

The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA)

is an umbrella organisation bringing together the 23 existing self-regulatory organisations (SROs) in Europe today with the pan-European bodies representing advertisers, agencies and the media. Established in 1992 EASA is committed to promoting and supporting self-regulation in the advertising industry. EPC is working closely with EASA to extend the remit of SROs to digital media to ensure high standards for consumers as they enjoy advertising online as well as in traditional media. EPC's Executive Director Angela Mills Wade is currently Vice-Chairman of EASA.

The EPC strongly supports the use of self-regulation in advertising as a complement to statutory legislation according to the principles of EASA's

Self-Regulatory Charter which have been validated by the European Commission as a tried and tested means of providing good, appropriate regulation and high standards of consumer protection in this sector.

Main arguments for self-regulation:

- No cost to consumers but provides fast and efficient consumer complaints mechanism
- Complements existing statutory legislation
- Rules can adapt quickly to societal, industry or consumer behaviour changes
- S-R bodies make quick decisions and act immediately on judgements providing realistic and practical solutions
- Consumer protection is often over and above legal requirements
- Run by independents, beyond influence of any particular company or sector and under the scrutiny of public authorities, consumer organisation and NGOs.

Self-regulation of the advertising industry has worked effectively for over 40 years in many countries and is spreading across Europe and beyond which is why the European Commission has made specific references to self-regulation as a useful and preferred means of transposing such Directives as the Unfair Commercial

Practices Directive and the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

Yet EU legislation remains a constant threat in areas such as alcohol, food, energy labelling, cars, gender stereotyping and advertising to children.

Data Privacy and Online Behavioural Advertising

DG SANCO, under the last Commission, was looking at data privacy from a consumer protection angle. They launched a useful debate on the way in which advertising can be targeted online according to interests of online users. EPC contributed to a pan-European industry submission which can be found here. [Joint response to DG SANCO on the Non-Paper on Data Collection, Targeting and Profiling of Consumers For Commercial Purposes in Online Environments](#) (13 July 2009).

This activity has now been passed over to DG Freedom Security and Justice under Commissioner Reding's leadership.

In response to concerns raised by the Commission and consumer bodies about the way in which their data is processed for the purposes of advertising online, EPC's Executive Director is now chairing a **cross-industry Steering Group to develop a package of self-regulation for Online Behavioural Advertising**. This group is working with IAB Europe in order that their Framework Code on OBA can integrate with the advertising self-regulatory system.

<http://www.easa-alliance.org>

talk to use

For further information, please go to:
<http://www.easa-alliance.org>

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