

# Alcohol: no ordinary commodity

## 3<sup>rd</sup> edition

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No conflicts of interest!

Based on

almost ready,  
only cover test  
will change...

*Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity* is a collaborative effort by an international group of addiction scientists to improve the linkages between addiction science and alcohol policy. It presents, in a comprehensive, practical, and readily accessible form, the accumulated scientific knowledge on alcohol research that has a direct relevance to the development of alcohol policy on local, national, and international levels. It provides an objective basis on which to build relevant policies globally and informs policymakers who have direct responsibility for public health and social welfare. By locating alcohol policy primarily within the realm of public health, this book draws attention to the growing tendency for governments, both national and local, to consider alcohol misuse as a major determinant of ill health and to organize societal responses accordingly.

The scope of the book is comprehensive and global. The authors describe the conceptual basis for a rational alcohol policy and present new epidemiological data on the global dimensions of alcohol misuse. The core of the book is a critical review of the cumulative scientific evidence in seven general areas of alcohol policy: pricing and taxation, regulating the physical availability of alcohol, modifying the environment in which drinking occurs, drink-driving countermeasures, marketing restrictions, primary prevention programmes in schools and other settings, and treatment and early intervention services. The final chapters discuss the current state of alcohol policy in different parts of the world and describe the need for a new approach to alcohol policy that is evidence-based, global, and coordinated.

A valuable resource for those involved in addiction science and drug policy, as well as those in the wider fields of public health, health policy, epidemiology, and practising clinicians.



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**ALCOHOL**

**NO ORDINARY COMMODITY**  
Research and public policy

THIRD EDITION

Babor et al.

OXFORD

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**ALCOHOL**  
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# Tradition: collaborative cross-national texts on alcohol problems and policies a global perspective

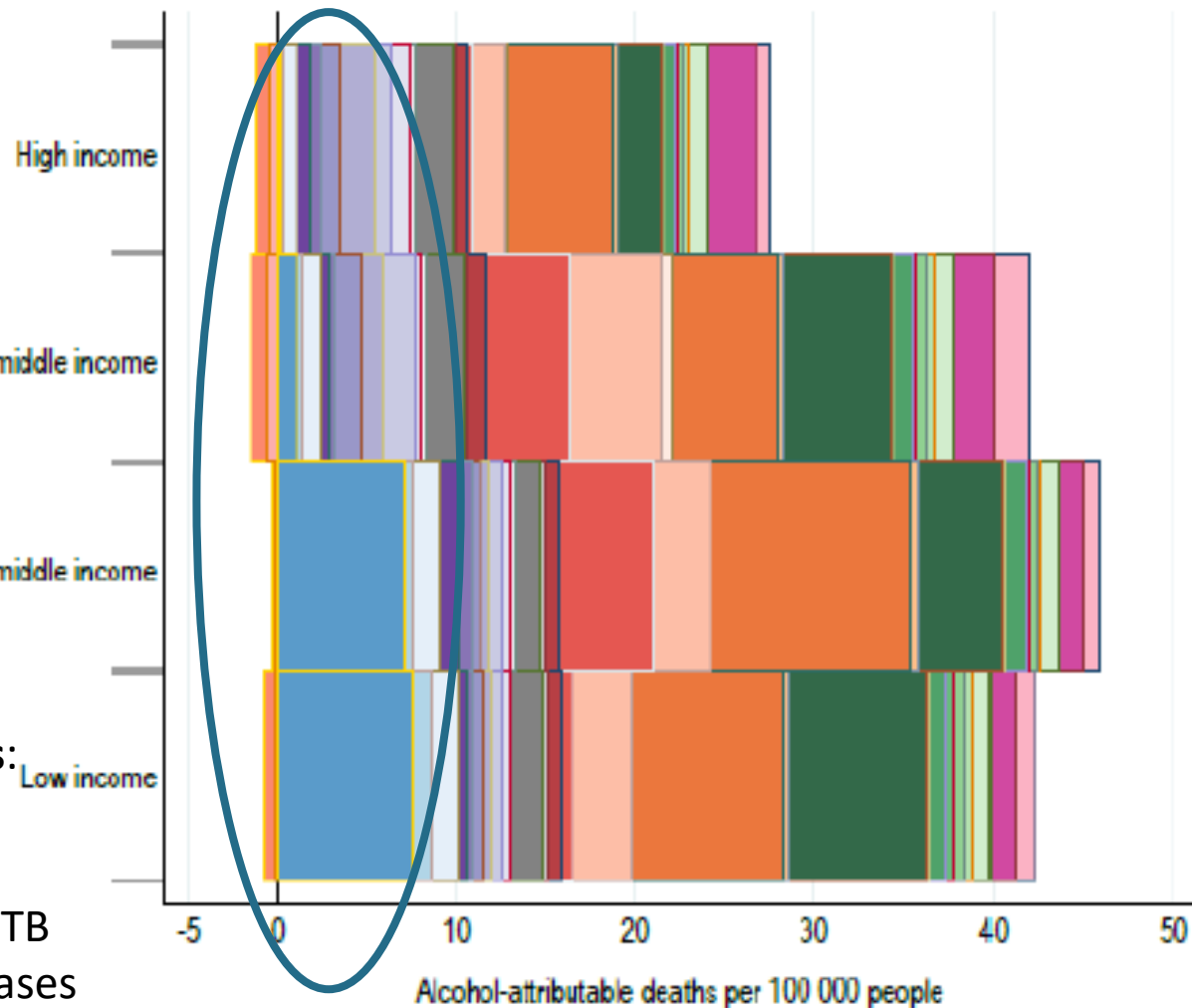
- **Kettil Bruun** et al. (1975) Alcohol Control Policies in Public Health Perspective
- Mäkelä K et al. (1981) Alcohol, Society and the State: A Comparative Study of Alcohol Control
- Edwards et al. (1994) Alcohol Policy and the Public Good
- Room et al. (2002) Alcohol in Developing Societies: A Public Health Approach
- Babor et al. (2003) Alcohol – No Ordinary Commodity (1<sup>st</sup> edition)
- Babor et al. (2010) Alcohol – No Ordinary Commodity (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)
- **And now, September 2022: Babor et al., Alcohol – No Ordinary Commodity, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition**



