

In this issue

Women and substance use

See page 10

12 Knowledge of alcohol
and cancer risks

14 MUP in Scotland

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Establishment of the Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use

The Programme for Government, which was launched in June 2020, committed to holding a Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use.¹ In February 2023, the Government gave its approval for the assembly to be established. The assembly's work will run from April to December 2023. The establishment of the assembly has been overwhelmingly welcomed by stakeholders across the sector and the political spectrum.

What is a Citizens' Assembly?

A Citizens' Assembly is a democratic structure in which people living in Ireland are brought together to discuss and consider important and often complex legal and policy issues, independent of the Government and Oireachtas. Based on submissions from stakeholders and discussions, the assembly makes recommendations on the topic at hand and reports to the Oireachtas. Previous assemblies have covered diverse topics such as a directly elected mayor for Dublin and local government structures for Dublin; biodiversity loss; gender equality; the Eighth Amendment of the Irish Constitution (abortion); the needs of an ageing population; fixed-term parliaments; the system for referenda; and climate change.²

(continued on page 4)

