



Alcohol as a public health issue in croatia

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Alcohol consumption in Croatia

01

the total APC (in litres of pure alcohol) in the adult (15+ years) population of the WHO European Region was 10.9 L, compared to the world average of 6.2 L

02

Croatia: Trend among young people – ESPAD - prevalence of alcohol use increased by 10% between 1995 and 2015

03

In Croatia men consume approximately twice the amount that women do (19.3 L and 10.1 L of pure alcohol, respectively, among drinkers only)

Alcohol consumption among youth in Croatia

ESPAD (2015)
– European
school survey
project on
alcohol and
other drugs

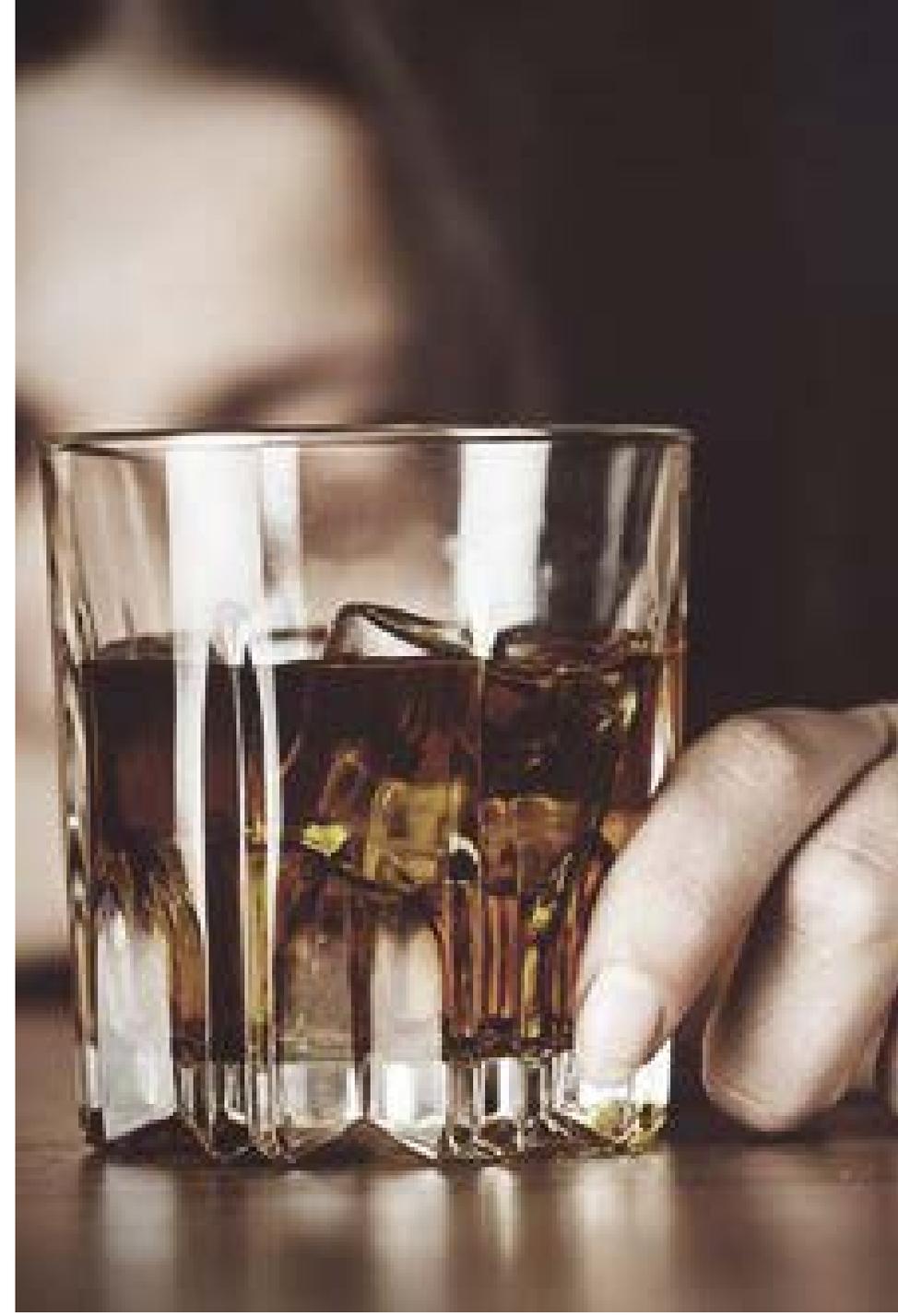
results from 2015 showed that the prevalence of reported drunkenness in the past 30 days was 16% for all students (17% of boys and 14% of girls)
1/3 of students reported that they had tried beer or wine before the age of 11 years, usually in their own home

HBSC
(2013/2014)
– Health
Behaviour in
School-aged
Children

32% of 15-year-old Croatians had been drunk twice or more in their life (40% of boys and 24% of girls)

Alcohol-related harm in Croatia

- Alcohol-attributable mortality – registered and monitored through the Croatian Health Service Yearbook
 - 112.9 deaths per million for liver cirrhosis
 - 94.2 per million for cancer
 - 33.42 per million for CVD
 - 105.4 per million for all injuries – 64.2 per million for unintentional injury, and 41.2 per million for intentional injury
- Croatia is 19th overall in alcohol attributable mortality in WHO European region
- Croatia ranks 10th highest in alcohol attributable rate of cancer



