

COMMITTEE ON CARCINOGENICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD, CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Alcohol and Cancer: Alcohol Consumption and Trends

1. At the September 2013 COC meeting, members reviewed a strategy paper proposed by the secretariat on how best to address the topic of alcohol and cancer. At the meeting, it was agreed that in the first instance a review of the data on alcohol consumption would be helpful. The availability of information on the trends and habits of alcoholic beverage consumption in the UK, Europe and globally has increased markedly over the past decade. This has been due to efforts of the UK government, and other organisations like the OECD and the WHO to commission reports and general population surveys to obtain such information.

Estimates of alcohol consumption (Alcohol units and measures)

2. The predominant types of commercially produced alcoholic beverages consumed in the UK are beer, wine and spirits. Some beverages are a combination of alcoholic types such as fortified wine, in which spirits are added to wine. Alcopops were introduced into the drinks market in the mid-1990s and are a ready-mixed alcoholic drink of either wine or spirits with a soft drink such as lemonade. Commonly, the strength of alcoholic beverages is expressed as percentage alcohol by volume (ABV). Typically, beer contains 4–5% ABV, wine contains about 12% ABV, and distilled spirits contain about 40% ABV. However, lower or higher ethanol content in alcoholic beverages is also possible (Table 1).

Table 1. Typical % Strength of alcoholic beverage as expressed in alcohol by volume (ABV)

Types of Alcoholic Beverage	Strength (ABV)
Mild strength beer, lager or cider	3-4%
Normal strength beer, lager or cider	4-5%
Extra strong beer, lager or cider	8-9%
Alcopops	5-7%
Table Wines	12-14%
Fortified wines (sherry, martini, port)	15-20%
Spirits (whisky, vodka, gin)	40%

3. Estimates of the consumption of alcoholic beverages in the UK are generally reported in terms of units of alcohol or grams of ethanol consumed per day. One UK unit of alcohol is defined as 10ml or 8g of pure ethanol (the specific gravity of ethanol is 0.8). The number of UK units of alcohol in a drink can be determined by

multiplying the volume of the drink (in milliliters) by its ABV and dividing by 1000. This calculation allows a standardised comparison of the volume of pure alcohol amongst alcoholic beverages. Since the introduction of alcohol consumption surveys in the 1970s, it has been assumed that one unit of alcohol is contained in a half pint of normal strength beer, a glass of table wine, a small glass of fortified wine, or a single measure of spirits. The method used to convert drinks to units remained essentially unchanged until 2005. Changes were made from 2006 onwards to the way UK surveys estimate alcohol consumption to take into consideration new types of alcoholic drinks such as alcopops, the varying strength of drinks and the varying glass sizes used.

4. For wine, since 2007, the General Household Survey (GHS)/General Lifestyle Survey (GLF) has included questions about wine glass size. A more accurate unit estimate of wine consumption has been determined by taking this information on glass size with a more up-to-date estimate of the average ABV of wine into consideration. A small glass (125ml) is counted as 1.5 units, a standard 175ml glass as 2 units, and a large 250ml glass as 3 units. This has resulted in the estimate of overall wine consumption more than doubling. Similarly, the unit estimates have increased for strong beers, where taking a more accurate account of the ABV and the size of can/bottle consumed has resulted, for example, in a half pint of strong beer been taken as 2 units rather than 1.5.

Government Guidelines

5. UK Official guidance over the amount of alcohol consumed was first introduced in 1987. The current guidelines on sensible drinking from the Department of Health for England state that men should not regularly drink more than 3 to 4 units per day and women should not regularly drink more than 2 to 3 units per day (Table 2). 'Regularly' means drinking most days or every day. The government also offered guidance to women trying to conceive and pregnant women, stating they should avoid drinking alcohol. If they do choose to drink, to protect the baby, the guidance recommends not to drink more than 1-2 units of alcohol once or twice a week and not to get drunk. In 2009 the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of England published guidance on alcohol consumption and children (Table 2). In 2012, the Government published their Alcohol Strategy¹ which has led to the initiation of a Department of Health (DH) and Public Health England (PHE) evidence based review (health and behavioural) of alcohol and the alcohol guidelines. They intend to publish their findings in 2014.

6. In UK surveys, heavy drinking is defined as exceeding twice the Government's daily benchmark on a single day (ie drinking more than 8 units on at least one day for a man and drinking more than 6 units on at least one day for a woman). Similarly, in UK surveys, very heavy drinking is defined as exceeding three times the government's recommended limits, set at drinking more than 12 units for men and 9 units for women on at least one day. Binge drinking refers to episodic excessive drinking. In the UK, researchers and for the purposes of surveys binge drinking is defined as the consumption of twice the recommended daily limit of alcohol.

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224075/alcohol-strategy.pdf

Table 2. UK Government advice on Alcohol consumption				
Men	Women	Pregnant Women	Children	Comments
Should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units/day	Should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units/day	<p>Advice is to avoid drinking alcohol;</p> <p>If they do choose to drink, they "should not to drink more than 1-2 units of alcohol once or twice a week and should not get drunk</p>	<p>If children do drink alcohol, they should not do so until at least 15 years old;</p> <p>If 15 to 17 year-olds drink alcohol, it should be rarely and never more than once a week. They should always be supervised by a parent or carer;</p> <p>If 15 to 17 year-olds drink alcohol, they should never exceed the recommended adult daily limits (3–4 units of alcohol for men and 2–3 units for women)</p>	<p>One UK unit of alcohol is defined as 10ml or 8g of pure ethanol (the specific gravity of ethanol is 0.8).</p> <p>"Regularly" means drinking every day or most days of the week; a break of 48 hours after a heavy drinking session is recommended</p>

Sources of Information on Alcohol Consumption

7. Data on global alcohol consumption was published by the WHO in 2011. The WHO Global Information System on Alcohol and Health (GISAH) provides information on trends related to alcohol consumption, alcohol-related harm, and policy responses in member countries². A recent report by the OECD (2012) presents trends over time on a number of health topics including alcohol consumption and variations across European countries.

