

**Progress on the South African  
Alcohol Advertising Ban**

**Prof Charles Parry**

*Alcohol & Drug Abuse Research Unit  
South African Medical Research Council*

**[cparry@mrc.ac.za](mailto:cparry@mrc.ac.za)**



**South African Medical Research Council**

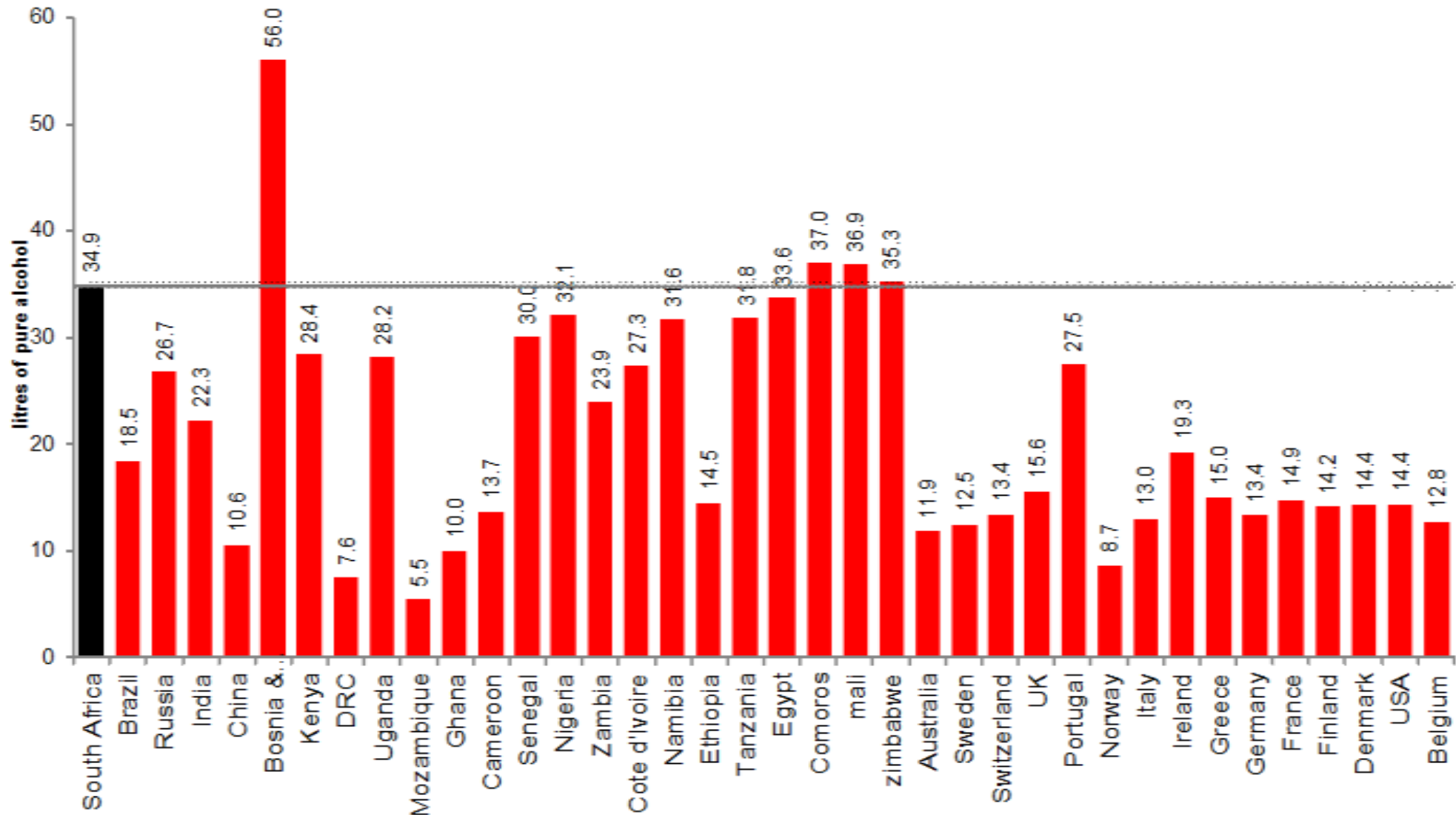
BUILDING A HEALTHY NATION THROUGH RESEARCH

# Outline

Building a healthy nation through research

1. **Drinking and alcohol marketing in SA**
2. **Controls on alcohol advertising in SA**
3. **Chronology of state action to impose a ban on alcohol advertising in SA**
4. **Industry action** opposing an alcohol advertising ban
5. Support for an alcohol advertising ban from **civil society**
6. **Control of Marketing of Alcoholic Beverages Bill**
7. **Going forward - reflections**

