.

ICAS also introduced new regional initiatives, such as dedicated roundtables in Spanish covering Latin America, and is starting to develop a partnership with Google to help with engagement with SROs in APAC countries.

Finally, ICAS also increased its membership, welcoming the ARB of South Africa as full member in January 2022 and the Turkish SRO, RÖK, as associate member in January 2023. Today, ICAS brings together 33 members, including EASA, that all work together to ensure that advertising standards are high and ads are responsible.



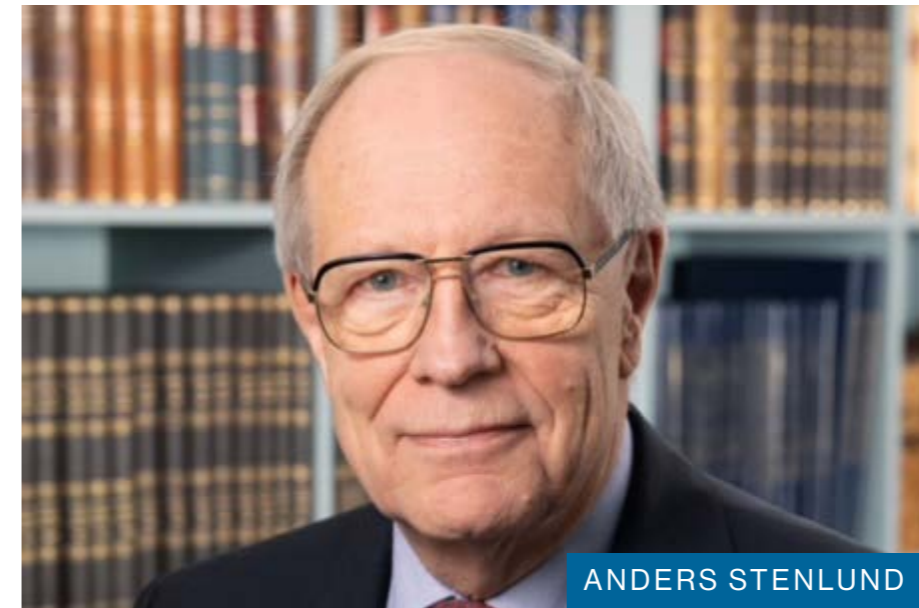
Building on an ongoing and successful partnership with ICC, in 2022 EASA has been an active member and contributor to the Global Commission on Advertising and Marketing. As part of the Commission, alongside with some of its members, EASA defended advertising self-regulation and allowed its members to provide valuable insights and expertise as practitioners of advertising self-regulation who directly apply the ICC code and national ad SR

codes featuring principles inspired by the ICC code. EASA also regularly updated the Commission on the latest regulatory developments in the EU and the latest trends and statistics from its network of SROs.

In 2022, EASA also supported the ICC Commission with its priorities, such as: 1. Reinforcing the importance of responsible marketing communications and the benefits for stakeholders implementing the ICC Code into effective self-regulation 2. Emphasising the authority of ICC as the organisation providing the gold standard for marketing self-regulatory practices, and reinforce the benefits of these practices for globally consistent, respected standards for self-regulation 3. Communicating ICC code principles and updates to demonstrate the Code's relevance in an evolving digital landscape and when facing emerging issues such as climate change, responsible consumption, greater equality/inclusivity, transparency 4. Advocating for enhanced responsibility along the advertising value chain 5. Advancing the role of advertising in society.

In 2022, the Commission was marked by two key milestones. First, the election of a new leadership team. EASA's Director General was appointed as Vice-Chair for the ICC Global Marketing & Advertising Commission. This was a unique opportunity to ensure the prominence of the voice of ad SR in Europe and to ensure continuity following the outstanding work done by the former team including Anders Stenlund, former Commission vice-Chair.

The second milestone was the launch of the 11th code revision. This initiative was preceded by the drafting of a pre-revision report to which EASA members contributed. This document will serve as a basis for the code revision process. Unlike the previous review, which was targeted, this one will be a comprehensive overhaul. It aims to address issues such as the scope and application of marketing communications, the code's applicability across platforms and media, and its applicability to new emerging areas. It also aims to address issues such as diversity and inclusion, environmental claims, influencer marketing, virtual experiences, disclosure and transparency as well as its application, usability, and promotion in the digital age. This revision process is expected to run until the end of 2024/ beginning of 2025. EASA will be in the front seat, enabling its members to meaningfully contribute throughout the process to help shaping a global code which is of the greatest value for the actors of responsible advertising in Europe.



ANDERS STENLUND

Co-Chair, ICC Code Revision Task Force. Special Advisor, Reklamombudsmannen



2022 was marked by the launch of the 11th revision of the ICC Advertising and Marketing Communications Code, which is the cornerstone for most self-regulatory systems, and also an important instrument of SR advocacy. The purpose of the revision is to deliver an updated and relevant Code that continues to be universally recognized as the global gold standard of advertising ethics. For that, the Code should not only adequately address topical issues, but also provide long-term stability through its general principles, yet enough flexibility to allow for local and regional application. Digital marketing communications are expected to be much in focus so as to keep the Code abreast of market and media developments. The revision will also look at ways to present the Code in more user-friendly formats. The entire SR community is invited to participate in the various work streams; the SROs hold invaluable expertise, in particular practical know-how and experience, which will hopefully feed into the process. We look forward to the engagement and contributions from EASA and its members.



The Global Commission on Marketing and Advertising examines major marketing and advertising related policy issues of interest to world business, and brings together top experts on self-regulation and ethical best practices in advertising and marketing communications. ICC has been the major rule-setter in international advertising self-regulation since 1937, when the Commission issued the first ICC code on Advertising Practice – one of the most successful examples of business self-regulation ever developed.

The ICC's commission mandate is to promote high ethical standards in marketing by business self-regulation through the ICC Code of Advertising and Marketing Communications Practice. The Commission also advances world business positions and initiatives to address government actions that affect marketing and consumer protection.

Cross-border complaints management

EASA's cross-border complaints (CBC) system ensures that concerns and complaints of European consumers are addressed no matter where the advertising campaign originates from. This was set up in response to the forthcoming European Single Market and the need to address complaints and issues arising from advertising circulating in one EU Member State but carried in media originating in another. EASA has facilitated the handling of CBCs since 1992.

- EASA's CBC system covers 27 EASA SRO members in 25 European countries that handle complaints. It also reaches out to international SROs that are members of the International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation (ICAS).
- EASA has members both inside and outside of the European Union who participate in the CBC mechanism. Each CBC is assessed based on the rules, laws, and regulations of the SRO in the country of origin of the medium or the advertiser, depending on the type of ad.

EASA's Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) members ensure that all Cross-Border Complaints (CBCs) are handled effectively and efficiently with a thoroughly developed mechanism based on a network of independent, impartial, and recognised SROs that exchange constant flows of information.

