



The 2008 Alcohol Control Act: paper on shelf or teeth and claw on the ground? Challenges from Thai case study

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Introduction

- Alcohol is attributable to 10% of DALY loss in Thailand, a leading health risk factor in 2009 rising from 8.1% in 2002 and 5.8% in 1999 (BOD Thailand, 2012)
- Prevalence of alcohol drinkers is one-third of Thai adults aged ≥ 15 years, range between 30% and 32.7% (NSO alcohol surveys 2001 – 2011)
- However, in the last decade, proportion of drinkers is increasing in particular women and young adults aged 15-24 years (Thamarangsi, 2013)
- In 2008, Thailand enacted the Alcohol Control Act to strengthen alcohol control policy and ultimately reduce alcohol consumption and related problems

The Alcohol Control Act of 2008

- The national alcohol control committee
- The provincial alcohol control committees
- Alcohol control measures
 - Raising MLPA from 18 to 20 years
 - Prohibiting selling alcohol to intoxicated people
 - Restricting selling alcohol in specific places (temples, schools, healthcare settings, government places, public places, petrol stations, dorms)
 - Restricting drinking alcohol in those places except dorms
 - Prohibiting any price promotions
 - Banning advertising any alcohol products

Objective

- To determine impacts of the alcohol control act in particular **MLPA and restricting selling and drinking places** in Thailand
- Scope of the study
 - Based on the available data on drinking behavior surveys before and after the enactment and the International Alcohol Control study (IAC) Thailand survey

Methods

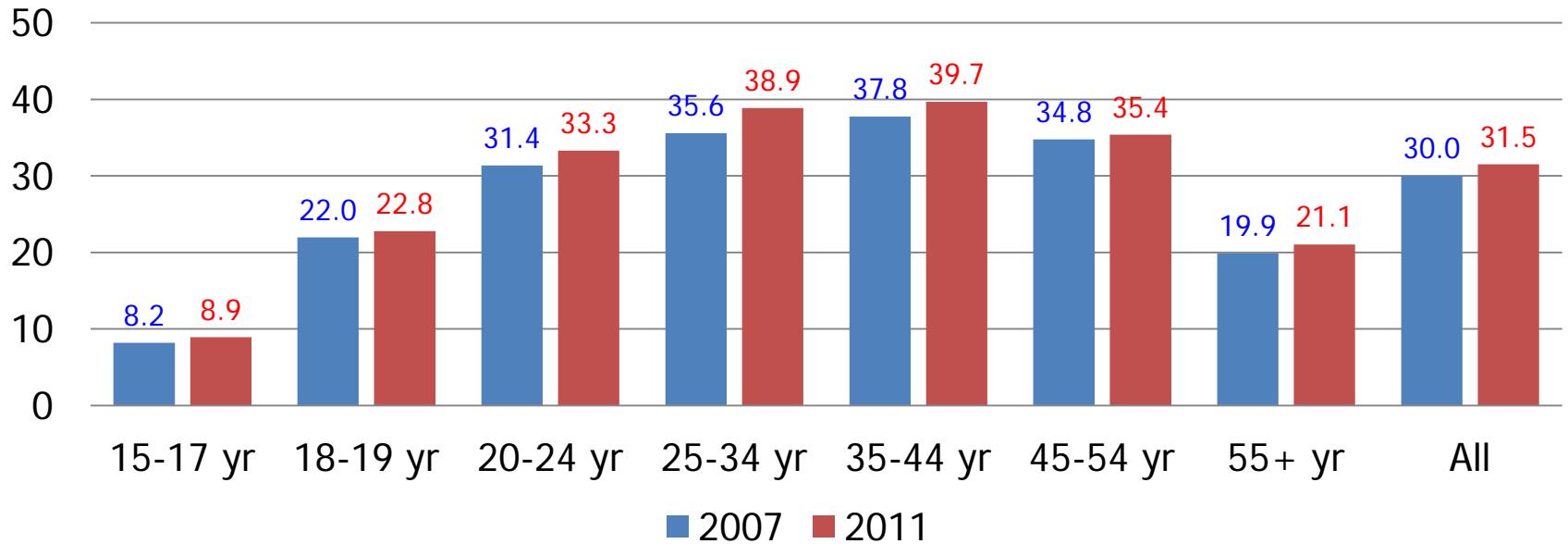
- Cigarette Smoking and Alcohol Drinking survey (CSAD) in 2007 (baseline) and 2011 (after)
 - Administered by National Statistical Office (NSO)
 - A multistage stratified sampling among Thai adults aged ≥ 15 years
 - 2007 with 79,560 households (n=168,285)
 - 2011 with 66,300 households (n=142,235)
 - Measurement
 - Drinker prevalence (underage drinkers)
 - Drinking patterns: weekly and binge drinking
 - Buying alcohol in prohibited selling places
 - Drinking alcohol in prohibited drinking places