# Per capita alcohol consumption per drinker (2003-2005) (high rates of abstinence)



Source: WHO



search

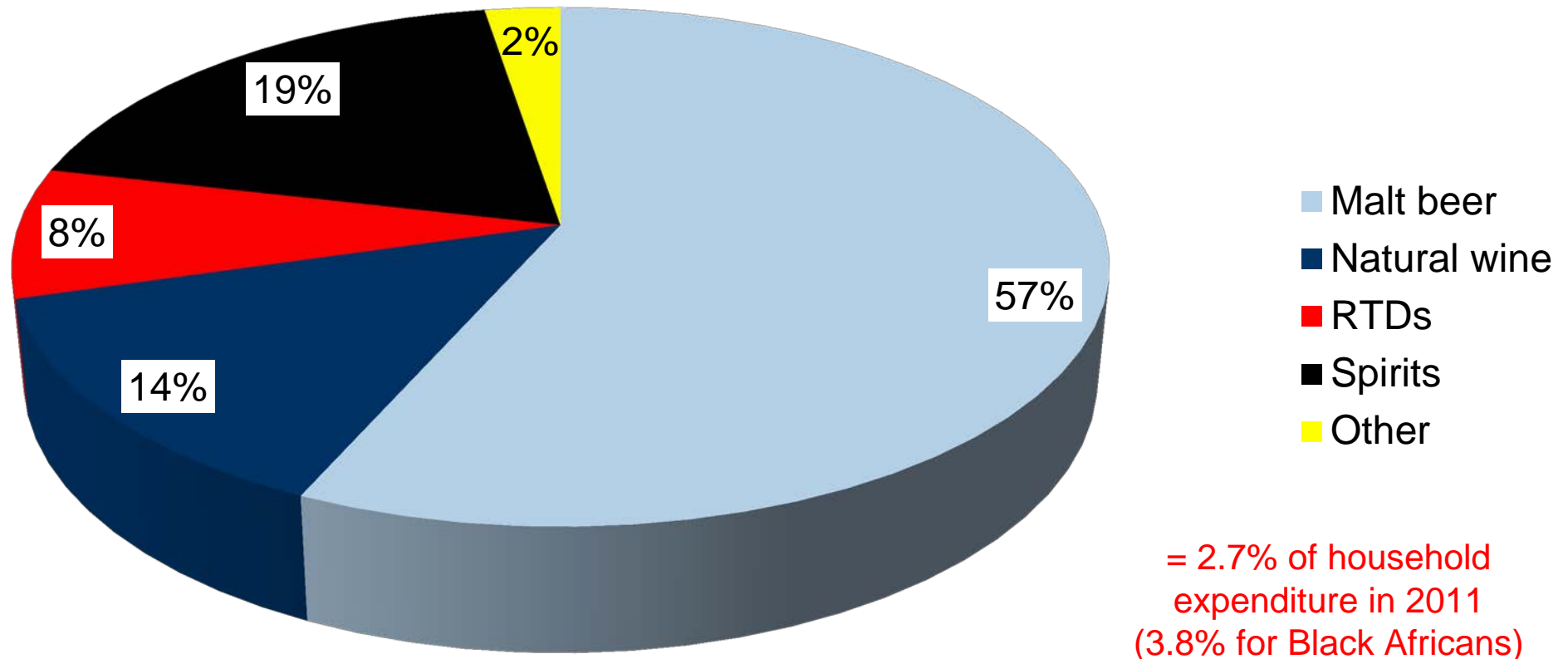
Strangely, SABMiller's Mark Bowman is not impressed with our consumption levels. He wants to increase this further. Bowman says that people on the African continent (excluding South Africa) consume only 8 litres of commercial beer per person per year and he intends to increase this to 30 litres per person per year over the next 20 years.

