The Less Alcohol Webinar Series sets out to start global conversations on contemporary policy issues critical to reducing alcohol consumption. The topics explored through the series intend to draw attention to perceived blind spots in the policy sphere. Blind spots range from new and emerging issues to topics that have historically been under-discussed. They also include areas where further research evidence and novel experiences from countries merit exchange to accelerate the implementation of the new global alcohol action plan for 2022–2030 (1). Examples of blind spots investigated through the series include the growing market of zero and low-alcohol beverages, the increased availability of home deliveries for alcoholic beverages, and the link between the alcogenecity of environments and alcohol consumption among youth.

By creating a platform for discussion, the series ultimately aims to serve as a launchpad for exploring each topic further. And by adopting a health promotion approach to tackle each topic, the series also aims to underscore the interrelated determinants of alcohol acceptability, availability and affordability and the importance of activating health promotion interventions in tandem (2).

Since the webinar series started in 2021, the World Health Organization’s Less Alcohol Unit has hosted 10 events, engaging nearly 80 speakers representing thought leaders, government officials, and representatives from civil society. The series has also put a spotlight on more than 20 different country experiences from across all six of WHO’s regions. More than 2 700 participants have taken part in the series by joining in real-time or viewing the recordings made available online following each webinar.

All ten blind spots have also been explored further in a parallel series of reports taking a more detailed snapshot of the evidence, country experiences, stakeholder insights, and expert opinion. For more information on the Snapshot Series on Alcohol Control Policies and Practice and the briefs developed in connection with the 2021 and 2022 edition of the webinar series, visit the publications of the Less Alcohol Unit here.

Overview of the Less Alcohol Webinar Series 3rd Edition | 2023

Addressing blind spots to accelerate the implementation of effective policy interventions

About the 2023 of the Less Alcohol Webinar Series

- Four-part series running from September to December 2023
- New 60-minute format
- Each webinar to include a keynote speaker and spotlight on three to four country practices
- Active moderation and engagement of online participants through real-time polls and surveys
- Free admission with prior registration

Format

In 2023, webinars are a shortened 60-minute format. All webinars will be held in English. The four-part series will run from September to December 2023. Each edition of the series will consist of a keynote presentation summarizing the evidence and critical concepts related to the topic, followed by a dynamic and actively moderated discussion spotlighting three to four country experiences. During the webinar, participants will be able to pose questions to the speakers and take part in real-time polls and surveys, tapping into the rich insights and experiences of the audience. In advance of each webinar, a detailed overview of the topic and policy questions will be available in a short concept note which can be accessed from the webinar’s event page.

Target participants

This series is intended for a broad audience, including people working in public health, and local and national alcohol control policy, policy-makers from national, regional and local administrations, government officials, researchers, civil society groups, consumer associations, the mass media, and people new to alcohol control policy, research or practice.
Attending a webinar

The webinars are free. Registration in advance is required to receive a direct link to the event. Please visit the webinar-specific registration links for further details.

Click on a webinar title to register

1. Alcohol and the environment: how to green alcohol control policies? 18 September 2023, 13–14:00 CET
2. Alcohol monopolies: what does it take for alcohol monopolies to work? 18 October 2023, 13–14:00 CET
3. Youth and alcohol: do new trends demand new solutions? 7 November 2023, 13–14:00 CET
4. Measuring alcohol policy implementation: are existing tools and methods fit for purpose? 7 December 2023, 13–14:00 CET

Webinar topics for 2023

1. Alcohol and the environment: how to green alcohol control policies?
   18 September 2023, 13–14:00 CET

As the world grapples to tackle climate change and preserve the natural systems that underpin our health and well-being, there is increasing attention to finding solutions across all sectors. The alcohol industry has been shown to have a high environmental footprint, particularly through water stress, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste production (3). This webinar will explore: the existing evidence on the environmental impact of the alcohol industry. How alcohol control policies could bring multiple health and environmental benefits? What opportunities and barriers countries face in maximizing these synergies to pursue their sustainable development goals (4)? This webinar picks up on the dialogue initiated in the first edition of the webinar series on protecting alcohol control policies from vested interests.

2. Alcohol monopolies: what does it take for alcohol monopolies to work?
   18 October 2023, 13–14:00 CET

Alcohol monopolies can be applied to the import, production, distribution, sales and export of alcohol (5). There are many different approaches to alcohol monopolies worldwide, varying, for example, by the segment of the alcohol supply chain they are applied to (6). A monopoly system can hold great advantages for public health and welfare by way of limiting the availability of alcohol and reducing alcohol-related harms (6, 7). They have also been found to be more effective than other policy interventions aimed at limiting the availability of alcohol, like licensing or zoning restrictions (5). However, establishing a new alcohol retail monopoly may not be politically viable. In this webinar, the following topics will be explored: How effective are alcohol monopolies at restricting the availability and decreasing the overall consumption of alcohol? What contemporary challenges do monopoly systems face? What preconditions or contextual factors influence the introduction of alcohol monopolies in new contexts? This webinar continues the dialogue initiated in earlier webinars on restricting alcohol availability and on alcohol consumption and socioeconomic inequalities.

3. Youth and alcohol: do new trends demand new solutions?
   7 November 2023, 13–14:00 CET

Alcohol consumption among young people (15–19-year-olds) carries significant health risks and no benefits (8-10). The 2018 WHO global alcohol report quantified significant differences in regional trends of alcohol consumption among the youth demographic: while there are declines in consumption in the Americas and European regions, there is greater variability in trends in Southeast Asia, including areas of increasing youth consumption (11). Population-level policy interventions that tackle regional and country-specific consumption trends among young people are needed if global health loss attributable to alcohol is to be substantially reduced (8). In this webinar, the following topics will be explored: what contextual factors drive increases in youth alcohol consumption? What policy interventions have proven effective for targeting this population group? How can youth-led efforts be enabled as part of implementation? This webinar builds upon the dialogue initiated in the second edition of the series on reducing exposure to alcogenic environments among young people: What can be learned from community-led approaches?

4. Measuring alcohol policy implementation: are existing tools and methods fit for purpose?
   7 December 2023, 13–14:00 CET

A harmonized approach to monitoring the extent to which governments have adopted evidence-based alcohol policy interventions is critical for measuring implementation and tracking progress towards agreed global objectives. Despite a wide range of initiatives, models, tools and datasets, the systematic measurement of policy implementation remains highly varied. Exchanging novel methods, as well as progress and pitfalls to their use, is critical to making progress on policy development. In this webinar, country, regional and global examples of approaches to measuring alcohol policy
implementation will be explored and discussed. Which different aims and intended uses of ongoing initiatives are taking place? What methods and data sources are relied on? What considerations would increase the use of this data in policy decision-making? This webinar picks up on the dialogue initiated in the first edition of the webinar series exploring population-wide interventions for reducing alcohol consumption: what is the per capita consumption indicator telling us?

Questions?
Subscribe to the Less Alcohol newsletter to be reminded of upcoming webinars and alerted when new publications are released. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions for a topic that has yet to be explored, contact the team at lessalcohol@who.int.

References