Methods (2)

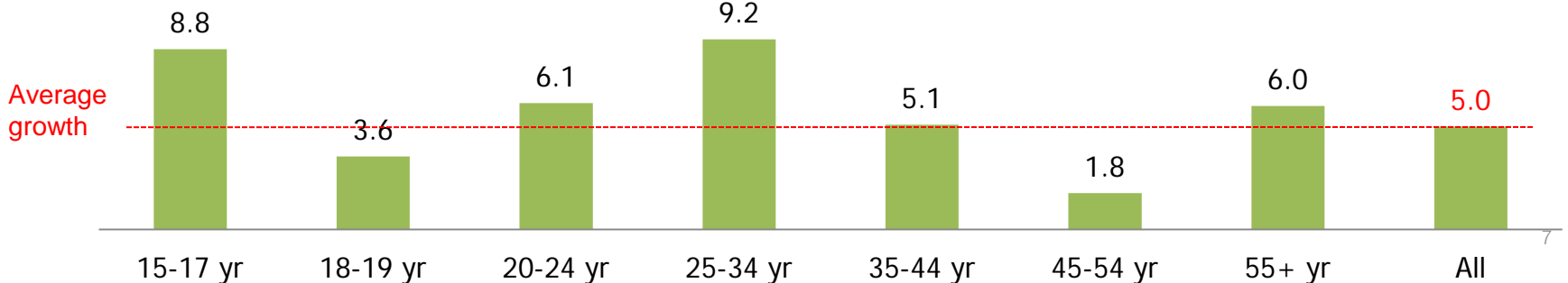
- Alcohol policy research (APR) survey 2009
 - Sub-sample of CSAD2007 (n= 12,375)
 - Measurement: **proportion of (social) free drinks**
- IAC Thailand survey in 2012/2013
 - A multistage stratified cluster sampling among Thai adults aged 15-65 yrs (n=5,817)
 - Measurement
 - **Alcohol supply to underage: commercial and social sources**
- Data analysis
 - Drinking prevalence and patterns were disaggregated by age-groups and sampling weights were applied