Cross-Border Complaints Recap 2021

- EASA's SRO network handled **200 cross-border complaints, 41% less than in 2020**
- **81%** of all cross-border complaints were **lodged by UK plaintiffs**
- In 2021, almost **a third (29%) of all 200 cross-border complaints were aimed at advertisements originating in Ireland**, with another fifth (22%) aimed at ads originating from the Netherlands.
- **9% of the complaints** received by the SROs **were upheld**. 15% were not upheld, and over a third of complaints were not investigated as SROs had already initiated procedures at national level, including successes at resolving the case informally, or transferring the case to appropriate authorities

- **Misleading advertising** continues to be the **main issue complained about (83%)**
- **87% of complaints** filed for **misleading advertising**
- **Digital Marketing Communications** gathered the **most complaints** among all media categories at 87%.
- Decrease in total number of CBCs, **Online Advertising** remain dominant media, leisure **remains the dominant sector for CBCs** as Europe moves on from the pandemic era.

Country of Origin of Advertisements

IRELAND **29%**

NETHERLANDS **22%**

FRANCE **9%**

UNITED KINGDOM **9%**

GERMANY **8%**

SPAIN **6%**

OTHER **17%**

The Origin of Complainants



UK

81%



IRELAND

11%



FRANCE

2%



HUNGARY

1.5%



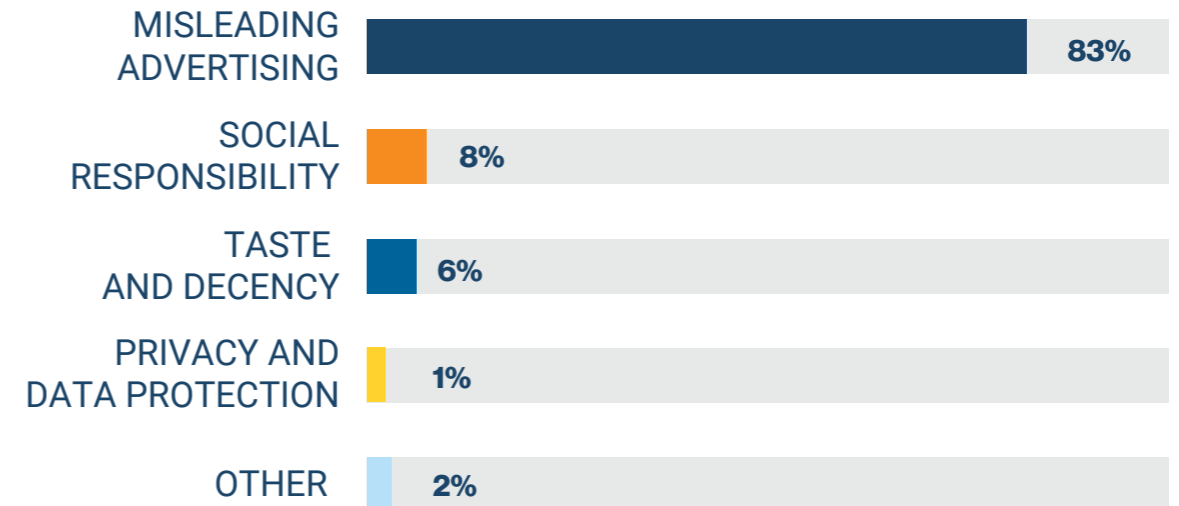
GERMANY

1.5%

OTHERS

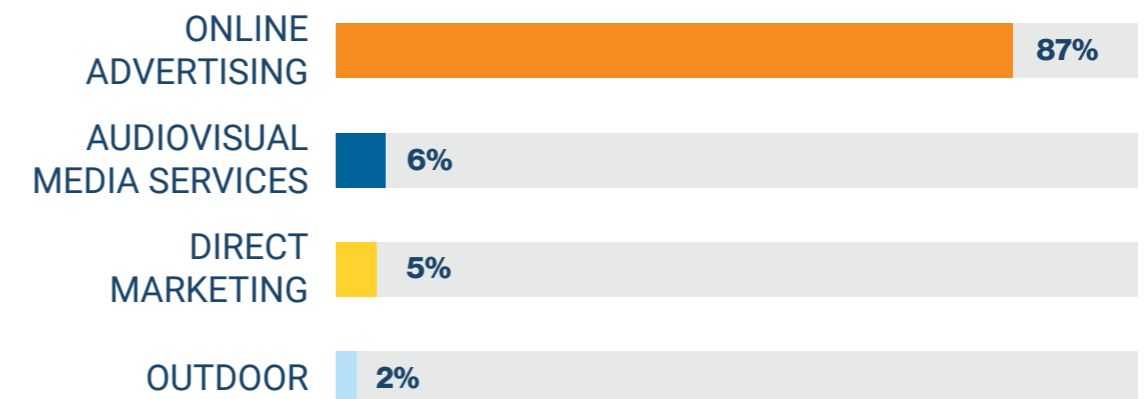
3%

ISSUES COMPLAINED ABOUT

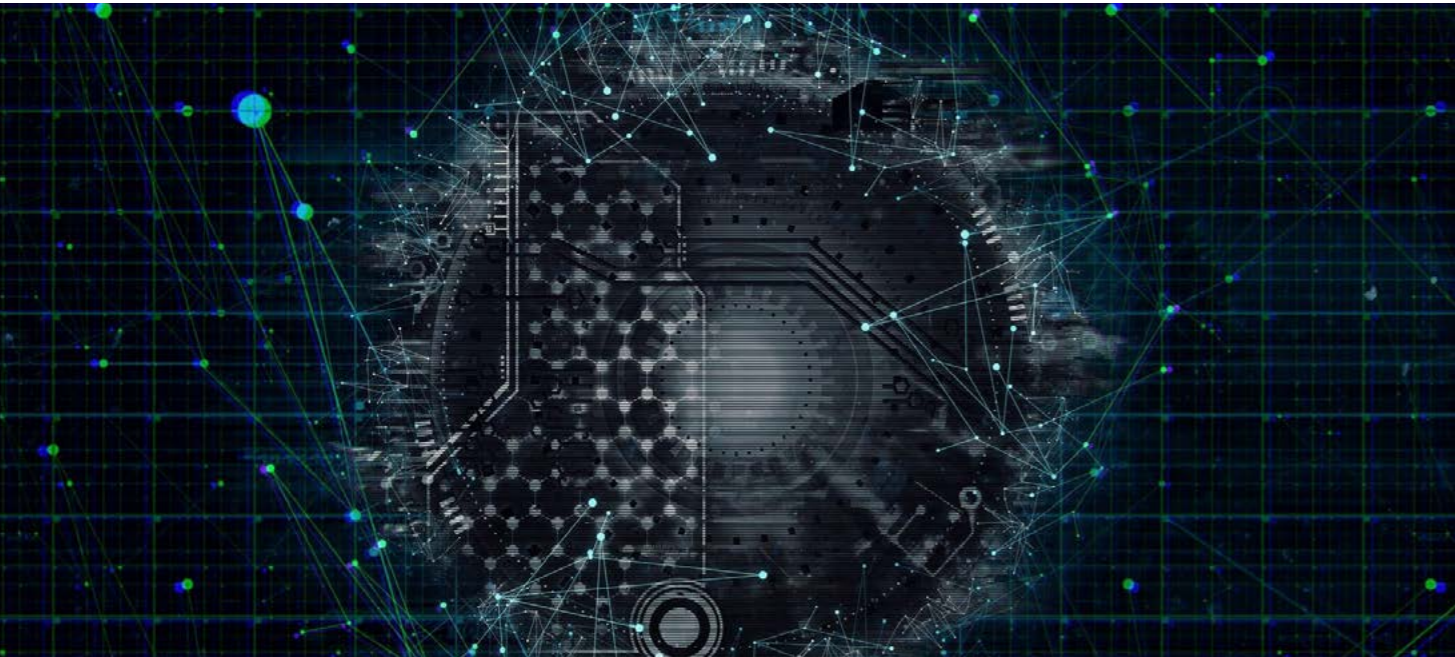


MEDIA

CBC were mostly concerning advertising of leisure services, health and beauty, and food & alcohol



