# Telling the story

* The harmful use of alcohol is defined broadly in the strategy as “the drinking that causes detrimental health and social consequences for the drinker, the people around the drinker and society at large, as well as patterns of drinking that are associated with increased risk of adverse health consequences”1
* Alcohol remains the only psychoactive and dependence-producing substance with significant global impact on population health that is not controlled at the international level by legally-binding regulatory frameworks. [[1]](#footnote-1)
* Alcohol intoxication can increase dysphoria, cognitive dysfunction, impulsivity and intensity of suicidal ideation. People have approximately seven times increased risk for a suicide attempt soon after drinking alcohol, and this risk further increases to 37 times after heavy use of alcohol (Borges et al., 2017). The alcohol-attributable fraction for suicide was estimated to be as high as 18% (Chapter 4). It is also known that the presence of AUDs at least doubles the risk of having depression (Boden & Fergusson, 2011). Risk of suicidal ideation, suicidal attempts and completed suicide are each increased by 2–3 times among those with AUDs in comparison with the general population (Darvishi et al., 2015).1
* Alcohol intoxication is a particular alcohol-induced mental health condition and a very common transient condition among drinkers. This dimension of the impact of drinking alcohol is often left to the police, welfare and justice systems to resolve but it should be a major concern for public health.1
* Alcohol is a psychoactive substance, affecting various neural pathways and parts of the brain. The potential effects of alcohol include impairment in attention and cognition; aggressive impulses and loss of behavioural control (important for criminal violence).1
* Alcohol contributes to the occurrence of intentional injuries such as suicide and interpersonal violence.1

# Actionable policies

* increase taxes on alcoholic beverages
* enacting and enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on exposure to alcohol advertising across multiple types of media
* enacting and enforcing restrictions on the physical availability of retail alcohol
* enact age limits for purchase of alcohol
* licensing requirements for retail sale
* Advertising and product placement restrictions
  + national television and/or cable television
  + national and/or local radio
  + in print media
  + cinemas
  + billboards
  + point-of-sale
  + the internet
  + social media

# Sources

Global status report on alcohol and health 2018

https://www.who.int/substance\_abuse/publications/global\_alcohol\_report/en/

Global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol

https://www.who.int/substance\_abuse/publications/global\_strategy\_reduce\_harmful\_use\_alcohol/en/

Global Information System on Alcohol and Health (GISAH)

https://www.who.int/gho/alcohol/en/

Alcohol-attributable fractions, all-cause deaths by country

<https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.gisah.A1091?lang=en&showonly=GISAH>

Advertising and product placement restrictions

<https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.gisah.A1131?lang=en&showonly=GISAH>

Worth Exploring:

Borges G, Bagge CL, Cherpitel CJ, Conner KR, Orozco R, Rossow I (2017).

A metaanalysis of acute use of alcohol and the risk of suicide attempt. 47(5):949–57.

Darvishi N, Farhadi M, Haghtalab T, Poorolajal J (2015). Alcohol-related risk of suicidal

ideation, suicide attempt, and completed suicide: a meta-analysis. PLOS ONE.

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Pridemore WA, Chamlin MB (2006). A time-series analysis of the impact of heavy

drinking on homicide and suicide mortality in Russia, 1956–2002. Addiction.

101(12):1719–29

1. "WHO | Global status report on alcohol and health 2018 - World ...." 21 Sep. 2018, <https://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/global_alcohol_report/en/>. Accessed 4 Apr. 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)