Results

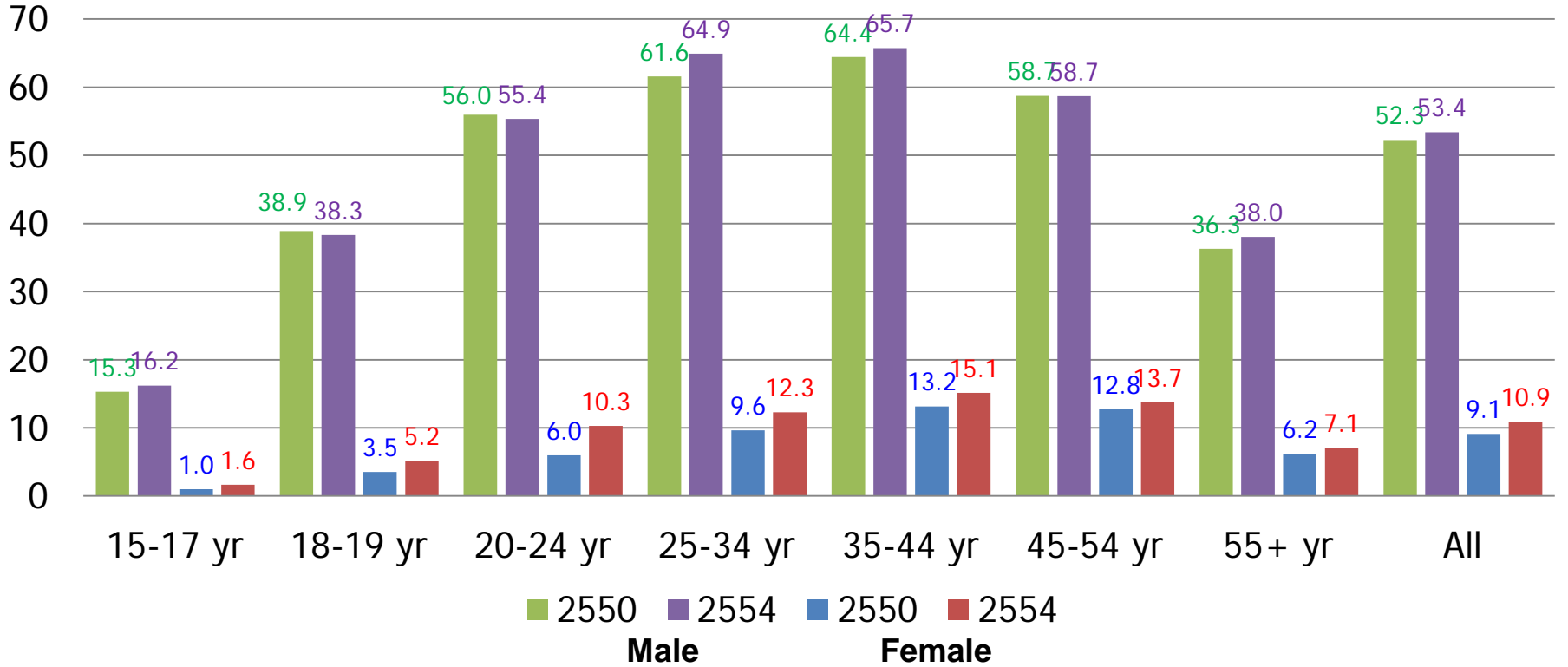
Prevalence of 12-month drinkers (both gender)



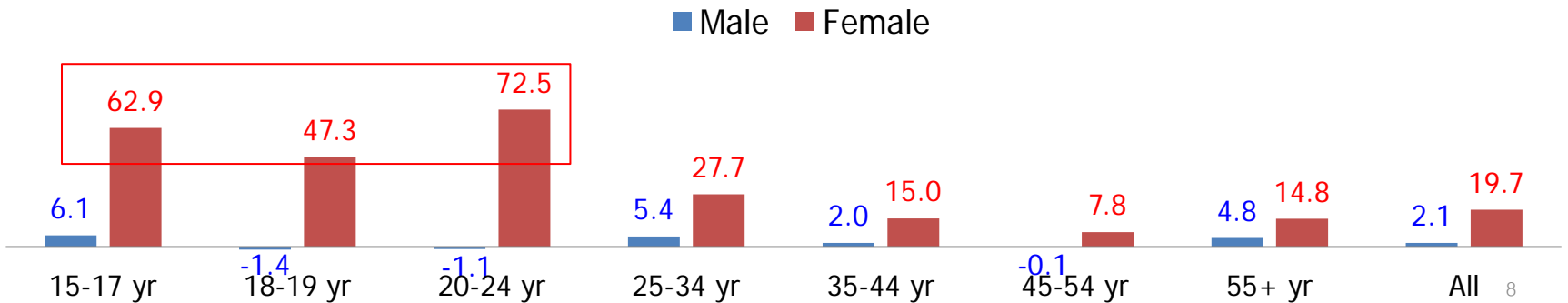
% Change of the prevalence between 2007 and 2011