Technological developments



Supporting Data-Driven SR

Advertising self-regulatory organisations members of EASA have a long-standing experience in monitoring advertising - no matter the format, whether it is outdoor advertising or spots in the various media. In recent years, the monitoring of online advertising has become a major issue given its significant growth, both in the number of advertisements as such and in the number and diversity of online advertising players. To tackle the issue of monitoring online ads at scale, EASA supports its member self-Regulatory organisations in developing and expanding innovative technological solutions, including the use of artificial intelligence.

Launched in 2020, EASA's dedicated Working Group on Data-Driven Self-Regulation aims to facilitate the exchanges of information and good practices between participating and aspiring members and upscale national activities across the membership. In 2022, its terms of reference have been reviewed to open the group to EASA Digital Pure Play company members whilst staying clear from any conflict of interest. Otto van der Harst, Director of the Dutch SRO Stichting Reclame Code was elected as the first Chairman of the working group. This working group met three times in 2022 to define the criteria and objectives for EASA co-funding of SRO projects using artificial intelligence and to share their experience, challenges, and solutions regarding online advertising self-regulation.

Besides the working groups meetings, EASA organised bilateral meetings between SROs to better understand their needs and constraints as well as to facilitate and encourage exchange of information between members. In addition, three webinars to learn more about the use of artificial intelligence to monitor online advertising were held for all EASA members. By the end of 2022, two third of the SROs members of EASA have been involved in a tech-driven monitoring project to ensure and/or improve the supervision of online advertising.

Financial support played a fundamental role in enabling these initiatives. In 2022, EASA increased its budget specifically dedicated to co-fund tech-driven projects by more than 35%. This budget allocation allowed to financially support all the SRO involved in data-driven projects, whether they are leading SROs in the field, or they have launched their first technological project in 2022.

EASA SROs MEMBERS DATA-DRIVEN PROJECTS

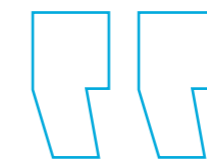
In 2022, France, the Netherlands and the United-Kingdom continued to develop the technological tools that can ensure effective and intelligent monitoring of digital advertising.

The Dutch SRO Stichting Reclame Code (SRC), actively participated in the improvement and dissemination of the tool developed by its tech partner DEUS, used by eight SROs members of EASA who have launched their first data-driven monitoring project in 2022.



OTTO VAN DER HARST

Director, Stichting Reclame Code and Chairman of EASA's Data-Driven Self-Regulation working group



I'm delighted to work with a wider group of SROs on digital driven experiments. Accessible for all, user friendly and with very concrete output. Although the task seems huge, making a start has set us on a course to get a better grip on online ads and the world of professional influencers. We - as self-regulatory organisations- have a duty to make ads online also honest, legal, decent and truthful.



The British SRO, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), strengthened their in-house technical team while continuing to engage external partners to best meet the ASA's strategic priorities for making online advertising safer.



ADAM DAVISON

Head of Data Science, ASA

“ In 2022 we continued to develop our data capabilities, and saw the impact on many high-priority topics. Rather than running separate data-led projects we’re increasingly seeing data as an integral part of our processes and everything we do. Next year, we’re looking forward to continuing to build out our data science team and finding new ways to work with tech partners.

In 2022, the French SRO Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la Publicité (ARPP), has continued to focus its action on influencer marketing by raising awareness, training content creators to comply with the rules governing online advertising, and by extending the monitoring activities to new sectors and to social media. They also launched a new project to automate the pre-clearance of audiovisual advertising operated by digital players through a TV broadcast environment.



MOHAMED MANSOURI

Deputy Director, ARPP

“ 2022 was a year of consecration of the technological tools implemented for more responsible digital communication. We have intensified our exchanges with the public authorities in parallel with a legal framework applicable to influencer marketing which is being defined, as well as with the platforms which have almost all joined the ARPP for better cooperation, and of course, the rest of the value chain. The enhancement of the influencer marketing certificate has led to an acceleration of registrations (over 500 certified content creators in March 2023). With ad-tech providers, we have also launched several projects to adapt our TV/AVMS preclearance systems to the merger of the broadcast and digital environments. All these concrete actions have been implemented with the same objective in mind : to provide evidence of an efficient, modern and agile self-regulation system.

All these three SROs used tools that allow for machine learning capabilities, enabling the algorithm to identify possible breaches of the codes. Besides the 3 countries mentioned above, 1 SRO (Germany) has launched its second monitoring project in continuity with the one launched in 2021 and 8 other SROs (Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and Turkey) have either launched or trialled their first data-driven monitoring project in 2022, mostly to analyse non-disclosure of commercial communication by the influencers on Instagram and YouTube. This increase in the number of SROs starting data-driven activities has been possible thanks to the additional funds made available through the EASA-Google partnership.

Other SROs are following suit, implementing similar technologies to their peers, such as Autocontrol in Spain, ÖWR in Austria, ÖRT in Hungary. In total, in 2023, 14 SROs (54% of the whole network) will be actively working with AI tools to automatically review online or offline ads.

ASA (UK) has a 5-year strategy (2019-2023) to deliver "More Impact Online", which includes a focus on the use of tech to better regulate digital advertising in the UK. The ASA is working with external vendors and developing in-house data science capabilities, currently consisting of 3 people.

Throughout 2022, ASA:

- Developed in-house tools that can capture and apply machine-learning filtering to ads to identify relevant content across a range of channels;
- Used these tools on high-priority topics including influencer non-disclosure, cryptocurrency services and climate change/environment;
- Worked with an audience measurement partner to deliver the "100 children" report tracking what digital content 100 under-18s see;
- Used social listening tools to monitor ads for prescription-only medicines.

ASAI (IE) has conducted its first experimental data-driven monitoring project with 2 components:

- Using an avatar to monitor HFSS ads served to children on a broad range of websites;
- Exploring the range and level of information that would be provided on Instagram stories, video and text posts that contain brand promotions.

AUTOCONTROL (ES) has implemented three integrated digitalisation tools to improve and streamline work within the organisation, namely an Enterprise Resource Planning system for finance, a software to manage human resources and a Customer Management System to speed up the processing of services provided to clients, such as copy advice or complaints. Internal discussions and consultation with technology suppliers also took place on the monitoring aspect to determine the priority areas for development in terms of interest, cost, and feasibility.

ARPP (FR) has set up new digital instruments to support ad self-regulation.