Measures to reduce the harm caused by alcohol

01

National alcohol policy documents: National Strategy for prevention of the harmful use of alcohol and alcohol-related disorders for the period 2011–2016 was adopted in 2010

During 2017 a National Strategy for the prevention of addiction which includes alcohol is being drafted by the Government Of The Republic Of Croatia Office For Combating Drugs Abuse

- determines priority areas for general action and provides guidance for political decision-making

- defines measures that can be applied and adapted at all levels, taking into account specific cultural circumstances and public health priorities

02

Areas of action:

- *raising awareness and taking on commitments;*
- *the role of the health system;*
- *activities in the community;*
- *driving under the influence of alcohol;*
- *availability of alcohol;*
- *marketing alcoholic drinks;*
- *pricing policies;*
- *decreasing the negative consequences of alcohol consumption and drunkenness;*
- *decreasing the influence of illicit and informally produced alcohol on community*
- *health; and*
- *monitoring and surveillance*

03

Multisectoral working group established at the Ministry of Health – the aim is to make suggestions, provide opinions and proposals related to strategic documents

Ministry of Health - Multisectoral working

- Established 2014
- Members are from:
 - Ministry of Social Politics and Youth (now Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Politics)
 - Ministry of Interior; former Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (now Ministry of Science and Education);
 - Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Finance;
 - Ministry 17 of Labour and Pension System;
 - Ministry of Culture; CIPH; Croatian Institute for Health Protection and Safety at Work;
 - University Hospital "Sestre Milosrdnice" – Psychiatry Clinic, the Reference centre of the Ministry of Health for Alcoholism;
 - Croatian Society for Alcoholism and Other Addictions of the Croatian Medical Association; and the Croatian Association of Clubs for Treated Alcoholics.
- The working group was developing an Action Plan for decreasing harmful use of alcohol for 2015-2020
 - Due to the political changes in 2015/2016 the meeting of this WG was in 2015, and will now be continued in 2017 and will continue to expand and influence the new Strategy



**UKLJUČI
SAVJEST**

**PRODAJA ALKOHOLA
OSOBAMA MLAĐIMA OD 18 GODINA
KAŽNJIVA JE ZAKONOM**



Ministarstvo
zdravlja



Health services' response

Screening and brief interventions for hazardous and harmful drinking

- *Health check-ups - prevent and record risk behaviours - prevention panels are used, among which there is a panel devoted to the prevention of excessive alcohol consumption (GP)*
- *Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) screening questionnaires (Hospitals)*
- *Cut down, Annoyed, Guilt, Eye-opener (CAGE)*

Treatment services for alcohol use disorders in the health system - treated alcoholics' clubs (TACs)

- Community-level projects
 - supporting peer education
 - structuring leisure time activities
 - encouraging sports activities
 - building life skills from an early age
- Prevention interventions
 - Part of school program
 - Health education curriculum - module called addiction prevention includes the topic of alcohol-related harm
 - Work with at risk children



- National mass media campaigns – binge drinking, drink-driving, selling alcohol to minors
- Trade Act - minimum legal age for purchase of an alcoholic drink (defined as any drink containing alcohol) in Croatia is 18 years
- National campaign launched in 2015 - “Turn on your conscience – sometimes you need to say NO to children” – called for consistent implementation of the law
- Other campaigns: “Think about it – when you drink, don’t drive”, “Think about it – you must know when to stop”
- 2016 – educational and preventative campaign “European night without accident”
- Croatia participated in the project co-funded within the Second EU Health Programme by the EU; “Joint Action on reducing alcohol related harm”
- Took part in the European Workplace and Alcohol Project, another project co-financed by the European Commission during the period 2011–2013



Drink-driving policies and countermeasures

- *legal BAC limit is 0.05% for the general population*
- *0.00% for young drivers (under 24 years of age) and professional drivers*

Availability of alcohol

- *legal minimum age 18 years*
- *Regulations regarding hours of sale not introduced at national level*

Pricing policies

- *excise duty law on alcohol is in force - not adjusted regularly in relation to the level of inflation and income*
- *Proposal from the Minister of Health: Increasing taxes on alcoholic beverages*

Marketing and labelling of alcoholic beverages

- *Health warning labels on alcohol advertisements or containers are not legally required*
- *Controversial topic: advertisement of beer on public broadcasting channels as well as public areas*



Cooperation with Brewing industry ?

- Up until 2015 this industry sponsored many public health campaigns



Campaign for testicular cancer awareness

- 2015/2016 - Ministry of health stopped giving their support for campaigns sponsored by brewery industries
- The question of cooperation is being addressed again

Conclusions

- **Last 5 years in Croatia:**

- In the process of developing National Strategy for the prevention of addiction which includes alcohol
- drafting of an alcohol action plan
- formation of a multisectoral working group on alcohol
- Increasing health education and prevention programs

- Consumption in Croatia has been, and remains, higher than the average in the WHO European Region

- **Areas of improvement:**

- Strong political will – there is a need for more resources and better enforcement of laws
- Strict regulations regarding discount sales, sales below cost and flat rates, introduce effective price policies
- Monitoring alcohol indicators and conducting alcohol research projects at the national level
- More effective control of domestic production of alcoholic beverages
- Focusing on consumption among young people