

Wydaje się, że w istniejącej rzeczywistości tradycyjne oparte, na filozofii całkowitej abstynencji działania prewencyjne wśród młodzieży powinny być uzupełniane strategiami typu „harm reduction” uczącymi bezpiecznego i racjonalnego używania alkoholu.

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## The issue of beer drinking in the period of socio-political transformation in Poland

### Summary

An attempt is made to outline the ongoing changes in attitudes and behaviors of the Polish society as regards beer drinking. Until recently beer used to be a symbol of drunkenness, but now it is more and more often perceived as an attribute of a free lifestyle of successful people.

A very impressive and ubiquitous promotion of beer, addressed mostly to young people, is received well. It is evident both from everyday observations and from epidemiological studies that the youth buy beer more and more often and willingly.

Such a dynamic increase in popularity of beer has been possible not only due to intense advertising campaigns, but also because the quality of beer, aesthetic attractiveness of beer cans and bottles as well as of retail outlets have greatly improved.

The social definition of beer seems to be undergoing a change: beer is currently perceived as a soft drink rather than an alcoholic beverage, even though that available on the market contains more of pure alcohol.

It seems that under the present conditions the traditional preventive measures based on the philosophy of total abstinence should be supplemented by harm-reduction strategies, teaching how to use alcohol safely and rationally.

**Key words:** beer/youth/epidemiology

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