- Responsible influence marketing: new training modules on gambling and greenwashing / certification of almost 500 Influencers / new social media monitored in addition to YouTube, Instagram and TikTok, namely Snapchat & Twitch;
- Ongoing monitoring of websites related to sensitive products in the field of health & finance, extended to environmental claims following the entry into force of the 5th version of ARPP's recommendation;
- Development of a Proof of Concept for pre-clearance of audio-visual advertising operated by digital players through a TV broadcast environment (addressable TV advertising, programmatic audio-visual advertising...).

CSL/SLK (CH) is in contact with a local influencer hub in the making and the Swiss Federation of Advertisers to discuss the feasibility and interest to launch a data-driven monitoring project.

ARP (PT) launched its first data-driven monitoring project to evaluate the practices of the top 1000 digital influencers and 277 most mentioned brands on Instagram and verify if the commercial communications have been clear and appropriately disclosed in the videos, stories and text posts. 73.785 stories and 5.563 text posts have been screened, of which respectively 7.2% and 14.6% contain brand promotions.

IAP (IT) launched a data-driven monitoring project, which analysed contents on Instagram and on 38 YouTube channels to verify if the commercial communications related to the food sector have been clearly and appropriately disclosed. Out of almost 38.000 contents posted in, 1.000 were an ad, of which 84% on YouTube and 51% on Instagram were properly disclosed.

Ro (SE) launched a data-driven monitoring project using a child avatar to analyse marketing communications targeting children on websites and social media (YouTube & Instagram).

SRC (NL) has further improved the quality of its monitoring tools and extended its reach to Instagram. However experimental, its ability to monitor has worked with all major platforms and social posts using video. They also improved the user interface to make the tools more user friendly. It delivers well on surveying an enormous amount of data and narrowing the evaluations to manageable proportions. HFSS food and alcohol advertising have been of primary concern in 2022.

DWR (DE) has launched a second data-driven monitoring project on alcohol and food in continuation of the one launched in 2021. It has been extended to Instagram stories and videos in addition to YouTube.

ÖWR (AT) has started internal discussions with the various decision-making bodies and external discussions with potential tech providers to define the type of data-driven monitoring project to be carried out.

ÖRT (HU) has started internal discussions to assess the feasibility of launching a data-driven monitoring project.

CARO (CY) and SEE (EL) launched a joint monitoring project to assess the rate of non-compliance with the disclosure rule for marketing communications published by influencers on Instagram, through the analysis of pictures, video, and text posted by the most famous influencers in both countries. The project ran for 4 weeks. 973 Cypriot posts and 680 Greek posts have been checked and analysed by the SROs, to assess whether they contained marketing content and whether they were properly disclosed.

An observation widely shared by the SROs: the data-driven monitoring projects carried out in 2022 demonstrated the need to raise awareness among brands and influencers of the need to comply with the rules and principles of self-regulation in online advertising.

RAC (RO) launched at the end of the year a data-driven monitoring of 300 influencers on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok to analyse marketing communication on food supplements and cosmetic products. In total, about 14.000 pieces of content have been screened by the AI tool.

RÖK (TK) has launched a data-driven monitoring project to analyse for 6 months the 50 most important influencers in Turkey to check if the marketing content of influencer posts

- has been correctly disclosed;
- does not advertise prohibited goods and services ;
- is compliant with national ad regulation and ICC Code.

The monitoring was accompanied by actions to raise awareness among influencers, which made it possible to reduce the non-disclosure rate from 57% to 15.2% between March and September.

DATA-DRIVEN SELF-REGULATORY GROUPS

- Long-term adoption of data-driven technology
- 1st data-driven monitoring project launched in 2022
- Advanced discussions to launch a pilot project
- Digitalisation of internal procedures

11%

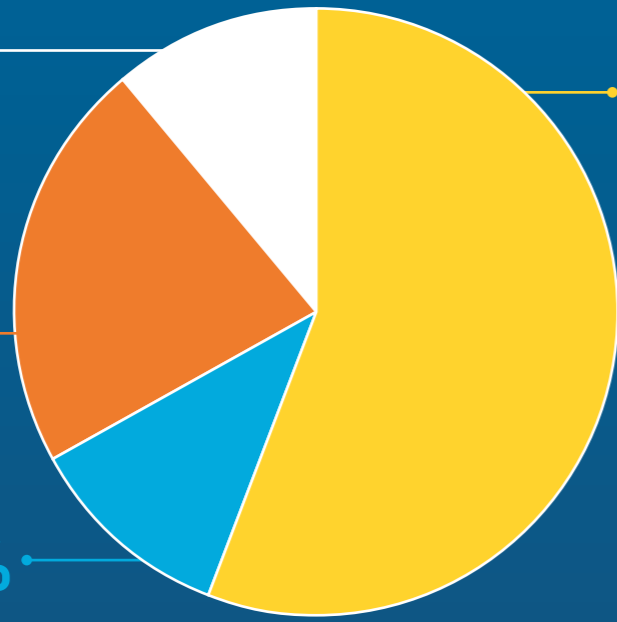
ALCOHOL
TARGETING
CHILDREN

22%

HFSS

11%

OTHERS



56%

NON-DISCLOSURE
(IM)

