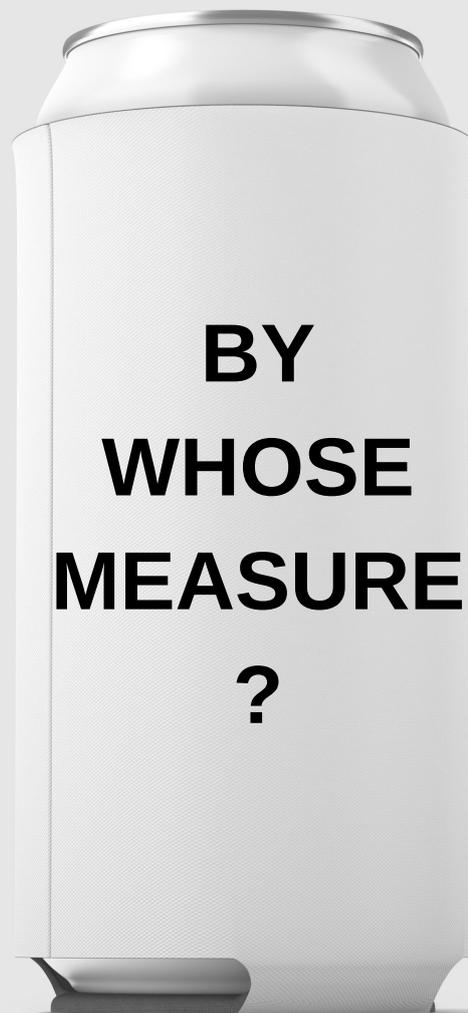


# ALCOHOL ALERT

MARCH 2018

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## ALCOHOL LABELLING



### THE 100ML QUESTION

Spirits and beer groups  
argue over serving size info...

while their off-label self-regulatory proposals strike  
a sour note with health and consumer experts

IAS

Institute of  
Alcohol Studies

**MARCH 2018**

**3 Health Secretary promises minister for children of alcoholics**

**4 Macron angers doctors with wine claims**

**Drinking at local Labour Party meetings ‘excludes women’** 

**5 Europe’s billion-euro wine spillage**

**Experts: ‘We need a strategy for older drinkers’**

**6 MPs call for ‘clarity’ on low/no alcohol labelling**

**7 COVER STORY**

**Off-label industry solutions strike a sour note**

**9 Welsh MUP moves a step closer**

**10 Government seeks guidance on describing low ABV drinks**

**11 Alcohol industry donated to federal agency study**

**Stereotypes about women’s drinking ‘unfair and unhelpful’**

**12 Scotland: Alcohol availability hits poorest hardest**

**13 Charity calculates cases of avoidable alcohol-related cancer**

**14 ALCOHOL SNAPSHOT**

**Drink drive figures – have we hit a dead end?**

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## Health Secretary promises minister for children of alcoholics

Adapted from the Sunday Express

Jeremy Hunt MP will put a minister in charge of helping the children of alcoholics, according to MPs representing National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACOA).

This follows a 'constructive' meeting with Labour MPs Liam Byrne, Caroline Flint and Jonathan Ashworth, the shadow health secretary, who are all children of alcoholics.

This proposal takes one of the key points from the [NACOA manifesto](#) launched in 2017. A source close to Mr Hunt confirmed that the name of the minister who would 'have responsibility for policy relating to children of alcoholics' would be announced in due course. The health secretary also promised to publish data on the scale of the problem in due course.

The Labour MPs have been campaigning alongside NACOA and the [Sunday Express](#) for the government to adopt a manifesto for change to help Britain's innocent victims of drink.

Mr Byrne said of the occasion: 'It was a very constructive meeting.

'The health secretary was very open and interested. He said he had followed the coverage of the campaign and was genuinely interested in children's mental health and recognised that alcoholism is one of the most serious problems children can face.'



## Macron angers doctors with wine claims

Two glasses a day will keep the doctors irate

French President Emmanuel Macron has been criticised for defending his wine drinking habit by a group of doctors, who have stressed that 'wine is an alcohol like any other'.