**April 16, 2012**

# Market share for alcoholic beverages in South Africa, 2012 (AA)

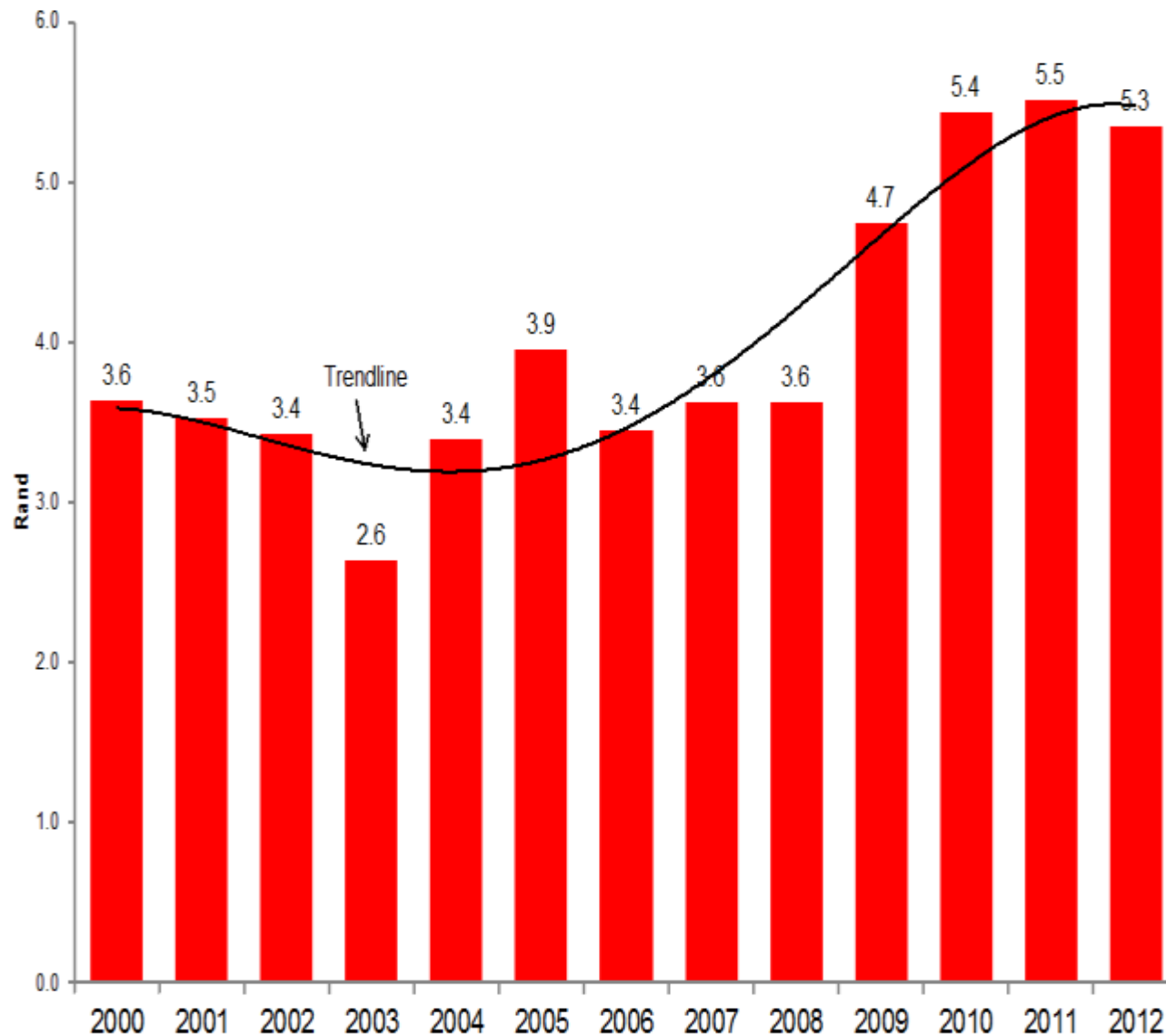
SOUTH AFRICA COUNCIL

Building a healthy nation through research



Excludes commercially & non-commercially produced sorghum beer or other  
Homemade or informally produced products (approx. 26% of the market) – 2/3<sup>rd</sup> unrecorded

