

Candidate 3 evidence

Modern Studies Assignment

Should the Scottish Government do more to restrict alcohol consumption?

In Scotland there is extensive evidence showing the unhealthy link between alcohol and Scotland's alcohol-related harm. ~~This shows~~ Excessive alcohol consumption is estimated to cost £3.56 billion each year, £900 per adult a year on average. The Scottish Government have several ways of changing the way people drink in Scotland, such as the Minimum Pricing Act 2012 which is aimed to stop deprived ~~to~~ buyers from obsessive consumptions. Also ~~the~~ increasing the legal alcohol drinking age to 21, which is aimed to stop so many young teenagers from drinking at an early age and prevent them from damage to their body. Another way the Government propose to ~~stop~~ restrict alcohol consumption is Government campaigns which ~~means~~ is a way of letting Scottish citizens see what alcohol's effects can really do and help prevent over consumptions of alcohol.

1) Arguments For:

- Minimum Pricing

- minimum pricing is introduced to stop the binge drinking problems in Scotland. At 50p per unit it stops the problem of buying cheap drink in bulk. From source B, it states 'Alcohol is now 60% more affordable in the UK than it was in 1980. It is possible in Scotland today to exceed the maximum weekly recommended intake of alcohol for men (21 units) for less than £5.'

This statement proves that it is not hard to exceed over the alcohol limit with only £5. This is how deprived drinkers are able to afford getting drunk all the time and how there are many ~~alcohol~~ obsessive binge drinkers in Scotland. If alcohol is so affordable it increases the chances of people to buy it, thus if the minimum pricing scheme was in place it could decrease the number of 'harmful drinkers' in a progressive period of time.

~~Research by the University of~~

Source E2 links into this problem by showing that only 12.5% of moderate drinking drinkers will be affected by the minimum pricing act, however more than double of harmful drinkers will be affected (30.5%). This supports the statement in Source B 'minimum pricing will impact most on harmful drinkers'. Overall from source E4 the binge drinking consumption is falling, and the effect of minimum pricing will have -28% impact.

In source E2 it shows that the ban on below cost selling makes no more than 1% difference on any of the 3 groups. In source E3 it states that 'Wine to be sold over £2.' 'Health groups and on-trade say it won't make a real impact' whereas if minimum pricing was to be, 'a bottle of wine would be closer to £4.50.' This shows that putting the minimum price of 50p per unit will impact the most on drinking habits. 'Researchers say a 50pence per unit minimum could save 3,000 lives per year by limiting cheap alcohol' This implies that it has promising aspects to take down the binge drinking ~~and~~ numbers each year.

- Increasing the legal alcohol drinking age to 21
- Many teenagers under the age of 18 have been under the influence of alcohol since a young age. This is a major problem as alcohol has many side effects, especially ~~at~~ ~~between~~ under the age of 15. In the graph of source E1 it shows the proportion of pupils (aged 13-15 years) who drank alcohol in the past week in Scotland. It shows over the years there has been an ~~increase~~ ~~over~~ slight increase of underage drinking of 24% compared to England & Wales 19%. More under 18 year olds are drinking for the

Social aspect of it, also because they are surrounded by a society full of binge drinking. They look up to the older generation and want to be like them. However, this is costly to their health as ~~in~~ in source A it states 'young people under 18 are physically and emotionally less able to cope with the effects of drinking alcohol.' Their bodies are unable to function as well as over 18's. They are still growing. It has many side effects as stated in source A; 'increase of organ damage in the developing body, change the brain structure - (harming brain development, motivation, reasoning, interpersonal interactions and other brain functions), links to problems - (for example, unprotected sex, teenage pregnancy, failing at school and taking illegal drugs). Also it can contribute to some anti-social behaviour.' This is why alcohol drinking age should be increased to 21, to prevent the ~~trav~~ many hazardous side effects to children under 18.

The youngest person found to have alcohol-related liver damage was a 17 year-old who started drinking at the age of 12. This is a brutal ~~down~~ example of how the developing body can be damaged.

- Government Campaigns.

- Scottish Government campaigns are directed at alcoholics and binge drinkers. They try to push a message out to show how alcohol affects the body and society we live in. Change4Life campaign is a big campaign in Scotland + England that provides services to help people with alcohol-related problems, giving tips and support to help the ones who need it most. It also provides lots of information on how much units is in each drink and the side effects of alcohol such as liver disease, cancer, stroke, reduced fertility and high blood pressure. The more you drink regularly, the higher the chances of those side effects. This Change4Life provides a better outlook on alcohol and sends the right message. Another campaign that has impacted the majority recently is the Drink Drive Campaign - Source D - where the "latest statistics show a 19% decrease in the number of drink drive detections" over the festive period. This is due to the "message not to risk drink driving has hit home to drivers across Scotland (8 January 2014)".