## This presentation's emphasis: what's new?

- Better data on alcohol in low- and middle-income countries
- More emphasis on inequalities
- Harm to others from drinking – approached systematically and as a whole
- The globalisation of the alcohol market and marketing
- Digital tools: marketing and prevention programs
- A rating system for levels of effectiveness and of evidence for strategies and interventions

# Wealth and alcohol-attributable deaths per 100,000 people



- Tuberculosis
- HIV AIDS
- Lower respiratory infections
- Lip and oral cavity cancer
- Other pharynx cancers
- Oesophagus cancer
- Colon and rectum cancers
- Liver cancer
- Breast cancer
- Larynx cancer
- Diabetes mellitus
- Alcohol use disorder
- Epilepsy
- Hypertensive heart disease
- Ischaemic heart disease
- Ischaemic stroke
- Haemorrhagic stroke
- Cardiomyopathy, myocarditis, endocarditis
- Cirrhosis of the liver
- Pancreatitis
- Road injury
- Poisonings
- Falls
- Fire, heat and hot substances
- Drowning
- Exposure to mechanical forces
- Other unintentional injuries
- Self-harm
- Interpersonal violence

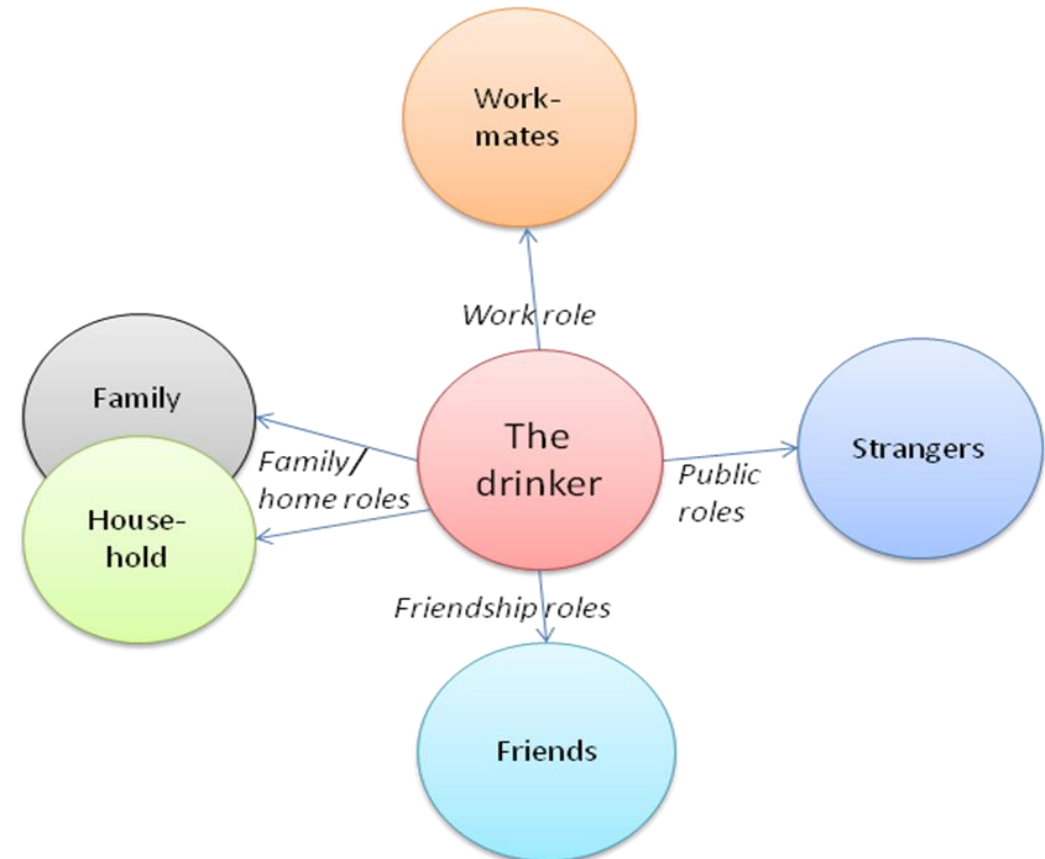
**Tuberculosis:**  
almost no alcohol-attributable TB in HIC, increases with decreasing wealth

# Not just health harm to the drinker: the burden is also **social harms and harm to others**

## **Alcohol-attributable social harms**

- Violence
- Vandalism
- Public disorder
- Property damage
- Family and marital problems
- Child maltreatment
- Other interpersonal problems
- Financial problems
- Work-related problems
- Educational difficulties
- Social costs, response costs
  - Majority due to productivity losses

Harms to others may be to specific others or to collectivities – neighbourhood, workplace, etc.



# Globalisation of the alcohol market and of alcohol marketing

- Globally, the alcohol market is dominated by consolidated transnational corporations – producing and controlling “marketing chains” across borders --
  - Large, profitable, politically influential
- Connected for marketing with transnational digital platforms, owners of global sporting events, public relations buffers (Corporate Social Responsibility)
- Globalisation facilitated by trade & investment agreements