Prevalence of 12-month drinkers in Males and Females

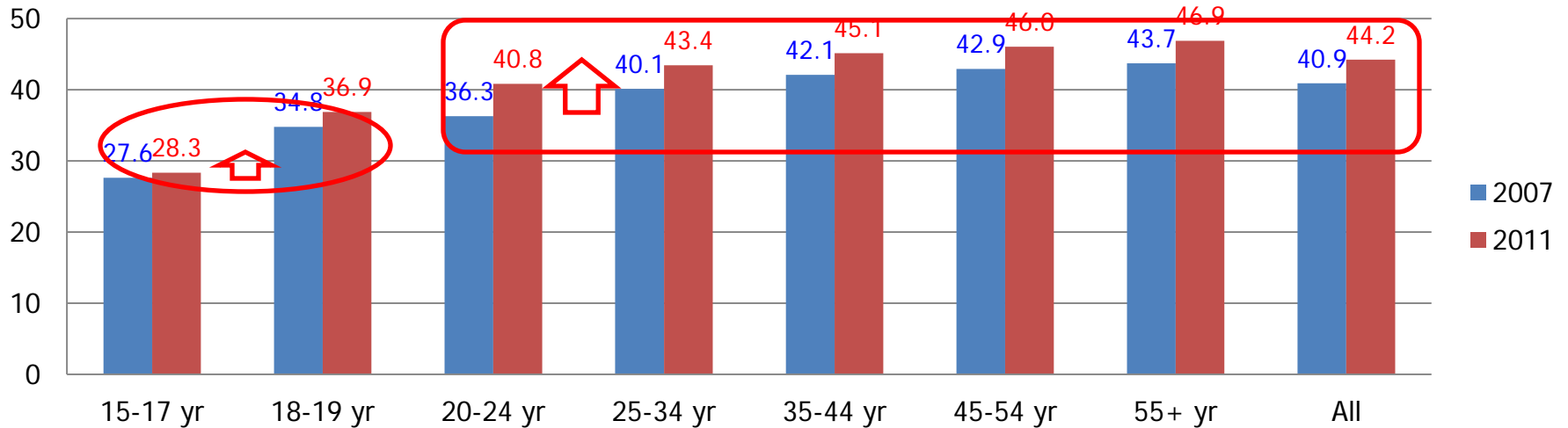


% Change of the prevalence between 2007 and 2011

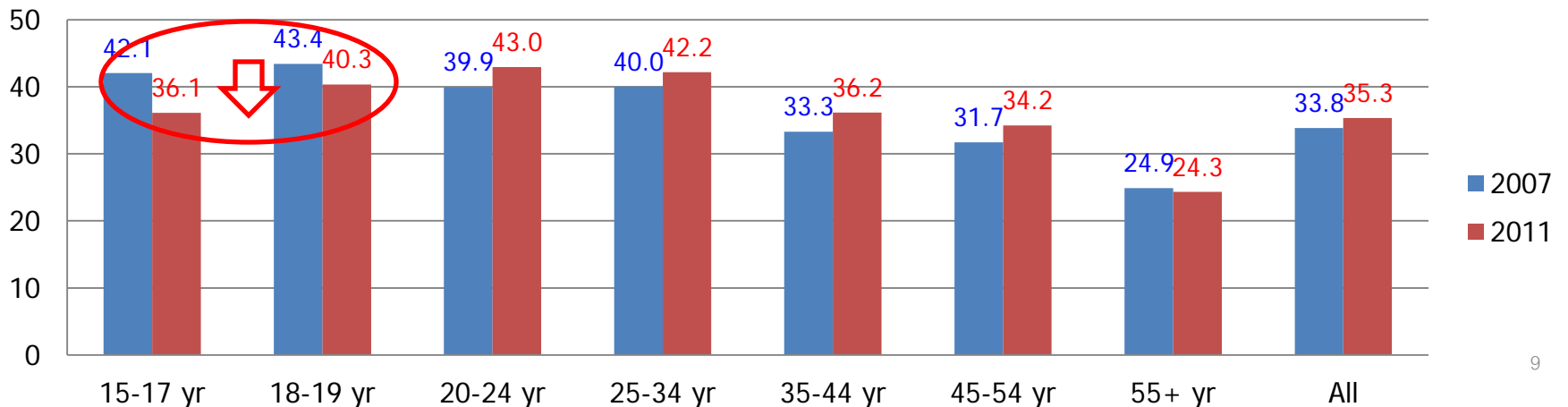