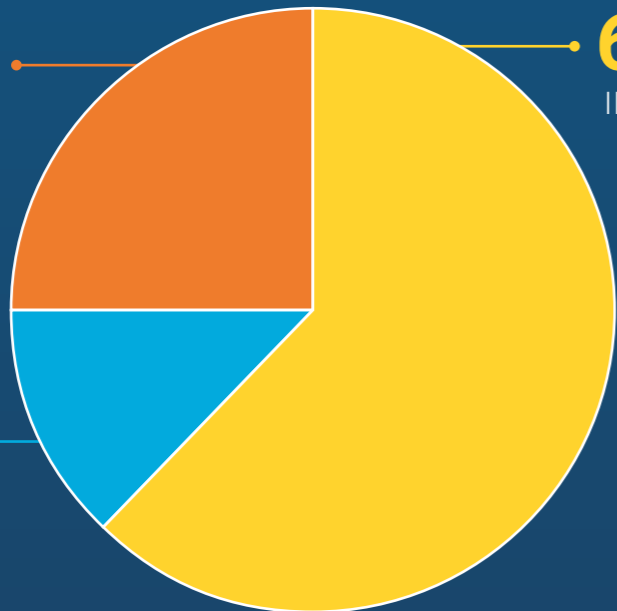
TOPICS

25%

YOUTUBE

13%

WEBSITE

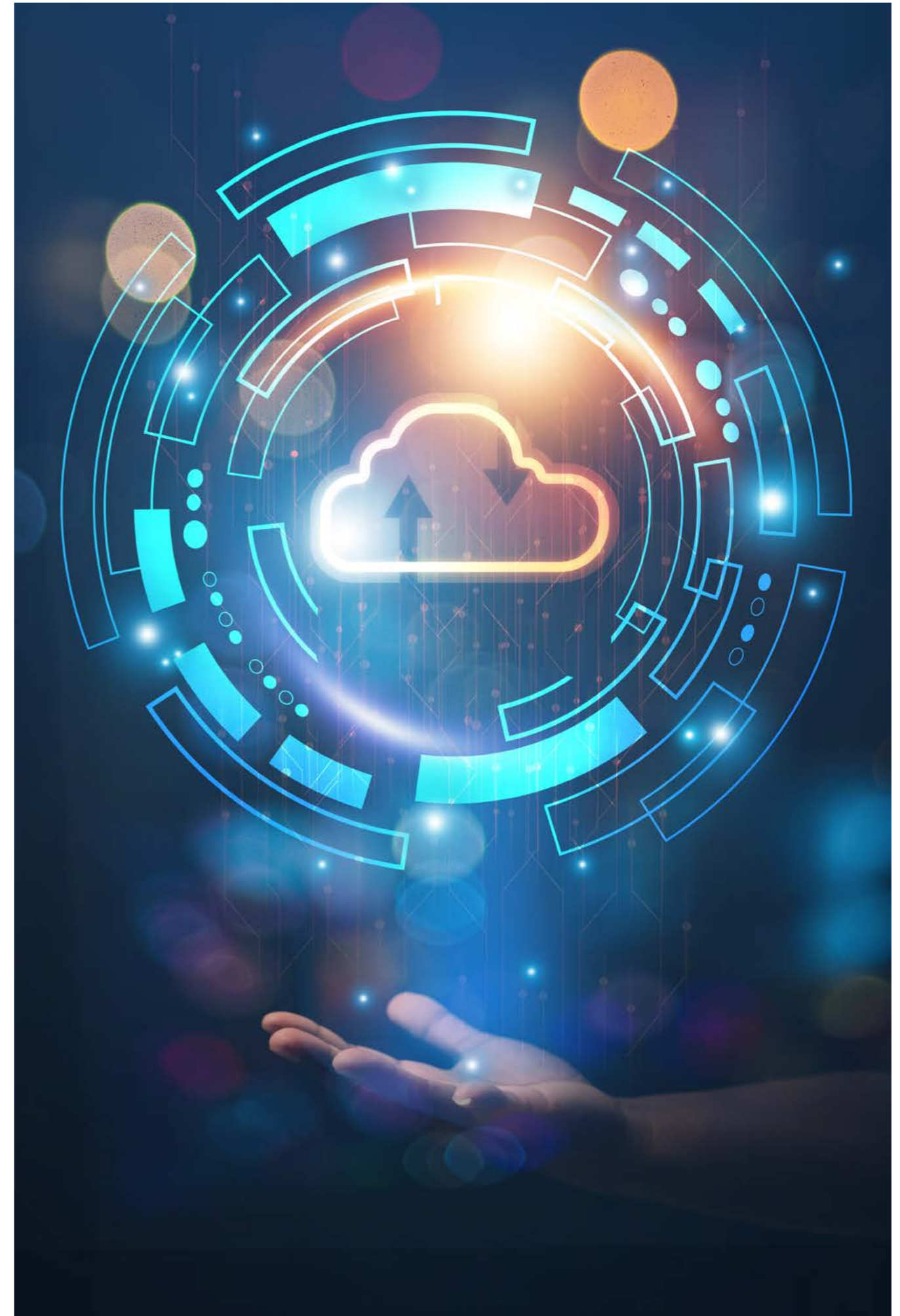


63%

INSTAGRAM

MEDIA MONITORED

EASA will continue to encourage the use of this technology among its members to ensure legal, decent, honest and truthful advertising for the benefit of the entire advertising community and ultimately of the consumer.



Connecting with Digital Players

Considering Google-EASA partnership as a formidable example-setter, EASA has been seeking to secure commitment in ad SR from other digital platforms. Throughout 2022, EASA met with Meta on numerous occasions, as part of one-to-one bi-monthly meetings. This comes as an addition to Meta and EMEA industry roundtables where EASA has actively participated in. Furthermore, speakers from Meta took part in the EASA biannual meetings in Dublin.

In parallel, EASA met with the representatives of TikTok several times over 2022. Moreover, TikTok attended events organised by EASA such as the session on “Ensuring responsible advertising online” in Dublin and EASA 30th Anniversary Celebratory Event in Brussels.

Both discussions with Meta and TikTok focused on possible collaborations, including financial commitment to the network and membership in EASA, showcasing the value ad SR brings to digital players and the wide industry.



Google immersion conference in Dublin, May 2022



Conference and panel discussion ‘Ensuring responsible advertising online’, Dublin, 12 May 2022



Google Safety Engineering Centre, visited during the immersion conference in Dublin, May 2022



Siobhan Cummiskey, Director of content policy at Meta, at the EASA network meetings in Dublin

Collaborating with Digital Players

EASA-GOOGLE PARTNERSHIP

Google's membership in the Alliance has been instrumental in helping EASA make ad SR fit for the future. Google's inputs were tangible across different areas of EASA's work, both at the European and national level.

European level

INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING & CONTRIBUTION TO A COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO SELF-REGULATION

- Two Google -focused webinars organised in 2022, one on cryptocurrency rules and the other on the potential of AI tools for safety
- One in-person immersion conference at Google Safety Engineering Offices in Dublin, enabling exchanges of priorities on keeping the online ad space safe
- Hosting of EASA's biannual meeting in Madrid at Google's offices
- Google is the only digital pure play company to have signed EASA's 30th anniversary declaration

EU funded projects

Project monitoring

Building on the successful results of 2021, EASA has continued the monitoring of European programmes in 2022 in order to identify those where EASA's network could meaningfully contribute. EASA especially focused on the following two: Horizon Europe and CERV (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values). These two programmes present the advantage of being similar in terms of the thematic approach, both addressing issues of gender stereotypes and non-discrimination, fully in line with the activities of self-regulatory organisations.

In 2022, EASA carried out a preliminary analysis touching upon the following points: what has already been done by SROs on the issue of gender stereotypes, the benefits that EASA and its members could expect from participating in a European project, and what this would imply in terms of concrete actions for the project partners.

EASA also explored which partners might be interested in participating in such a project, both internally with its members as well as externally with other players such as universities, the events sector, artificial intelligence developers, etc. This analysis made it possible to draw up an initial assessment, both regarding the selection of projects to which EASA could respond, and the resources it could allocate for those.





EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



**Serving
EASA's
Network**

Projects

Monitoring exercise coordination

EASA has been coordinating monitoring projects to assess sectoral compliance in different markets since 2003. Compliance monitoring projects are a proactive way to identify issues and work as a learning exercise for advertising practitioners. EASA also carries out ad hoc exercises, advising various sectors on best practices in advertising self-regulation. EASA runs an accountability mechanism panel, where SRO experts assess complaints submitted by consumers across Europe. In this section, you can find an overview of the past and future projects carried out by EASA and its members.

MONITORING EXERCISES

2 International and 3 European exercises conducted

5

PROFILES CHECKED

Including websites, social media and influencer marketing profiles

1934

SROs IN EUROPE AND ACROSS THE WORLD

19



Alcohol monitoring

In 2022, EASA conducted a monitoring exercise of the Responsible Marketing Pact coordinating the work of 7 European SROs and 7 SROs from the rest of the world. EASA ran this monitoring from 2017 to 2019 and the 2022 project has been a continuation of these 3 waves.