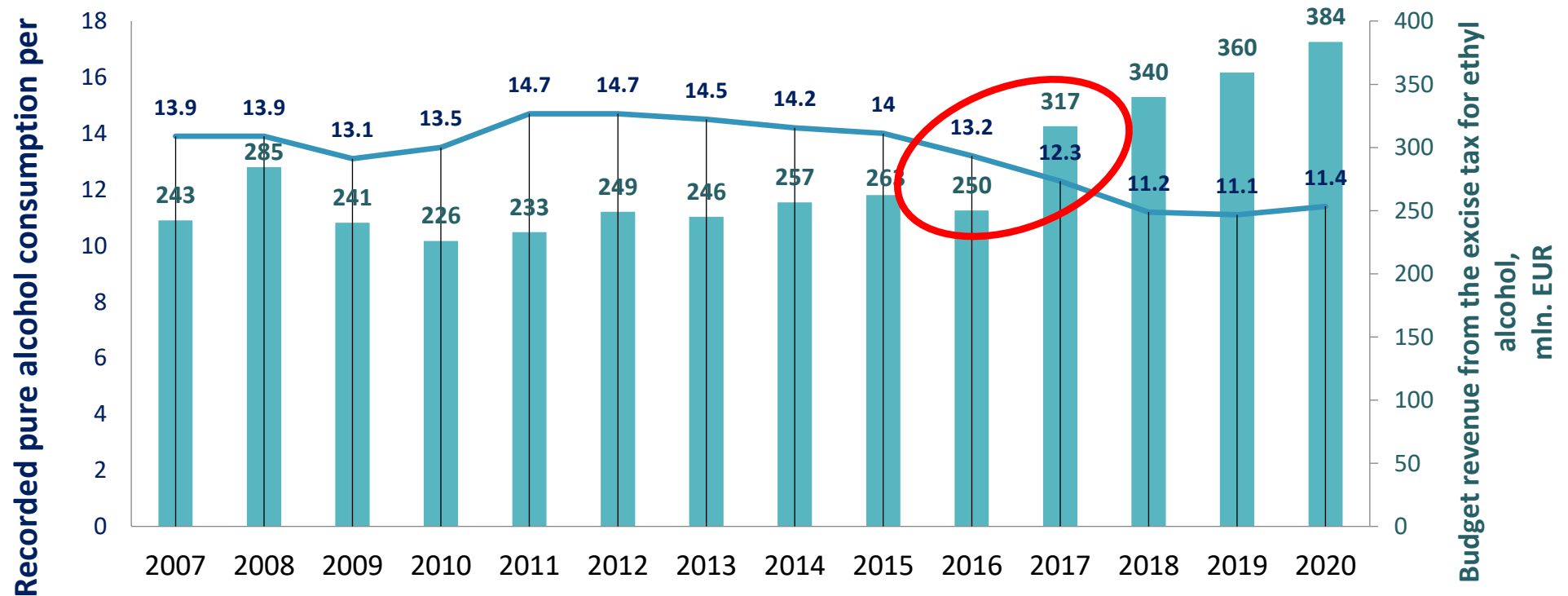
	Name of company (country of registration)	Sales (US\$)	Profits (US\$)
1	Anheuser-Busch InBev (Belgium)	52.3 billion	9.1 billion
2	Diageo (United Kingdom)	16.8 billion	3.9 billion
3	Heineken (The Netherlands)	26.8 billion	1.2 billion
4	Kweichow Moutai (China)	11.3 billion	6.2 billion
5	Pernod Ricard (France)	10.6 billion	1.6 billion
6	Asahi Group Holdings (Japan)	19.2 billion	1.3 billion
7	Kirin Holdings (Japan)	17.8 billion	547.1 million
8	Carlsberg (Denmark)	9.9 billion	984.8 million
9	Wuliangye Yibin (China)	5.2 billion	2 billion
10	Constellation Brands (U.S.A.)	8.3 billion	-11.8 million



# To reduce the harms from alcohol: which policies and strategies are chosen matter!

Example: Lithuania, 1.3. 2017

- Alcohol taxation increase: beer/wine +110%; spirits +20%
- Mortality gains in the next year (until 1.3. 2018): > 1,000 deaths avoided!
- Fiscal gains
- And **reductions in inequalities**



Source: Statistics Lithuania

# Why are alcohol control policies so important in Europe right now?

- The WHO European Region is the WHO region with the highest alcohol consumption and the highest alcohol-attributable proportion!
  - We now have a number of good examples how alcohol control policies can make a difference (e.g., marked increase in life expectancy in Russia and Lithuania associated with alcohol policy).
  - We have better European evidence that these policies work (e.g., in four countries of EU, 16 increases in taxation and decreases of availability in the last 20 years were associated with average decrease in APC of almost one litre), and with decreases in all-cause mortality.
  - We just completed a study showing that taxation increases were associated with decreases in mortality inequalities.
  - People are finally realizing (even the EU!), that alcohol causes cancer with no lower threshold. And the positive experiences with taxation increases have led to support of the general population including those originally opposed.
- => The WHO European Region has started a signature initiative in alcohol control policy.

# ANOC 3 will come with a rating system

**‘Best Practices’** = superior to any alternatives

- High in effectiveness
- Supported by numerous studies
- Capable of reaching their target group
- Relatively low in cost

**‘Good Practices’**

- less than the maximum on effectiveness and amount of research support, but nevertheless good investment.