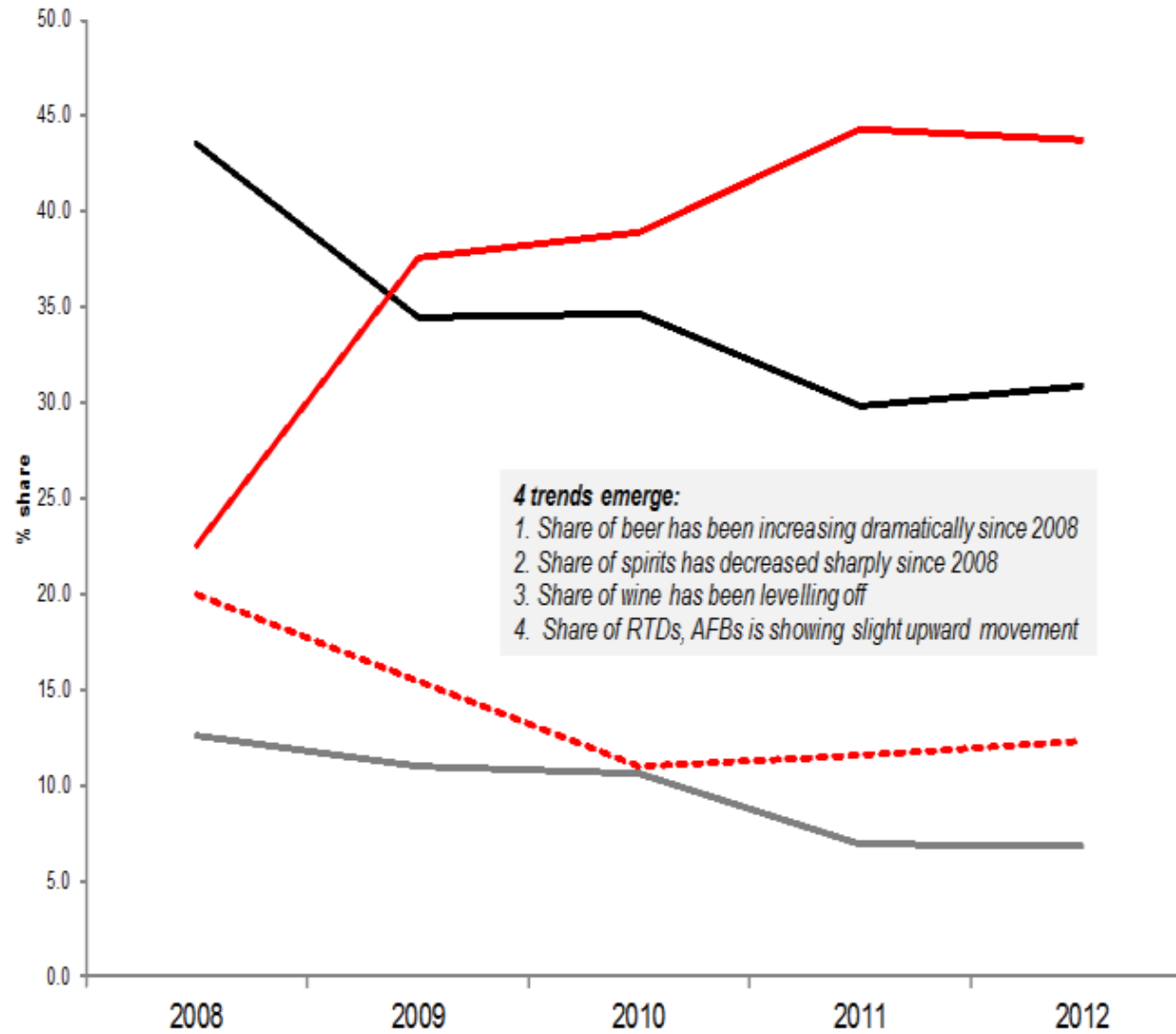
# Share of alcohol adspend in total ATL adspend (Total - R34.2 bn in 201)



