

## *Alcohol - Acting on evidence: what we've learnt so far*

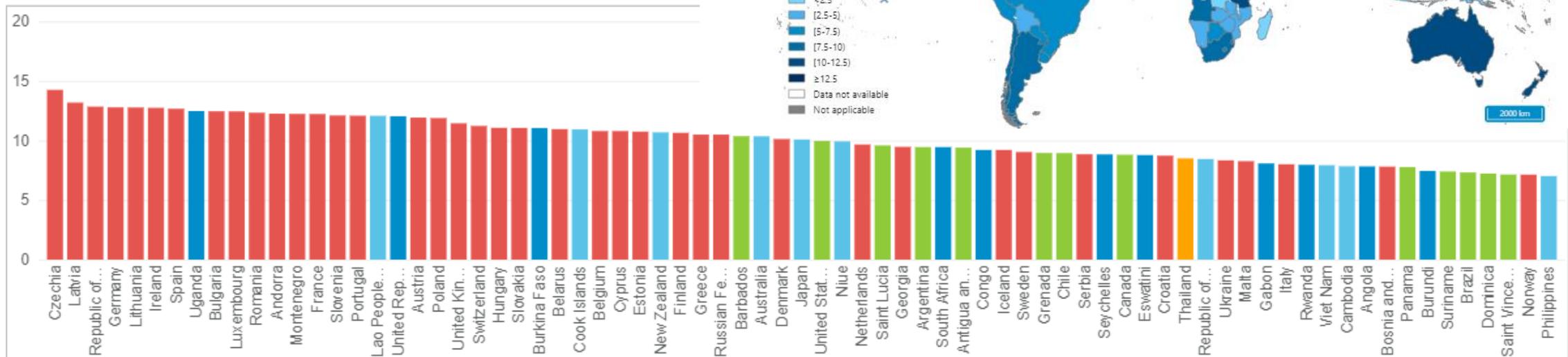
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WHO European Office for Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases, WHO Regional Office for Europe

**3 million** deaths every year from harmful use of alcohol

women 1/4  
men 3/4

# Alcohol consumption: where does the Region stand?



# And what about the alcohol-attributable burden?

- Globally, the WHO European Region has the highest proportion all of deaths and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) that are caused by alcohol.
- Around **2545 people died every day** from alcohol-attributable causes of deaths in 2016.
- Every 10th death within the Region was alcohol-attributable – in the age group of **20–24-year-olds this was nearly one in every fourth death**

In 2016

**928 841 deaths**

in the WHO European Region were estimated to be alcohol-attributable

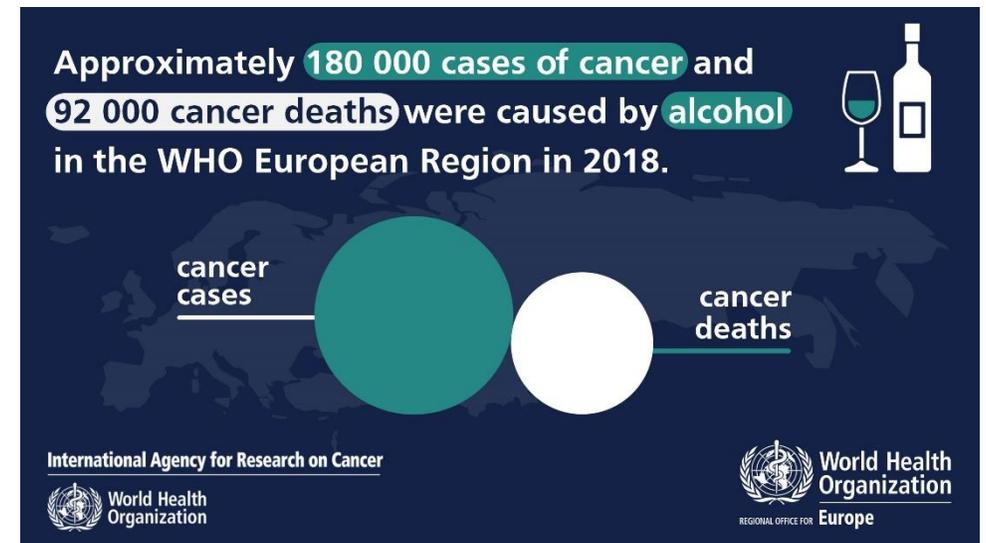


Proportion of deaths caused by alcohol use in the WHO European Region, by age and sex (2016)

