



International Council  
for Ad Self-Regulation

# 2024

## Global Factbook

**OF ADVERTISING SELF-REGULATORY ORGANIZATIONS**



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# INTRODUCTION

The Global Factbook of Advertising Self-Regulatory Organizations (Global SRO Factbook) is an annual publication by the International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation (ICAS).

The 2024 edition showcases the role of Advertising Standards Bodies, also known as Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs), within the ICAS network, highlighting key data and insights from 2023.

It explores global industry trends, regulatory developments, and the evolving landscape of advertising self-regulation. A key focus is on how SROs are leveraging machine learning and artificial intelligence to enhance their processes, improve efficiency and expand their impact.

The Global Factbook complements the [Global SRO Database](#), an online resource providing information on SRO operations, available via the ICAS website.

Built on a standardized methodology, the database enhances transparency, enabling high-level comparisons of SRO operations across markets while accommodating local differences.

The Global SRO Factbook provides a comprehensive summary of key data from the Global SRO Database, along with additional insights from SROs. It offers context on local market differences while presenting a broader international perspective. Together, the Factbook and Database provide industry stakeholders with valuable insights into advertising self-regulation systems worldwide.

Effective self-regulation depends on legal, cultural, and economic factors unique to each region and country. While no single model suits all markets, tailored solutions ensure relevance and impact in diverse regulatory environments.

Despite variations in how SROs operate globally, all ICAS members adhere to common principles outlined in the ICAS Charter (adopted in May 2021).

These principles<sup>[1]</sup> promote transparency, accountability, and high standards for responsible advertising,

including broad market coverage, independent decision-making, industry guidance and training, proactive ad monitoring, and strong enforcement mechanisms.

Technology plays a central role in fulfilling the ICAS Charter's commitments. Investments in AI, machine learning, and digital monitoring enhance enforcement efforts, fostering an ethical, transparent, and accountable advertising ecosystem that evolves with the digital landscape.

[1] The principles enshrined in the ICAS Charter correspond to the requirements of integrity pointed out by researchers and authorities. See the following documents for reference:

**"UNCTAD. Manual on consumer protection, 2018"**. "Box. 5. Checklist for Self-regulation and corporate social responsibility", Page 44. Available at: [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditccplp2017d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditccplp2017d1_en.pdf)

**"OECD Report – alternatives to traditional regulation"**. 2002. Pages 59 – 60 Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatorypolicy/42245468.pdf>

OECD. Industry self-regulation – role and use in supporting consumer interests. 2015, pp. 8, **"Features or provisions of the Self-Regulation"**. Available at: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/5js4k1fjqkwh-en.pdf?expires=1658438454&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=29D99884BF769D9826B1B7724EBE71D0>

# 1. SELF-REGULATORY ORGANIZATIONS

Advertising Standards Bodies, also known as Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs), are independent organizations[2] ensuring that advertising across all media is legal, decent, honest, and truthful.

They proactively promote responsible advertising by offering guidance, training, and industry support while also addressing complaints about misleading, harmful, or offensive ads. Through their work, SROs help uphold consumer trust and industry integrity, fostering a transparent and accountable advertising ecosystem.

Their systems involve a wide range of stakeholders, not only the advertisers, but also advertising agencies and the media making this self-regulatory system an effective and 'collective' regulatory system for advertising, which is unparalleled when compared to other forms of industry self-regulation.

Multiple checks and balances ensure transparency and accountability, which is why the benefits of advertising self-regulation have been recognized by public authorities, international organizations[3], as well as in legislative texts.

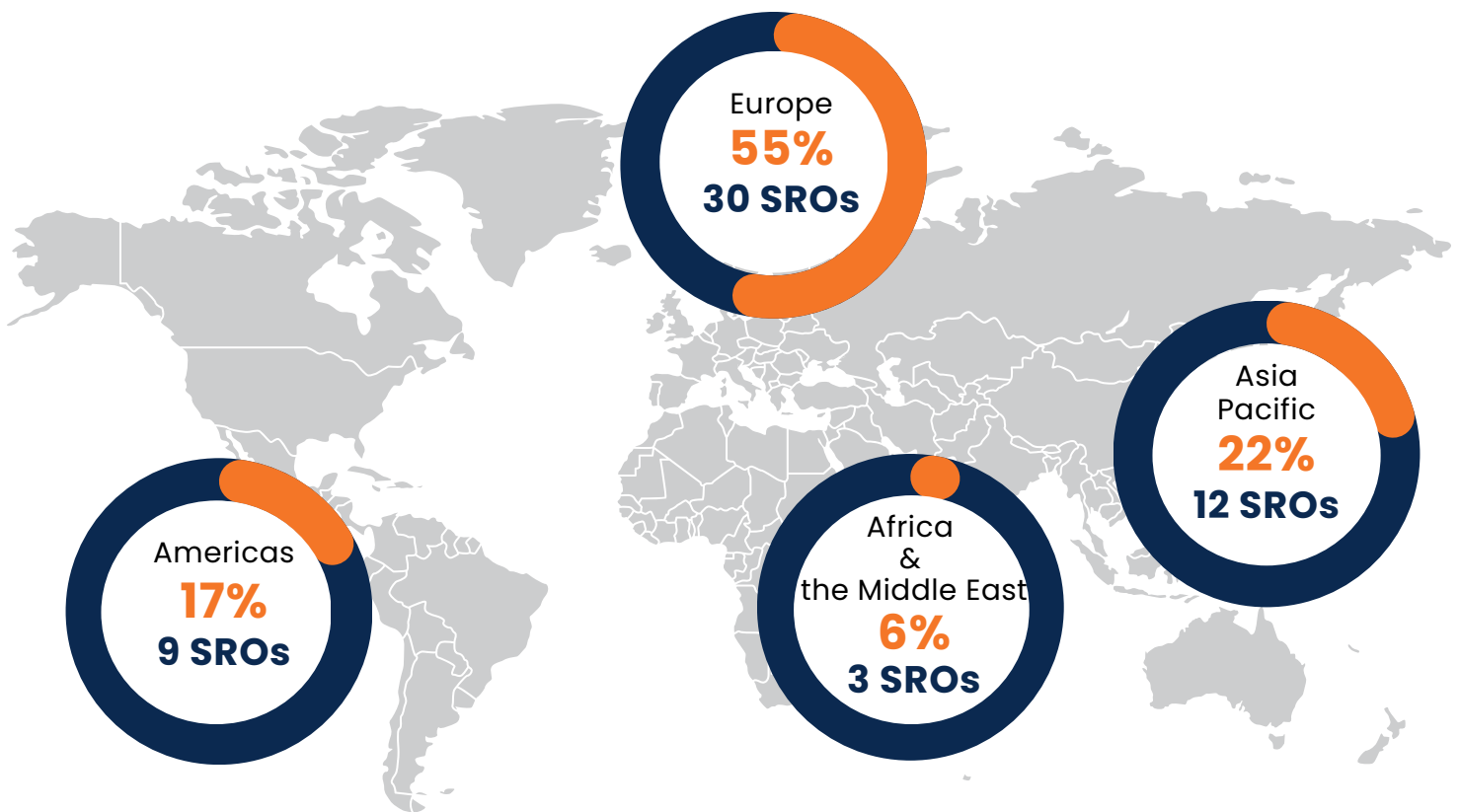
[2] SROs operate independently. They administer and enforce the codes and standards independently from the government, specific interest groups, and the advertising industry.

