



June 2021



LATEST EVIDENCE ON MINIMUM UNIT PRICING

It's been a bumper month for studies which form part of the evaluation of minimum unit pricing. See below for a round-up of the reports published in June 2021.

Lowest alcohol sales in Scotland for 26 years

The latest findings from the annual MESAS monitoring report show that alcohol sales in Scotland fell to the lowest since 1994. However, adults continued to consume above the recommended low-risk drinking guidelines, drinking an average of 18 units per week per adult. The volume of pure alcohol sold in Scotland was 6% higher than in England and Wales, the smallest difference seen in the available time series.

 [Read more](#)

Minimum unit pricing has lasting impact study shows

Recent evidence from researchers at Newcastle University, published in the Lancet, provides insight into the impact of minimum unit pricing (MUP) in both Scotland and Wales.

The study found a sustained decrease in alcohol purchases in Scotland two years following the implementation of MUP. The study also provides early evidence that MUP in Wales, more recently implemented, also had an immediate impact in reducing alcohol purchases, particularly in heavier drinking households.

 [Read more](#)

Price distribution of alcohol following MUP

Public Health Scotland published an analysis of alcohol price distribution data, which finds that the introduction of MUP was associated with changes in the volume of off-trade alcohol sold at different price bands in Scotland, compared to both England & Wales (where MUP did not apply in the timeframe considered) and Scotland before MUP.

After MUP was implemented, almost two-thirds of off-trade alcohol was categorised in the 50 to 64.9ppu price range (65.3%), approximately double that in England & Wales (33.6%) and in the previous year in Scotland (31.9%).

As expected, it is the cheapest, high-strength products, favoured by heavier

drinkers, that have increased in price the most - namely beer, spirits, cider and perry.

 [Read more](#)

Impact of MUP on people dependent on alcohol and accessing treatment

This first report from the University of Sheffield presents data on participants' awareness of changes in product availability and price, responses to MUP and the need for targeted support. Researchers found little evidence of negative consequences of MUP, such as a shift to use of illicit substances, among people who are alcohol dependent and accessing treatment services.

Alcohol Focus Scotland welcomes this first report - there was limited evidence before its introduction of the impact MUP might have on this group, so it's really helpful that this study has been undertaken and that further work is planned. We also need to seriously consider how to better support people with existing alcohol dependence to ensure that we can support them into recovery.

 [Read more](#)



Young people and their views on alcohol marketing

Ahead of the Scottish Government consultation on alcohol marketing, Alcohol Focus Scotland is working with young people to understand how they view alcohol and alcohol marketing in their daily lives.

AFS Youth Engagement Officer, Megan McGarrigle, recently delivered online focus groups with young people from partner organisations to find out more about their views and experiences.

The young people shared their thoughts on several topics in relation to alcohol marketing including the impact alcohol messaging, alcohol advertising and sports sponsorship has on them. This continued work will allow us to provide examples of young people's exposure to and awareness of alcohol marketing.

 [Read more](#)



Euros renews call for action to protect children from alcohol sports sponsorship

Deliberate product placement of Heineken beer in front of footballers at the Euros 2020 tournament renewed the call to protect children from alcohol sport sponsorship.

Sporting events such as the Euros are commonly viewed and attended by millions of under-18s, with research showing that alcohol sponsorship is associated with alcohol consumption among children.

Alcohol Focus Scotland have called on the Scottish Government to curb alcohol sponsorship of sporting events, in line with World Health Organization recommendations.

★ [Read more here.](#)



UK Government proposals to restrict online and TV advertising for HFSS foods

The UK Government has **announced** that it will introduce advertising restrictions on products high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) via the upcoming Health and Care Bill. This includes a 9pm watershed on TV and UK-based on-demand services, and restrictions on paid-for advertising online. Ofcom will be the statutory regulator although it is likely that the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) will be appointed as a frontline regulator. The restrictions are expected to come into force at the end of 2022.

Although welcome, these restrictions should also include alcohol to ensure a consistent approach to advertising regulation of harmful products. We're also concerned that both the various exemptions to the restrictions and the continued reliance on self- and co-regulation with the advertising industry will significantly undermine the effectiveness of the restrictions.

 Read our responses to the **2019** and **2020** consultations.



ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE

Alcohol can have a profound impact on your staff's health and wellbeing,

absenteeism and productivity. As employers, we also have important legal duties to protect employees' health and safety.

To help you support your staff we offer a range of online training courses aimed at providing participants with

- an introduction to alcohol
- understanding of the impact alcohol can have on the individual, the workplace and wider Scottish society
- how to make informed choices about consumption
- specific guidance on how to address alcohol and drug related issues in the workplace



Find out more about our full ***Alcohol in the Workplace*** **courses as well as free bitesize sessions on key topics.**



TRAINING

PERSONAL LICENCE HOLDER TRAINING

Alcohol Focus Scotland are now offering regular online courses for the updated Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders (SCPLH) and refresher (SCPLHR) qualifications.

Our one-day course will be delivered online and exams will be conducted via City & Guilds new remote invigilation service.



For further information, course dates and to book visit the **Alcohol Focus Scotland website**



REBUILD AND RECOVER

Alcohol Change UK's 2021 online conference

On 22 and 23 September, Alcohol Change UK will be bringing you a conference that puts alcohol in context: an opportunity to reflect on the reasons people drink, and the many routes to harm reduction and recovery for a diverse population.

Across the two days of **Rebuild and Recover**, we'll be seeking to learn the lessons of the lockdown and understand how best to respond to the challenges of the post-pandemic world. Speakers include:

- Dr Lee Hogan and members of Moving On In My Recovery, on providing peer support in the pandemic
- Justina Murray of Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs (SFAD), on supporting the families of drinkers through lockdown and beyond
- Dr Emmert Roberts, on what can we learn about alcohol harm reduction from the hotel-based emergency housing programme
- Author Millie Gooch, on changing how we think about not drinking
- Community development specialist Cormac Russell, on remaking connections post-Covid-19.

 [Find out more and book your places here](#)

