



Preventing Harmful Alcohol Use

Alcohol can be a source of enjoyment and is an important part of the economy in many countries. Yet harmful alcohol use is a leading risk factor for premature death, injuries and many non-communicable diseases. Harmful alcohol use can also affect others, for example in the case of violence and foetal alcohol syndrome. These diseases and injuries, in turn, have an impact on healthcare budgets and the productivity of the labour force.



In **Cyprus**¹ the levels of alcohol consumption are around **10.8 litres of pure alcohol** per capita per year, roughly equivalent to 2.2 bottles of wine or 4.2 litres of beer per week per person aged 15 and over. In addition, in Cyprus, some population groups are at higher risk than others; specifically:



28% of adults engage in binge drinking at least once a month. This corresponds to drinking more than 80% of a bottle of wine or 1.5 litres of beer per occasion.



Men consume 16.9 litres of pure alcohol per capita per year while **women consume 4.8 litres** per capita per year.



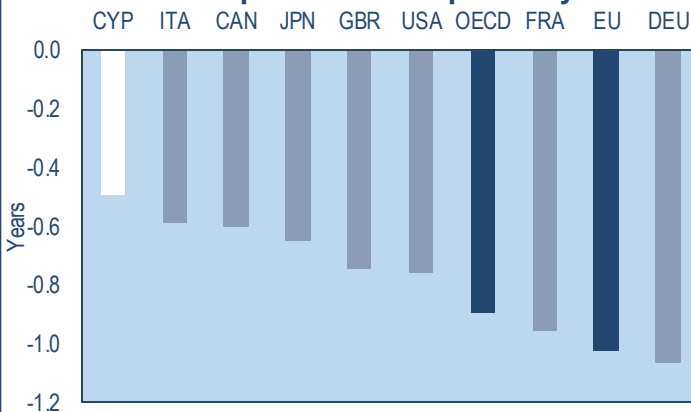
Women are **195% more likely** to binge drink monthly if they have **completed higher education**.



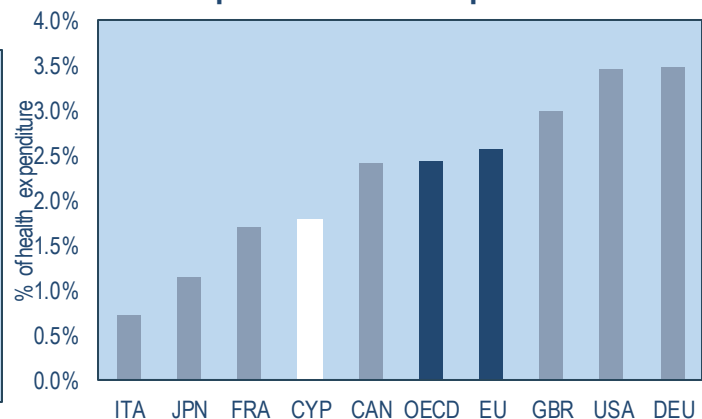
3.1% of adults are **dependent** on alcohol.

Life expectancy is **0.5 years lower** over the next 30 years, due to diseases and injuries caused by drinking more than 1 drink per day for women and 1½ drinks per day for men, on average in the whole population, according to OECD simulations.

Impact on life expectancy



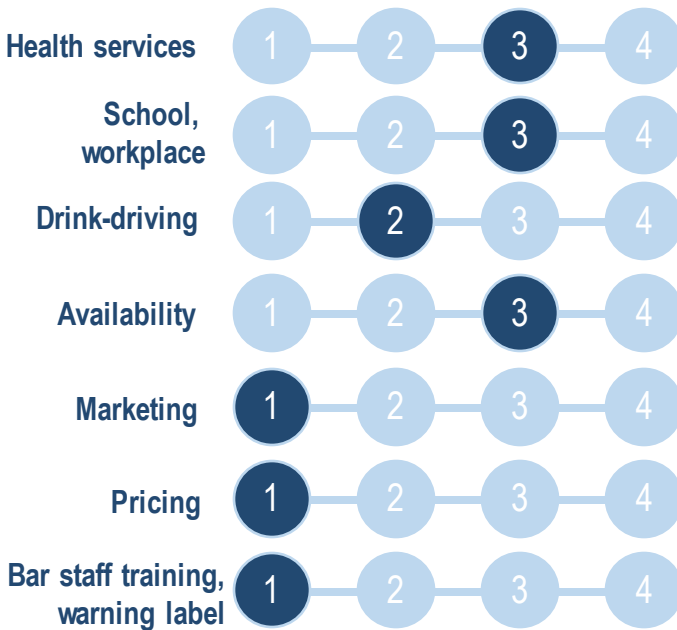
Impact on health expenditure



Based on current consumption patterns in **Cyprus**, OECD simulations estimate that diseases and injuries caused by drinking above 1-1½ drinks per day lead to treatment costs equal to **1.8% of health expenditure** and a reduction in the workforce productivity.

1. Note by Turkey
 The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".
 Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union
 The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Implementation level of policies to address harmful alcohol use in Cyprus



1-lower level of implementation, 4-higher level.
Countries with a maximum score can still enhance policy implementation and enforcement.

OECD analysis of WHO data reflects the implementation status across policy areas within the WHO's *Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol*.

Cyprus performs well in certain policy areas, but there are opportunities for further action. Policy priorities could include:

- Improving the implementation of **screening and counselling** within primary care services for people who drink heavily;
- Upscaling action to **tackle drink-driving** to prevent road traffic crashes and injuries;
- Strengthening **pricing policies** targeting cheap alcohol to protect heavy drinkers and young people;
- Strengthening **regulation of marketing**, particularly those targeting younger people.

OECD analyses looked at enhanced policy package to tackle harmful alcohol use. The package contains many of the policy priorities for Cyprus, including:



Strengthening sobriety checkpoints to counter drink-driving



Complete ban on alcohol advertising to children via traditional and new media, sponsorships, branding and point-of-sale displays



Alcohol taxation



Strengthening screening and counselling in primary care



Strengthening regulation on alcohol advertising, sponsorships, branding and point-of-sale displays



Minimum unit pricing targeting cheap alcohol

In Cyprus, investing EUR 1.7 per person per year in the enhanced policy package to tackle harmful alcohol use will:

- prevent **68.7 thousand non-communicable diseases and injuries** by 2050;
- save **EUR 4.8 million** per year in health costs;
- increase employment and productivity by the equivalent of **900 full-time workers** per year.

For every **EUR 1 invested** in the policy package, **EUR 16** are returned in benefits, not considering any impact on the alcohol industry.