[3] The benefits of advertising self-regulation are recognized by international governmental organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). See e.g. [Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation \(APEC\) Joint Ministerial Statement](#), APEC, 2017, Industry Self-Regulation: ROLE AND USE IN SUPPORTING CONSUMER INTERESTS, OECD (2015-03-01), OECD Digital Economy Papers, No. 247, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5js4klfjqkwh-en>. "Toolkit for protecting digital consumers". (OECD) 2018. The Report recognizes the benefits of effective Self-Regulation, "particularly relevant to the characteristics of the digital economy". Pages 59 and 60 <https://www.oecd.org/going-digital/topics/digital-consumers/toolkit-for-protecting-digital-consumers.pdf>

# 1.1. MARKET COVERAGE OF ADVERTISING SELF-REGULATION

Today, ICAS estimates that approximately 50 countries have advertising standards bodies worldwide (see the full list in the Appendix)[4]. More than half of these are already direct members of the ICAS network, while SROs in another 14 countries are indirect members through the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA), ICAS' sister organization in Europe.

Chart 1. Geographical Spread of Established SROs YEAR 2024



[4] For the purpose of this report, countries where more than one organization performs the functions of an SRO are only counted once. For the map, Turkey is counted as part of the Africa & Middle East region, despite also being part of Asia and Europe, and Russia is counted as part of Asia-Pacific, despite being also part of Europe.

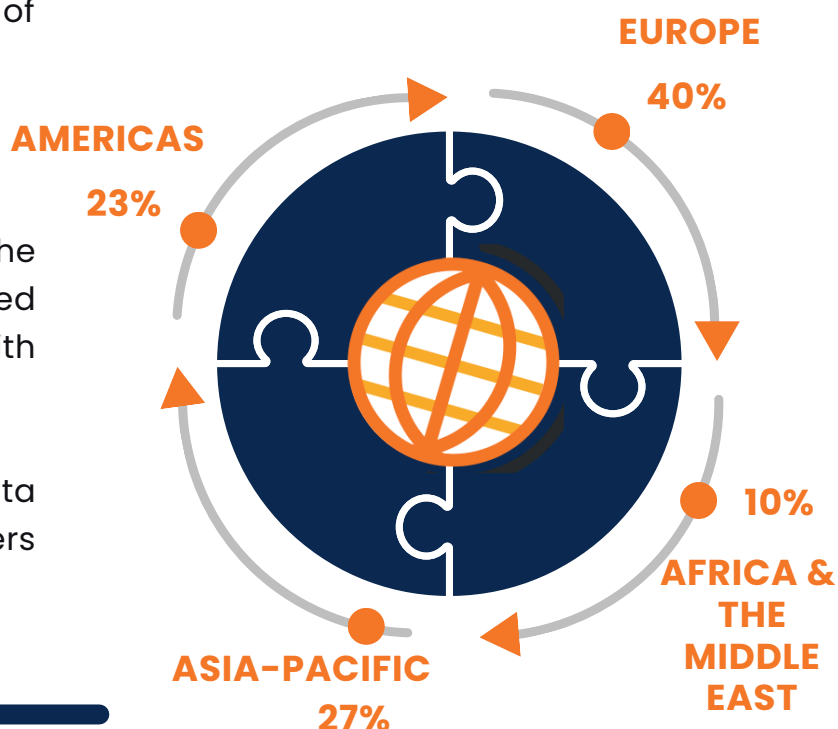
Additionally, three SROs – Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay – have joined the newly established ICAS Latin American Chapter, which was launched in October 2023.

This new chapter serves as a platform and gathering point for ICAS members and stakeholders in Latin America, along with the Spanish SRO, AUTOCONTROL, to exchange ideas, share best practices, and discuss global and regional issues. The platform will also support collaborations and joint initiatives aimed at strengthening the capabilities and growth of advertising self-regulatory organizations in Latin America.

In several markets, efforts are underway to establish fully independent SROs. ICAS and EASA work closely with these markets to support the promotion of advertising self-regulation.

Among ICAS members, Europe has the highest number of SROs with 12, followed by Asia-Pacific with 8, the Americas with 7 and Africa & the Middle East with 3.

Unless otherwise noted, the data presented later in this Factbook covers 28[5] of ICAS’ 30 SRO members.



[5] Data from AUTOCONTROL Colombia and CONAR – Consejo de Autorregulación Publicitaria de CERNECO in Paraguay was not available for this report.



## 1.2. HISTORY AND SRO GOVERNANCE

### History

ICAS members include some of the largest and oldest SROs in the world, including those in France, the UK, Spain, the U.S., and Canada. L'Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la Publicité (ARPP) in France is the oldest SRO, founded in 1935, and will celebrate its 90th anniversary in 2025.

The Canadian SRO, Ad Standards, was established in the 1950s, followed by three more SROs in the 1960s (the UK, the Netherlands, and Italy). The development of SROs then accelerated in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s.

More recently, a few SROs have been established, building on pre-existing structures and local advertising codes.

The South African SRO[6] was created in 2018, and the newest, Colombia's Autocontrol[7], was founded in 2019 and became fully operational in 2020.

SROs are typically formed by advertising industry representatives committed to upholding self-regulatory standards. However, their organizational structures vary significantly across markets.

Where available, Statutes or Articles of Incorporation, and Annual Activity Reports can be accessed in the [Global SRO Database](#).

[6] The Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB) in South Africa was established in November 2018 following the closure of the former SRO. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) of South Africa had been created in 1969.

[7] In September 2019, the new SRO, Autocontrol Colombia, was launched to replace the former Comisión Nacional de Autorregulación Publicitaria (CONARP), which was itself created in the 1980s.

## SRO Governance

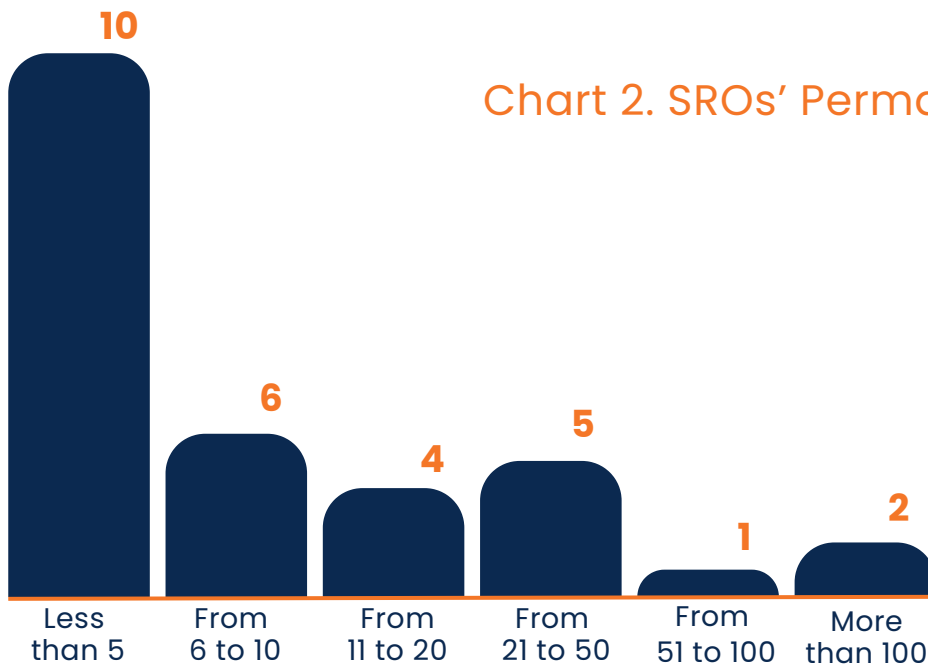
To support their governing bodies and provide services to industry players, consumers, and public authorities, as a rule, SROs have permanent staff. However, the size of their Secretariat depends on financial resources and the scope of services provided.

The smallest SROs are operated by volunteers from the industry or just one staff member.

