

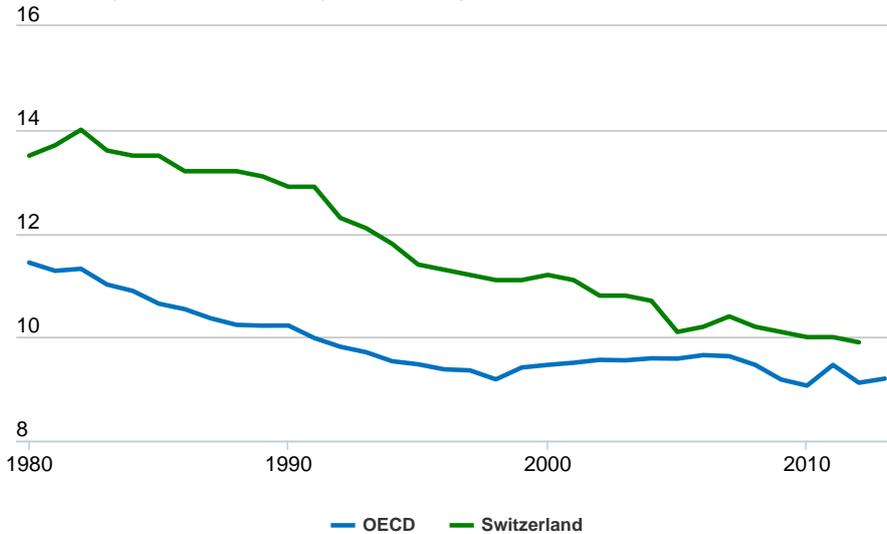
Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use

Country note - Switzerland

Consumption Trends

Levels of alcohol consumption in Switzerland have decreased in the last 30 years, but are still above the OECD average. In 2012, an average of 9.9 litres of pure alcohol per capita is consumed in Switzerland, compared with an estimate of 9.1 litres in the OECD.

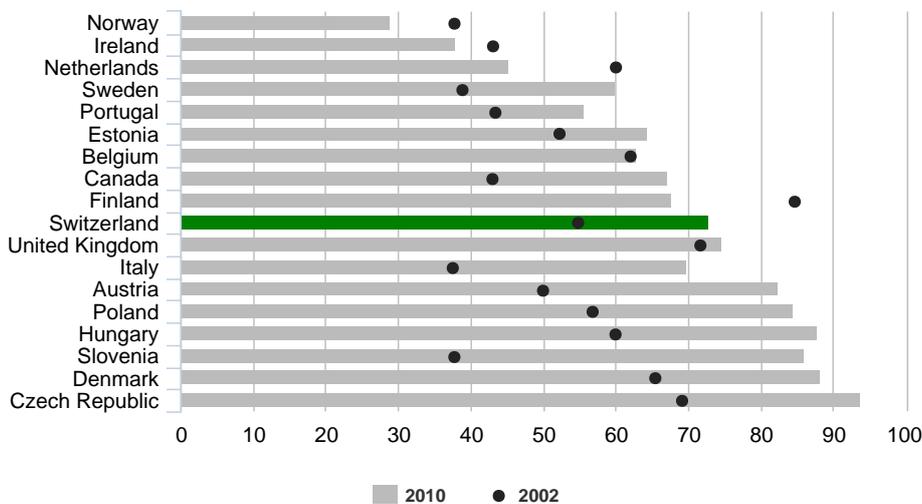
Annual alcohol consumption per capita
liters of pure alcohol component, 15-year-olds and older



Youth Drinking

Initiation into alcohol drinking happens at increasingly early ages. In Switzerland, the proportion of 15 year olds who have experienced alcohol increased from 55% in 2002 to 73% in 2010.