Writing in national outlet *Le Figaro*, they stressed that from the liver's perspective, alcohol was exactly the same thing, whether it came in the form of wine, beer, vodka, or whisky. The article came in response to President Macron's outspoken ode to the so-called national tippie at an agricultural fair earlier this year, where he boasted of having a glass of wine at both lunch and dinner, and denied the health risks of consuming the beverage, differentiating between wine and other types of alcohol.

'It is a blight on public health when young people get drunk at an accelerated speed with alcohol or beer, but this is not the case with wine,' he said.

He also promised not to tighten the *Loi Évin* – which restricts advertising on alcoholic beverages – in a bid to dampen wine producers' disquiet over comments made by his health minister Agnès Buzyn, who declared there to be 'zero difference' between wine and other alcoholic beverages.

Appearing on the programme *Alcohol: the French taboo?*, Buzyn said: 'We have let the French think that wine protects, that it brings benefits that other alcohols do not.'

'It's false scientifically, wine is an alcohol like any other.'

The doctors' article warned of the misleading nature of the president's remarks, pointing out that wine represents 60% of France's alcohol consumption, leads to approximately 50,000 deaths per year throughout the country, is the second only to smoking as a contributory factor of cancers, is a source of domestic violence, street violence, and a significant proportion of mental illnesses, suicides and accidental and road deaths.

The article also referred to a survey in which 60% of respondents were said to find the current alcohol regulation to be 'insufficient'.

### Drunk with power

However, if Macron's past actions are anything to go by, a tightening of the alcohol legislation is unlikely. As economy minister himself in 2015, he oversaw the watering down of the *Loi Évin* to allow wine producers to make it easier to 'give information' about their product, referring especially to 'a region of production' or 'cultural, gastronomic or landscape heritage related to an alcoholic beverage having an identification of quality or origin', or related to a protected soil.

More recently, as president, he came under fire from the public health lobby for employing the services of a former leading wine lobbyist as one of his agriculture advisers.

Consumption of alcohol in France stands at 12 litres per year, one of the highest per person averages in Europe. The group of doctors have called on 'the responsibilities of the government and elected representatives' and especially President Macron to do more to protect the French people, namely by putting together a 'national action plan on alcohol'.



## Drinking at local Labour Party meetings ‘excludes women’

The presence of alcohol at Constituency Labour Party (CLP) meetings has a ‘corrosive effect’ on grassroots party politics, a former Crawley CLP member has claimed in an article.



Writing in *LabourList*, Nona Buckley-Irvine (pictured) highlighted how such alcohol-fuelled constituency meetings led to a ‘striking under-representation of women’, especially at council level, and how she was made acutely aware of the influence of alcohol when she tried to put through a motion banning it, being ‘shouted down’ by other party members who denounced her proposal as ‘evil and wicked’.

She wrote of Labour Party policy generally: ‘There are no national rules prohibiting drinking, which places the Labour Party behind the trade union movement in terms of inclusivity in this regard.’

‘The presence of alcohol at meetings can be exclusive of Muslims, pregnant women, drivers, young people under 18, recovering alcoholics, those who cannot afford a pint.’

Nona argued for more cultural reforms to ensure that the part is welcoming to all and would mitigate the risks that consumption of alcohol poses to others.

You can hear Nona talk in more depth about alcohol in local CLP meetings on our *Alcohol Alert* podcast. 

## Europe’s billion-euro wine spillage

Eurocare has published a report on wine promotion subsidies under the European Union’s (EU) Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), calling for EU lawmakers to phase out this costly market intervention. The report, entitled *Europe’s billion-euro wine spillage*, highlights the problems of cost inefficiency, public health risks, alcohol ads targeting youth and misuse of funds, to mention some.



‘EU’s promotion of wine has gotten out of hand,’ says Eurocare Secretary General Mariann Skar. ‘It’s time to dismantle this expensive support of the wine sector, which amounts to more than €250 million a year. Wine is already heavily subsidized with EU taxpayers’ money.’

The new publication makes five concrete recommendations to limit the mismanagement of the subsidies and ensure public health perspectives are duly taken into account.

