

Candidate 3 evidence

Alcohol in Scotland

Everybody knows of Scotland's reputation when it comes to alcohol. Approximately 24% of the population drink above the high risk guidelines and on average Scots buy enough alcohol for adults to be drinking 19 units a week, which is marginally above the recommended limits. To really put it into perspective, in Glasgow alone there were 188 alcohol caused deaths and 6264 hospital admissions in 2021. In the highlands there was 1413 hospital admissions. However in total across the country there were 1245 deaths which related to alcohol consumption, which doesn't seem large but it is still not low enough. It is very clear that alcohol in Scotland is a rising issue, which is resulting in poor health impacts. So this raises the question, should Scotland be doing more to tackle this?

Option one: Increase pricing

Due to minimum unit pricing it is now illegal to sell alcohol at any price lower than 50p per unit. This was a minimum price put into place to try and prevent problem drinkers. Since its implementation ~~there~~ in 2017 the number of fatalities revolving alcohol consumption has decreased by 13.4% which is proof that the scheme is working. In a PHS report, Dr Grant Wyper confirms this further by saying: "following two and a half years of implementation, ~~more has been~~ 150 deaths and 400 hospital admissions, wholly attributable to alcohol consumption, have been prevented each year due to MUP." There

is also evidence that since minimum unit pricing has been in place, alcohol sales have reduced by 3%. Even though it is not a massive reduction, it is still progress which proves MUP is working and deterring people from buying alcohol. In summary, the more prices increase, the less likely people are to spend their money on alcohol. (Source A & B & C)

In Scotland the alcohol industry is important and fairly sized, which is why companies will not be penalised when pricing increases. Across the country there are 141 distilleries. These contribute towards the creation of whisky, which is ~~the~~ Scotland's own prized alcohol. Of the £8.1 billion in the economy from Scotland's alcohol industry, 60% is from the whisky exports. This proves just how successful the whisky industry is. Additionally, under the proposed 65ppu increase, a 700ml bottle of whisky will rise from £14 to £18.20, which is over £4. This will increase the amount made from one bottle, proving companies will not be negatively effected by the increase of pricing. (Source D, E & F)

However despite MUP being put into place to try and reduce the number of 'problem' drinkers, it fails to take those struggling with poverty into account. Despite alcohol consumption and alcohol related health issues being five times greater in deprived areas, a public health Scotland report stated that there was "limited evidence" to show MUP was also helping these people. As those living in deprivation have become so dependent on alcohol the increasing prices have not really phased them.

~~They~~ Instead they are finding other ways to get a hold of the drink. This includes theft, which may also increase crime rates, or even the loss of basic necessities such as food or heating in order to afford alcohol. This unfortunately proves that a larger increase will not be effective and will only result in further cuts to lifestyle, especially for those in poverty. (Source G)

Ontop of this, drinking alcohol in Scotland is so popular and encouraged. For example, Hogmanay is a 3 to 4 day celebration of the new year in the city of Edinburgh, and other places across Scotland too. It includes traditions such as street parties, live music and fireworks which always involve excessive amounts of alcohol. As this is such an important celebration within the country, increasing of prices will not deter people from purchasing alcohol. Similarly, alcohol consumption is incredibly popular within the younger generation. In a survey I conducted, where 67% were of the age 16-17 years, 48% answered that current alcohol prices should stay as they are, and 36% answered that they should be decreased. This clearly shows the enjoyment of drinking alcohol within the young people. ~~as they are so~~ So this proves that an increase of pricing will be ineffective because social attitudes will be difficult to change. (Source H, P & Q)

Option two: Implementation of other countries policies.

Norway has a number of measures to reduce

alcohol consumption within the country which are effective. For example if alcohol is over 4.7% ABV it can only legally be bought from within a Vinmonopole outlet. These stores only open between 8:30 ~~am~~ to 18:00 on weekdays which prevents early morning and late night purchasing of stronger alcohol. Additionally it is illegal to buy any form of alcohol with a discount as it will decrease the price, or to sell alcohol to anybody who is already intoxicated which will prevent health risks. It is very clear that all of these restrictions within Norway are successful as it has one of the lowest rates of alcohol consumption at 7.4 litres per capita per year. With the implementation of these policies in Scotland maybe alcohol consumption will start to decrease too. (Source 1, J & K)

Bangladesh is another country who has very low alcohol consumption rates as they are one of the only countries to have a complete alcohol ban. This is due to the population being marginally muslim and alcohol is haram (forbidden) in their religion. To be able to drink alcohol residents must have a legal permit. This can only be obtained over the age of 21 and only with a given medical prescription to drink alcohol within controlled conditions. Non-muslims are exempt from medical prescription but must still apply for a permit. Any visitors of the country can drink but only within the walls of where they are residing. Between the time of November 2009 to April 2010, 94.4% of the population claimed they had never drunk any form of alcohol in their lifetime. This proves that

even though a small fraction of the population still drink, the ban has been mostly successful. (Source N & O).