Patterns of drinking

% Weekly drinking among 12-month drinkers



% Binge drinking among 12-month drinkers

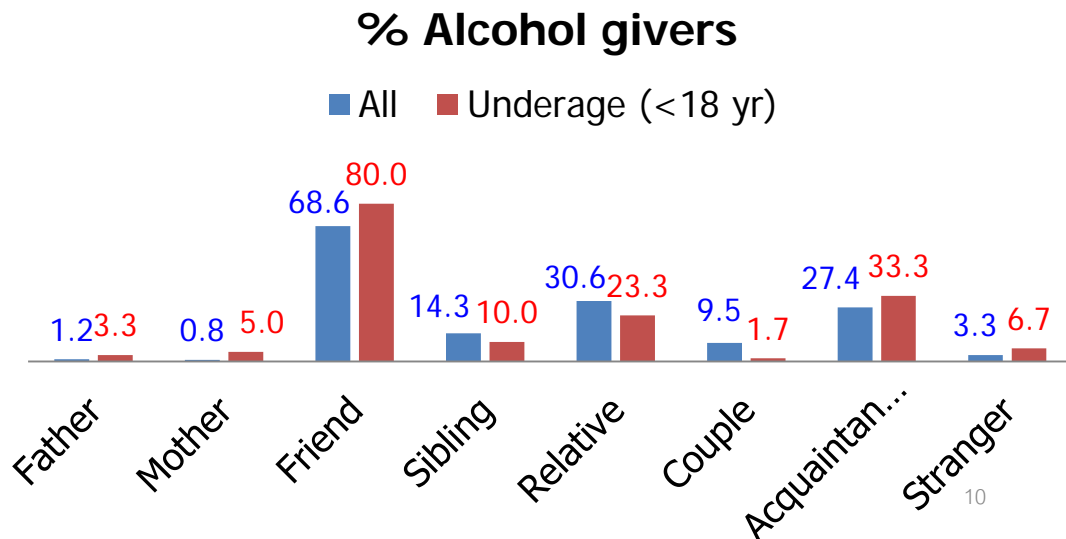
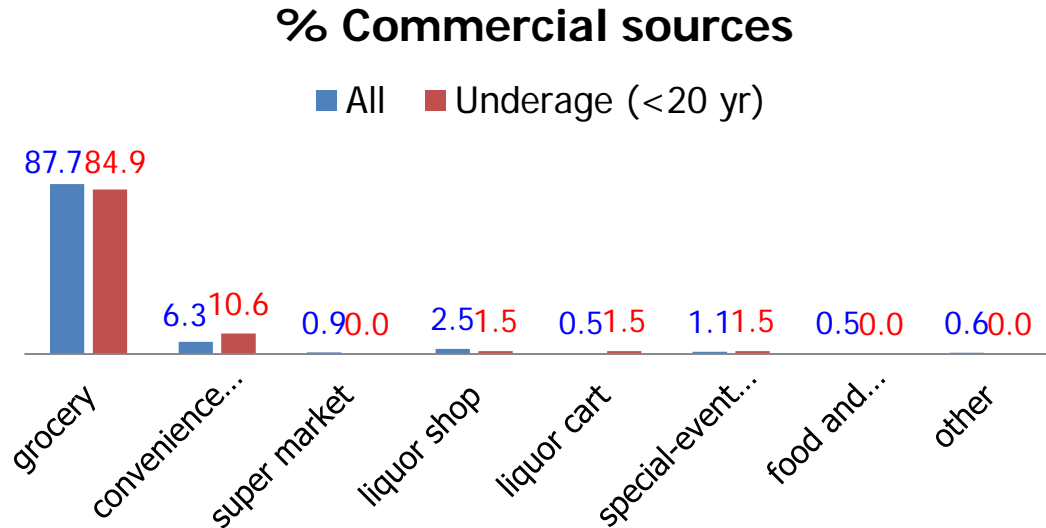