8. Information on the consumption of alcoholic beverages by the UK population is obtained regularly as part of the GLF³, the Health Survey for England (HSfE)⁴, the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) survey of Young People⁵ and the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA). The GLF survey, formerly known as the GHS, is a national survey; covering adults aged 16 and over living in private households in Great Britain. The latest GLF 2011 report is based on a survey

² <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.GISAH?lang=en>

³ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ghs/general-lifestyle-survey/2011/rpt-chapter-2.html>

⁴ <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB09300>

⁵ <https://catalogue.ic.nhs.uk/publications/public-health/surveys/smok-drin-drug-youn-peop-eng-2011/smok-drin-drug-youn-peop-eng-2011-rep2.pdf>

which ran from January to December 2011 and was published in March 2013 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The GLF is a face-to-face interview survey conducted with a sample of 13,200 households and gathers a large amount of information on social, economic and health-related topics. The HSfE is an annual survey which has provided information on a range of aspects concerning the public's health including alcohol consumption from a representative sample of the general population (8,610 adults and 2,007 children were interviewed). The HSfE report is written by NatCen Social Research (previously the National Centre for Social Research) and published by the HSCIC. Both surveys have been adapted in recent years to take into account the change to expressing the sensible drinking message in terms of daily benchmark intake of alcohol units.

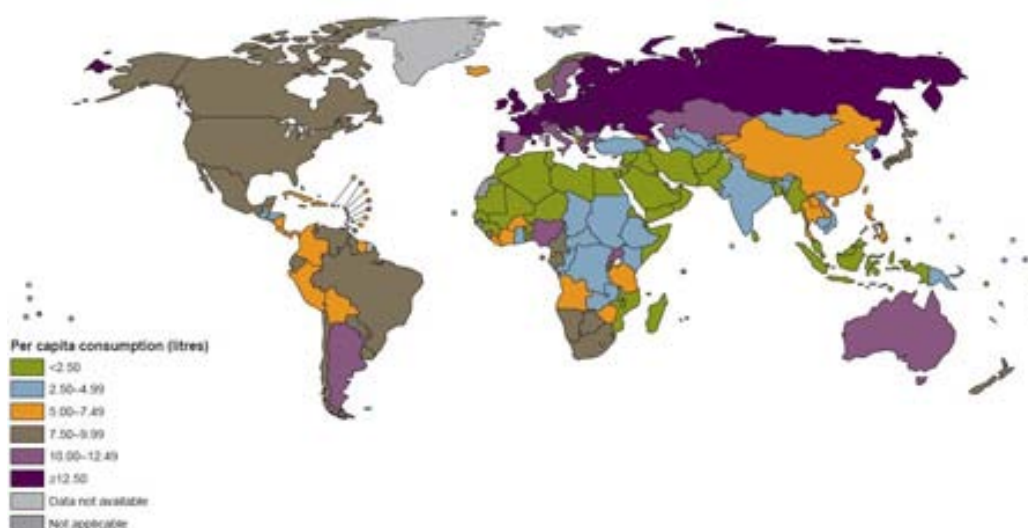
9. Data on alcohol consumption for this review were obtained from either surveys or from sources where recorded consumption were calculated (i.e. alcoholic beverages consumed that are recorded in official statistics of production, trade, sales or taxes). Methodology for determining alcohol consumption in populations has a number of limitations. It is generally accepted that surveys underestimate alcohol consumption in interviewees. The HSfE (2011) report commented that *"Comparisons of survey measures with HM Revenue and Customs data on alcohol taxed for sale suggest that survey estimates of consumption represent between 55% and 60% of the true figure. However, survey data provide a reliable means of comparing drinking between different groups and of measuring trends in drinking over time"*.

10. Alcohol consumption measurements and estimates are typically expressed either as the total per capita amount of alcohol consumed in litres of pure alcohol in a given population (15 years and over) or in terms of units of alcohol consumed on an annual basis. The data from the WHO, OECD and BBPA are expressed as a total amount of alcohol consumed while the data from the UK surveys (GLF, HSfE and the HSCIC of young people) express their data in terms of units of alcohol consumed daily.

Global Consumption of Alcohol

11. The WHO Global status report on Alcohol and Health (2011) reviewed the global, regional and national consumption of alcohol, patterns of drinking, health consequences and policy responses in Member States. Worldwide annual per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages in 2005 equalled 6.13 L of pure alcohol consumed per person aged 15 years or older. The WHO reports that a large portion of this consumption (1.76 litres per person) was from homemade and illegally produced alcohol, referred to as unrecorded alcohol. The highest alcohol consumption was found in the developed world, namely, the Northern Hemisphere, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand. North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean region, and southern Asia and the Indian Ocean had the lowest consumption of alcohol (Figure 1). For the WHO European region, the total adult annual per capita consumption of alcohol was 12.2 L of pure alcohol (2.7L of which was unrecorded) and the total adult (15+ years) per capita consumption for the UK was 13.4L (1.7L of which was unrecorded) in 2005. This UK total adult annual per capita consumption of alcohol of 13.4 L would equate to 1340 units of alcohol annually or 3.7 units per day, based on the calculation that one unit of alcohol contains 10 mls of pure alcohol.