In fact, nearly 60% of ICAS SRO members had fewer than 10 employees.

Only three SROs had more than 50 employees in 2023: BBB National Programs in the U.S.[8] with 93 staff members, AUTOCONTROL in Spain with over 102, and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in the UK with 116 people.

Chart 2. SROs' Permanent Staff



[8] Not all of BBB National Programs' employees are engaged in advertising self-regulation. About a third of the staff are engaged in non-advertising dispute resolution.

## 1.3. SRO FUNDING MODELS

In 2023, more than half of ICAS members operated with an annual budget of less than USD 1 million, while only five SROs had annual expenses exceeding USD 5 million.

Overall, SROs can be categorized into three main funding models in terms of how their activities are financed:

Half of ICAS SROs, 14 markets<sup>[9]</sup> are primarily financed through membership fees. In this model, annual contributions from member companies and/or associations representing the advertising industry are used to finance the SRO's activities. Membership fees can be a fixed amount or proportional, based on a sliding scale, where larger members contribute more than smaller ones. Additionally, some SROs apply different membership fee levels depending on the type of business the members represent, and/or the service provided.

Four markets operate under a levy system, where a small percentage of advertising costs is allocated to finance the operation of the SRO.

This amount is typically collected by advertising agencies before being transferred to the SRO. These agencies act as intermediaries between advertisers and media owners, including TV, radio, billboards, newspapers, and online platforms.

The remaining SROs (ten markets) use alternative funding methods, including service fees, a combination of membership and levy systems, voluntary contributions, or grants.



[9] A report published in October 2018 that looked at SRO funding models across the globe for members and non-members alike found in 32 markets a membership model. Read more here: [ICAS Note How are Self-Regulatory Organizations financed?](#)

## 2. SELF-REGULATORY SYSTEM

### 2.1. ADVERTISING STANDARDS

The existence of a Self-Regulatory Code of Standards or a set of Guiding Principles governing ad content is usually a prerequisite for establishing a Self-Regulatory System.

Most self-regulatory standards and programs incorporate the following core principles:

#### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Advertisements should be created with a strong sense of social responsibility, ensuring they are legal, decent, honest, and truthful.

#### FAIR COMPETITION

Advertisements should follow fair competition principles, aligning with widely accepted business practices and competition laws.

#### PUBLIC TRUST

No advertisement should undermine public confidence in advertising.

In most countries, local advertising standards are based on the **Advertising and Marketing Communications Code** of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC Marketing Code).

This code is regularly reviewed and updated to remain relevant. However, national adaptations are often necessary to reflect specific legal, social, cultural, and economic contexts.

Across ICAS markets, self-regulatory standards are implemented in different ways:

### **Direct Adoption of the ICC Marketing Code**

Belgium, Sweden, Turkey and the UAE use the ICC Marketing Code in its original form, translating it into their own languages.

### **Alternative Frameworks**

The United States follows self-regulatory standards based on laws and guidelines set by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the country's national advertising regulator.

The Korea Advertising Review Board (KARB) and Australia's Alcohol Beverages Advertising Scheme (ABAC) also follow distinct self-regulatory frameworks.

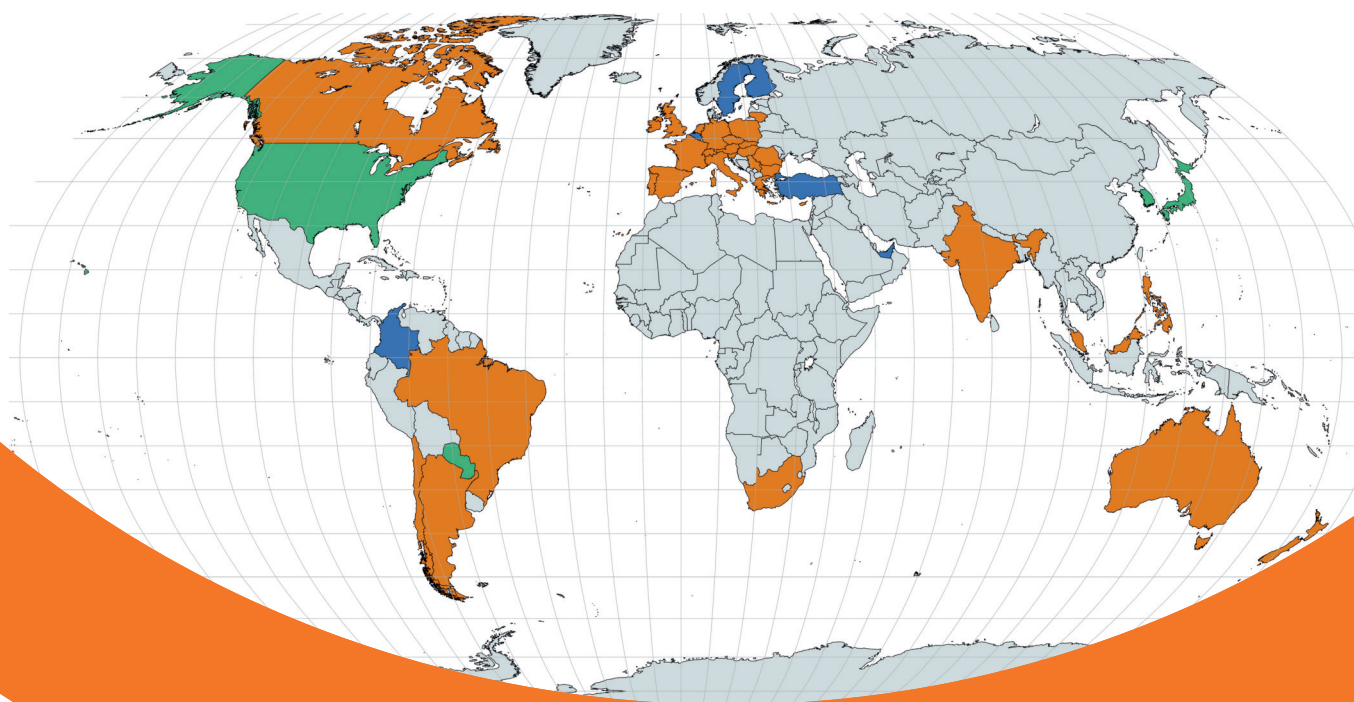
### **National Self-Regulatory Standards**

The remaining markets, representing 75% of the ICAS SROs, develop and update their own national self-regulatory standards, with their core principles being often aligned with the ICC Marketing Code.

Specific provisions within local standards are typically agreed and regularly updated by an independent standards-making body within each Self-Regulatory Organization (SRO).

In addition to general advertising standards, many countries implement sector-specific codes or guidelines (e.g., for alcohol and beauty products) and issue-specific regulations (e.g., for interest-based advertising, advertising to children, influencer marketing, etc...).