Arguments Against.

- Minimum Pricing

- minimum pricing may not overly benefit the way in people drink. The statistics in source E2 show that although there ~~is~~ ~~some~~ ~~not~~ could be some improvement, there is roughly 69.5 - 87.5% ~~of~~ unaffected by any change which is still a incredibly high percentage. Also from source E3, ~~the~~ critics say, 'some retailers and producers say its illegal under EU competition law and would punish the less well off.' This could result in depression and drug usage for the most deprived areas as if alcohol is unaffordable they will turn to cheaper ~~hazardous~~ hazardous products. with the same kind of affect.

- Increasing the legal alcohol drinking age to 21.

- Increasing the age from 18-21 is not a huge gap which means that there will always be an underage drinking age. It's a social aspect to drink so if the age increased it wouldn't really make much of a difference to stop the younger ones to do what has always been done. The graph from source E1 shows an overall decrease through the years, so therefore without the increase of age it has already decreased. From source C it ~~is~~ states 'Binge-drinking among all UK adults fell from 18% in 2005 to 15% in 2003,

but it was in the age groups 16-24 and 25-44 that the most notable falls were seen " " increasing numbers of young adults aged 16-24 are now teetotal. These statements show that the factors of alcohol problems is not the age mainly as the numbers of teenagers have decreased overall.

- Government Campaigns

Government campaigns have impacted only a small amount of people as most are still unaware of all the causes of alcohol, for example 85% of people did not know that alcohol can increase the chances of developing breast cancer. 66% did not know it increased bowel cancer. The campaigns are not strong enough, and therefore many alcoholics or drinkers are unable to see the many side effects.

- Rebuttal.

• Minimum pricing may not support all the ~~drinkers~~ alcohol consumers in Scotland, however there will never be a massive decrease in the number as it is the way people live in society. Alcohol has many related problems especially to those that are deprived but ~~increasing~~ setting a limit on the price of alcohol units will stop the benefit of binge drinking and therefore help the

less well off from making mistakes from ~~the~~ the consumption of alcohol.

- Government campaigns ~~are~~ have not reached out to all ~~are~~ of Scotland and taught the way of alcohol leading to bad habits such as drink driving, fighting etc... overly well and so ~~it~~ it still affects the UK. However the recent drink drive advertisement has had a impact on Scotland. If campaigns are put up well they can make an effect. The message ~~just~~ needs to be ~~to~~ spread wider about the issues of alcohol. ~~It~~ especially to the younger generations.

CONCLUSION

Overall I feel that the ~~the~~ Scottish Government should take more action into restricting alcohol consumption.

In my opinion, minimum pricing ~~will~~ would have the biggest impact overall.

Setting the unit price to 50p will stop the cheap alcohol from ~~being~~ ~~being~~ being consumed in big bulks and reduce the obsessive alcoholics from exceeding the maximum intake. Increasing the age to 21 will not be as effective and won't make a difference ~~to the age that is already~~ ~~to the age that is already~~ already to the age that is already. Government campaigns will help improve but only over a long period of time.

Source Analysis.

From comparing my sources source E2 gives more overall information in different ways compared to Source E1. Also source E2 could be more reliable if the pie chart was done on 50p minimum unit price instead of 45p as ~~the~~ 50p is what the set minimum is.

Source A

<http://www.nhs.uk/cha/pages/2602.aspx?CategoryID=62>

Drinking alcohol is more harmful for children and young people under 18 than for adults. This is because young people under 18 are physically and emotionally less able to cope with the effects of drinking alcohol. They're also less mature, so are more likely to behave in a risky or unacceptable way after drinking alcohol. Some of the risks to young people who drink too much alcohol are listed below.

- Drinking at an early age can cause serious health problems. Evidence shows that drinking too much alcohol can increase the risk of organ damage in the developing body.
- Drinking heavily under the age of 14 can change the brain structure, which can harm brain development in young people as well as affecting motivation, reasoning, interpersonal interactions and other brain functions.
- Drinking too much alcohol is strongly linked to many other problems, for example, unprotected sex, teenage pregnancy, failing at school and taking illegal drugs.
- Alcohol can contribute to some young people's anti-social behaviour

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services/Alcohol/minimum-pricing>

Alcohol is now 60 per cent more affordable in the UK than it was in 1980. It is possible in Scotland today to exceed the maximum weekly recommended intake of alcohol for men (21 units) for less than £5. This is an unacceptable position and we have a responsibility to address this problem.

Minimum unit pricing will impact most on harmful drinkers - those who regularly drink more than the sensible drinking guidelines. Those who drink within sensible guidelines will only be marginally affected simply because they only consume a small amount of alcohol and also because they do not tend to buy as much of the cheaper alcohol that would be most affected by a minimum unit price.