# “Best buys” and best practices: pricing and taxation

Policy area	Number of policy options evaluated	Best Practices	Good Practices	Ineffective (or potentially harmful) policies and practices	Comments on mechanisms of action and caveats
Pricing and taxation policies (Chapter 7)	5 (4 found effective)	Alcohol taxes that decrease affordability	Minimum unit pricing; differential pricing by beverage; special taxes on youth-oriented beverages	Policies that increase the affordability of alcohol (may need additional work on unrecorded)	When alcohol becomes less affordable, people drink less and experience fewer problems; when affordability increases, so do drinking and harm. Increased taxes reduce alcohol consumption and harm for the whole society, including heavy drinkers and adolescents. The government also gets tax revenues to compensate society for the costs of treatment, prevention, and enforcement. Alcohol taxes need to be substantial to be effective

# “Best buys” and best practices: regulating physical availability

Policy area	Number of policy options evaluated	Best Practices	Good Practices	Ineffective (or potentially harmful) policies and practices	Comments on mechanisms of action and caveats
Regulating physical availability (Chapter 8)	15 (12 found effective)	Limiting hours and places of sale; public welfare-oriented alcohol monopoly; minimum purchase age laws	Rationing systems; restricting outlet density; individualized permit systems; post-conviction preventive bans; encouraging lower-alcohol beverages; sales ; total bans where supported by religious or social norms	Policies that increase outlet density and temporal and spatial availability	Regulating who can consume alcohol, or the places, times, and contexts of availability, increases the economic and opportunity costs of obtaining alcohol. Limitations on physical availability, including convenience and legal access (e.g. age restrictions), reduce alcohol consumption and harms. Controls on availability can be imposed at a population level (e.g. hours of sale) or at an individual level (e.g. as directed by a court order). Availability restrictions can have significant impact if enforced consistently

# “Best buys” and best practices: restrictions on alcohol marketing

Policy area	Number of policy options evaluated	Best Practices	Good Practices	Ineffective (or potentially harmful) policies and practices	Comments on mechanisms of action and caveats
Restrictions on alcohol marketing (Chapter 9)	3 (2 found effective)	Complete ban on alcohol marketing	Partial bans on alcohol marketing	Industry voluntary self-regulation of marketing	Exposure to alcohol marketing increases the attractiveness of alcohol and the likelihood of drinking by young people; restrictions on marketing are likely to deter youth from early onset of drinking and from binge drinking. Exposure to alcohol images and messages can precipitate craving and relapse in persons with alcohol dependence. Extensive evidence of impacts on drinking and experience from tobacco bans suggest a complete ban is likely to be a Best Practice despite lack of evaluated examples

# Other best practices: drink-driving countermeasures

Policy area	Number of policy options evaluated	Best Practices	Good Practices	Ineffective (or potentially harmful) policies and practices	Comments on mechanisms of action and caveats
<b>Drink-driving countermeasures (Chapter 11)</b>	15 (13 found effective)	Low BAC levels for young drivers; intensive breath testing, random where possible; intensive supervision programmes	Low or lowered BAC levels (0.00% to 0.05%); graduated licensing for young and novice drivers; sobriety checkpoints; administrative licence suspension; comprehensive mandatory sanctions; DUI-specific courts; interlock devices	Severe punishment; designated driver programmes; safe ride services; education programmes; victim impact panels	Measures based on the threat of punishment are unlikely to change alcohol-impaired driving, but those aimed at deterring drinking and driving through surveillance measures and limitations on driving (e.g. licence removal) can be effective

# In which areas did we find no best practices?

- Education and persuasion (see Chapter 10)
- Modifying the drinking environment (see Chapter 12)
- Treatment and early intervention (see Chapter 13)

There are often other good reasons to apply such strategies, but effects of measures in these areas on consumption levels or rates of harm in the population were mixed at best



# The English-language edition of the book will be available on November 29

- Available without charge online after this date only

<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/alcohol-no-ordinary-commodity-9780192844484?q=abor&lang=en&cc=gb#>

The Open Access link (upper right corner of page) won't lead anywhere until the book has been published. The print version of the book won't be available in the Americas until 29 January but the free ebook should be available globally on 29 Nov.

- Paper copies can be purchased
- Translations in several languages will be published in the following year

Thanks for your attention!