Total wine export from the EU to non-EU countries has increased less than the amount spent on promoting wines abroad. The wine promotion scheme has failed to deliver increased competitiveness. Instead, misuse of the subsidies is reported throughout Europe. An EU audit from 2014 addressed several cases of fraud and furthermore established that the money is often ‘used for consolidating markets, rather than winning new markets or recovering old market.’

With this report, the general public is informed of the many challenges associated to promoting wine, a beverage which does not fall under the CAP objective of supporting ‘safe food’. The findings contained in the report are also a contribution to the ongoing debate of the CAP reform. Subsidising wine promotion has not demonstrated economic results and additionally has potentially severe public health consequences. Therefore, argue the authors, it should be phased out.

Eurocare hopes that policy makers and consumers become aware of ‘the massive waste of resources that the wine promotion subsidies represent’. 

## Experts: ‘We need a strategy for older drinkers’

We need a national strategy for older drinkers, argue health experts in the latest edition of *Our Invisible Addicts*.

The report, which was developed in conjunction with the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the British Geriatrics Society, calls for cohesive integrated policies devised by public health agencies and professionals, supported by government, and implemented at local, regional and national levels.

The publication adds to the findings of the original report in 2011, which represented ‘an important landmark in recognising the extent of substance-related health problems amongst older people’.

Substance misuse amongst older people has only continued to grow since then, as the population of ‘baby boomers’ ages, increasing both the number of older people and the percentage of the older population with experience of substance misuse.

The second edition of the report builds upon the recommendations of the first, most notably including: urging the government to fund the training of more addictions psychiatrists and old age psychiatrists to manage the specific needs to older substance misusers; improving communication with the media, the Faculty of Public Health and NHS England to improve public education in recognising that current lower risk drinking limits in older people may in fact be too high for some older people; and to support the implementation of minimum unit pricing.

The authors of *Our Invisible Addicts* also stressed the need to improve knowledge and awareness around the increasing use of illicit and prescription drugs, as well as the harm caused by novel psychoactive substances, substances acquired using the internet, and other addictions accompanying substance misuse such as gambling.

The working group that produced the report, co-chaired by old age consultant psychiatrist Dr Tony Rao and addictions consultant psychiatrist Professor Ilana Crombe, represented professionals from a wide range of clinical specialities as well as a patient with first-hand experience of alcoholism.

Professor Crombe and Dr Rao said: ‘In the 21st century, substance misuse is no longer confined to younger people. The public is poorly informed about the relationship between substance misuse and health risks in older people. We need a clear and coordinated approach to address a problem that is likely to increase further over coming decades. By improving our approach to substance misuse in older people from detection to continuity of care, we can also improve both quality of life and reduce mortality in a vulnerable group that deserves better.’

The report is next due for revision in 2025. ■■■

## MPs call for ‘clarity’ on low/no alcohol labelling

MPs from all parties gathered in the House of Commons to call for new, clear regulation on the labelling of low alcohol and alcohol-free drinks, while sampling alcohol-free beers, wines and spirits.

Members of the [All-Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) on Alcohol Harm](#) were joined by charities Alcohol Research UK and Club Soda, who held a survey of more than 500 consumers in which 86% of respondents said they bought these products because they were looking to cut down their overall drinking.

However, many were confused by the labels, and found it hard to make sense of terms such as ‘alcohol-free’, ‘low alcohol’, ‘dealcoholised’ and ‘non-alcoholic’ – all of which currently have a different legal definition. Some products also use the term ‘light’ or ‘lite’ to mean low alcohol, where others use it to refer to calories.

56% of respondents expected that a ‘low-alcohol’ beer would only contain up to 0.5% alcohol-by-volume (ABV), whereas ‘low-alcohol’ products can currently contain up to 1.2% alcohol. Some felt ‘alcohol-free’ should mean absolutely no alcohol, while others were happy for it to mean drinks of up to 0.5% ABV.

Fiona Bruce, chair of the APPG on Alcohol Harm, said:

**In the UK we’re waking up to the harm alcohol can cause, and many are choosing to cut down as a result. An increasing number of us are choosing to drink low alcohol and alcohol-free alternatives. But labelling is lagging behind consumer demand.**

**The Department of Health must give us common-sense regulations around the labelling of alcohol alternative drinks, so that we can make informed choices about our health. ■■■**

## Off-label industry solutions strike a sour note

The European Union needs mandatory labelling, say campaigners

Health and consumer groups have reacted with fury to the latest alcohol labelling proposals offered by industry to the European Commission, which will allow producers to potentially place essential health and calorie information about a beverage online rather than on the product itself.