REVIEWED PROFILES

1365

(342 Facebook profiles, 323 Instagram profiles, 145 Twitter profiles, 350 company owned websites and 205 YouTube profiles)

The monitoring exercise was conducted in June-July 2022, and the final reports on the results were sent to the companies in September 2022.



Alcohol monitoring

Company specific monitoring exercises

As an addition to the RMP/DGP monitoring exercise, one company asked EASA to conduct checks against the RMP/DGP safeguards by 10 SROs from Europe and across the world in addition to the main RMP/DGP monitoring exercise.

REVIEWED
PROFILES

100

(30 Facebook profiles, 31 Instagram profiles, 6 Twitter profiles, 27 company owned websites and 6 YouTube profiles)



EU Pledge monitoring

In the scope of its long-standing collaboration with the EU Pledge Secretariat, EASA ran in 2022 the 14th monitoring exercise to assess whether EU Pledge member companies respected their



commitment to not advertise food and beverage products that do not meet the applicable nutritional criteria to children under the age of 13 and whether the adverts are in potential breach with the ICC (International Chamber of Commerce) Advertising and Marketing Communications Code and the ICC Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communications.

During the exercise 8 SROs of EASA's network reviewed company-owned websites, company-managed social media pages, and influencer profiles that companies collaborated with for marketing purposes. The findings were then shared during a dedicated workshop where companies and SROs discussed the findings and exchanged information on factors that contributed to ads appealing to children and self-regulatory rules.

REVIEWED
PROFILES

200

(55 company-owned websites, 145 company-owned social media pages)

AND
INFLUENCER
PROFILES

96

(126 posts)

This monitoring ensures that companies receive an independent, impartial, knowledgeable and experienced team of self-regulatory experts who review online content in a fair, consistent, and objective manner. The exercise allows for companies to follow the development of their yearly compliance rate, to demonstrate the solidity of their commitments, and identify possible improvements.

This 14th iteration of the monitoring exercise included a category of compliant profiles that featured factors potentially problematic in terms of how appealing the creatives are for children under the age 13: the orange category. This category consisted solely of compliant advertisements with regard to the EU Pledge commitment and was meant to provide context to marketers about how experts conduct the review of profiles. It also listed the specific aspects and elements contained in these compliant creatives that could appeal to children as much as to other demographics. The intent is to further strengthen the high-level compliance level of signatory companies and show in fact that the great majority of profiles did not contain any of these factors.



Unesda monitoring



Coupled with the EU Pledge monitoring project, EASA conducted a monitoring for the products of seven companies' belonging to UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe (some also signatories of the EU Pledge) following the same criteria and methodology as the aforementioned project. UNESDA is an organization that represents 23 national associations and 10 corporate members from the European soft drinks industry.

REVIEWED
PROFILES

48

(14 company-owned websites, 34 company-owned social media pages)

AND
INFLUENCER
PROFILES

14

(41 posts)

The profiles were monitored by the 8 SROs involved in the EU Pledge monitoring exercise.

EU Pledge accountability mechanism

The EU Pledge Accountability Mechanism was initially designed and implemented by EASA in 2018. Its purpose is to allow the handling of complaints revolving around alleged EU Pledge commitment breaches and to further increase the Pledge's accountability and transparency in line with DG SANTE's request. The mechanism features a panel of 8 experts coming from EASA members SROs. For every case received, 3 SRO (Self-Regulatory Organisations) experts assess the case and adjudicate with the support of EASA and the EU Pledge's secretariat. In 2022, no complaints were handled.



Gambling monitoring



EGBA (European Gaming and Betting Association) developed their Code of Conduct in 2020. In 2020, EASA conducted a gap analysis on this Code using the expertise from its SROs across Europe. As a follow-up to the adoption of the Code, EGBA commissioned EASA to conduct a monitoring exercise with ads of 5 companies captured during the European football championships of 2021.

REVIEWED
TV AND
ONLINE ADS **88**

SOCIAL
MEDIA
PROFILES **32**

Four SROs took part in this monitoring, checking the content of these ads, as well as official social media pages of the signatory companies. The initial results of the monitoring exercise were sent to the companies in May 2022. After a workshop on the results with both the companies and the SROs in June, the final reports were delivered in July 2022.

What's next for 2023?

Potentially
**NEW
MONITORING
EXERCISES** **4**

for
SECTORS **2**

Alcohol monitoring - APPEAL

WFA commissioned EASA to conduct the Appeal monitoring, checking whether TV, YouTube and paid social ads are compliant with the Appeal pillar of the RMP, a blacklist banning over 50 creative features that are primarily appealing to minors. Nielsen, an external partner, will provide captured ads, that will be checked by 6 European SROs. The project will take place in the first quarter of 2023.

Alcohol monitoring - RMP/DGP

In November 2023, EASA and WFA started negotiations for a new wave of the RMP DGP monitoring for WFA and IARD, in order to verify compliance with the RMP social media and the DGP commitments for digital marketing communications related to alcoholic beverages worldwide. This project will be conducted in the third quarter of 2023 and will include the monitoring of approximately 300 profiles by 7 SROs.

EU Pledge monitoring

In the scope of its long-standing collaboration with the EU Pledge Secretariat, EASA should run in 2023 the 15th monitoring exercise to assess whether EU Pledge member companies respect their commitment to not advertise food and beverage products that do not meet the applicable nutritional criteria to children under the age of 13 and to be in line with the ICC Advertising and Marketing Communications Code and the ICC Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communications. During the exercise 8 SROs of EASA's network will review websites, social media and influencers profiles.

UNESDA monitoring

Coupled with the EU Pledge monitoring project, EASA may conduct a new wave of monitoring for UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe member companies, some also signatories of the EU Pledge, following the same criteria and methodology as the aforementioned project.



ROCCO RENALDI

EU Pledge Secretary General
(Landmark Public Affairs)



EASA's hard work and dedication helps to further ensure our member's commitment. The network of SRO experts offers an insightful, independent, and detailed monitoring. We are looking forward to collaborate with them again in the future.



MARTEEN HAIJER

Secretary General, EGBA



EGBA collaborated with EASA to produce a gap analysis and a monitoring exercise of the EGBA code of conduct on responsible advertising for online gambling. The code is the first pan-European set of self-regulatory rules for online gambling advertising. The gap analysis exercise provided a great overview of how the code fits in 15 Members States and the UK, while monitoring allowed the signatory parties of the code, members of EGBA, to examine compliance and ways of strengthening the code and its application.





EASA ANNUAL REVIEW



Promoting Advertising Self-Regulation

Policy and advocacy

Over the course of 2022, EASA has constantly worked on raising policymakers' awareness on advertising self-regulation, on its efficiency, its advantages and its complementarity with EU law. Such EASA advocacy vis-à-vis European institutions is only possible thanks to a close coordination with all the EASA members, which have provided highly valuable input on a variety of files.

Below you will find an overview of the policy initiatives, in which EASA has been involved in 2022 whether by answering consultation, actively reaching out to lawmakers, or driving new SR project enhancing the visibility of ad SR.