However, Norway's policies are not perfect. Even with all of the restrictions in place, Norway's alcohol industry and the harms that come with it are costing the country between \$9 billion to \$11 billion. Additionally, the rate of alcohol consumption in the country is not decreasing, it is doing the opposite. In 2011 alcohol consumption per capita was 87.87 litres. However in 2021 it had increased to 94 litres. This only shows that even with the policies they can't decrease alcohol consumption, so would it even be effective in Scotland? (Source L & M). Additionally, Bangladesh's alcohol ban is not effective in preventing health issues. Even though only 5% of the population have actually drunk alcohol, 77% of them are binge drinkers. Binge drinking is the act of consuming large amounts of alcohol in a short period of time and is the main cause of health issues to do with alcohol. The alcohol ban was a large attempt to decrease disease & other health issues within Bangladesh but it hasn't prevented alcohol health issues. This proves it isn't completely effective. (Source O).

Source evaluations

One of the sources used was a survey I had created and sent out for people to respond to. In total there were 47 responses ~~however only~~

Which isn't an overly large number for a survey to which preferably had opinions from a lot of people around the country. Additionally of the responses only around 25% were actually of legal age to be drinking alcohol which lead the survey to be biased with younger people's opinions, which were very different to the older generations'. A third point is that it was impossible to determine whether all responses were definitely from within Scotland, which causes the results to be slightly unreliable.

Conclusion

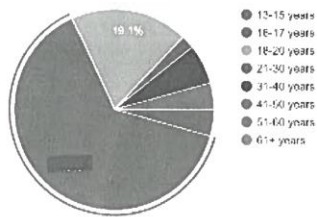
In conclusion option two is going to have the biggest impact on the issue of alcohol within Scotland. More specifically if the government took inspiration from Norway and implemented shops specifically for alcohol over a certain strength to prevent it being so easily bought from a supermarket such as 'Tesco'.

Modern Studies Higher Assignment: Research Evidence	
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
<p>https://www.oecd.org/norway/Preventing-Harmful-Alcohol-Use-Key-Findings-NORWAY.pdf - Source K</p> <p>https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2023/march/report-highlights-the-impact-of-minimum-unit-pricing-mup-on-deaths-and-hospital-admissions/ - Source B</p> <p>https://www.edinburghshogmanay.com/ - Source H</p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6349140/ - Source O</p> <p>https://www.scotland.org/about-scotland/food-and-drink/whisky - Source D</p> <p>https://www.scotch-whisky.org.uk/newsroom/swa-comments-on-mup-consultation/ - Source F</p> <p>https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2023/june/minimum-unit-pricing-reduces-alcohol-related-harm-to-health#:~:text=Public%20Health%20Scotland%20(PHS)%20has,addressing%20alcohol%2Drelated%20health%20inequalities - Source G</p> <p>https://movendi.ngo/news/2022/03/17/alcohol-harm-causes-massive-economic-costs-in-norway/ - Source L</p> <p>https://www.statista.com/statistics/757583/per-capita-consumption-of-alcohol-in-norway#:~:text=In%20Norway%2C%20the%20government%2Ddowned,volume%20of%20about%2098%20liters - Source M</p> <p>https://www.concealedwines.com/business-opportunities-scandinavia-wine-producers/domestic-alcohol-policy-norway-vinmonopolet/ - Source I</p> <p>What is your opinion on the prices of alcohol in Scotland? <input type="checkbox"/> Copy</p> <p>47 responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They should be increased ● They should stay as they are ● They should be decreased <p>- Source Q</p>	

[https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2023/june/minimum-unit-pricing-reduces-alcohol-related-harm-to-health/#:~:text=Public%20Health%20Scotland%20\(PHS\)%20has,addressing%20alcohol%2Drelated%20health%20inequalities](https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2023/june/minimum-unit-pricing-reduces-alcohol-related-harm-to-health/#:~:text=Public%20Health%20Scotland%20(PHS)%20has,addressing%20alcohol%2Drelated%20health%20inequalities) - **Source A**
<https://octopusmda.com/index.php/2023/08/07/norwegian-drinking-laws-everything-you-need-to-know/> - **Source J**
[https://www.gov.scot/publications/alcohol-minimum-unit-pricing-mup-continuation-future-pricing-consultation/pages/2/#:~:text=There%20was%20strong%20and%20consistent,\(supermarkets%20and%20other%20shops\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/alcohol-minimum-unit-pricing-mup-continuation-future-pricing-consultation/pages/2/#:~:text=There%20was%20strong%20and%20consistent,(supermarkets%20and%20other%20shops)) - **Source C**
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/laws-rights/62899/faq-do-you-have-a-licence-to-drink> - **Source N**
<https://www.shaap.org.uk/news/396-contribution-of-alcohol-industry-to-scottish-economy-called-into-question-by-new-report.html> - **Source E**

How old are you?

47 responses



- Source P