This self-regulatory solution is the industry's answer to the challenge set by the European Commission to solve a dispute between spirits, wine and beer companies over how to label their respective alcohol beverage types.



Wine **WITHOUT** alcohol **PROVIDES** information to consumers

Wine **WITH** alcohol **DOES NOT** provide information to consumers

Under the current regime, alcoholic beverages are not obliged to indicate the list of ingredients and nutrition declaration, which is not the case for other foods. The alcohol industry come to the conclusion that online information provides more clarity. But consumer and health groups say this approach denies customers the right to know what is in the products they are buying at the point of sale, a peculiarity that marks alcohol out from all other drinks and foodstuffs commonly sold in grocery and supermarket stores.

What is the difference between alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages? Information. Source: Eurocare

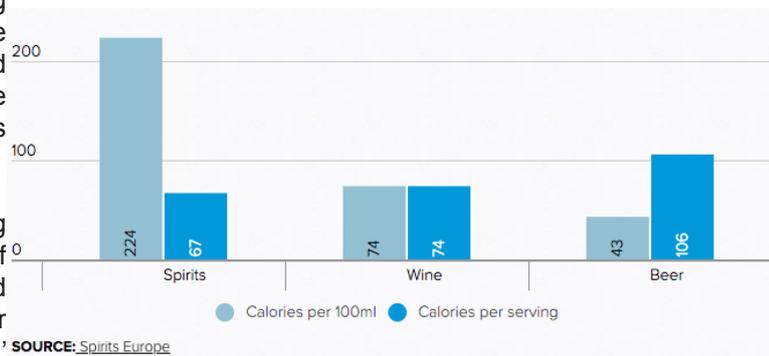
## A short history of a long-running saga

In March 2017, the Commission published a report on alcoholic labelling, which found no justification for the absence of nutritional information from alcoholic beverages, where for food it was mandatory.

The Commission granted alcohol producers a year to deliver a self-regulatory proposal, during which the alcohol industry has argued for off-label information (eg placing QR codes on labels, referring customers to a website).

Furthermore, a row has been brewing within the industry over whether to label alcohol beverages based on 100-millilitre servings or not. The EU's *Food Information to Consumers Regulation of 2011* required food and soft drink producers to provide information on calories per 100 grams or 100 millilitres, and 'if appropriate, to allow additional portion-based declarations'. In the case of alcohol, this is a mandatory requirement, but the industry were encouraged to agree on a measure that would suit all beverage types.

The Brewers of Europe were satisfied with displaying calorie information in 100ml servings, as it would constitute a fraction of a typical glass serving of beer – at least a third as much. But the spirits industry is set against it, as the volume is far in excess of a typical serving of their products – spirits are usually served at 30ml.



Furthermore, winemakers have claimed that labelling such specificities is misleading because of the quality of the vintage, which changes from one year to the other and even during the maturation process. 'Contrary to other industrial products, there is no pre-established recipe,' said Jean-Marie Barillère, president of the wine lobby Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins, in reaction to the Commission's 2017 report.

Alcoholic drinks: Calories per 100ml versus calories per serving

Health groups, on the other hand, endorsed the 100ml measure for its simplicity and uniformity, ingredient labelling on the basis of consumers having the right to know what is in their drink, and health warnings to be aware of the potential risk factors of consumption.

Regardless, trade associations representing wine, beer, spirits and ciders offered their proposal to the Commission on 12 March, which advocated offering off-label calorie and ingredient information.

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## Public health backlash

However, the industry's suggestions have prompted a backlash from many public health and consumer rights groups. Alcohol policy NGO Eurocare pointed out that putting information online rather than on labels excludes a large category of consumers who don't have a smartphone or who are not computer literate – around 35% of Western Europeans do not own a smartphone, according to their calculations, which precludes the usefulness of QR codes, and 44% of Europeans lack basic digital skills.

