

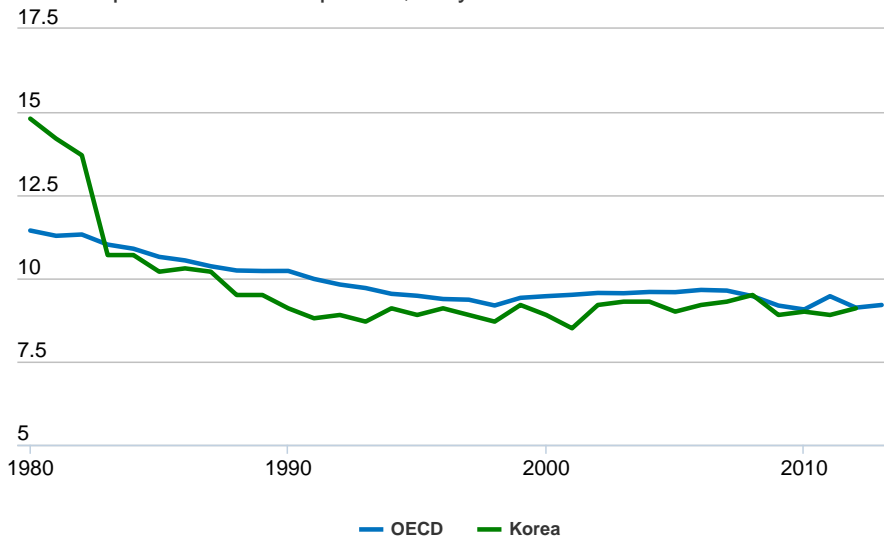
Tackling Harmful Alcohol Use

Country note - Korea

Consumption Trends

Levels of alcohol consumption in Korea decreased substantially in the last 30 years and, in 2012, consumption reached the OECD average of 9.1 litres of pure alcohol per capita.

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



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 Korea, both men and women with low education are more likely to be hazardous drinkers than more educated ones. This social gradient differs from many other countries.

Share of hazardous drinkers by education level and gender

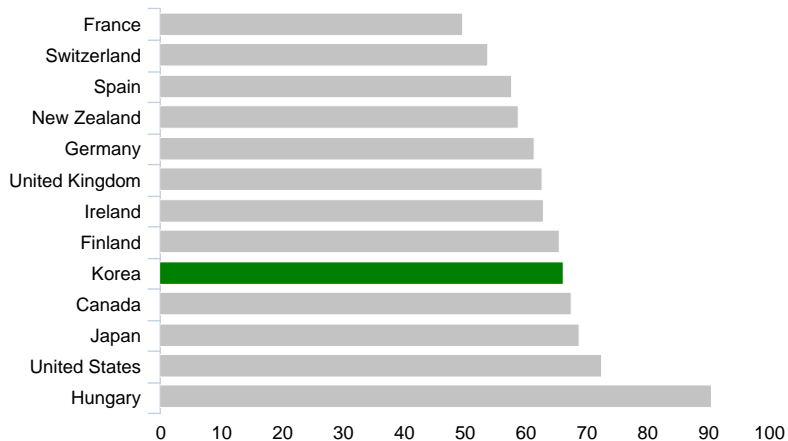
	Korea		Country 2	
	men	women	men	women
Low education	30.5	4.6		
Medium education	23.6	3.6		
High education	15.4	2.3		

Heavy Drinkers

The distribution of alcohol drinking is heavily concentrated. In Korea, the heaviest-drinking 20% of the population drink 66% 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

In South Korea, 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). Conversely, BAC levels for young drivers (0.05%) and professional drivers (0.05%) are among the least restrictive (the majority of countries have a maximum BAC level of 0.02%). Korea has adopted a policy of minimum age for selling alcohol which is set at 19, one of the highest across the OECD and Key Partner countries, but other legally binding policies (e.g. regulation of sales promotion of alcohol beverages, restrictions for sales in petrol stations and to intoxicated persons) are not applied.

	Korea	[Country 2]
National legal minimum age for off-premise sales		
beer	19	
wine	19	
spirits	19	
National legal minimum age for on-premise sales		
beer	19	
wine	19	
spirits	19	
Restrictions for on-/off-premise sales of alcoholic beverages		
time (hours/day)	N/N	
location (place/density)	N/N	
specific events	N	
intoxicated persons	N	
petrol stations	N	
National maximum legal blood alcohol concentration (%)		
all drivers	0.05	
young drivers	0.05	
professional drivers	0.05	
Legally binding regulations of		
advertisement	Y	
product placement	N	
sponsorship	N	
sales promotion	N	
health warnings (advert/containers)	N/Y	

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