Consumer affairs: fitness check on digital fairness and ADR

The European Commission has launched on 17 May 2022 a Fitness Check on digital fairness in the EU consumer law. The objective of this in-depth evaluation is to assess the adequacy of the existing EU legal framework in dealing with consumer protection issues, and it might lead to a new legislative proposal revising the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, or to measures for improved implementation and enforcement. EASA has responded to two waves of consultation that took place over the course of 2022, with a call for evidence in May-June 2022, followed by a more detailed public consultation in late 2022. In the most recent phase of the fitness check, the European Commission has been looking into online vulnerability, amending the rules on the burden of proof, dark patterns, influencer marketing, and the marketing of digital items. The European Commission will continue to carry out this fitness check over 2023 and 2024, with results expected after the 2024 European elections.

On a different note, regarding consumer protection, EASA replied in late 2022 to the European Commission's consultation on the update of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) framework. EASA's answer was based on member's feedback, thanks to a dedicated info request and webinar on 14 December with the participation of the relevant Commission's Unit. EASA remains in close contact with the DG JUST's unit in charge of consumer protection and redress.

Green claims

The "Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition" initiative was launched on 30 March 2022 by the European Commission. This initiative intends to amend the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD) and its Annex, to protect consumers from greenwashing and explicitly prohibit several green claims. The draft report published by the lead parliamentary Committee (IMCO) contains several amendments to the provisions on green claims, most of which are tightening the European Commission's draft, and include: compulsory pre-approval mechanism for sustainability labels, a ban on future-oriented claims relying on greenhouse gas offsetting schemes without strong commitments, and a ban on claims that a product has a neutral or positive greenhouse gas emissions' impact, inter alia.

EASA has provided feedback to the European Commission's proposal in June. At a later stage, considering the developments of the legislative file, EASA updated its paper, suggesting solutions to address the shortcoming identified in the MEP's approach and to promote an enhanced recognition of self-regulation in the UCPD. The co-legislators' negotiating positions are expected in 2023, together with the ensuing interinstitutional negotiations.

EASA's 30th anniversary event on 16th November offered a great opportunity to exchange views with policymakers and stakeholders on the topic "Ensuring responsible marketing for the green transition". The event was introduced by a keynote from Commissioner Didier Reynders. Furthermore, EASA is developing and nurturing good relations with DG Just and the CPC network on the issue of green claims.



Political advertising

The European Commission's proposal for a Regulation on political advertising, initially tabled back in 2021, has been debated by the European institutions in 2022. The proposals' objective is to support the functioning of the single market for advertising services; however, to ensure that the source and purpose of advertising is known and to combat disinformation and interference in democracy in the EU, its definition of political advertising became a matter of concern, as it would most likely cover commercial issue-based advertising. The co-legislators are keeping a fast pace in the negotiations, aiming for an entry into force of the Regulation before the European elections in 2024.

Throughout 2022, EASA has been very actively liaising with policymakers, stressing that rules targeting political advertising should not cover commercial issue-based advertising, illustrating

why such an excessive scope would be detrimental to existing regulatory and self-regulatory rules on commercial advertising, and advocating for amending accordingly the definition of political advertising. This work is continuing in 2023.

AVMS Directive implementation

Since its revision of 2018, the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) contains a strong recognition of the role to be played by self-regulation in the fields coordinated by the Directive. The transposition of the revised Directive took longer than expected according to law (2020). Ireland was the last one to transpose on 10 December 2022, through the enacting of its Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill.



Karim Ibourki, ERGA Chair, EASA Chairwoman and Director General

EASA is deepening its collaboration with the Irish Regulator BAI, which is expecting to face a challenging number of complaints, due to the extension of the AVMSD to the video-sharing platforms, combined with the application of the country-of-origin principle. The Irish Regulator has shown interest in the experience of EASA's SRO network and the good coverage by ad SR of the AVMSD

VSP-related provisions, resulting in the development of a pilot project, with 5 SROs so far (ASAI, ARPP, SRC, Autocontrol and ASA). This pilot has taken the shape of a statement of intent signed on 14 December 2022 by EASA and the BAI, opening a space for potential collaboration between the BAI (and soon the new Irish Media Commission replacing the BAI) and EASA, on the handling of VSP-related cross-border complaints covered by SR rules. The opening of the pilot to other SRO members is expected in 2023, alongside with the first stage of the project's operationalisation.

Moreover, since Summer 2022, the European Parliament's Culture and Education Committee (CULT) has been preparing a report on the implementation of the AVMSD, complemented by an opinion from the IMCO parliamentary committee. EASA answered a consultation by CULT over the Summer 2022, took part as a speaker in a CULT hearing in October, and further increased contacts with the relevant MEPs in CULT and IMCO. The CULT's draft report, presented on 1 December, fully recognised the potential of co- and self-regulation. The European Commission is also preparing a report on AVMSD implementation, which will be focused on the transposition and implementation by the Member States.

EASA is also keeping good relations with the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA), as shown by the presentation held by Mr Ibourki, the Chair of ERGA, during EASA's Executive Committee on 15 September. EASA also took part as a speaker in an ERGA internal workshop on 4 October, with a focus on the application of the AVMSD to vloggers.



Digital services act

In 2022, the DSA was adopted, officially entering into force in November 2022. While the implementation of provisions encouraging the drawing up of EU-wide Codes of Conduct for online advertising mechanisms deserves particular attention, two other mechanisms may be of particular interest to SROs as well.