General Secretary Mariann Skar questioned the proposals on these grounds. 'We do not have to go online to find information for milk or orange juice, why should we for wine?'

The sentiment was supported by the Royal Society for Public Health, whose chief executive, [Shirley Cramer CBE](#), expressed [her disappointment](#) at the industry's submission.

Her statement read: 'The truth is that the overwhelming majority of people will not follow a QR code on a label, especially if they are not already health-conscious or digitally literate.'

'The alcohol industry knows this, which is why the proposal announced today amounts to nothing more than hiding, not providing, information to consumers.'

The consumers' group European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) also disagreed with the proposals. 'As consumers make shopping decisions in a matter of seconds, it is unrealistic to expect they will take a few minutes to check online how calorific wine or vodka is', it said.

## Over to the Commission...

In journalist [Anca Gurzu's column for POLITICO](#), she quotes a MEP as hinting that the battle over alcohol labelling, which in its entirety stretches back over 30 years, doesn't look like ending any time soon:

For now, the Commission is holding its cards close. It praised the alcohol sectors for their efforts in coming up with a common pitch. 'The Commission is determined to find an equitable solution that offers to the EU citizens enhanced information on the alcohol they drink,' said a Commission spokesperson.

In the meantime, MEP Sommer doubts a legislative proposal from the Commission on mandatory labelling could be agreed quickly. 'I wonder whether this labelling decision would take place before the next European elections,' she said. The Commission has 20 months left in its mandate and the impact assessment needed for new laws could take longer than that.

If it doesn't work very quickly, a new College of Commissioners will pick up the baton, potentially pushing well into the 2020s a decision on a goal first proposed in the 1980s.



## Welsh MUP moves a step closer

Senedd agrees to law in principle

The Welsh Government's *Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Bill* has cleared its first hurdle in the Welsh Assembly.

Assembly Members (AM) backed the general principle of the law in a vote in the Senedd – a total of 47 AMs backed the general principles of the bill with six against and one abstention.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said evidence from other countries showed a link between price and consumption.

He told AMs in a Senedd debate that [a minimum price for alcohol would help end 'the sad spectre of people who die from drink'](#).

But he also acknowledged that minimum pricing would not work 'in isolation' and [promised an extra £1m funding of health boards to tackle substance misuse services](#), taking projected overall funding levels for the services to £18m in 2018/19.

Concerns were voiced from some representatives of opposition parties. UKIP's Caroline Jones was one. Comparing alcohol to smoking, she claimed that increasing tobacco prices had not seen a decrease heavy smokers, 'it just makes them poorer.'

She went on to say that 'the bill would be unfair on the families of less well-off drinkers resulting in 'children going without and having a much poorer quality of life.'

Welsh Conservative AM Angela Burns said her party would be backing the bill, but with 'a very long list of caveats and concerns that we would like to see addressed over the coming stage.'

Dai Lloyd, Plaid Cymru chair of the health committee said his party backed the principle of the law, but thought that higher alcohol prices could push some drinkers towards other, more harmful substances.

However Gething addressed the issue by saying: 'I've been very clear, that it [MUP] will not work in isolation. Alcohol policy in Wales requires is a variety of approaches, which taken together, can generate change.

'That's why we are supporting people throughout Wales to develop a Substance Misuse Strategy, and end the sad spectacle of people dying from drink.'

Gething added the bill would not include a specific price for a minimum unit as he wanted it to 'remain flexible and able to respond to changing circumstances'. Instead, he would consult on a proposed price which would then be put before the assembly for AMs to agree on.

The bill will now go on to detailed consideration by assembly committees. If passed by the assembly, it should take effect 12 months after its royal assent. ■■

## Government seeks guidance on describing low ABV drinks

Department of Health to the public: 'I wanna know what alcohol is, I want you to show me'

The UK Government has opened a consultation seeking views on the introduction of guidance on low alcohol descriptors to replace current regulations.

Launched on the Department of Health website, *The Consultation on Low Alcohol Descriptors* will ask members of the public how best to continue to communicate information to the public about low alcohol drinks, so that 'adults can make informed choices' when purchasing them.