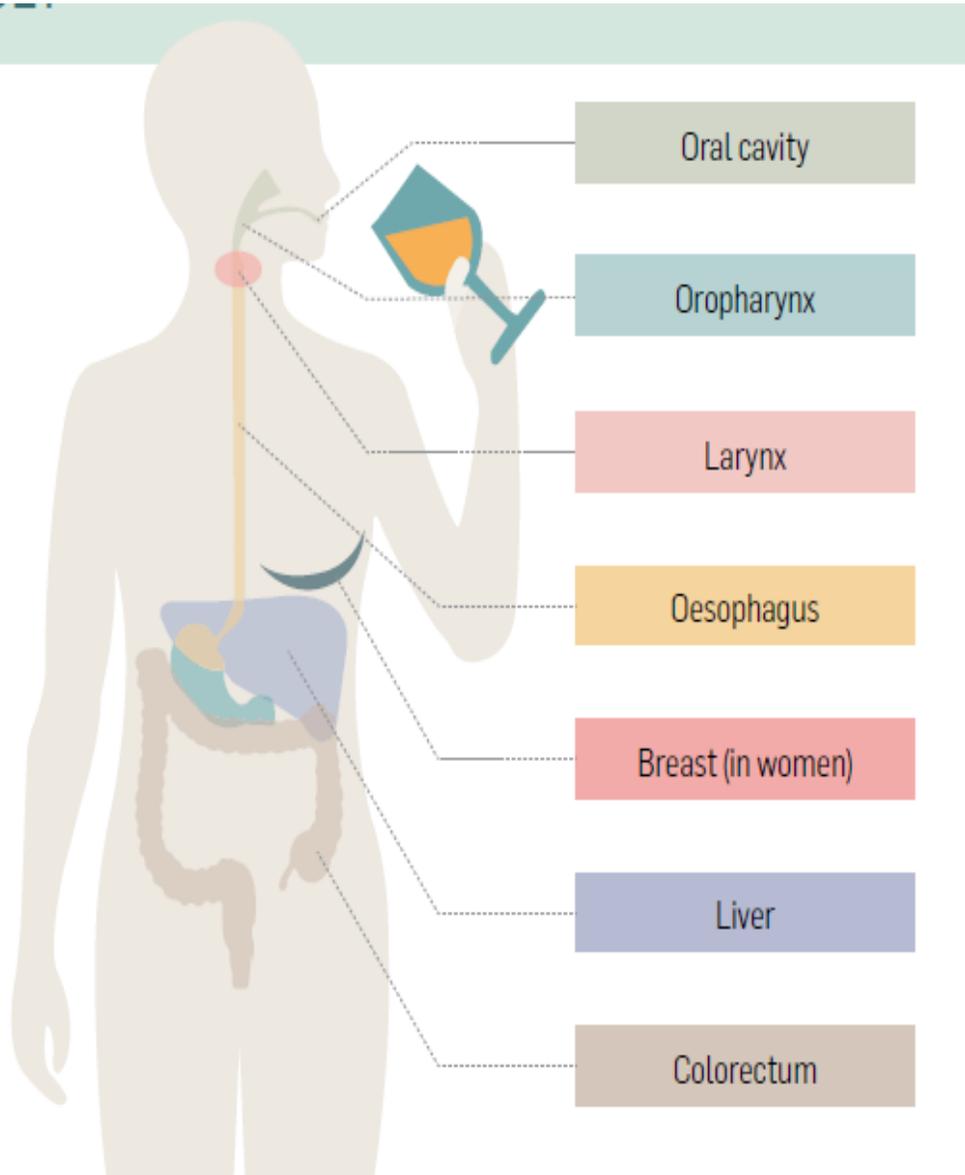
<sup>a</sup> The orange area along each line represents confidence intervals.

