SUMMARY OF THE REPORT ALCOHOL AND SOCIETY 2025

HEALTH AND SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM REDUCED ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:

When less is more

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Excecutive summary

- Alcohol causes significant global harm. Health risks increase with the amount, pattern, and duration of alcohol use. This report reviews evidence for the benefits of reduced alcohol use for individuals and for populations.
- Health benefits of reducing alcohol:
  - **Cardiovascular:** Lowers blood pressure, improved heart function, and reduced risks of heart disease, stroke, and atrial fibrillation, especially for heavy drinkers.
  - **Cancer:** Lowers risk of alcohol-related cancers, notably cancers of the mouth, throat, oesophagus, colon and female breast, especially for heavy drinkers.
  - **Brain health:** Reducing consumption, avoiding binge drinking and delaying onset of alcohol use (i.e. in youth) all promote cognitive and neurological health and reduce the risk of dementia, especially early onset.
  - **Mental health:** Improved mental well-being, reduced depressive symptoms and enhanced quality of life.
  - **Reproductive health:** Reduced miscarriage risk and improved fertility in both men and women.
- Population-level impacts: Reducing per capita alcohol consumption reduces alcohol-related diseases, injuries, and deaths. Abrupt reductions in population consumption (e.g. during strikes by alcohol workers or comprehensive COVID-19 restrictions) have shown substantial public health benefits.
- Global policy gaps: Unlike tobacco, there is no global framework for alcohol regulation. WHO recommends that national policies raise alcohol prices (e.g. through taxation), limit availability, promote early interventions and restrict marketing to effectively reduce harm.

Conclusion: Reduced alcohol consumption at both the population and individual levels results in substantial health and social benefits. Effective policy measures such as taxation, availability restrictions, and marketing bans can drive population-wide change. On an individual level, initiatives like time-limited abstinence campaigns, support for behaviour change, and tailored health interventions can help people reduce their alcohol intake, leading to improved physical and mental health outcomes.

Read and download the full report:

alcoholandsociety.report