Figure 1. Total adult (15+) per capita consumption, in litres of pure alcohol, 2005^a



^a Best estimates of 2005 using average recorded alcohol consumption 2003-2005 (minus tourist consumption) and unrecorded alcohol consumption 2005

12. The WHO report also provided information on the changes in global alcohol consumption over time. Looking at the time period from 1990 up to 2006, worldwide recorded annual per capita consumption had remained stable at around 4.3–4.7 litres of pure alcohol. In the WHO European region, a slight decrease was observed at the beginning of the 1990s but alcohol consumption increased again to 9.5 litres in 2005. For the UK, a robust estimate of five year change from 2001-2005, indicated that the recorded adult per capita consumption of alcohol had stabilised (WHO, 2011).

Alcohol Consumption in the EU

13. A recent review by the OECD “*Health at a Glance: Europe (2012)*” provided comparable data on alcohol consumption in 35 European countries – the then 27 member states of the European Union, five candidate countries and three EFTA countries – up to 2010. For this comparison, alcohol consumption was defined as annual sales of pure alcohol in litres per person aged 15 years and over. It was noted that the methodology to convert alcohol drinks to pure alcohol may differ across countries. The EU region has the highest alcohol consumption in the world. Measured through monitoring annual sales data, it stands at 10.7 litres of pure alcohol per adult on average across EU member states (Figure 2). Alcohol consumption for the UK was reported as 10.2 L per adult and would equate to 1020 units of alcohol annually or 2.8 units per day, based on the calculation that 1 unit of alcohol contains 10 mls of pure alcohol. The OECD report on alcohol consumption in Europe found the highest consumption of alcohol, at 12 litres or more per adult, in Austria, France, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania in 2010. The lowest levels of consumption (7-8 litres of pure alcohol per adult) were reported in southern European countries (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta) along with Nordic countries (Iceland, Sweden, and Norway). It was noted that alcohol consumption

has fallen in many European countries. However, alcohol consumption per adult rose significantly in a number of countries, including Cyprus, Finland and Ireland.

Alcohol consumption in the UK

14. Data from British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) website, accessed on Sept 23rd 2013, estimates the total alcohol consumption in the UK at 7.99 litres per capita on average throughout the entire population in 2012. This figure is based on HMRC alcohol tax returns and represents a 3.3% fall in consumption compared to 2011. It would equate to approx. 800 units of alcohol annually or 2.2 units per day, based on the calculation that one unit of alcohol contains 10 mls of pure alcohol. Figure 3, taken from the BBPA Statistical Handbook (2012), illustrates the total alcohol consumption in the UK from 1975 to 2011. It demonstrates an overall long-term increase in UK alcohol consumption since 1975. Average annual consumption per capita was 9 litres for the UK population older than 15 years (blue bars) (approximately 2.5 units per day) and 6.9 litres on average as a whole (red line) in 1975. Alcohol consumption reached a peak of 11.5 litres for the UK population older than 15 years (approximately 3.2 units per day) and 9.5 litres per capita as a whole, respectively, in 2004, but a downward trend has been observed since that time.

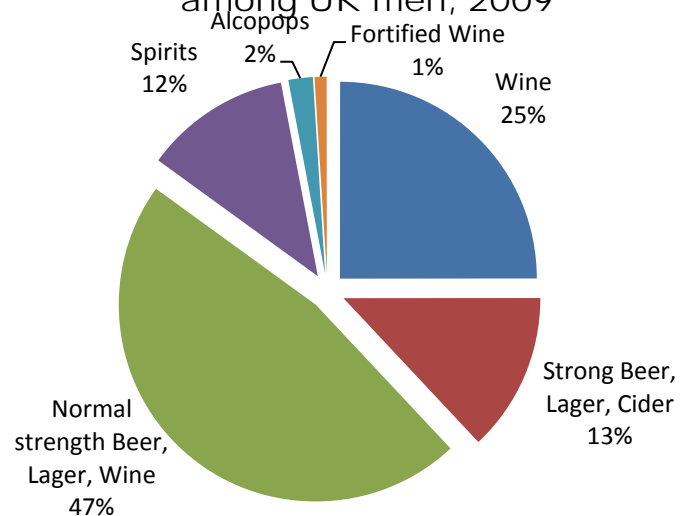
Types of alcoholic beverages consumed in the UK

15. The 2009 ONS Omnibus Survey reported that consumption of beer represented over two-fifths of the total average weekly consumption of alcoholic beverages, with wine and fortified wines representing just under two-fifths of the total in adults. Spirits accounted for 14 per cent, and alcopops for 3 per cent of all alcohol consumed. Differences were observed in the drink preferences of men and women (Figures 4 and 5). Women were proportionately less likely to drink beers and more likely to drink wine, fortified wine, spirits and alcopops compared to men.