Source: Addynamix, AC Nielsen

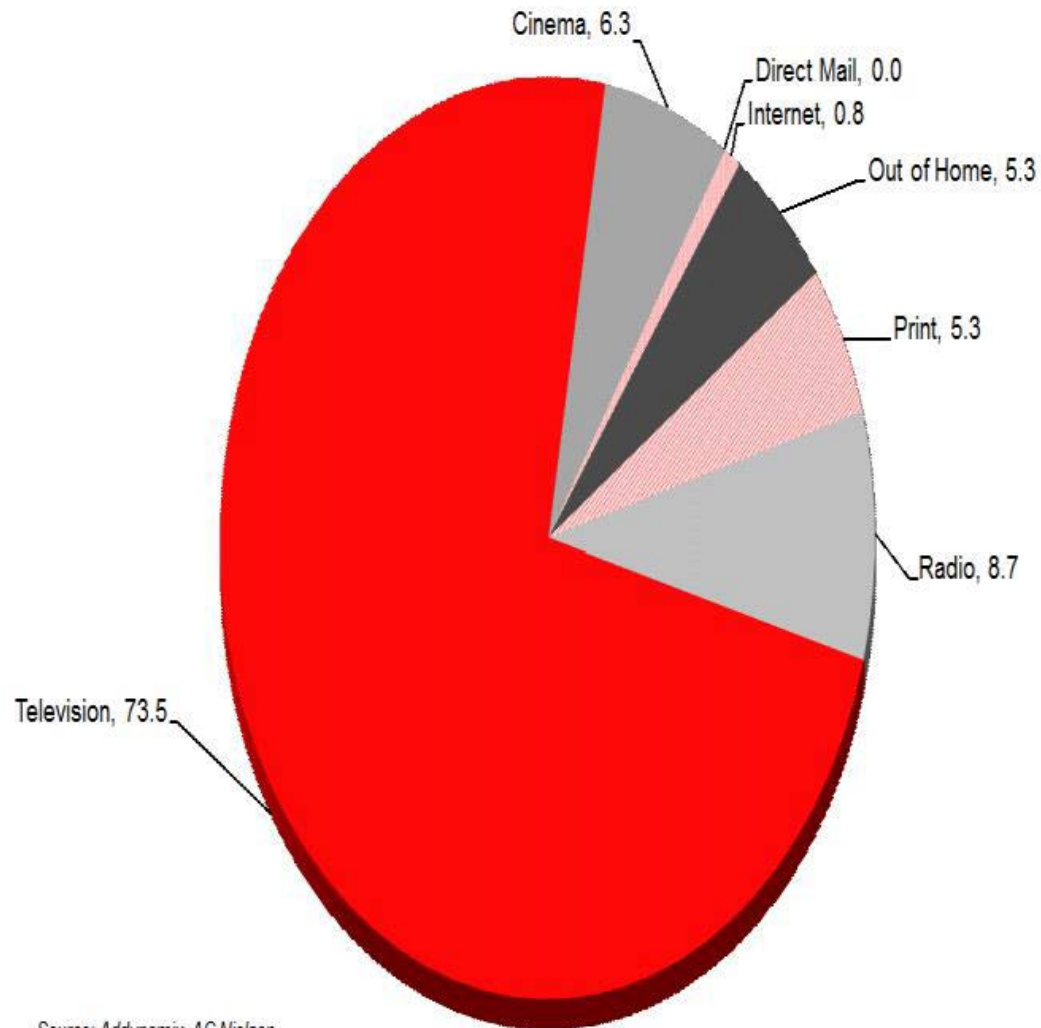
# Share of types of beverages in total alcoholic beverages advertising expenditure

