

Myth Busting on Minimum Pricing – The Facts!

People are drinking more than ever before. As a result of this, people's health and the level of harm experienced in many communities are all increasing.

Minimum pricing has been suggested as a way to increase the price of drinks which are strong but usually very cheap. The idea behind minimum pricing is based on the number of 'units' contained within the drink, the more units it contains (the stronger it is) the more expensive it becomes.

Examples include supermarket own brand whisky, cheap 'white' ciders, usually sold in large plastic bottles. These drinks would be most affected because they are high in strength but sold very cheaply.

So how do you work it out?

At the moment, a 2 litre plastic bottle of cider (15 units) sells for around £3.08. Under a minimum pricing scheme of, say, **45p per unit** it couldn't be sold for less than £6.75.
Work it out - 15 units x 45p = £6.75.

Supermarket whisky sells for between £5 & £8 depending on which supermarket you buy it from. This would become 28 units x 45p = £12.60 as a minimum price.

But I don't want to pay more for my booze

Most people won't pay much more. The drinks being targeted are the cheapest ones which are popular with young people and heavy drinkers.

But won't people on low incomes suffer even more?

People on a low income are even more likely to die or have a long-term illness as a result of drinking too much. **Those drinking small amounts e.g. a bottle of wine a week will notice very little difference in price** – a bottle of wine at 13% (contains 9.7 units) at 45p per unit couldn't be sold for less than £4.36. If the wine was 12% in strength (9 units) it couldn't be sold for less than £4.05 – so the price varies with the strength of drink.

Won't there be even more job losses during this really difficult time?

There is no evidence to support this. The drinks industry might not sell as many drinks but the higher price for some drinks would mean that it would balance out.

Isn't the Government just trying to raise money with a new name for another tax?

Not at all, the Government won't receive a penny from the drinks which go up in price, **this goes straight back to the industry.**

So, who will benefit from minimum pricing?

We are encouraging **everyone** to drink less and improve health, but certainly if heavy drinkers are drinking less, friends and family will notice a positive difference in their lives. If young people are drinking less, they will be less at risk of coming to harm themselves and less likely to disrupt those living in the local area.

*Alcohol is too cheap and too easy to access. We drink too much and too many people die. Reducing drinking will reduce harm. Every year in Scotland the equivalent of **33 double decker buses** of people die from their drinking. At the moment, alcohol problems cost everyone in Scotland **£500 per year**.*

Minimum pricing will benefit us all – it will save millions of pounds in NHS, crime and employment costs.

To find out more: <http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/pdfs/Minimum%20Pricing%20May%202009.pdf>