Trends in Alcohol Consumption over time in the UK

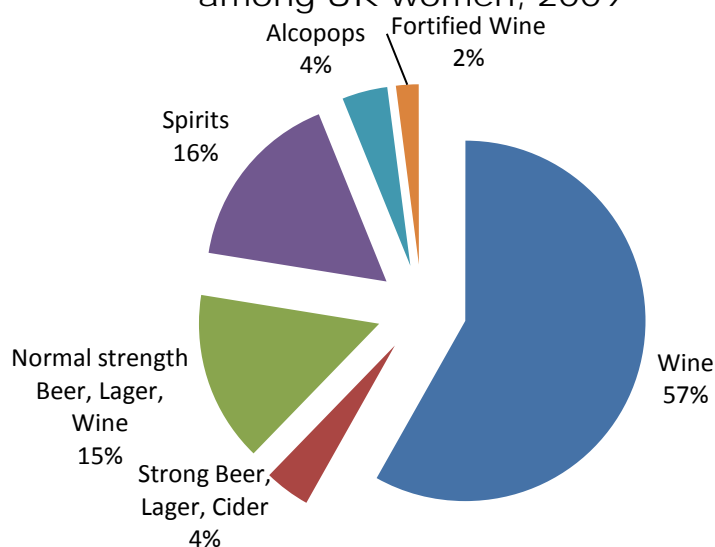
16. Both the 2011 GLF and HSfE surveys have found that a high proportion of UK adults drink alcohol. In the GLF (2011), 59% of adults reported that they had consumed alcohol in the seven days prior to interview, with men (66%) more likely than women (54%) to have had an alcoholic drink. Similarly the HSfE reported that 69% of men and 54% of women drank alcohol in the previous week. However data from GLF (2011) showed a downward trend in the proportion of people drinking in the seven days before interview when compared to the data from 2005 (Figure 6). The survey found that the proportion who reported drinking in the seven days before interview fell from 72% in 2005 to 66% in 2011 in men and from 57% in 2005 to 54% in 2011 in women. The GLF (2011) reported that men (16%) were more likely than women (9%) to have consumed alcohol on at least five days in the week prior to interview. Similarly, the 2011 HSfE survey reported that 18% of men and 10% of women had drunk on five days or more in the previous week, prior to interview. However, from 2005 to 2011, a downward trend was observed in the GLF for both men and women in the proportion who reported drinking alcohol in at least five days in the week before interview, falling from 22 to 16% for men and 13 to 9% for women over the time period.

Figure 4. Proportion of average weekly units accounted for by each type of drink among UK men, 2009



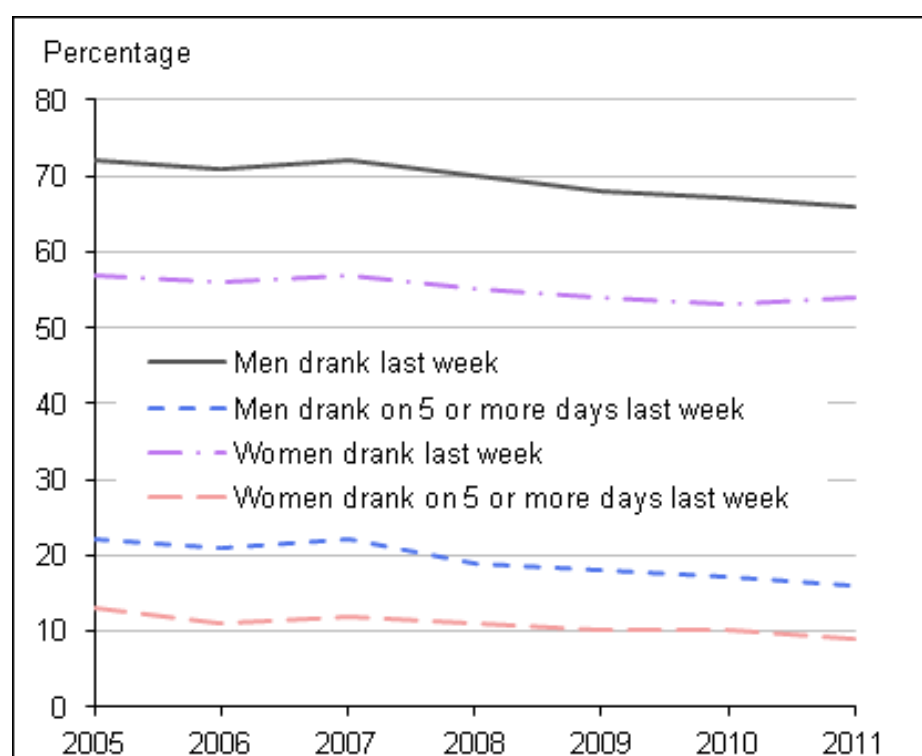
Source: HSCIC, Extract from Drinking: Adults' behaviour and knowledge, 2009 Omnibus Survey

Figure 5. Proportion of average weekly units accounted for by each type of drink among UK women, 2009



Source: HSCIC, Extract from Drinking: Adults' behaviour and knowledge, 2009 Omnibus Survey

Figure 6. Trends in Alcohol Consumption over time (2005 -2011) in the UK, based on drinking in the last week by sex by persons over 16 (General Lifestyle Survey - ONS, 2013).



17. The 2011 GLF also observed a downward trend, from 41% in 2005 to 34% in 2011, in the proportion of men exceeding the Government's daily benchmark of 4 units on their heaviest drinking day in the week before the interview. A similar downward trend was observed for women. The proportion of women exceeding the Government's daily benchmark of 3 units had decreased from 34% in 2005 to 28% in 2011. The most pronounced change has occurred in the 16-24 year age group, where the proportion of males drinking more than 4 units on their heaviest drinking day fell from 46% in 2005 to 32% in 2011. For females in this age category, the proportion drinking more than 3 units on their heaviest drinking day fell from 41% in 2005 to 31% in 2011 (Table 3).