# Key messages:

- 180,000 cancer cases and 92,000 cancer deaths caused by alcohol in 2018
- No safe level of consumption
- Public health responses must be matched to this complex vision of the dangers of alcohol and respond to population-level harms



# Which cancers are caused by alcohol?



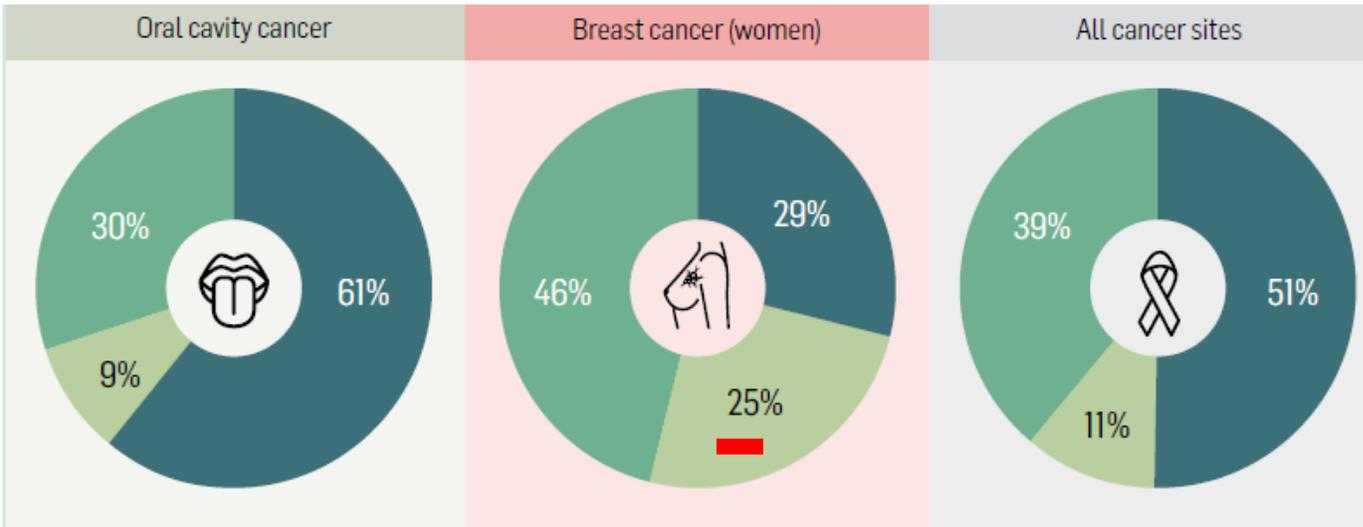
People who use both **alcohol and tobacco** have a **5 times** increased risk of developing cancers of the **oral cavity, oropharynx, larynx and oesophagus**, compared to people who use either alcohol or tobacco alone.

For heavy users, the risk is up to **30 times** higher.

International Agency for Research on Cancer  
World Health Organization

World Health Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe

# No safe level



### Moderate drinking:

a maximum of two drinks, or 20 g of pure alcohol, per day



### Risky drinking:

3–6 drinks, or a maximum of 60 g of pure alcohol, per day



### Heavy drinking :

six drinks, or 60 g of pure alcohol, or more per day



There is **no safe level** of alcohol consumption.

The risk of cancer increases even with low levels of alcohol consumption.