Sources of alcohol to underage

- Source of alcohol
 - Commercial 33.8% and Social 66.2%

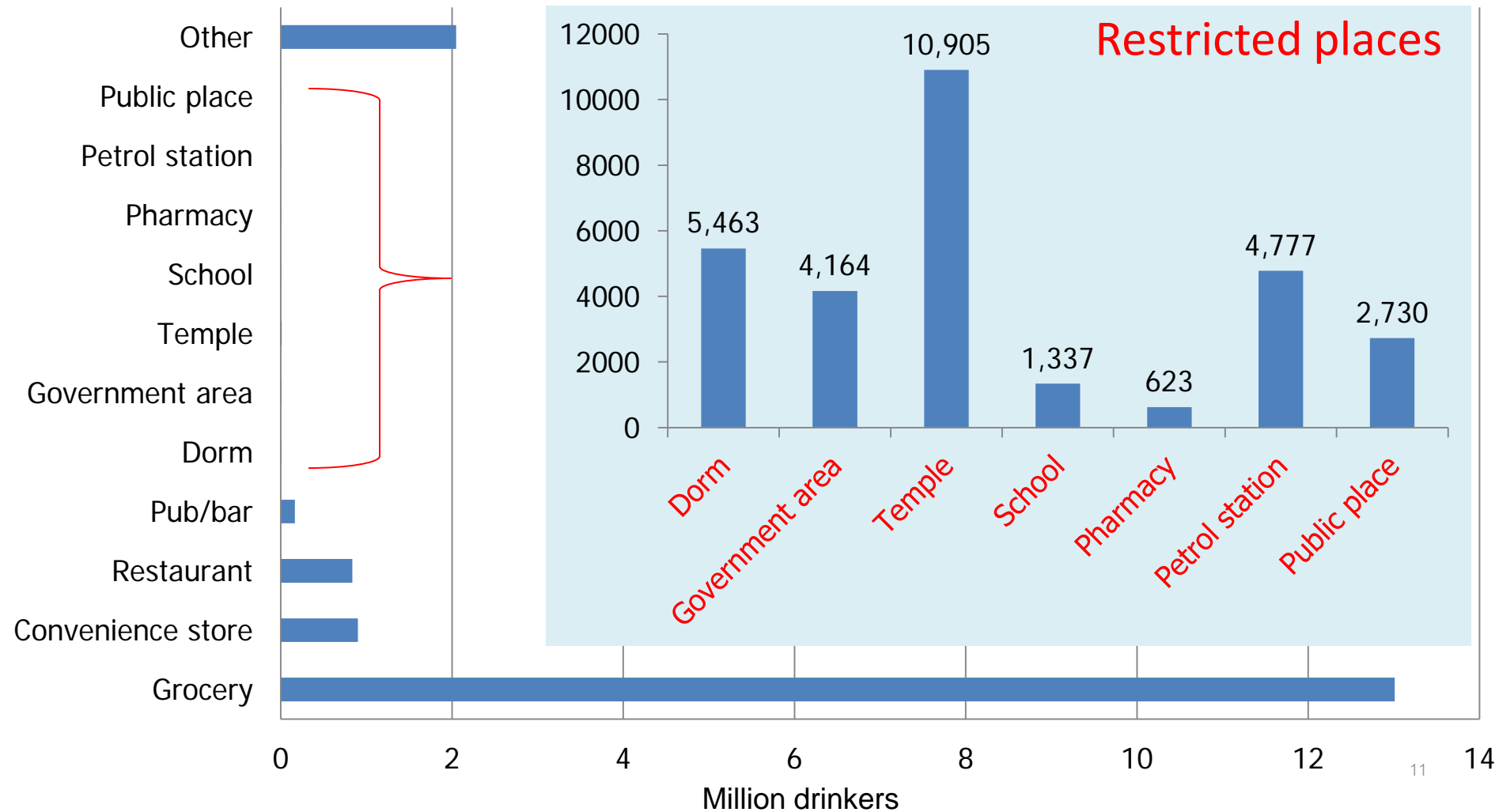
- Sellers of alcohol to underage (<20 yr) (MLPA in Alcohol Control Act of 2007)