Chart 3. SROs and the Use of the ICC Marketing Code Worldwide

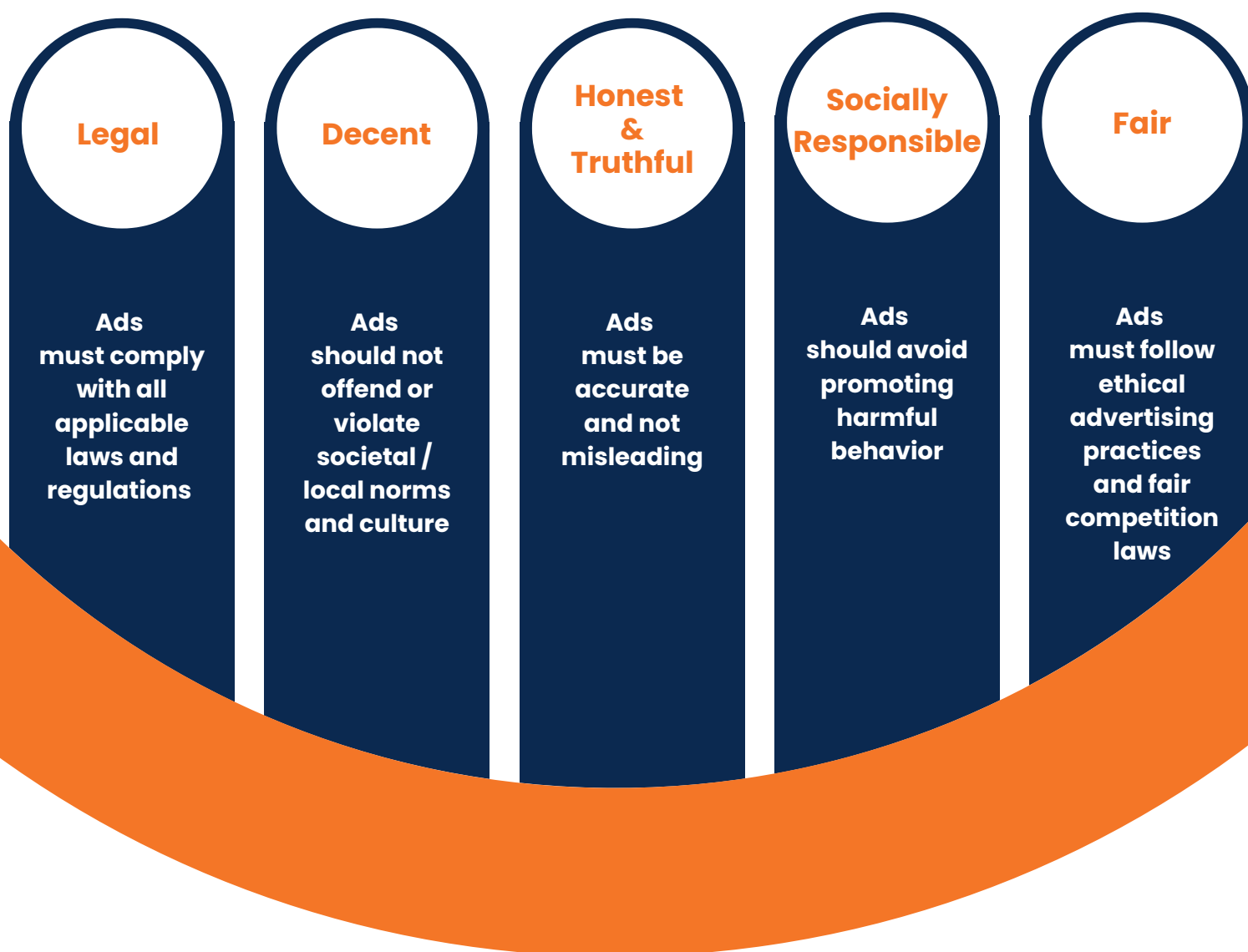


- SROs use the ICC Code as a basis or inspiration for their National Code
- SROs use Alternative Frameworks - Own National Code
- SROs use the ICC Code as their Code

## 2.2. SCOPE OF SELF-REGULATION

When evaluating whether an advertisement complies with self-regulatory standards, SROs apply slightly different criteria based on their mandate and scope of activities.

Most of them work to ensure that ads adhere to the following core principles:



Almost half of the SROs also assess ads in terms of their regard for consumers' privacy and data protection rules, ensuring compliance with personal data regulations.

Other criteria, not listed in Table 1, may also be used by some SROs such as whether ads comply with the principle of environmental responsibility or with the protection of children's rights.

# TABLE 1.

## Criteria Used to Assess Whether an Ad is Compliant with Local Standards

CRITERION		% of ICAS markets where ads are assessed against this criterion through Advertising Self-Regulation
<b>Legality</b>	whether an ad is compliant with applicable laws	100%
<b>Decency</b>	whether an ad is not offending standards of decency prevalent in the local culture	96% (all except US)
<b>Honesty</b>	whether an ad is not abusing the trust of consumers or exploiting their lack of experience or knowledge	100%
<b>Truthfulness</b>	whether an ad is not including content that could mislead consumers (e.g. regarding the actual benefits/characteristics of the product or service)	100%
<b>(Social) Responsibility</b>	whether an ad respects human dignity and is free of any form of discrimination, including that based upon race, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation	96% (all except US. The US has, however a provision on social responsibility in its new children’s code and the US NAD is also monitoring ads for negative social stereotypes since September 2022 <sup>[10]</sup> )
<b>Fairness</b>	ensuring that an ad is not derogatory to the competition and is free of plagiarism	81% (all except Belgium <sup>[11]</sup> , Italy, UK ASA, Turkey and the US <sup>[12]</sup> )
<b>Right to Privacy</b>	ensuring that an ad complies with (self)-regulatory standards on data protection for consumers	62% (all except Argentina, Belgium, France, India, Italy, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Turkey and UK ASA)

[10] For the first time in its 50-year history, the National Advertising Division (NAD) is holding brands accountable for advertising that portrays or encourages harmful and misleading “social stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination.” NAD, a division of BBB National Programs, is now monitoring not just the truth and accuracy of advertising claims as to products and brands but also as to explicit and implied social messaging.

[11] Because JEP in Belgium does not deal with competitors’ complaints, the principle of fair competition is rarely invoked in the complaints received by the Jury. This does not mean however that JEP cannot use the fairness criterion in its assessment of ads.

[12] For children’s advertising the US deals with fairness; the US also deals with ads that are falsely derogatory.



## 2.3. COMPLAINTS HANDLING—BODY

SROs may intervene before or after an advertisement is published to ensure compliance with self-regulatory standards. All SROs offer mechanisms of some sort to handle complaints from consumers and/or competitors (see section 3).

### The Jury

In most cases, an independent body within the SRO—often called the Jury or Complaints Committee—reviews these complaints.

Separate from the standards-making body, the Jury is responsible for determining whether an individual advertisement violates self-regulatory standards.

**78,5%**

In the vast majority of cases (78,5%), all eligible consumer and/or competitor complaints are reviewed by the Jury. The SRO staff may filter out complaints that are deemed out of scope, but all decisions regarding individual ads are made by the Jury.

**2**

In two cases (US and South Africa), all first-level decisions on individual complaints are made by the SRO rather than by a Jury. However, in these countries, a Jury can be convened to review first-level decisions if they are appealed.

**4**

In four cases (Korea, New Zealand, Sweden and the UK), some decisions on individual ads may be made by the SRO Secretariat. The most complex cases, or those without a clear precedent, are always assessed by the Jury.

The size and composition of the Jury varies from market to market. In some markets, the Jury consists of less than 10 members, while in others, members may be selected from a pool of over 100 individuals. Since Jury members are often independent professionals on a voluntary basis, the individuals participating in Jury meetings may not be the same from one meeting to the other.

Jury members typically include individuals with experience in the advertising industry. However, in many markets, a significant percentage – or even a majority – of Jury members are independent lay experts or individuals representing interests outside of the industry, such as academics, retired judges, or consumer advocates.

8 SROs from seven countries have half or more than half of their Jury members independent from the advertising sector (Belgium, Ireland, Korea, New Zealand, Romania, Singapore and the UK – ASA and The Portman Group).

In 6 SROs across five countries, all Jury members are independent from the advertising sector (Australia – Ad Standards and ABAC – , France, Italy, Portugal and Spain).

In the remaining SROs<sup>[13]</sup>, advertising industry professionals represent a majority in the pool of Jury members, but members representing consumer organizations, academics, independent experts, lawyers and representatives of civil society are often also involved in Jury decisions.

