

## Round-Up - The ICAP Digest - April

By [The ICAP editorial team](#) | 22 April 2013

Once a month, the International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP), which covers alcohol policies worldwide, will look at what's going on in-market to promote a responsible role for alcohol in society.



**International Center for Alcohol Policies**  
Analysis. Balance. Partnership.

Every month, the International Center for Alcohol Policies looks at responsible drinking measures around the world

**Global.** The authors of a systematic analysis of the 2010 Global Burden of Disease study, published in The Lancet journal in December 2012, have found that the [attributable burden from alcohol consumption was significantly overestimated](#).

Alcohol is associated with 3.9% of global disability adjusted life years (DALYs) instead of the 5.5% originally reported. This puts alcohol consumption as the fifth leading risk factor for the global disease burden, rather than the previously-cited third.

The alcohol-attributable burden of disease varies by age and gender, with a higher burden for males and younger age groups. In addition, it has been estimated that [the burden of disease attributable to alcohol is higher in low-income countries than in high-income countries](#), although, according to the corrected calculations, the burden in some regions, such as Latin America, is lower than originally estimated. While alcohol may be a risk factor for certain diseases, it does not necessarily cause them.

**Overtured.** A Turkish court has [overturned a prohibition on alcohol consumption in public places](#), on the grounds that it bans an activity not prohibited by law. Governor Irfan Balkanlıoğlu instituted the ban on drinking in public in April 2012. The ban had been extended to vehicles in these spaces, with the stated intention of reducing road traffic crashes and anti-social behaviour.

Meanwhile in Prague, municipal authorities are reportedly [planning to extend a 2008 decree restricting alcohol consumption in outdoor public areas](#). The current decree prohibits consumption throughout the city, including the Malá Strana and Václavské squares and locations such as public parks, in front of supermarkets, or outside subway stations.

**Banned.** Google has announced it will [voluntarily ban alcohol advertisements from appearing on its online services in Finland](#). Estonian and Finnish alcohol producers contended that the ban would hinder commercial promotion in important advertising channels. Google will reportedly implement similar bans in China, Poland, Vietnam, and South Korea.

Also on the advertising front, the Public Prosecutor of São Paulo is [calling for amendments to draft legislation that would restrict alcohol advertisements on television to include advertisements for beer](#). The amendments under consideration would prohibit television advertisements for beverages with an ABV of greater than 13%. Public Prosecutor Jairo Edward de Luca is advocating for restrictions on ads for any beverages with an ABV equal to or higher than 0.5%, however, asserting that this would be a greater deterrent to underage consumption.

**Songkran.** The 2013 Thai Songkran festivities mark the first in which [vehicle passengers were prohibited from consuming alcohol](#). The director-general of Thailand's Disease Control Department announced that non-compliance with the ban would carry fines of up to THB10,000 (US\$353) and six months imprisonment.

The Economist's Banyan columnist writes that, [during the 2012 Songkran time frame, 320 people died in 3,129 road traffic crashes, and that of those who died, three-fifths were driving or riding pillion on motorcycles, most were not wearing helmets, and most had been drinking](#). The Banyan details government agency efforts to improve road safety during Songkran - such as the declaration of alcohol-free zones in 66 provinces - and includes insights from ICAP's Brett Bivans.

**Containers.** In an open letter to Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and Health Minister Gennady Onishchenko, Moscow Bureau for Human Rights (MHRB) Director Alexander Brod has [called for limits to be placed on the use of aluminium cans to package beer](#). Brod stated that 18% of Russian beer was packaged in aluminium cans, and expressed concern that aluminium could leach out into the beer due to chemical reactions with alcohol and contaminate the beverage during long-term storage.

In India, the Madhya Pradesh High Court is also [reviewing alcohol containers and has issued a ban on the sale of country-made liquor packaged in plastic bottles](#), after the non-governmental organisation Prani Mitra filed a public-interest litigation (PIL) citing environmental and public health concerns. The group contended that plastic containers could leach chemicals in the presence of alcohol, and that the accumulation of non-recyclable plastic adversely affected the environment.

**Suspended.** Officials have announced that [Taiwan's Kenting Music Festival vendors will have to suspend alcohol sales two hours before the end of each day's events](#). The ban is part of efforts to reduce alcohol-related road traffic crashes. Vendors found in violation will be fined TWD50,000 (US\$1,680) and the fine will affect their application for next year's festival.

Additionally, Gardai police officials have announced that they will be [increasing law enforcement efforts around large music events in Ireland](#). New nation-wide protocols will shortly be launched in the country, to replace mostly local guidelines enforced in garda divisions. Reducing pre-concert alcohol consumption among attendees to reduce anti-social behavior and violence is set to be a priority.

**Caught.** Nigeria's National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has [exposed a network of crime syndicates producing and distributing counterfeit goods including wine, spirits, and medication](#). The operations were valued at over NGN1bn (US\$6.4m) and officials are reviewing legal code to increase penalties to life-sentence jail terms and higher fines for those convicted.

The Investigations Police of Chile and the Linares Prosecutors' Office have also been conducting investigations into counterfeit alcohol. Officials in the country [confiscated around 1,000 bottles of Duff brand beer and 69,000 labels following complaints of copyright infringement by the owner of The Simpsons cartoon, Twentieth Century Fox](#). Officials are currently working to locate a shipment of 22,000 bottles that recently left the production facilities.

**Measure.** Organisers of a whisky festival in Scotland have [called for the standard 2.5cl volume of whisky to be renamed a 'dram' in acknowledgement of the spirit's traditional unit of measurement](#). The festival's manager pointed to the preservation of the 'pint' as a legal measurement name in the UK after the adoption of the metric system, and contended that the Government should recognise Scotch whisky's historical measurement as well.

In the US, Florida businesses and lawmakers are [proposing the legalisation of beer sales in 64oz containers, typically used for take-home sales at small breweries](#). Under current regulations, 32oz and 128oz 'growlers' are legal to fill in Florida, and it remains one of three states that prohibit the 64oz volumes. Supporters said that the half-gallon growler has become the standard container used by microbreweries throughout the US, and that lifting the restriction would stimulate the industry and lead to job creation.

And finally,

**Substitute.** Khartoum's Tourism Minister, Mohamed Abdul-Karim, recently discouraged tourists hoping to consume alcohol or visit dance clubs while touring the Sudanese state, and [suggested they substitute camel's milk for alcohol beverages](#). Tourists are also reportedly restricted in their movements in the region, in spite of tourism's importance to the area economy.

[The International Center for Alcohol Policies](#) (ICAP) is a not-for-profit organisation supported by major international producers of beverage alcohol. Established in 1995, ICAP's mission is to promote understanding of the role of alcohol in society and to help reduce harmful drinking worldwide. ICAP's efforts to foster dialogue and partnerships in the alcohol policy field are shaped by its commitment to pragmatic and feasible solutions to reducing harm that can be tailored to local and cultural considerations and needs. ICAP has been recognised by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) as a non-governmental organisation in Special Consultative Status.

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