- Who socially supply alcohol to underage (<18 yr)? (MLDA in Child Prevention Act of 2003)



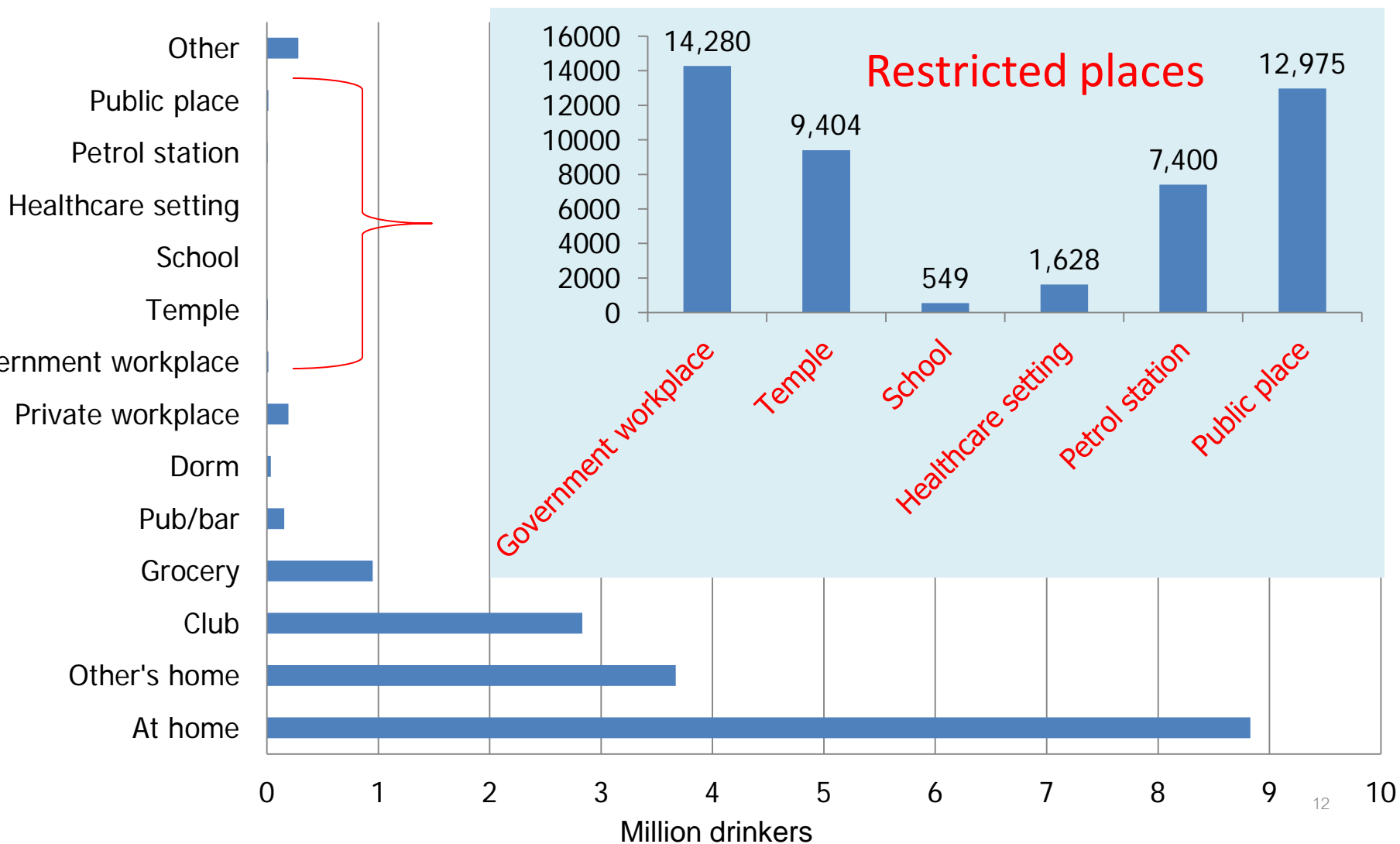
Selling alcohol in restricted areas

No. of drinkers by places their mostly bought alcohol in 2011



Drinking alcohol in restricted areas

No. of drinkers by places their mostly drank alcohol in 2011



Discussion

- Prevalence of underage drinkers increased by 9% among 15-17 yrs, weekly drinking also increased but not on heavy episodic (binge) drinking.
- Prevalence changes by gender:

Percent changes of prevalence, between 2007 and 2011

Age group, yr	Female	Male
15-17	63%	6%
18-19	47%	- 1.4%
20-24	73%	- 1.1%

- Between 2001 and 2011, young adult drinkers increased by 9.7% while female drinkers increased by 11.2% (Thamarangsi, 2013)

Discussion (2)

- Compliance with legal requirement by alcohol sellers is low without legal sanctions, e.g. >95% sold to underage consumers (Puangsuwan et al., 2012; Chaiyasong et al., 2013)
- Underage and youth drinking remains a problem as 66% of alcohol were socially offered, 34% were through commercial outlets
- Moreover, there are a number of people selling and drinking alcohol in restricted places although they are prohibited by law
 - government workplaces, healthcare settings, public places, petrol stations, temples and schools

Limitations and Suggestions

- Although there are several measures in the alcohol control act that can affect physical availability of alcohol, the study focuses on only increasing MLPA and restricting selling and drinking places
- The surveys allow proxy reports; this may be underestimated especially underage drinking
- The study can provide the least estimates of selling and drinking alcohol in restricted places due to lack of questions asking selling and drinking in all places