earch



Source: Addynamix, AC Nielsen

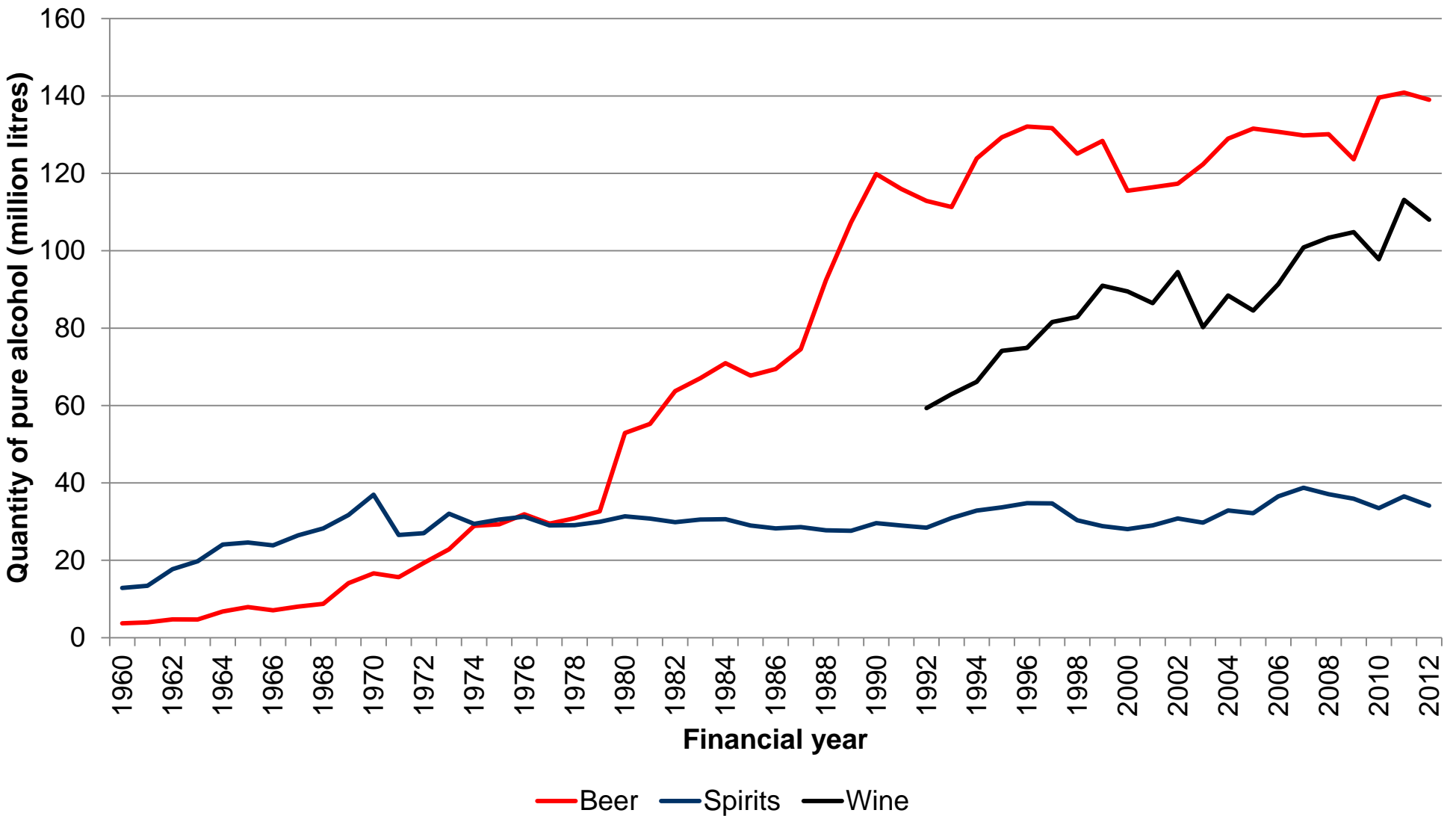
# Share of various media types in total alcoholic beverages ATL advertising expenditure (2012)



