

## Danes' attitudes towards young people's alcohol habits 2014

Report published by the Danish Cancer Society and TrygFonden, September 2015.

Danish title: "Danskernes holdninger til unges alkoholvaner 2014 – en kortlægning"

### Summary

This report examines the Danes' knowledge of and attitudes towards the alcohol habits of young people in Denmark in 2014. The report is based on data from an online survey carried out among 2,006 Danes aged 15-64. The survey was carried out by the research agency Epinion, and it is nationally representative in terms of gender, age and region. The report has been created by the Danish Cancer Society and TrygFonden's preventative alcohol campaign with the Danish name "Fuld af liv".

### Danes' knowledge of the health impacts of alcohol

The majority of Danes aged 15-64 (91%) agree or completely agree that there is a health risk involved in drinking alcohol and 54% believe that alcohol can increase the risk of cancer. In particular, Danes are aware of the link between alcohol and liver cancer, while the link between alcohol and breast cancer, for example, is less widely known.

### Danes' knowledge of and attitudes towards age restrictions for alcohol purchase in Denmark

62% of Danes aged 15-64 are *unable* to correctly state the age restrictions for the purchase of alcohol in Denmark. The older the respondents, the more unaware they are of the age restrictions. The age limit of 16 years for buying alcohol with a percentage of up to 16.5% from a shop is the least known. Only 57% are aware of this age restriction.

50% of Danes aged 15-64 believe that there should be a minimum age limit of 18 years for purchasing all alcohol, regardless of alcohol percentage, also in shops. The older the respondents, the greater the proportion who support a total minimum age limit of 18 years.

### Danes' knowledge of young people's alcohol habits

Danes aged 15-64 overestimate young people's alcohol consumption, as 48% believe that half or more of young people aged 15-20 drink more than the recommended safe limits outlined by the Danish Health and Medicines Authority. According to figures from the Danish Cancer Society and TrygFonden's preventative alcohol campaign "Fuld af liv", around 20% of Danes aged 15-20 drink more than the recommended safe limits.

### **Danes' attitudes towards young people's alcohol habits**

73% of Danes aged 15-64 believe that young people's consumption of alcohol is too high. This is stated by a higher proportion of women than men. Furthermore, the proportion who believe that young people's alcohol consumption is too high increases in line with the age of the respondent. 87% believe that parents are primarily responsible for the alcohol consumption of young people aged 12-14, and 65% believe that parents are primarily responsible for the alcohol consumption of young people aged 15-17.

### **Parental assessment of their child's alcohol habits**

Among parents of young people aged 11-15, 25% state that their child has drunk a complete unit of alcohol (alcohol debut), while 7% state that their child has been drunk (intoxication debut). Among parents of young people aged 16-17, 97% state that their child has had their alcohol debut and 78% state that their child has had their intoxication debut. 84% of parents of young people aged 11-17, who drink alcohol, estimate that their child's alcohol consumption is appropriate and over half (56%) have no concerns regarding their child's alcohol consumption.

76% of parents of young people aged 11-17 who have had their alcohol debut believe that their child drinks *less* alcohol than other young people of the same age, while none of the parents questioned believe that their child drinks *more* alcohol than other young people of the same age. This indicates that parents have a tendency to underestimate their own child's alcohol consumption, and believe that everyone else's children are the ones who drink heavily.

### **Parental influence on their child's alcohol habits**

85% of parents of a child aged between 11 and 17 experience that they have an influence on their child's alcohol consumption, and the majority (76%) actively try to influence their child to drink less or not to drink.