18. Heavy drinking followed a similar pattern in the GLF survey. The proportion of men who were heavy drinkers (defined in the survey as those exceeding twice the Government's daily guidance on their heaviest drinking day) had fallen from 23% in 2005 to 18% in 2011 and the proportion of women who were heavy drinkers had fallen from 15% in 2005 to 12% in 2011. The most pronounced changes were observed in the 16-24 age group. The proportion of males aged 16-24 who were heavy drinkers fell by almost a third between 2005 and 2011 (32% in 2005 compared with 22% in 2011) and for females aged 16-24, the proportion who were heavy drinkers fell from 27% to 18% in the same time period (Table 3).

Frequency of Drinking in the UK

19. The GLF (2011) and HSfE (2011) observed that the proportion of adults drinking during the last week varied between age groups. The frequency of drinking increased with age in both surveys. For example, 26% of men aged 75 and over had drunk every day in the previous week compared to 1% of 16-24 men in the HSfE (2011). In the GLF (2011), men aged 45-64 and 65 and over were at least twice as likely as those aged 16-24 and 24-44 to have had a drink on 5 or more days in the week before interview (22%, 24%, 5% and 11% respectively) (Table 4). This increase in drinking with age was greater for men than for women in both surveys.

Maximum Daily Amount Drunk in Last week in the UK

20. Both the HSfE (2011) and GLF (2011) report on the consumption of alcohol on the heaviest drinking day in the past week. The surveys examine the proportion of men exceeding 4 units and women exceeding 3 units of alcohol on their heaviest drinking day. This measure is based on the government's recommendations that men should not regularly drink more than 3 to 4 units and women more than 2 to 3 units of alcohol a day. The GLF (2011) reported that 34% of men and 28% of women exceeded the recommended limits on at least one day during the previous week. Similarly, the HSfE (2011) found that 39% of men and 27% of women drank above the recommended limits on at least one day. However, among men and women, those aged 65 years and over were significantly less likely than other age groups to exceed the recommended daily benchmark set by the Government (Table 5).

21. Both surveys also reported on heavy drinking that would lead to intoxication as examined by the proportion of men exceeding 8 units and women exceeding 6 units of alcohol on their heaviest drinking day (twice the Government's recommended limit). The GLF reported that 18% of men and 12% of women drank twice the recommended limit and the HSfE reported 22% of men and 13% of women drank twice the recommended limit on at least one day in the previous week. Both surveys again noted that older people were less likely than younger people to exceed the 8 units for men or 6 units for women. For example, only 6% of men aged 65 and over exceeded 8 units on at least one day during the previous week compared with 22% of men aged 16-24 (Table 5, GLF 2011).

22. The GLF (2011) also examined the issue of very heavy drinking (defined in the survey as three times the government's recommended limits), set at more than 12 units for men and 9 units for women on their heaviest drinking day. This level of drinking was most prevalent in the 16-24 and 25-44 age groups. In the 16-24 age group, 13% of men and 12% of women drank more than three times the government benchmarks on at least one day in the previous week, as did 13% of men and 9% of women in the 25-44 age group (Table 5).

Drinking trends between countries and regions of the UK

23. In terms of frequency of consumption, the 2011 GLF reported a higher proportion of men (67%) and women (54%) in England consumed alcohol in the

week before interview than in Scotland (56% and 48% respectively). Men in Scotland (9%) were less likely than men in England and men in Wales (17% and 18% respectively) to have had an alcoholic drink on at least five days in that week. There were, however, no significant differences between the countries in the proportions of adults consuming over the recommended daily limits on their heaviest drinking day (34% and 28% in England, 33% and 24% for Wales and 33% and 30% for Scotland for men and women, respectively) or in the proportions drinking heavily (8 units for men and 6 units for women at least one day). The HSfE reported that London had the highest proportion of men (39%) and women (54%) who did not drink alcohol in the last week. Similar results were obtained in the GLF where 40% of men and 55% of women did not consume alcohol in the last week. Both surveys reported that the southern areas of England (South East Coast, South Central and South West) had the highest proportion of adults drinking alcohol in the past week and on five or more days in the last week compared with other regions.

24. In terms of maximum daily consumption, the HSfE reported that the highest proportions of adults exceeding the recommended daily limits on their heaviest drinking day came from the North East (68% of men, 60% of women) and the North West (65% of men, 60% of women). Similarly, the GLF (2011) reported the highest proportions of adults exceeding recommended limits came from the North East, North West and the Yorkshire and Humber regions (36%, 35% and 35 % respectively of adults). For those adults that exceeded twice the recommended limits of 8/6 units of alcohol, the GLF (2011) reported that Yorkshire and the Humber and the North West regions showed the highest levels of heavy drinking (20% and 18% of adults exceeded twice the recommended daily limits on their heaviest drinking day, respectively). A similar regional pattern was observed in the HSfE survey for those exceeding twice the recommended limits of 8 units for men and 6 units for women.

Alcohol Consumption in the Young (up to 15 years of age)

25. In 2009, a new guideline for alcohol consumption in children was introduced by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England (CMO, 2009). This guideline recommended that no children under the age of 15 years should consume alcohol, after evidence indicated that drinking before this age increased the risk of alcohol dependency in later life and also affected cognitive development.

26. Since 2000, the NatCen Social Research and the National Foundation for Educational Research have carried out an annual survey of secondary school children in England which provides the national estimates of how many young people aged 11 to 15 smoke, drink alcohol and take illicit drugs. The 2011 survey was a self-completed paper questionnaire with a sample size of 6,519 pupils aged between 11 and 15 in 219 schools.