Source: Addynamix, AC Nielsen



# Derived quantities of pure alcohol consumed in South Africa, 1960-2012 (UCT Economics)

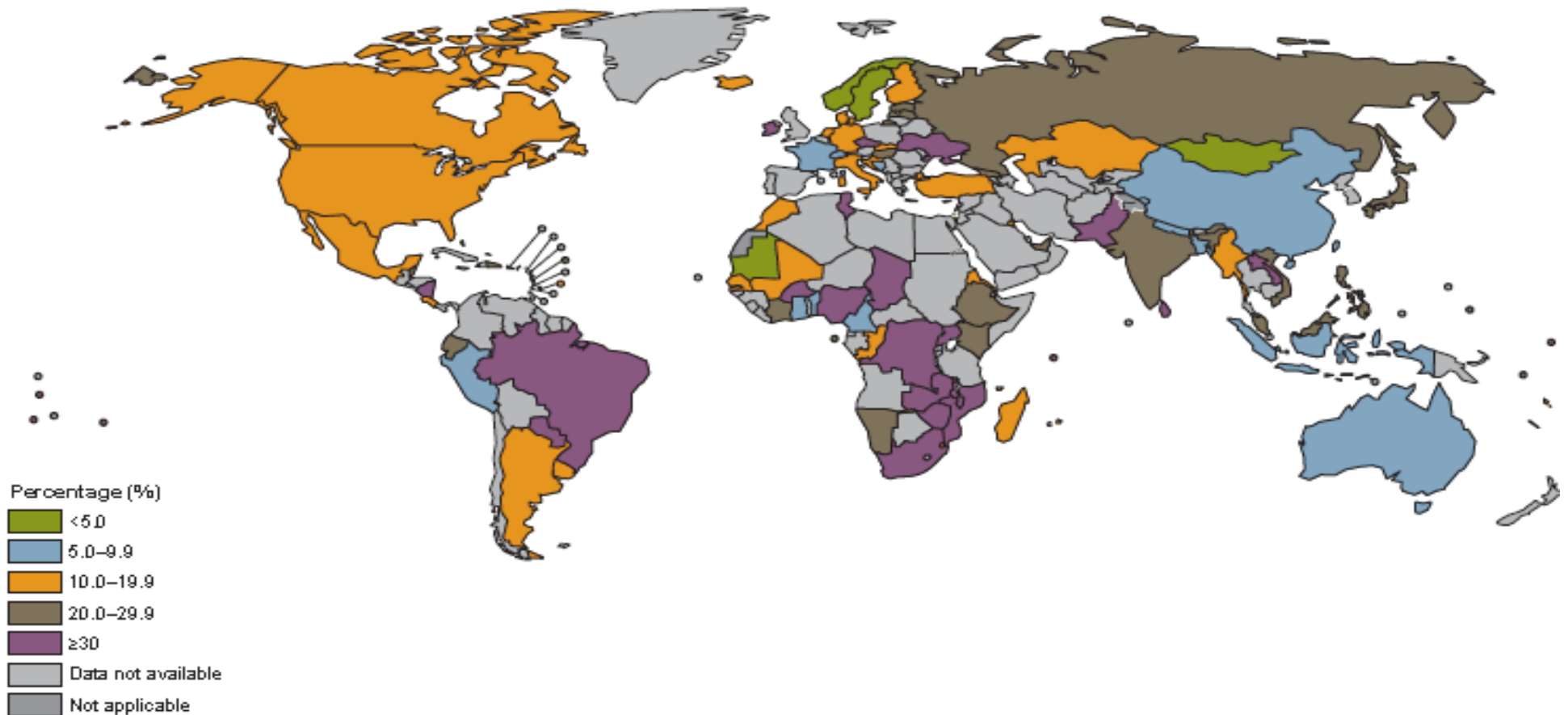


# Background: Drinking in SSA

WHO, 2011

Building a healthy nation through research

Prevalence of heavy episodic drinking among past-year male drinkers, 2004<sup>a</sup>

