

Dostępność, konsumpcja alkoholu i konsekwencje picia – trzy dekady doświadczeń

Affordability and availability, alcohol consumption and consequences of drinking – three decades of experiences

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Abstract – Aim. The paper’s aim is to respond a question how alcohol policy has affected affordability and availability, alcohol consumption and consequences of drinking in the last three decades in Poland.

Measurement. Simple indicators of affordability (number of bottles of vodka an average monthly wage can buy) and availability (number of alcohol outlets) were traced for a period 1980–2006. In addition, perception of alcohol availability by students was investigated. Outcome measures included registered and overall alcohol consumption, prevalence of drinking among students, out-patient and in-patient admissions to alcohol treatment, as well as mortality due to mental and behavioural disorders due to alcohol, alcohol poisoning, liver diseases.

Results. The 1980s witnessed reinforcement of strong alcohol control system imposed by the State under strong pressure from the civic society, represented by “Solidarity” movement. Alcohol affordability and availability were severely reduced and then remained almost stable for about a decade. Stabilisation of consumption and related harm followed. Transition to market economy and Parliamentary democracy was accompanied by dismantling of the alcohol control policy which was replaced by school education and treatment efforts. In spite of huge investment in school based education prevalence of drinking among school age children increased several times reaching rates present among adult population. Both affordability and availability substantially increased. In less than two decades number of clients in alcohol treatment doubled. Despite higher provision and qualitative improvement of treatment mortality due to alcohol related diseases tended to grow. Alcohol-related traffic crashes, however, declined, in particular in terms of number of crashes per 1000 vehicles.

Conclusions. Shifts in alcohol policy from centralised alcohol control system to policy based on school education and treatment is very likely to increase consumption and related consequences.

Key words: alcohol, consumption, availability, treatment, health harm

Streszczenie – Cel. Cel pracy to odpowiedź na pytanie, czy i w jakim zakresie polityka wobec alkoholu wpływała na dostępność ekonomiczną i fizyczną alkoholu, na poziom konsumpcji i konsekwencje picia w ostatnich trzech dekadach w Polsce.

Dobór wskaźników. Przyjęto proste wskaźniki dostępności ekonomicznej (liczba butelek wódki, jaką można kupić za średnie przeciętne wynagrodzenie) i fizycznej (liczba punktów sprzedaży alkoholu).