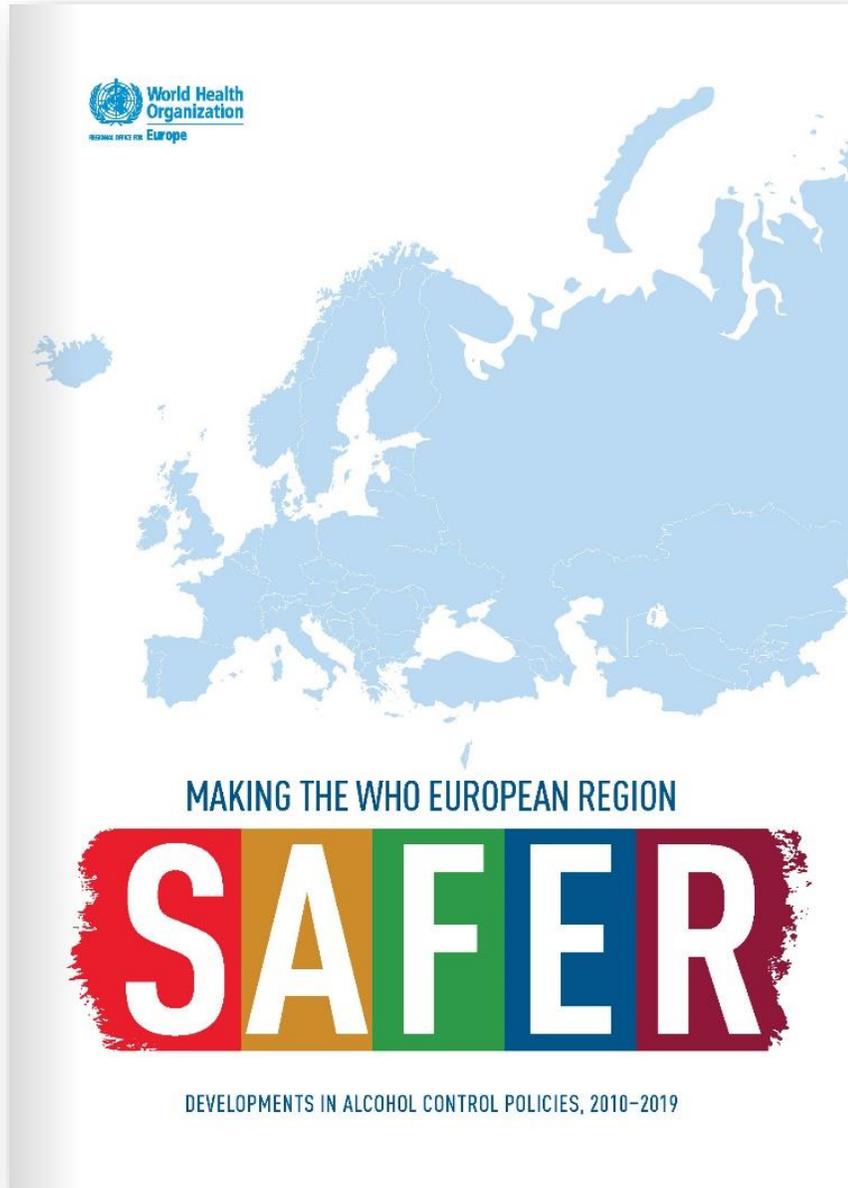
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Half of all alcohol-attributable cancers are NOT because of heavy drinking + so is the majority of breast cancers.

**Every fourth** alcohol-attributable breast cancer is because of “moderate drinking”

# Policy options to reduce alcohol-attributable cancers



Alcohol-attributable cancers and deaths can be prevented by:

- 1) reducing alcohol consumption
- 2) using effective policies
  - increasing taxes
  - banning or restricting alcohol marketing
  - restricting availability

# Launch of the #SAFEREuropeanRegion initiative

## GENERAL POPULATION STRATEGIES:

highly effective, highly cost-effective, easy and inexpensive to implement (“**best buys**”)

- price increase via taxation or other means
- availability decreases
- ban on marketing

## HIGH-RISK POPULATION STRATEGIES:

Effective, cost-effective

- drink-driving countermeasures
- screening and brief interventions
- treatment of alcohol use disorders

## Environmental strategies

- Education
- Registration of all alcohol, including industrial alcohol
- Informal controls