27. The survey reported that 45% of pupils aged between 11 and 15 have had at least one alcoholic drink in their lifetimes, the percentage having decreased in recent years, from 61% in 2001. The 2011 survey found that the mean amount of alcohol consumed by pupils who had drunk in the last week was 10.4 units, and the median was 7.0 units, with 12% of boys and girls consuming alcohol in the last seven days. The proportion of pupils who drank alcohol in the last week had fallen

from 26% in 2001 to 12% in 2011. The survey found that older pupils were more likely to have consumed alcohol than younger pupils in the previous week (from 1% of 11 year olds to 28% of 15 year olds). White pupils were more likely to have drunk alcohol recently than pupils of Black or Asian ethnicity.

Alcohol consumption in pregnancy

28. Currently the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) advises that women should avoid drinking alcohol in the first three months of pregnancy if possible, because it may be associated with an increased risk of miscarriage. The advice for women choosing to drink during pregnancy is to drink no more than 1 to 2 units of alcohol, once or twice a week, at which level there is no evidence that there would be any harm to the unborn child. The GLF (2011) found that 5% of pregnant women (compared with 20% of women aged 16-49) drank alcohol on more than two days in the week before interview and 9% of pregnant women (compared with 42% of women aged 16-49) consumed more than 2 units on their heaviest drinking day in that week.

Summary

29. Data on the total alcohol consumption worldwide and in the EU demonstrate the wide variation in the volume of alcohol consumed across countries. In the UK, alcohol consumption in adults has increased over the past thirty years, however the data is indicating that there has been a downward trend since the peak of 2004. Men continue to consume more alcohol than women. The frequency of consumption increases with age. Younger people were more likely to drink heavily on a single occasion. There has been an overall reduction in the numbers of 11-15 year olds drinking alcohol and the amount they consumed in recent years. Details on the frequency of alcohol consumption and the maximum amount consumed in a day in the UK provide a clear indication of the proportion of the population that are drinking above the government's recommended daily limits.

Questions for the Committee

Have the committee any general comments on the data provided?

Have the committee any specific comments on the data provided from the above reports on alcohol consumption and the recent trends in the UK population?

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Figure 2. Annual alcohol consumption per capita in Europe in 2010 and the percentage change in consumption over 30 years (OECD, 2012).

