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From:
Kristina Sperkova
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To:
An Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD
Dept of the Taoiseach
Government Buildings
Merrion Street Upper
Dublin 2

**UPHOLD IRELAND'S COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE'S HEALTH –
IMPLEMENT ALCOHOL WARNING LABELS WITHOUT DELAY**

Dear Taoiseach Micheál Martin,

I write to you from **Movendi International**, the global social movement for alcohol policy solutions that protect people's health, rights, and development.

We share with the people of Ireland the vision of a fair, healthy society where every person can live free from preventable harm so that everyone, especially children and young people, can thrive.

Ireland's Public Health (Alcohol) Act is a shining example of leadership towards that shared vision.

By adopting it in 2018, after a prolonged and hard-fought democratic process, Ireland made a bold commitment: to put people's health before private profit interests, and to provide people with the information they need to be aware of the risks and harms linked to alcohol. In 2023, the European Commission green light for Ireland's cancer warning labels on alcohol products marked another historic milestone. It meant the chance to fulfill the government's promise to empower the public with clear, evidence-based information. These labels are due to come into effect on May 22, 2026, after a three-year preparation period.

Our members around the world looked to Irish leadership with the hope it would inspire much-needed change in their countries, too.

But today we're shocked to see that this life-saving policy is under severe threat.

Aggressive lobbying by alcohol industry actors has prompted senior government officials to call for a re-examination of the regulation. The alcohol industry's stated concern over "trading conditions" and "tariffs" masks their true agenda: to delay, derail, and ultimately destroy a democratically mandated public health measure.

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Unfortunatelly, we are all too familiar with this alcohol industry playbook. In our work across the world, we witness the grave consequences of alcohol industry interference in public policy for people's health and development:

- In **Uganda**, Diageo and other multinational alcohol corporations interfered to block a long-overdue update of the country's colonial-era alcohol law. The effort was completely derailed last year in Parliament. And alcohol harm keeps escalating.
- In **Kenya**, a national alcohol policy was finally adopted in 2025 after years of obstruction – including in 2019, when alcohol industry front groups funded by multinational national alcohol giants, including Diageo, managed to derail an already agreed policy.
- In **Vietnam**, a decade-long initiative for world-class alcohol legislation – like Ireland's – was systematically attacked by alcohol companies, such as Heineken, and their front groups. A watered-down version was adopted in 2019, but efforts to raise alcohol taxes were delayed for six more years. In that time, alcohol harm soared, at immense cost to lives, well-being, and the economy.

These are not isolated events. They reveal a global pattern: **wherever ambitious and evidence-based alcohol policy is on the table, alcohol industry interests see their private profits threatened and aggressive interference follows**. And the costs – in human suffering, lost health, stalled development, and weakened democratic institutions – are profound.

We are deeply concerned that the same is happening now in Ireland.

Already, the Public Health (Alcohol) Act was delayed two years in the Seanad. And instead of using the three-year implementation window to prepare for labelling, the alcohol industry has intensified their lobbying to stop it altogether. A reexamination or delay now would hand a victory to vested interests, betray the trust of the Irish public, and risk sending the same devastating signal we've seen elsewhere: that private profit interests come before people's health and their fundamental rights to be protected from preventable harm.

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This is about public health and it is about democratic integrity, social justice, and human rights.

Ireland has ratified key international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). These agreements compel the Irish Government to protect people from preventable harm and to act in their best interests – especially when it comes to children's right to health, and women's right to live free from alcohol-related violence and other harm. The right to adequate information is also paramount.

Abandoning or delaying Ireland's alcohol labelling law implementation would weaken human rights protections your government has an obligation to uphold.

Taoiseach, we appeal to your leadership and values to:

- Stand firm for people's health and democratic decision-making.
- Resist alcohol industry pressure that seeks to undo what has already been decided in the public interest.
- Implement the health warning labelling requirements on alcohol products in full, as planned, and as promised.

Your leadership at this critical juncture matters deeply – to the people of Ireland, to basic democratic principles in Ireland, and to communities across the world looking to Ireland as a source of progress in efforts to better protect communities from preventable alcohol harms to create healthy environments where everyone can thrive.

Yours sincerely,



Kristina Sperkova
International President, Movendi International
Stockholm, July 18, 2025