



Drinks Ireland Policy Priorities

The island of Ireland has a rich and celebrated heritage of brewing and distilling. Our island is home to some of the world's most iconic and best loved drinks brands. Irish-produced drink categories export to over 140 global markets, supporting local jobs, local farmers and local suppliers. Our breweries and distilleries attract over 2.8 million visitors annually. Domestic consumers of our products contribute billions of euro in revenue to the Irish exchequer. We are very proud of the contribution of the drinks industry to the Irish economy. We are committed to responsible marketing, promotion and sales of our products and to the sustainable brewing and distilling of our beers, spirits and ciders. Ireland's drinks industry:

- Employs over 90,000 people right across Ireland
- Contributes €2.6 billion in excise and VAT revenues to the exchequer
- Generates €2.9 billion in wages from the drinks industry and hospitality sector
- Purchases €1.1 billion of Irish produce annually
- Exports €1.45 billion worth of product to over 140 markets
- Attracts over 2.8 million tourists to 24 visitor attractions
- Leads the way on sustainable business practices

Drinks Ireland is proud to launch our four-point manifesto, which we ask all political parties to support.

Commitment 1: GLOBAL AMBITION FOR LOCAL INDUSTRY

Our drinks industry is an ambitious one. Ireland's breweries and distilleries export €1.45 billion of high-quality premium products to 140 countries. To continue this stellar performance, a stable global trading environment is critical. Regrettably, however, the Irish Drinks Industry continues to face significant uncertainty due to Brexit, while our Irish cream liqueur exports have been hit by a 25% tariff in our largest export market, the US. To secure industry growth, the Irish Government needs to:

- support an ambitious EU and global trade agenda, including ratification of trade agreements that benefit Irish drinks producers
- oppose protectionism in global trade & seek the reversal of US tariffs on Irish drinks products
- maintain ongoing frictionless trade between Ireland and Northern Ireland; and the EU and the UK generally post-Brexit, and
- implement measures to support market diversification by Irish drinks producers, including targeted promotional campaigns in international markets

We ask you to support the Irish Drinks Industry by creating an effective environment for global business growth.

Commitment 2: SUPPORTING REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND IRISH CONSUMERS

The drinks industry is an integral part of the Irish economy. It directly employs 90,000 people in a national network of pubs, off-licences, restaurants, breweries, distilleries, wholesalers, distributors, and other supporting businesses, and supports approximately 175,000 jobs in the wider hospitality sector.

Ireland's alcohol excise tax is the second highest in the European Union. We have the highest EU excise tax on wine, the second highest on beer and the third highest on spirits and cider. Our high excise tax unfairly penalises businesses and Irish consumers, puts jobs in rural Ireland at risk, and negatively impacts Ireland's attractiveness as a tourist destination, at a time when tourism revenue is declining.

We ask you to support the Irish Drinks Industry by bringing excise into line with the majority of EU economies.

Commitment 3: SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DRINKS INDUSTRY AND IN OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

The Irish drinks industry makes a major contribution to Irish agriculture, purchasing 46,000 tonnes of apples, 220,000 tonnes of Irish malt and barley, over 300 million litres of milk, as well as supporting 12,000 farm families.

The Irish drinks industry is already a leader in sustainability from sourcing Irish ingredients to actively reducing energy usage, CO2 emissions and waste. Going forward, active government support will be required to continue to foster sustainable practices. This includes:

- Reversing the dramatic loss of area planted under cereal crops e.g. barley
- Recognising that tillage farming contributes significantly less to greenhouse gas emissions than other types of farming
- Expanding and diversify Irish malting production
- Incentivising the growing of viable non-barley crops suitable for brewing and distilling, and
- Continuing to incentivise sustainable practices in drinks manufacturing

We ask you to support a greener and more sustainable future for the Irish drinks Industry and our supply chain.

Commitment 4: WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO REDUCE ALCOHOL MISUSE

The drinks industry is an important partner in the fight to address alcohol related harm. We can only be successful in addressing alcohol related harm through a multi-stakeholder approach.

Drinks Ireland members are fully committed to responsible marketing, promotion and sales of our products. We are committed to the effective implementation and full compliance with the advertising measures recently introduced under the Public Health (Alcohol) Act.

We have a proven track record of implementing positive change in this space. Since 2003, the drinks industry has proudly adhered to some of the strictest advertising codes in the world for both content and volume of alcohol advertising. This is reflected positively in consumption figures, which show that since 2001, the average per adult alcohol consumption has fallen by 23.2% in Ireland [CSO & Revenue figures]. In addition, latest figures from the Health Behaviours in School-aged Children 2018 Study shows that 69% of young people in Ireland aged between 10 -17 have never had an alcoholic drink, an increase of 11% since 2014.

We ask you to support the Irish drinks industry to take targeted action to tackle harmful consumption, promote responsible consumption, and recognise the important role industry can play in addressing alcohol misuse.