[13] ABG The Advertising Business Group from UAE is reforming its Dispute Committee

# 3. SRO SERVICES

## 3.1. ADVISORY SERVICES

### Pre-Clearance and Copy-Advice

For the purpose of this report, the term 'advisory services' refers to the services provided by SROs to advertisers and their agents prior to the publication of an ad.

These services can be divided into two main categories:



**PRE  
CLEARANCE**

This involves an ad being assessed by the SRO as a compulsory pre-condition before it can be published. The obligation, where it exists, often covers specific media such as TV or radio, or to particularly sensitive sectors such as medications and medical devices, ads directed at children, or ads for financial services.

**COPY  
ADVICE**

This is where the SRO issues an opinion on whether an ad complies with advertising standards prior to its publication, at the request of the advertiser, agencies, or the media. The advice is provided on a confidential basis and is usually non-binding. It may include suggestions for amendments to ensure compliance with the rules. Copy advice can be a free service or a paid service, depending on the market and the type of ad/advertiser.



**PRE  
CLEARANCE**



**6 markets**

Pre-clearance is provided by SROs in six markets covered by ICAS' membership: Australia, with ABAC - The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Scheme<sup>[14]</sup>, Canada, France, Korea, the Philippines and Portugal.

**100,000 ads pre-cleared**

In 2023, the Advertising Standards Council (ASC) in the Philippines processed the highest number of pre-clearance requests, conducting 45,858 assessments. The French SRO, ARPP, handled 26,621 requests, followed by KARB in Korea with 20,000, Ad Standards Canada with 7,350, ABAC in Australia with 3,167, and Auto Regulação Publicitária in Portugal with 256.

In total, more than 100,000 ads were pre-cleared by these six SROs in 2023.

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[14] The Australian SRO, ABAC - The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Schemes, provides Pre Clearance services for specific sectors



## 21% increase

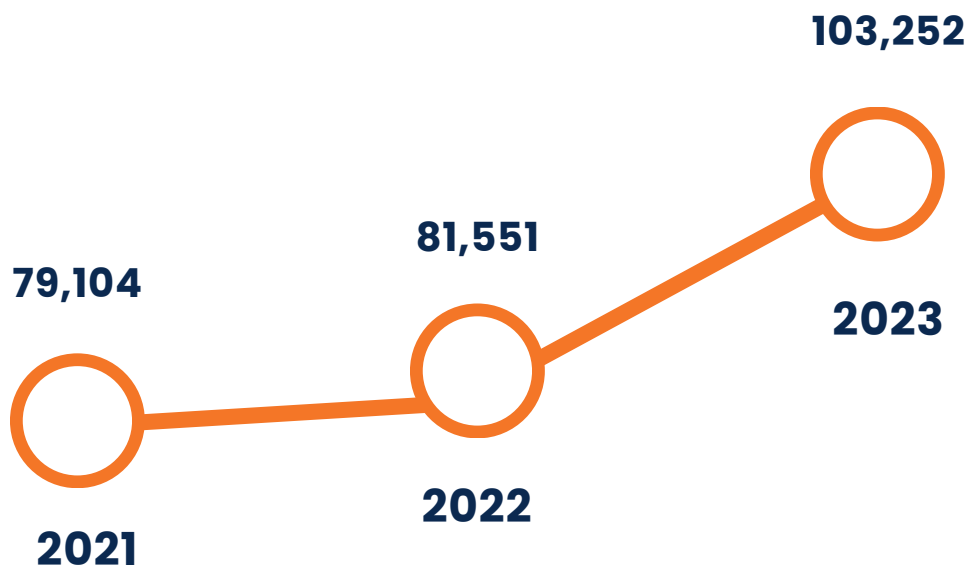
Compared to 2022, this reflects an increase of 21% in the pre-clearance figures reported to ICAS. However, this growth is partially attributed to the addition of two new SROs<sup>[15]</sup> that joined ICAS and began submitting data.



## 48H response

In terms of average time to issue a pre-clearance, more than half of these SROs provided a response within 48 hours or less

Chart 4. Pre-Clearance 2021-2023



[15] KARB Korea Advertising Review Board and ABAC The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Scheme, from Australia, have become member of ICAS.

## COPY ADVICE

**82%**  
markets

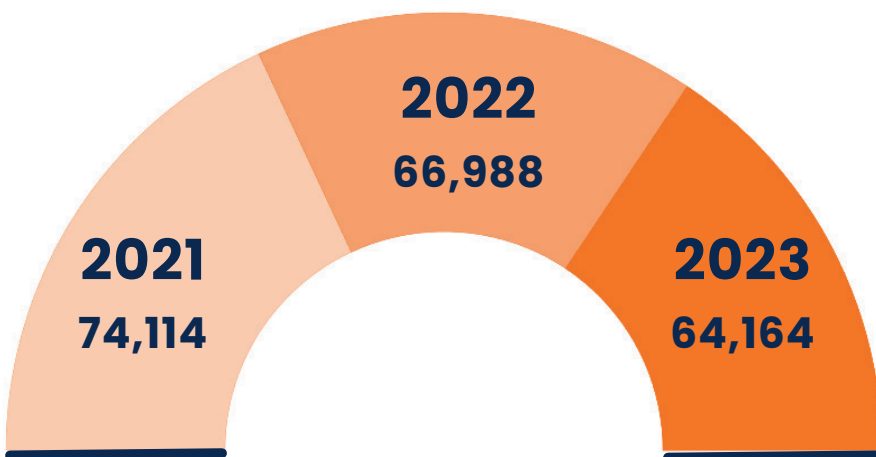
**64,000**  
copy-advice

Copy advice is a service frequently offered by SROs, with 82% of ICAS members currently providing it. Additionally, two more SROs— CONAR (El Consejo de Autorregulación Publicitaria) in Argentina and Ad Standards Canada—are in the process of developing this service.

In 2023, ICAS SRO members processed over 64,000 copy advice requests[16]. Spain handled the highest volume, issuing 33,620 opinions, followed by France with 25,932 and the ASA in the UK with 3,360.

In most cases, copy advice is provided within two to three working days, with some SROs offering express services that deliver same-day responses.

### Chart 5. Copy-Advice 2021-2023



In 2023, ICAS SRO members processed 64,164 copy advice requests, compared to 66,988 in 2022 and 74,114 in 2021. While there has been a gradual decline in the number of requests between 2021 and 2023, these figures highlight the continued relevance of copy advice services.

[16] Numbers related to the copy advice service in 2023 were unavailable from the Malaysian SRO, Content Code, and from ABAC – The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Scheme, from Australia.

## 3.2. COMPLAINTS

### Consumer Complaints

One of the key benefits of advertising self-regulation worldwide is that it offers a cost-effective (typically free of charge), fast, and efficient solution to address consumer complaints about individual ads.

Among ICAS members that provided 2023 data, only two SROs currently do not handle consumer complaints: ABG in the UAE and BBB National Programs in the US. Currently the Korean SRO, KARB, is developing this service.