The small increase in the cost of alcohol to moderate drinkers has to be seen in the context of the total costs of alcohol misuse - estimates suggest around £900 per year for every adult in Scotland

The Chief Medical Officer believes that - like the smoking ban - minimum unit pricing would save lives within a year. Research by the University of Sheffield estimated that the proposed minimum price of 50p per unit would result in the following benefits:

- Alcohol related deaths would fall by about 60 in the first year and 318 by year ten of the policy
- A fall in hospital admission of 1,600 in year 1, and 6,500 per year by year ten of the policy
- A fall in crime volumes by around 3,500 offences per year
- A financial saving from harm reduction (health, employment, crime etc) of £942m over ten years

The proportion of this group bingeing at least once a week is now down from 29% in 2005 to 18% in 2013.

It is thought that fewer adults are choosing to drink alcohol and also drinking less when they do.

More than a fifth of UK adults now say they do not drink alcohol at all - a slight increase on 2005.

Men drinking more than eight units of alcohol on their heaviest drinking day in one week are considered to have binged.

Whilst the average level of consumption has fallen, this may be in part due to the change in the ethnic make-up of the country with many people abstaining from drinking altogether. Prof Sir Ian Gilmore, Alcohol Health Alliance

For women, binge-drinking equates to drinking more than six units of alcohol in one day.

Two units of alcohol is roughly equivalent to one pint of normal strength lager or one medium-sized (175ml) glass of wine.

Teetotal trend

Binge-drinking among all UK adults fell from 18% in 2005 to 15% in 2013, but it was in the age groups 16-24 and 25-44 that the most noticeable falls were seen.

Among these groups, binge-drinking fell by one-third and frequent drinking by more than two-thirds since 2005.

Increasing numbers of young adults aged 16-24 are now teetotal.

In London, almost one-third of all adults said they did not drink alcohol - higher than any other region of Great Britain.

But drinkers in the north of England and in Scotland were most likely to have binged.

About a third of drinkers in these regions had binged, compared with less than a quarter of those in other parts of Britain.

Analysis

By Mark Easton, BBC Home Editor

The binge-drinking jib, for so long media shorthand for Britain's youth, is becoming more unrepresentative of the young generation with every year that passes.

So what's going on?

Partly it is cultural. Young people spend more time at home using social media or doing their homework and less time down the pub or hanging around the bus shelter with their mates.

Alcohol is just not that fashionable any more. Indeed, consumption of tobacco and illegal drugs is also down.

Having a clear head can be cool.

Public health campaigners will argue that the figures demonstrate the success of sensible drinking campaigns and police believe better management of the night-time economy is an important factor.

Changing attitudes to alcohol are also driven by diversity.

A little over 7% of young people currently describe themselves as Muslims or Sikhs, religions which largely forbid alcohol consumption.

Indeed, areas with higher levels of immigration tend to have lower levels of problem drinking.

A third of people in diverse London are teetotal, a quarter in the East Midlands. In the south-west of England, it's 15% and in the North East it's 17%.

More than one in 20 adults in Britain now say they stick to soft drinks

Health risk

It is estimated that alcohol misuse costs the NHS in England about £3.5bn every year. Alcohol is still a major cause of ill-health throughout the UK.

Drinking too much can contribute to a number of serious health conditions, including cancer, liver disease and heart disease. Long-term binge-drinking is linked with an increased risk of strokes, cancer and high blood pressure.

Deaths from alcohol, however, are now at their lowest rate since 2000 in the UK.

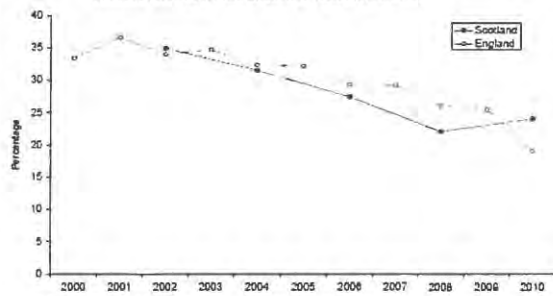
In Scotland, which had the highest alcohol-related death rate in 2013, the figure is significantly lower than 10 years ago - from 45 per 100,000 to 29 per 100,000.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-31452735>

source B

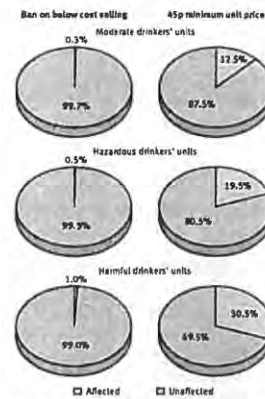
source C

Figure 4.19: Proportion of pupils (aged 13-15 years) who drank alcohol in the past week in Scotland (2000-2010) and England & Wales (2000-2010)