Share of 15-year-olds who have drunk alcohol
boys and girls, 2002 vs 2010



Drinking and Social Disparities

Large socio-economic disparities in hazardous drinking rates exist in both men and women. The probabilities of an average individual aged 40 to engage in hazardous drinking (i.e. having a weekly amount of pure alcohol of 140 grams or more for women, and 210 grams or more for men) are depicted below by level of education. In Switzerland, women with high education are more likely to be hazardous drinkers than less educated ones, while it's the opposite for men.

Share of hazardous drinkers by education level and gender

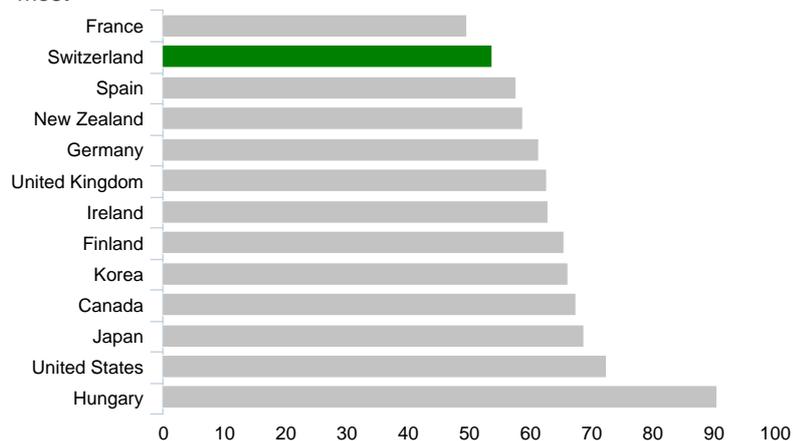
	Switzerland		Country 2	
	men	women	men	women
Low education	9.7	2.7		
Medium education	9.4	3.4		
High education	8.0	4.9		

Heavy Drinkers

The distribution of alcohol drinking is heavily concentrated. In Switzerland, the heaviest-drinking 20% of the population drink almost 54% of all alcohol.

Concentration of alcohol consumption

Share of total alcohol consumed by the 20% of the population who drink the most



Taxes & Legal Framework

Compared with other countries in the OECD area, Switzerland has somewhat milder levels of taxation of alcohol, particularly for beer and no taxation for wine, but relatively higher levels of taxation for spirits. The blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for the general population is 0.05%, in line with most OECD countries (22 out of 40 OECD countries and Key Partners (i.e. Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russian Federation and South Africa) have the same limit). Switzerland has adopted regulations for advertisement and sponsorships for spirits, but other legally binding regulations (e.g. prohibition to sell beer and wine to people under 16 years -except in the Canton of Ticino where the minimum age is 18- and spirits under 18 years, and policies to restrict sales of alcohol in petrol stations and to intoxicated persons) are not applied on a national level.

	Switzerland	[Country 2]
National legal minimum age for off-premise sales		
beer	16	
wine	16	
spirits	18	
National legal minimum age for on-premise sales		
beer	16	
wine	16	
spirits	18	
Restrictions for on-/off-premise sales of alcoholic beverages		
time (hours/day)	N/N	
location (place/density)	Y/N	
specific events	Y	
intoxicated persons	N	
petrol stations	N	
National maximum legal blood alcohol concentration (%)		
all drivers	0.05	
young drivers	0.01	
professional drivers	0.01	
Legally binding regulations of		
advertisement	Y	
product placement	N	
sponsorship	Y	
sales promotion	Y	
health warnings (advert/containers)	N/N	

Related Publication

Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use

<http://www.oecd.org/health/tackling-harmful-alcohol-use-9789264181069-en.htm>



Contacts at OECD Health Division

Annalisa Belloni – Health Policy Analyst: +33-1-4524 1354 - annalisa.belloni@oecd.org

Michele Cecchini – Health Policy Analyst: +33-1-4524 7857 - michele.cecchini@oecd.org

Marion Devaux – Statistician/Junior Policy Analyst: +33-1-4524 8261 - marion.devaux@oecd.org

Franco Sassi – Senior Health Economist: +33-1-4524 9239 - franco.sassi@oecd.org