**55,800**  
consumer  
complaints

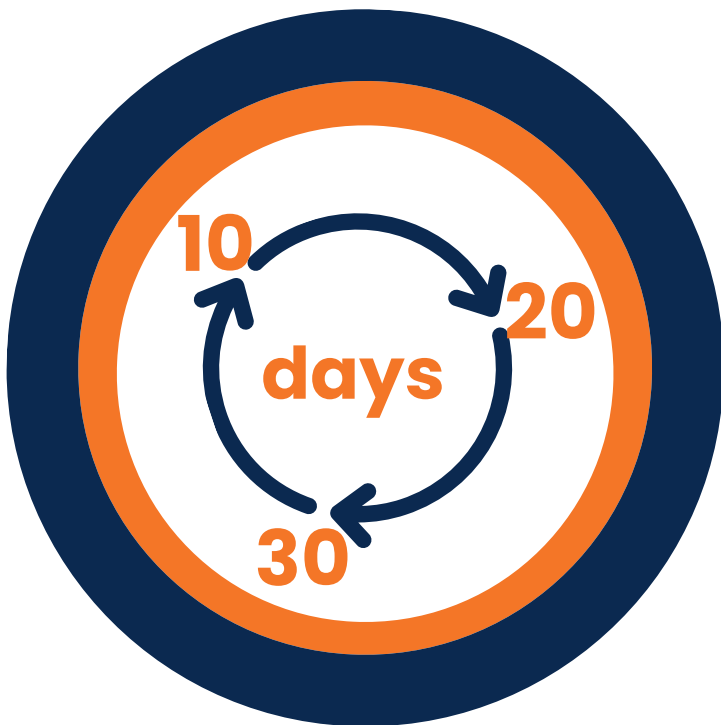
The number of consumer complaints handled by SROs varies across different markets and from year to year. Among ICAS members offering this service and reporting data for 2023, a total of 55,800 consumer complaints<sup>[17]</sup> were processed, with significant variations in volume across SROs.

[17] According to the ICAS methodology, consumer complaints include both complaints submitted by individuals and complaints submitted by organizations representing consumers' interests. In case several complaints are received on the same ad and handled as a single case, all underlying complaints are counted. A complaint is defined as an expression of concern about a particular ad which requires a response. It may include one or several concerns about the given ad by the same complainant.

## Chart 6. 2023 SROs' Consumer Complaints



The UK Advertising Standards Authority handled the highest number of consumer complaints in 2023, with 37,840 complaints.



The average number of days SROs take to resolve a consumer complaint varies<sup>[18]</sup>.

The majority of SROs resolve complaints in less than 20 days, with six SROs resolving them in less than 10 days. Another six SROs take between 21 and 30 days, while only three SROs take more than 30 days.

On average, 35% of consumer complaints were upheld by the SROs, while 26,5% were resolved informally.

[18] Five SROs did not provide data on this topic.



Between 2021 and 2023, the number of consumer complaints handled by SROs varied. In 2021, SROs processed 60,816 complaints, which declined to 48,156 in 2022 before rising again to 55,800 in 2023.

Chart 7. Consumer Complaints 2021–2023



## Competitor Complaints

All SROs, except for two<sup>[19]</sup>, handle competitor complaints. The process for handling competitor complaints is generally similar to that for consumer complaints, although companies filing complaints are often required to pay a fee. Additionally, in some countries, special public hearings are organized to address cases filed by competitors.

In 2023, the 28 ICAS members that reported statistics on competitor complaints collectively processed 1,553 cases<sup>[20]</sup>. While this number varies by market, it is generally lower than the volume of consumer complaints.

[19] KARB - Korea Advertising Review Board is developing this service.

[20] The French SRO, ARPP - Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la Publicité and ABAC - The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Scheme from Australia did not provide data on this service.

## Chart 8. 2023 SROs' Competitor Complaints



In practice, the handling of competitor complaints by SROs in 2023 varied significantly across markets.

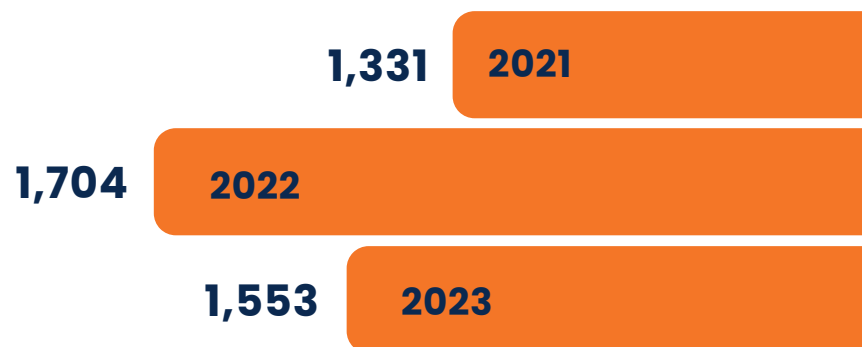
In 2023, similar to consumer complaints, the UK ASA handled the highest number of competitor complaints, totalling 791 – more than twice the number from the previous year.

**X̄ 35 days**

Regarding the time SROs take to resolve a competitor complaint, on average, it takes 35 days.

## Chart 9. Competitor Complaints 2021–2023

Comparing the data from 2021 to 2023, the numbers show a minor fluctuation over the three-year period. In 2021, there were 1,331 cases, which increased to 1,704 in 2022. However, in 2023, the figure declined to 1,553.



## Public availability of SRO–Jury decisions

In the majority of cases (70%), decisions of the SROs on both consumer and competitor complaints are publicly available, usually published on the SRO's website, and a list of links to these pages can be accessed through the ICAS [Global SRO Database](#).

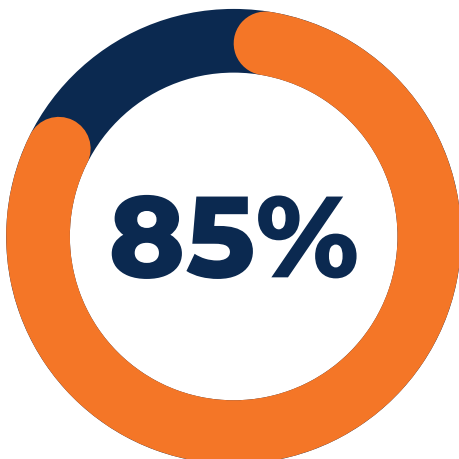
Those decisions may be published in full or in summary form or anonymized form, depending on the rules of procedure of each SRO and due to the sensitive nature of some aspects related to competition law.

In Romania and Malaysia, for example, decisions can be accessed upon request – Romania provides them through a secured extranet for members instead of publicly on the website.

Generally, the SROs that do not publish decisions are the ones handling fewer complaints each year.



## Complaints from Entities other than Consumers and Competitors

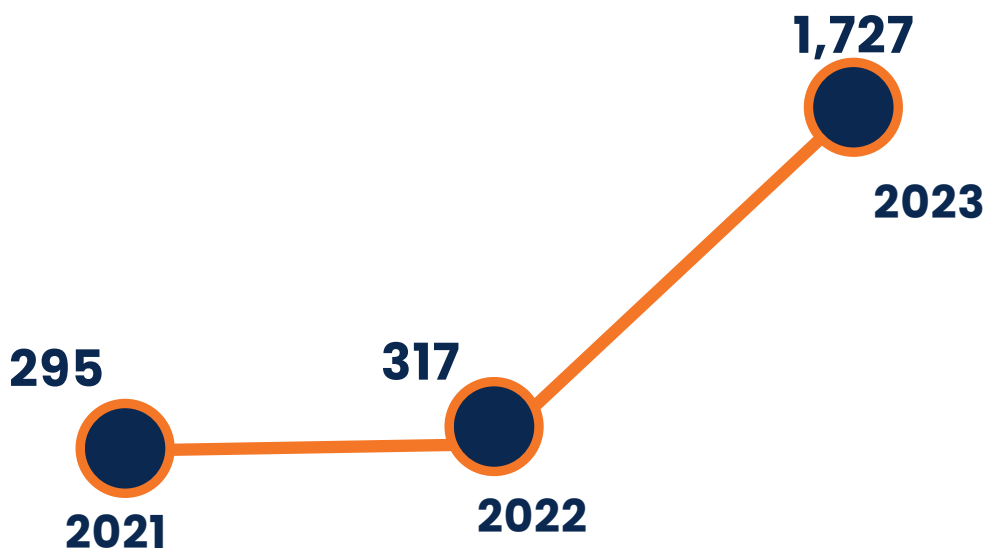


In 85% of the markets covered by the ICAS Global SRO database that provided data for 2023, SROs accept complaints from entities beyond consumers and competitors, including public authorities and NGOs.