**S**trengthen restrictions on alcohol availability;

**A**dvance and enforce drink–driving countermeasures;

**F**acilitate access to screening, brief interventions and treatment;

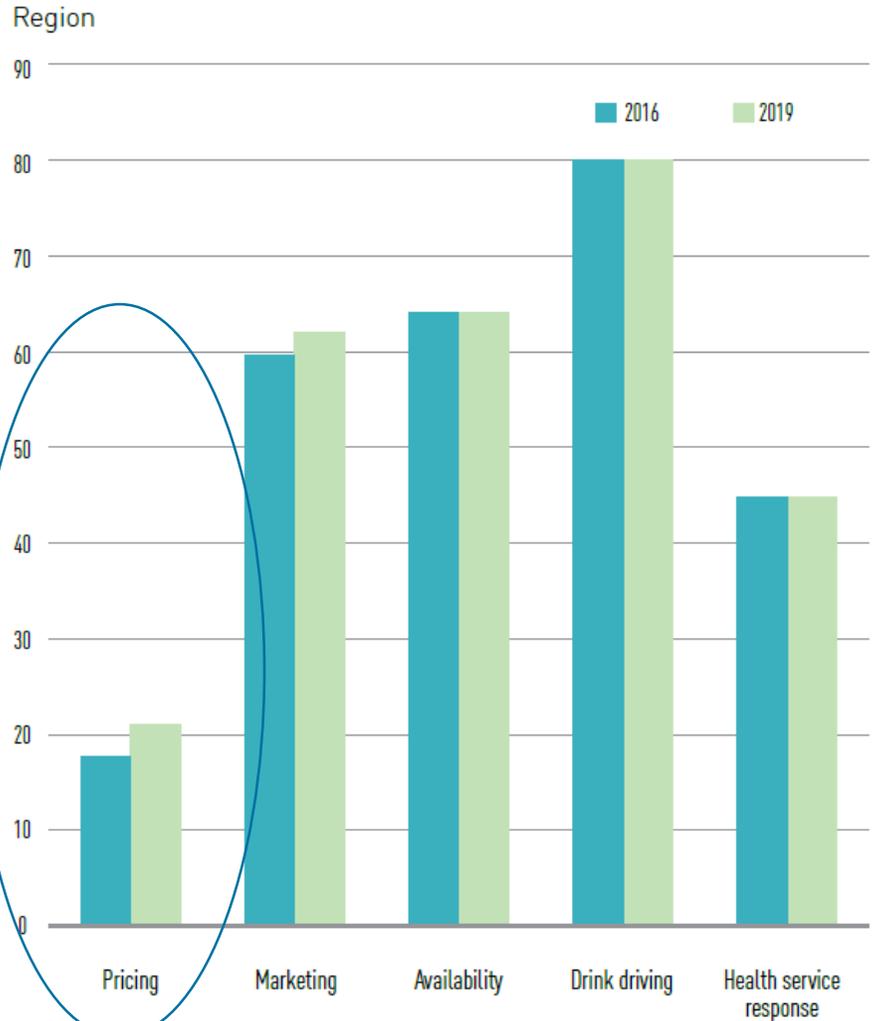
**E**nforce bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship and promotion;

**R**aise prices on alcohol through excise taxes and pricing policies.



# Policy options to reduce alcohol-attributable cancers

Implementation of the five SAFER areas in the WHO European Region



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10%  
of all deaths in the WHO European Region are attributable to alcohol.

But alcoholic beverages don't have labels warning us of the potential health hazards from its consumption.

It's your right to know  
**WHAT'S IN THE BOTTLE!**

World Health Organization  
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Almost every fourth death among 20-24-year-olds is caused by alcohol

But alcoholic beverages often don't display labels warning us of potential health hazards of alcohol consumption.

It's your right to know  
**WHAT'S IN THE BOTTLE!**

Raising awareness and informing consumer choice through alcohol labelling

# Reducing alcohol consumption is a public health imperative

Increased recognition of alcohol's contributory role in cancer development and cancer death

There is a need for interconnected measures:

- a clear message that there is **no safe level of drinking**;
- **concerted action** at national and international level, including to combat the influence of vested interests opposed to alcohol control policies;
- increased levels of **political commitment** and implementation of a comprehensive policy approach, with emphasis on the **WHO best-buys**;
- appropriate and widespread **engagement** of public health-oriented nongovernmental organizations, professional associations and civil society groups.

# Thank you! Спасибо!

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