Conclusion

- Epidemiological trend shows increased prevalence of alcohol drinkers last 12 months among youths, and increased prevalence of weekly drinking though not on bingeing prevalence
- Social offers of alcohol to youths is prevalent, 66% of total sources, while purchase alcohol consists of 34%
- Clear violating regulation on selling and drinking in restricted areas
- Alcohol Control Act is a paper on shelf, it did not exercise its teeth and claw through vigilance, legal and social sanction
- This calls for "Alcohol--every one business"

Policy Recommendations

I. Public awareness

- **Regular vigilance:** underage surrogate consumer purchase, survey of drinking and selling alcohol in restricted places
- **Regular public reporting:** trend of prevalence and profiles of underage drinking, sources of alcohol, its education/health/economic/family consequences; publish sellers violating MLPA

II. Sanctions

- **Legal sanction on violating MLPA:** termination of license, closure of on-premises providers
- **Social campaigns against offering alcohol to youths and underage**

Further Research and Evidence for Policy

- In view of **rapid increases** in drinking prevalence between 2007-2011 **among young Thai female**:
 - 63% in 15-17yr. 47% in 18-19yr, 73% in 20-24yr,
- **better understanding** of
 - the social, economic, educational, peer pressures and other dimensions of drinking initiation,
 - changes in pattern towards regular weekly and binge drinking and harmful consequences of drinking
- Essential not for monitoring but effective device of policy interventions.

Acknowledgement

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Thank you for your attention

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