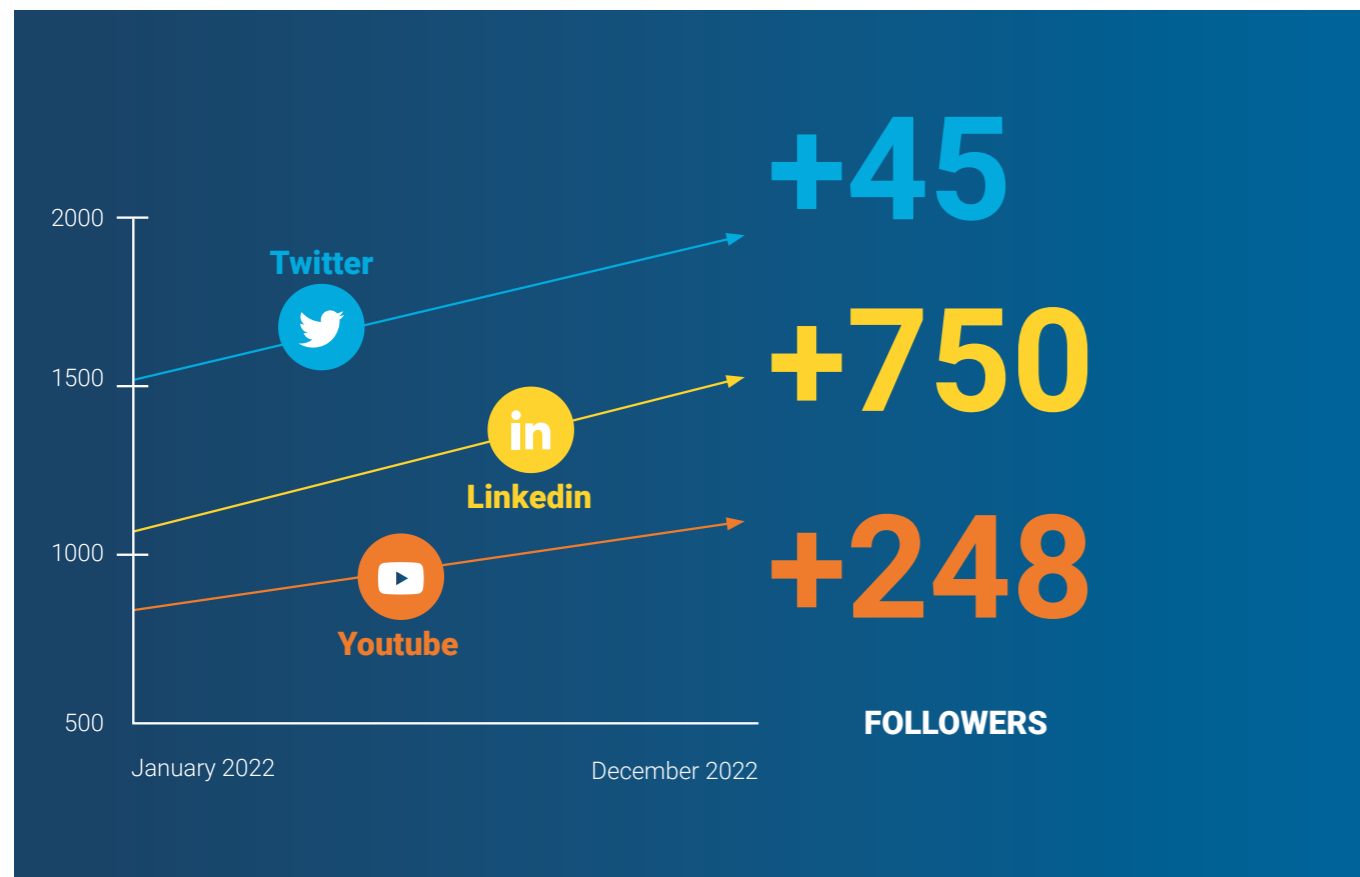
First, out-of-court dispute settlement bodies (Article 21), meant to complement online platforms' compulsory internal complaint-handling systems, could represent an opportunity for SROs. Second, the possibility for "trusted flaggers" to report illegal ads (Article 22) by submitting notices of illegal content to online platforms with adequate substantiation, is also an instrument which some SROs may like to take up. EASA has continuously kept its members informed along the adoption process of the DSA and will continue to inform them throughout in the implementation phase.




Communications and publications

EASA's visibility on social networks

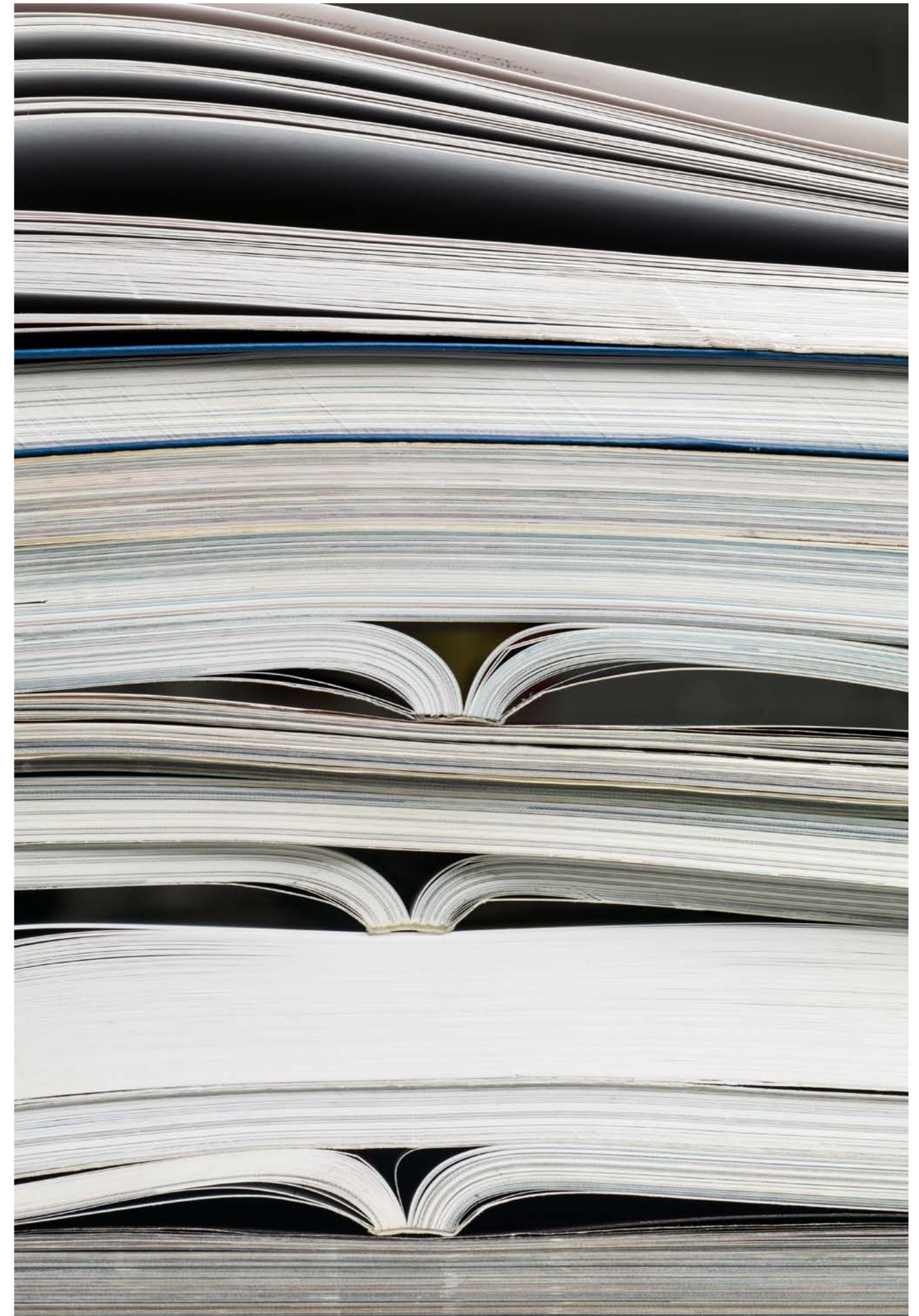
In 2021, EASA boosted its social media presence with systematic updates and posts, updated its website content with newest information, produced publications on statistical reports, best practice recommendations, updated its Bluebook and contributed to external publications.



 @AdvertisingEASA

 european-advertising-standards-alliance

 The European Advertising Standards Alliance – EASA



Publications

In 2022, EASA produced publications on statistical reports, leaflets, best practice recommendations, and updated its Bluebook.



BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATION ON CODE DRAFTING AND CONSULTATION



EASA DIGITAL BLUE BOOK

STATISTICS REPORTS:



EUROPEAN TRENDS IN ADVERTISING COMPLAINTS, COPY ADVICE AND PRE-CLEARANCE (2021)



EASA ANNUAL CROSS-BORDER COMPLAINTS REPORT (2021)

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