In 2023, SROs within ICAS membership processed 1,727 complaints from these entities, representing an increase of more than 500% compared to 2022.

**500%**   
**previous year**

Chart 10. Complaints by Other Entities 2021-2023



## Own Initiative Investigations

Half of the SROs also take proactive action by conducting their own initiative investigations to identify ads that may breach self-regulatory standards.

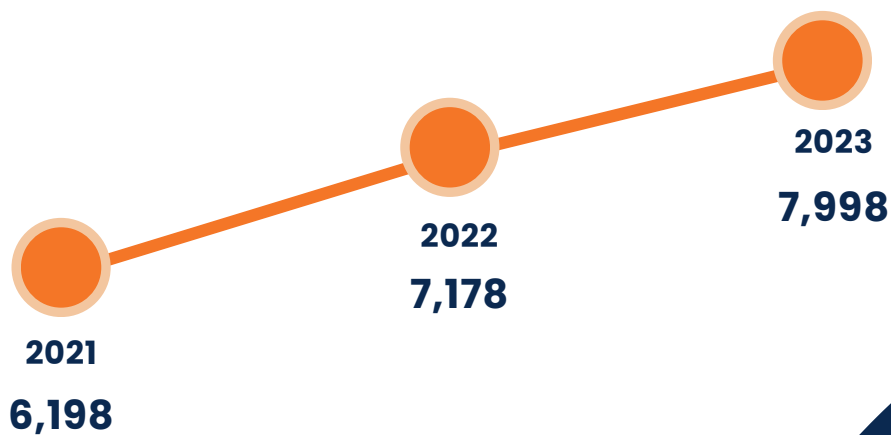
In 2023, nearly 8,000 advertisements were investigated as a result of proactive measures, reflecting an increase of almost 1,000 ads compared to the previous year.

The Indian SRO, ASCI - The Advertising Standards Council of India, recorded the highest number of investigations in all three years.

Additionally, one more SRO is currently working on developing this capacity to strengthen its oversight.



Chart 11. SROs' Own Initiative Investigations 2021-2023



### 3.3. MONITORING OF ADVERTISEMENTS

In addition to handling complaints, providing advice, or pre-clearing ads, an increasing number of SROs are developing monitoring services, either per sector or per media.

This monitoring can be sector-specific, focusing on areas such as food and beverages – particularly when these

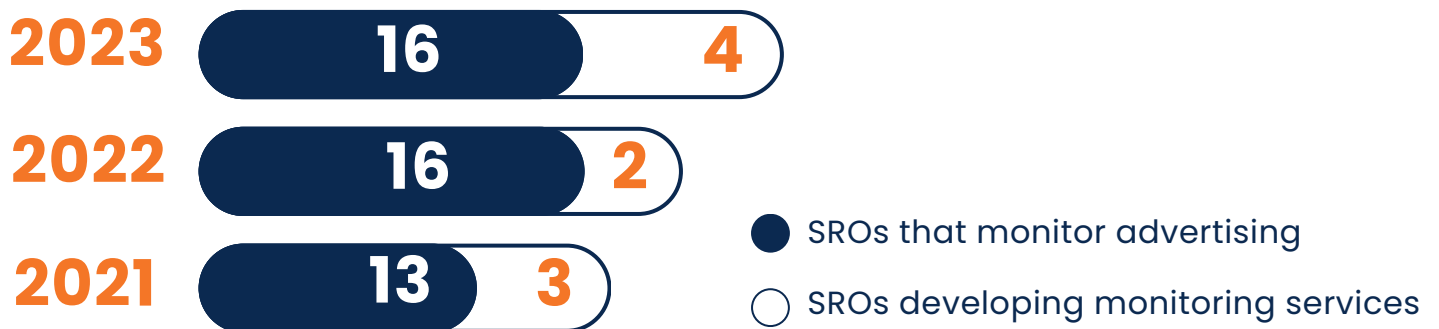
ads target children – or on alcohol beverage advertising.

Another growing area of focus is online advertising, where SROs are becoming more vigilant in identifying issues such as unlabeled influencer ads.

In 2023, 60% of SROs in the ICAS network conducted monitoring exercises, marking a 20% increase compared to 2021. Four additional SROs are currently developing the capacity for such activities, three more SROs than in 2022.



Chart 12. SROs’ Monitoring 2021-2023 (per sector or media)



## Advanced technology to monitor advertising online



**11  
SROs**

---

**Use AI  
Technologies**

Among the SROs that conduct monitoring exercises (60% of ICAS members), 11 have integrated AI technologies to enhance their oversight capabilities.

These include machine learning algorithms, AI-driven avatars, and automated web crawlers that track ads across various platforms, including company-owned websites and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.

Additionally, three SROs are implementing data-driven approaches in their monitoring efforts, a trend that is likely to further expand the use of advanced technologies in advertising oversight.

By leveraging machine learning, image recognition, and natural language processing, SROs can monitor ads at scale, enabling faster and more effective enforcement.

These technologies are particularly useful for identifying problematic advertisements, especially in high-risk areas such as influencer marketing or ads that pose greater risks to consumers.

## 3.4. OTHER SERVICES

In addition to advisory services and complaints handling, 96% of the SROs offer other valuable services to cater to the needs of both consumers and the advertising industry locally.

### Educational Services & Training Programs

Educational services play a vital role in raising awareness about advertising standards and enhancing compliance. SROs provide a variety of training and awareness programs tailored for industry professionals, member organizations, volunteers, and the public in general. These include internal training sessions for the advertising ecosystem, as well as industry-specific seminars—both digital and on-site.

Additionally, many SROs offer eLearning opportunities and webinars, providing free online training courses, video modules, and newly developed educational resources accessible through their websites.

Some also collaborate with universities and industry organizations to promote best practices in advertising, while others offer certification programs and conferences to enhance professional knowledge and ensure compliance with advertising standards.



In 2023, SROs provided a total of 466 training programs, approximately 35% more than the previous years, 2022 (347) and 2021 (336).

A few SROs also offer specialized certification programs, mediation services (such as in the telecoms sector), and services specifically designed to address privacy and data protection concerns related to marketing practices.



## 4. OUTLOOK

SROs are constantly evolving to keep pace with technological innovations and societal expectations. With the rapid shift in advertising spending toward digital and online media—now accounting for more than half of global ad spending—SROs are dedicating more time and resources to regulating online advertising and addressing scalability challenges. A key focus is on influencer marketing and digital platforms.

As new digital platforms and trends continue to emerge, integrating them into the self-regulation framework becomes essential for maintaining transparency and consumer trust. To achieve this, SROs are expanding their membership to include digital platforms and work with them on specific projects. Examples of successful initiatives between platforms and SROs can be found on the [ICAS website](#).

One of the key focus areas has been **Influencer Marketing**, where partnerships with influencer associations and other stakeholders, both public and private, have launched monitoring projects to ensure transparency in endorsements. These efforts are vital to address the growing concern over undisclosed or misleading brand collaborations, with self-regulatory bodies working to set clear guidelines for influencers and brands alike.

Additionally, SROs are adopting AI-based monitoring tools to automate the detection of non-disclosed partnerships and deceptive practices, making influencer marketing oversight more efficient.

In the **Gaming and Gambling Advertising sector**, collaborations with regulatory bodies aim to protect vulnerable audiences and ensure that ads adhere to the advertising codes.