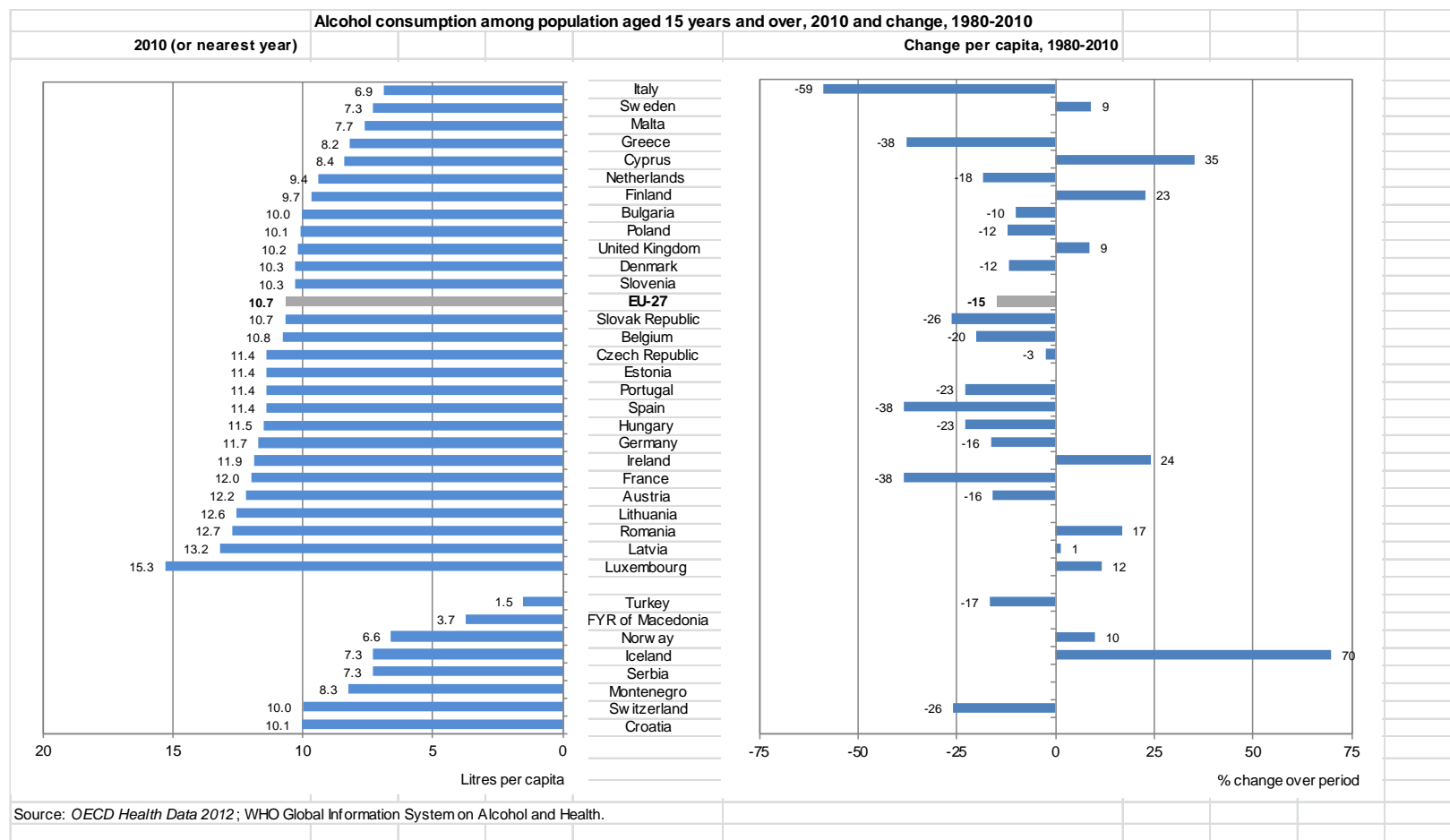
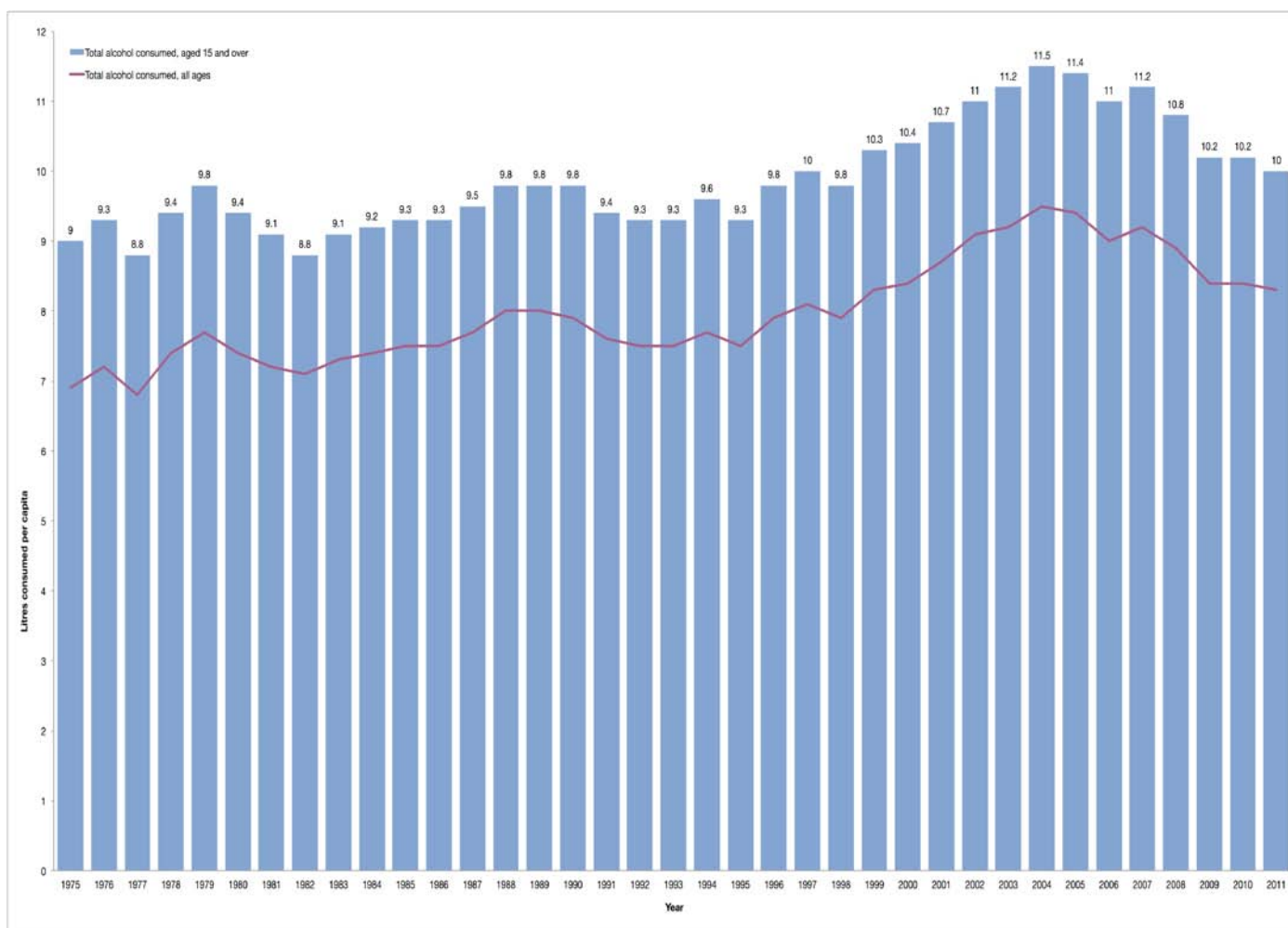


Figure 3. UK Total Alcohol Consumption, 1975 to 2011, litres per capita



(Source: British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA), Statistical Handbook 2012)

Table 3. Maximum drunk on any one day in the last week by sex and age: 2005 to 2011

<i>Persons aged 16 and over</i>									<i>Great Britain</i>
Maximum daily amount	2005 ¹	2006 ³	2007	2008 ⁴	2009 ⁴	2010 ⁴	2011 ⁴	Weighted base 2011 (000s)=100%	Unweighted sample 2011 ⁵
Percentages									
Men									
Drank more than 4 units on at least one day									
16-24	46	42	44	42	36	34	32	2,310	560
45-64	43	42	44	41	41	40	38	6,680	2,130
65 and over	21	21	23	21	20	22	20	4,188	1,700
Total	41	40	41	37	37	36	34	19,858	5,960
Drank more than 8 units on at least one day									
16-24	32	30	32	30	24	24	22	2,310	560
25-44	30	31	31	27	27	25	24	6,680	1,570
45-64	22	21	24	21	21	20	19	6,680	2,130
65 and over	6	7	8	7	5	7	6	4,188	1,700
Total	23	23	24	21	20	19	18	19,858	5,960
Women									
Drank more than 3 units on at least one day									
16-24	41	39	40	36	37	31	31	2,473	590
25-44	42	40	43	37	36	35	34	7,452	1,980
45-64	37	35	36	32	32	32	33	7,195	2,490
65 and over	12	14	14	10	11	11	12	5,089	1,930
Total	34	33	34	29	29	28	28	22,209	6,990
Drank more than 6 units on at least one day									
16-24	27	25	24	24	24	17	18	2,473	590
25-44	20	21	22	20	19	19	16	7,452	1,980
45-64	12	12	13	13	11	11	12	7,195	2,490
65 and over	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	5,089	1,930
Total	15	15	15	14	13	13	12	22,209	6,990

1 2005 data includes last quarter of 2004/5 data due to survey change from financial year to calendar year.