The consultation will also take views on the possibility of introducing new descriptors for those beverages above 1.2% alcohol by volume (ABV) in order to further promote lower strength ones.

The current *Food Labelling Regulations (FLR) 1996* set out rules for how low alcohol drinks (those of 1.2% ABV, or less) may be described, which aim to protect the public and inform consumers until its expiry on 13 December 2018. They state that a manufacturer must display a warning for drinks with an alcohol content above 1.2%. However, alcoholic beverages above 1.2% ABV (that contain any of the six main artificial colours) are also exempt from European Union mandatory health warnings such as 'may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children'. Such exemptions are the subject of fierce debate on the continent, where alcohol manufacturers have been granted the chance to produce and adhere to their own 'self-regulatory' proposals, much to the dismay of public health campaigners.

However, this consultation overview hints at following the EU model in replacing the current regulations with a guidance-led partnership approach between government and industry, stating that the government 'believes any future low-alcohol descriptors could be introduced through guidance rather than legislation.'

The consultation closes on 10 May 2018. ■■

## Alcohol industry donated to federal agency study

Study design may have also been under the influence

Major alcohol industry players helped sponsor a \$100m randomized controlled trial (RCT) study overseen by the US National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), designed to answer conclusively whether moderate drinking truly reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.

What's more, the *New York Times* (NYT) [exposé of the scandal](#) has suggested that they may have had a hand in its design and the selection of researchers too.

Obtaining details of e-mails and travel vouchers and other documents under the Freedom of Information Act, as well as interviews with former federal officials, NYT reporters were able to contradict the lead investigator's claim that he had never discussed the planning of the study with industry. In fact, according to the NYT:

... the documents and interviews show that the institute waged a vigorous campaign to court the alcohol industry, paying for scientists to travel to meetings with executives, where they gave talks strongly suggesting that the study's results would endorse moderate drinking as healthy.

One unnamed former official told the NYT that she had followed up after the presentations with appeals for money, telling industry executives the research study's results would endorse moderate drinking as healthy.

Others were involved in paying scientists to travel to meetings with executives, where they'd attempt to convince them that the study's results would endorse moderate drinking as healthy. Meetings would be held at the Beer Institute convention in Philadelphia and at the Washington headquarters of the Distilled Spirits Council, among others.

Activity resulting in fund-raising may have violated the policy of NIAAA's parent organisation, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which [prohibits employees from soliciting or suggesting donations, funds or other resources](#) intended to support activities.

The NIH has subsequently announced that [it will begin an investigation into whether the researchers violated federal policy by soliciting donations](#), and will appoint external experts to review the design of the study. In the meantime, Anheuser Busch InBev, Heineken, Diageo, Pernod Ricard, and Carlsberg have contributed \$67.7 million of the \$100 million government study, which is ongoing.

The NYT speculates that at the very least the campaign is bound to raise more questions about the independence of the investigators and the scientific integrity of the huge trial. ■■■

## Stereotypes about women's drinking 'unfair and unhelpful'

The stigmatisation of women's drinking, and the sexualisation of women in alcohol advertising, was highlighted at an event held in the Scottish Parliament by policymakers, academics, researchers and politicians. The report *Women and Alcohol: Key Issues* launched by Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) and the Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS) addresses some of the challenges faced by women in relation to alcohol.

Recommendations include: better collaboration between researchers, practitioners, women's rights groups, and those with lived experience of alcohol harm; restrictions put in place for all forms of alcohol marketing, including online, which employ sexualised images and messaging relating to women; more women-only spaces in alcohol services, and more residential treatment and recovery support for women and children.

Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP, who sponsored the event at the parliament's buildings, said: 'I am really pleased to sponsor this event at Parliament, in our nation's struggle with alcohol we have seen many myths linked to drinking habits and gender. If we are to tailor an effective national policy response we need to be clear about the facts and in particular challenge preconceptions. As research findings show, there are strong stereotypes embedded in our social consciousness, and our first challenge is to unpick these.'

The report draws on findings from a series of consultation events held in Edinburgh and London in 2017 about the relationships between alcohol and women, including the stigmatising of certain women's drinking behaviours and the motivations and behaviours of alcohol producers. It also follows research from Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) and the University of Stirling in 2016 that found 'gender is poorly reported in systematic reviews of population-level interventions to reduce alcohol-related harm, hindering assessment of the intended and unintended effects of such policies on women and men.'