SROs also aim to update national codes in areas such as **Environmental Claims**—particularly concerning **"Greenwashing"**—and **Food and Alcohol Advertising**, aligning industry practices with public concerns and evolving legal requirements.

Other key areas of focus include **Diversity & Inclusion**, as well as **Crypto Asset Advertising**.

Finally, several SROs are exploring guidelines regarding **AI use in advertising**, particularly in terms of if and when AI-driven content should be disclosed, how disclosures should be made clear and accessible (including

for consumers with disabilities), and ensuring that disclosures that are needed remain attached to ads when shared across platforms.

SROs will continue to innovate and adapt their services to protect consumers from irresponsible advertising, foster a level playing field for businesses, and complement local legal frameworks for the benefit of society.

To learn more about the activities of SROs across all ICAS markets, you can download their activity reports from the [Global SRO Database](#) or visit their websites, which are listed on the Members page of the [ICAS website](#).

## 5. APPENDIX

The list below includes organizations that can largely be described as SROs—independent bodies established and/or funded by the advertising industry to enforce self-regulatory standards ensuring ethical advertising practices.

In several markets not listed here, efforts are ongoing to establish fully-fledged independent SROs. ICAS and its European sister organization, EASA, collaborate closely with these markets to support the promotion of advertising self-regulation.

Please note that the data included in the ICAS Global SRO Database and in this Factbook only includes members of ICAS, those highlighted in bold.

Country code	Country	Short name of the SRO	Full name of the SRO	Association membership
<b>AE</b>	<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	<b>ABG</b>	<b>Advertising Business Group</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>AR</b>	<b>Argentina</b>	<b>CONARP</b>	<b>Consejo de Autorregulación Publicitaria</b>	<b>ICAS Latin American Chapter*</b>
<b>AT</b>	Austria	ÖWR	Österreichischer Werberat (Austrian Advertising Council)	EASA
<b>AU</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Ad Standards</b> <b>ABAC</b>	<b>Ad Standards</b> <b>The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Scheme</b>	<b>ICAS</b> <b>ICAS</b>
<b>BE</b>	<b>Belgium</b>	<b>JEP</b>	<b>Jury d'Ethique Publicitaire / Jury voor Ethische Praktijken inzake reclame</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>BG</b>	Bulgaria	NCSR	National Council for Self-regulation	EASA

<b>BR</b>	<b>Brazil</b>	<b>CONAR</b>	<b>Conselho Nacional de Autorregulamentação Publicitária</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>CA</b>	<b>Canada</b>	<b>Ad Standards</b>	<b>Ad Standards</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>CH</b>	Switzerland	CSL	Schweizerische Lauterkeitskommission/ Commission Suisse pour la Loyauté	EASA
<b>CL</b>	<b>Chile</b>	<b>CONAR</b>	<b>Consejo de Autorregulación y Ética Publicitaria</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>CO</b>	<b>Colombia</b>	<b>AUTOCONTROL</b>	<b>Autocontrol Colombia</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>CY</b>	Cyprus	CARO	Cyprus Advertising Regulation Organisation	EASA
<b>CZ</b>	Czech Republic	RPR	Rada Pro Reklamu	EASA
<b>DE</b>	Germany	DW WBZ	Deutscher Werberat Zentrale zur Bekämpfung unlauteren Wettbewerbs e.V.	EASA EASA
<b>EC</b>	Ecuador	SAC	Special Advertisement Committee	n/a
<b>ES</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>AUTOCONTROL</b>	<b>Asociación para la Autorregulación de la Comunicación Comercial</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>FI</b>	Finland	MEN LTL	Mainonnan eettinen neuvosto / The Council of Ethics in Advertising Finland Liiketapalautakunta / The Board of Business Practice Finland	EASA EASA
<b>FR</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>ARPP</b>	<b>Autorité de régulation professionnelle de la publicité</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>

<b>GR</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>SEE</b>	<b>Advertising Self-Regulation Council</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>HU</b>	Hungary	ÖRT	Önszabályozó Reklám Testület/ Hungarian Advertising Self-Regulatory Board	EASA
<b>ID</b>	Indonesia	DPI	Dewan Periklanan Indonesia/ Indonesian Advertising Council	n/a
<b>IE</b>	<b>Ireland</b>	<b>ASA</b>	<b>Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>IN</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>ASCI</b>	<b>The Advertising Standards Council of India</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>IT</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>IAP</b>	<b>Istituto dell'Autodisciplina Pubblicitaria</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>JP</b>	Japan	JARO	Japan Advertising Review Organization	n/a
<b>KR</b>	<b>Korea</b>	<b>KARB</b>	<b>Korea Advertising Review Board</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>LT</b>	Lithuania	LiMA	Lithuanian Advertising Standards Bureau (LRB)/ Lithuanian Marketing Association (LiMA)	EASA
<b>LU</b>	Luxembourg	CLEP	Commission Luxembourgeoise pour l'Éthique en Publicité	EASA
<b>MY</b>	<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>ASA</b> <b>Content Forum</b>	Advertising Standards Advisory Malaysia <b>The Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia</b>	n/a <b>ICAS</b>

<b>NL</b>	<b>The Netherlands</b>	<b>SRC</b>	<b>Stichting Reclame Code</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>NZ</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>ASA</b>	<b>Advertising Standards Authority</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>NO</b>	Norway	MFU	Matbransjens Faglige Utvalg (the Food and Drink Industry Professional Practices Committee)	n/a
<b>PH</b>	<b>The Philippines</b>	<b>ASC</b>	<b>Advertising Standards Council</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>PL</b>	Poland	RR	Związek Stowarzyszeń Rada Reklamy	EASA
<b>PT</b>	<b>Portugal</b>	<b>ARP</b>	<b>Auto Regulação Publicitaria</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>PY</b>	<b>Paraguay</b>	<b>CONAR CERNECO</b>	<b>Centro de Regulacion, Normas y Estudios de la Comunicacion</b>	<b>ICAS Latin American Chapter*</b>
<b>RO</b>	<b>Romania</b>	<b>RAC</b>	<b>Romanian Advertising Council</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>RU</b>	Russia	AMI	Advertising Council	n/a
<b>RS</b>	Serbia	NAESO	National Association for Ethical Standards in Advertising	EASA
<b>SE</b>	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>RO</b>	<b>Reklamombudsmannen</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>SG</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>ASAS</b>	<b>Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>SI</b>	Slovenia	SOZ	Slovenian Advertising Chamber	EASA
<b>SK</b>	Slovakia	RPR	Rada Pre Reklamu	EASA

<b>TR</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>ROK</b>	<b>The Advertising Self-Regulatory Board</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>ASA</b>	<b>The Advertising Standards Authority</b>	<b>EASA, ICAS</b>
		<b>The Portman Group</b>	<b>The Portman Group</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
		Clearcast	Clearcast	EASA
<b>US</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>BBB National Programs</b>	<b>BBB National Programs</b>	<b>ICAS</b>
<b>UY</b>	Uruguay	CONARP	Consejo Nacional de Autorregulación Publicitaria	ICAS Latin American Chapter*
<b>ZA</b>	<b>South Africa</b>	<b>ARB</b>	<b>The Advertising Regulatory Board</b>	<b>ICAS</b>

\* The ICAS Latin American Chapter was set up in October 2023, to bring together the Latin American SROs. This chapter will function as a platform and gathering point for ICAS members and stakeholders in Latin America as well as the Spanish SRO, AUTOCONTROL, to exchange ideas and best practices and deliberate on global and regional issues. The platform will also facilitate collaborations and joint initiatives aimed at enhancing the capabilities and growth of advertising self-regulatory organizations in Latin America.



International Council  
for Ad Self-Regulation

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