2 Figures produced using the updated methodology for converting volumes of alcohol to units assuming an average wine glass size

3 Results from 2006 onwards include longitudinal data (see Appendix B - Sample design and Response).

4 Figures produced using the updated methodology including data on wine glass size

5 All unweighted bases are rounded to the nearest 10.

Bases for earlier years can be found in GLF/GHS reports for each year.

Source: GLF (ONS, 2011)

Table 4 Whether drank in the last week and number of drinking days by sex and age*Persons aged 16 and over**Great Britain: 2011¹*

Drinking days in the last week	Age				Total
	16-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	
Men	Percentages				
0	48	33	28	37	34
1	23	21	17	16	19
2	15	19	14	11	15
3	7	10	12	7	10
4	3	6	8	5	6
5	2	4	7	5	5
6	1	2	4	2	3
7	1	5	11	17	9
% who drank last week	52	67	72	63	66
<i>Weighted base (000s) = 100%</i>	<i>2,313</i>	<i>6,672</i>	<i>6,679</i>	<i>4,184</i>	<i>19,848</i>
<i>Unweighted sample²</i>	<i>560</i>	<i>1,570</i>	<i>2,130</i>	<i>1,700</i>	<i>5,960</i>
Women					
0	50	44	40	58	47
1	26	22	19	15	20
2	10	15	14	7	12
3	7	8	8	4	7
4	3	4	6	3	5
5	2	2	4	3	3
6	1	1	3	2	2
7	1	3	6	9	5
% who drank last week	50	56	60	42	54
<i>Weighted base (000s) = 100%</i>	<i>2,481</i>	<i>7,455</i>	<i>7,200</i>	<i>5,089</i>	<i>22,225</i>
<i>Unweighted sample²</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>1,980</i>	<i>2,490</i>	<i>1,930</i>	<i>7,000</i>
All persons					
0	50	39	34	48	41
1	25	22	18	15	19
2	13	17	14	9	14
3	7	9	10	6	8
4	3	5	7	4	5
5	2	3	5	3	4
6	1	2	3	2	2
7	1	4	9	13	7
% who drank last week	50	61	66	52	59
<i>Weighted base (000s) = 100%</i>	<i>4,794</i>	<i>14,127</i>	<i>13,879</i>	<i>9,273</i>	<i>42,073</i>
<i>Unweighted sample²</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>3,560</i>	<i>4,620</i>	<i>3,630</i>	<i>12,960</i>
















1 Results include longitudinal data (see Appendix B - Sample design and Response).

2 All unweighted bases are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source: GLF (ONS, 2011)

Table 5. Maximum drunk on any one day in the last week, by sex and age
Persons aged 16 and over

Great Britain: 2011¹

Maximum daily amount	Age				
	16-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over	Total
Percentages					
Men					
Drank nothing last week	49	33	28	37	34
Up to 4 units	20	28	34	43	32
More than 4, up to 8 units	10	15	19	14	16
More than 8, up to 12 units	22  32	24  39	19  38	6  20	18  34
More than 12 units	9	11	10	4	9
	13	13	9	2	9
Women					
Drank nothing last week	51	44	40	58	47
Up to 3 units	18	22	27	31	25
More than 3, up to 6 units	13	17	21	9	16
More than 6, up to 9 units	18  31	16  34	12  33	2  12	12  28
More than 9 units	7	7	6	2	5
	12	9	6	1	6
All persons					
Drank nothing last week	50	39	34	48	41
Up to 4/3 units	19	25	30	36	29
More than 4/3, up to 8/6 units	11	16	20	11	16
More than 8/6, up to 12/9 units	20  31	20  36	15  36	4  15	15  31
More than 12/9 units	8	9	8	3	7
	12	11	7	1	8
<i>Weighted base (000s)</i> <i>= 100%</i>					
<i>Men</i>	<i>2,310</i>	<i>6,680</i>	<i>6,680</i>	<i>4,188</i>	<i>19,858</i>
<i>Women</i>	<i>2,473</i>	<i>7,452</i>	<i>7,195</i>	<i>5,089</i>	<i>22,209</i>
<i>All persons</i>	<i>4,783</i>	<i>14,132</i>	<i>13,875</i>	<i>9,277</i>	<i>42,067</i>
<i>Unweighted sample²</i>					
<i>Men</i>	<i>560</i>	<i>1,570</i>	<i>2,130</i>	<i>1,700</i>	<i>5,960</i>
<i>Women</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>1,980</i>	<i>2,490</i>	<i>1,930</i>	<i>6,990</i>
<i>All persons</i>	<i>1,150</i>	<i>3,560</i>	<i>4,620</i>	<i>3,630</i>	<i>12,960</i>

¹ Results include longitudinal data (see Appendix B - Sample design and Response).

² Figures for unweighted sample have been rounded independently. The sum of component items does not therefore all unweighted bases are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source: GLS, (ONS, 2011)