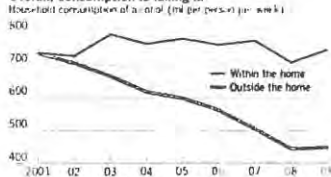


Sources: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey; Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Among Young People in England. Notes: SDDUYF estimates for 2000-2009 are unweighted. Due to a change in survey design, estimates for 2010 are weighted. Estimates for Scotland include a small number of 12- and 18-year olds in 2009 (10% and 1% respectively) and 2010 (1% and 2% respectively).

<https://mentorthinks.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/scots-vs-english-teens-drinking.png>



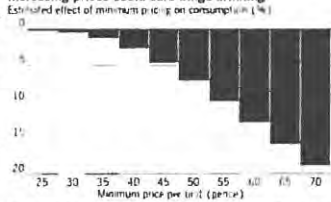
Overall, consumption is falling ...



... but problem drinking is rising



Increasing prices could curb binge drinking



	Below cost ban	Minimum pricing	Taxation
Definition:	'Cost' proposed as duty + VAT but some say should include production and distribution costs	A 'minimum unit price' at which alcohol must be sold. E.g. 50 pence per unit minimum	Raising duty rates on alcohol
Possible Impact:	Under a duty + VAT definition, only a small number of drinks or promotions may be restricted	Researchers say a 50 pence per unit minimum could save 3,000 lives per year by limiting cheap alcohol	Moderate rises in taxation are unlikely to impact high street prices
Example:	Wine to be sold over £2 a bottle, spirits £10.50/litre, crate of beer £8-9	A bottle of wine would be closer to £4.50, a pint of beer between £1 - £1.50	Increasing rate of tax paid on higher strength alcohol
Supported by:	Some industry groups have supported a 'Duty + VAT' definition. Health interests have said its a 'step in the right direction'	Health groups, researchers and alcohol charities; some retailers	The IFS say taxation is preferable to prevent extra revenue going to retailers
Critics say:	Health groups and on-trade say it won't make a real impact. Does not relate to unit content so may encourage 'switching'	Some retailers and producers say it is illegal under EU competition law & would punish the well off	Different duty rates apply to different products and fall under EU law

<http://www.alcoholpolicy.net/alcohol-pricing/page/2/>

Source E3

Source E2

Source E4

<https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?sa=i&ict=i&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CacQIRw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ft.com%2Fcms%2Fs%2F0%2Fd94f3538-6936-11e1-9618-00144feabdc0.html&ei=teo1VbW00MKw7AbdqIFg&bvm=bv.91071109.d.d2s&psig=AFQjCNEU6JLFzMrMvWQBN4aj-rBhN5ri8Q&ust=1429682728941274>

<https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?sa=i&ict=i&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CacQIRw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bmi.com%2Fcontent%2F349%2Fbmi.g5452&ei=iA1VazLFYeX7QbMy4DYDg&bvm=bv.91071109.d.d2s&psig=AFQjCNECXmZXfOZjINCRN17siflVU6DRw&ust=1429684311735137>

New statistics from Police Scotland have today (8 January 2014) revealed that the message not to risk drink driving has hit home to drivers across Scotland. The new lower drink drive limit of 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood came into force on 5 December 2014, bringing Scotland into line with much of the rest of Europe.

During a four week festive Drink Drive campaign from Road Safety Scotland (part of Transport Scotland) and the Scottish Government, Police Scotland tested 17,504 drivers for alcohol – an average of 625 drivers each day. A total of 351 drivers were caught under the influence this year compared to 434 in the same period last year – a 19 per cent reduction.

Police detected one drink driver for every 50 (351 from 17,504) tests carried out compared to one drink driver for every 47 (434 from 20,646) tests carried out in the same campaign period last year. Those caught now face the New Year without a licence, a minimum 20-year criminal record and a fine.

Of those caught drink driving, 20 drivers were detected between the new 50mg limit and the previous limit of 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.

And during the period a total of 27 drivers were detected between 0600 and 1000 hours, six of whom were between the old and the new limit.

Cabinet Secretary for Justice Michael Matheson, said: "These latest statistics show a 19 per cent decrease in the number of drink drive detections over the festive period, and are testament to the immediate effect that the new lower limit has helped to make our roads safer."

"Scotland is leading the way across the UK with the introduction of a lower drink drive limit, which has backing from experts, road safety campaigners and the majority of the public north and south of the border, as well as bringing Scotland into line with almost every other country in Europe."

<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Drink-drive-campaign-success-144a.aspx>