Supporting the event, Dr Carol Emslie (Glasgow Caledonian University) and Dr Niamh Fitzgerald (University of Stirling) presented a new *Infographics on Men, Women and Alcohol in Scotland* series (illustrated, top), intended to challenge stereotypes and stigmatising attitudes about gender and drinking.

Dr Carol Emslie – [seen here talking about the report](#) – said:

'Women are still judged more harshly than men if they have been drinking and media reports continue to highlight young women as a group prone to "risky" drinking. Our infographics ask people to question why stereotypes about gender and alcohol persist. Watch out for "bench girl", an image often used to accompany any story on alcohol, showing a young woman in a black dress and boots, sprawled apparently



semi-conscious on a street bench. Yet official statistics demonstrate older men make up the majority of those who die or are hospitalised for alcohol-related causes.'

Report authors Victoria Troy and Dr Eric Carlin, both of SHAAP, said:

'Although men are about twice as likely as women to die from alcohol-related causes, media discussion often focuses on the perceived problem of women's drinking, with moralistic and stigmatising attitudes featuring strongly in public discussions. We've been trying to explore why this happens and to suggest how we can counter cynical marketing by alcohol producers that exploit rather than emancipate women, as well as suggesting how support services can be more women-friendly.'

Katherine Brown, the Institute of Alcohol Studies chief executive, gave an address identifying the contradictions in alcohol marketers selling women alcohol as empowering while at the same time using highly sexualised and submissive images of women to sell alcohol to men.

She said of the *Women and Alcohol* series: 'Some of the findings from these seminars were really worrying. The sexualisation of women in alcohol marketing may be working to undermine gender equality and ultimately de-sensitise public attitudes towards domestic abuse and sexual assault.'

We need to see an end to such practices and learn from other countries such as France which restrict alcohol advertising to protect against adverse outcomes.' ■■■

## Scotland: Alcohol availability hits poorest hardest

Scotland's poorest suffer most from having easy access to alcohol in their area, a new study has suggested.

Researchers at Glasgow and Edinburgh universities found those on the lowest incomes were more likely to drink too much if availability was high and that the amount of alcohol consumed by people on the highest incomes was far less affected by the number of outlets near their homes. They concluded that the Scottish Government should take an overview at the number of shops selling alcohol, particularly in low-income areas.

The study, which was published in the journal *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, combined data on the density of alcohol outlets in towns and cities across the country with details from a national health survey of more than 28,000 people. ■■■

# Charity calculates cases of avoidable alcohol-related cancer

Tens of thousands could be avoided by reduction in drinking

Reducing your alcohol intake could prevent nearly 12,000 cases of cancer occurring a year, according to charity Cancer Research UK. This amounts to 3.3% of all cases.

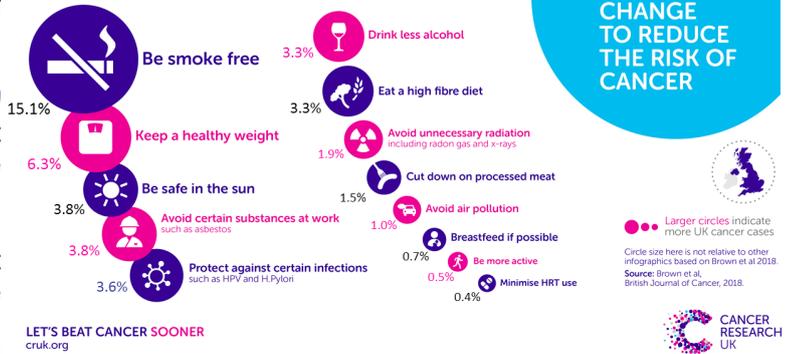
The research, which was published in the *British Journal of Cancer*, calculates the percentage of cancers that could be prevented by tackling lifestyle risk factors in the UK.

