

Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use

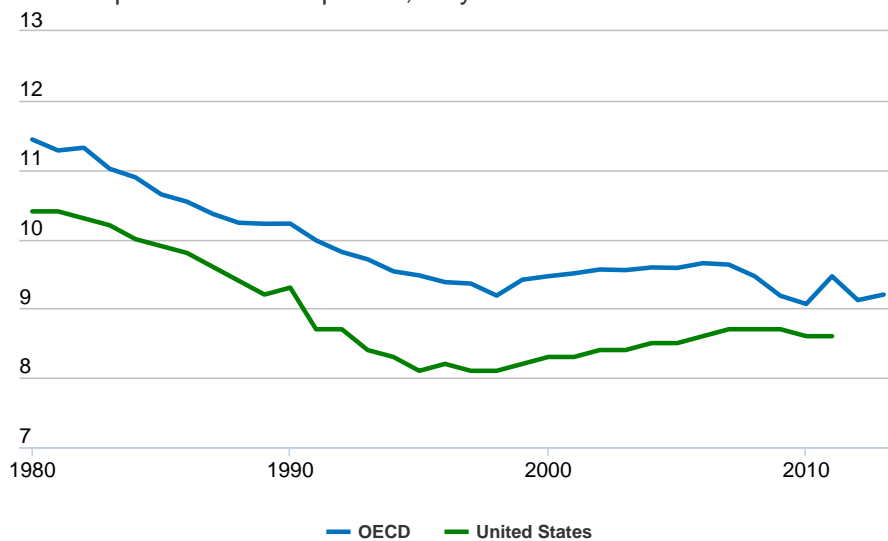
Country note - United States

Consumption Trends

Levels of alcohol consumption in the United States are close to the OECD average and have remained relatively stable in the last 20 years, but with a progressive shift from beer to spirit consumption. In 2011, an average of 8.6 litres of pure alcohol per capita was consumed in the United States, compared with an estimate of 9.5 litres in the OECD.

Annual alcohol consumption per capita

liters of pure alcohol component, 15-year-olds and older



Drinking and Social Disparities

Large socio-economic disparities exist in rates of hazardous drinking, but social gradients differ in men and women. The probabilities of an average individual aged 40 to engage in hazardous drinking (i.e. having a weekly amount of pure alcohol of 140 grams or more for women, and 210 grams or more for men) are shown below by level of education. In the United States, women with more education are more likely to be hazardous drinkers than less educated women, while men with less education are more likely to drink at risk.

Share of hazardous drinkers by education level and gender

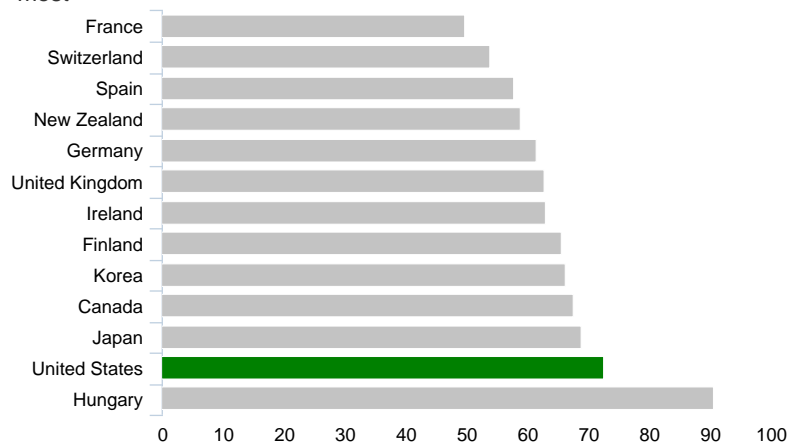
	United States		Country 2	
	men	women	men	women
Low education	12.7	3.5		
Medium education	10.3	4.0		
High education	8.0	4.3		

Heavy Drinkers

no text available

Concentration of alcohol consumption

Share of total alcohol consumed by the 20% of the population who drink the most



Taxes & Legal Framework

Compared with other countries in the OECD area, the United States has somewhat lower levels of taxation of alcohol, particularly for beer and spirits. The national blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for drivers is 0.08% (0.04% for professional drivers) which is higher than many other OECD countries (the majority of countries have a maximum BAC level of 0.05%) but certain States have lower limits. The United States have adopted a policy of minimum age for purchasing alcohol, which is set at 21, the highest across the OECD countries and Key Partners (i.e. Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russian Federation and South Africa). Other legally binding policies (e.g. advertisement and promotion of alcohol beverages, restrictions for on- and off-premise sales) are not homogeneously applied at a national level, while a voluntary scheme on the placement of alcohol advertising in various media is in place.

	United States	[Country 2]
National legal minimum age for off-premise sales		
beer	21	
wine	21	
spirits	21	
National legal minimum age for on-premise sales		
beer	21	
wine	21	
spirits	21	
Restrictions for on-/off-premise sales of alcoholic beverages		
time (hours/day)	subn	
location (place/density)	subn	
specific events	subn	
intoxicated persons	subn	
petrol stations	subn	
National maximum legal blood alcohol concentration (%)		
all drivers	0.08	
young drivers	subn	
professional drivers	0.04	
Legally binding regulations of		
advertisement	N	
product placement	N	
sponsorship	N	
sales promotion	N	
health warnings (advert/containers)	Y/Y	

Related Publication

Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use

<http://www.oecd.org/health/tackling-harmful-alcohol-use-9789264181069-en.htm>



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