It provides an update to figures first published in 2011, that show four in ten (37.7%) of all cancers diagnosed in the UK each year could be prevented by lifestyle changes, including drinking less alcohol, stopping smoking and maintaining a healthy weight. This represents 135,500 cases of cancer each year, or more than 2,500 per week. For the first time we have been able to provide a breakdown for the different UK nations.

The latest figures – calculated by combining data on risk factor prevalence in 2005, cancer incidence in 2015, and published evidence on the risk of developing cancer in people exposed to the risk factor versus those unexposed – found that smoking remains the biggest preventable cause of cancer despite the continued decline in smoking rates.

Sir Harpal Kumar, Cancer Research UK's chief executive, said of the study: 'Leading a healthy life doesn't guarantee that a person won't get cancer, but it can stack the odds in your favour. These figures show that we each can take positive steps to help reduce our individual risk of the disease.'

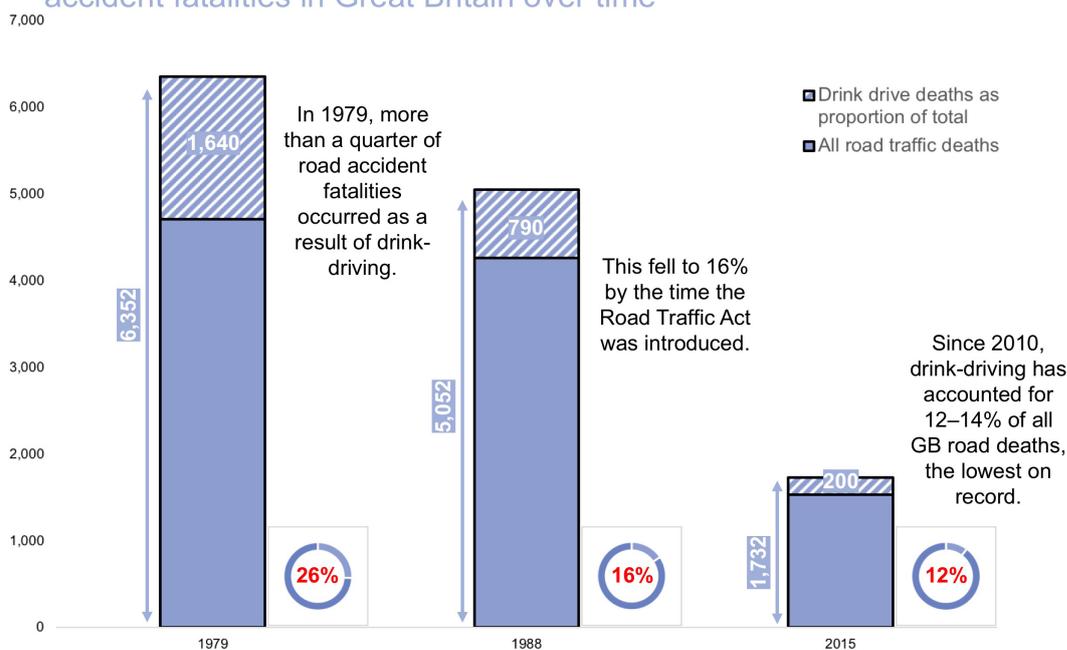
## 4 IN 10 CANCER CASES CAN BE PREVENTED...



## ALCOHOL SNAPSHOT

### Drink drive figures – have we hit a dead end?

Figure 8: Estimated drink drive road accident fatalities versus all road accident fatalities in Great Britain over time



The first provisional dataset for drink drive accidents in 2016 hints at a small uptick in fatalities on Great Britain's roads compared with the previous year (the 2015 figure is displayed here as the final statistic, please see our [Drink-driving factsheet](#) for more information). As a proportion of all road deaths, this may not turn out to be significantly higher a rate than the 12–14% that has persisted since 2010, the lowest on record. When records began, twice as many road accident fatalities were down to drink-driving.

Seen another way, however, there is certainly room for improvement – the number of fatalities has stalled for almost a decade, and as the [most recent Department for Transport data shows](#), may be about to get worse. Ultimately, any death due to drink-driving is one death too many, and the government could do worse than to look at adopting policies such as [lowering the drink drive limit](#) and increased breath test enforcement for drivers.



**An Institute of Alcohol Studies publication**

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