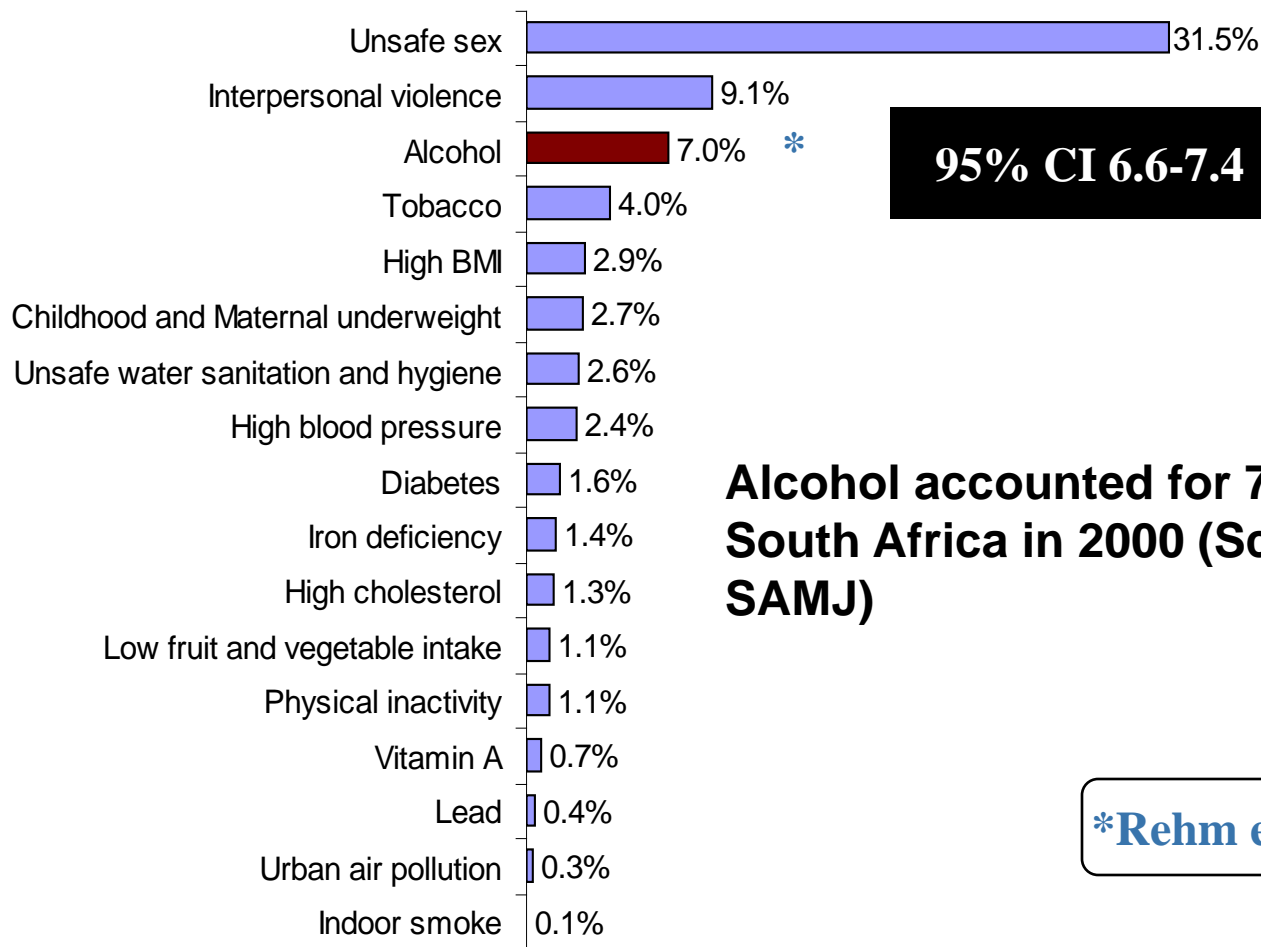


<sup>a</sup> Best estimates for 2004 based on surveys carried out within the time period 1997-2009.

# Is alcohol THAT much of a health problem in SA?



Building a healthy nation through research



**95% CI 6.6-7.4**

**Alcohol accounted for 7% of all DALYs in South Africa in 2000 (Schneider et al., 2007, SAMJ)**

**\*Rehm et al., 2009: 6.3%**

Attributable DALYs (% of 16.2 million)



## Burden attributable to alcohol use in SA in 2004 (Rehm et al.,2009)

Selected condition	DALYS	%
1. Infectious diseases (TB, HIV & AIDS)	415 693	32
2. Intentional injuries	329 652	25
3. Unintentional injuries	211 012	16
4. Neuropsychiatric disorders	157 751	12
5. Cardiovascular diseases	91 228	7
6. Cancer	51 840	4
7. Cirrhosis liver	31 156	2
8. Other	23 511	2
<b>Total all conditions (incl. beneficial effects)</b>	<b>1 311 843</b>	

**Underestimates FAS burden**

## CONTROLS ON ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Building a healthy nation through research

- Advertising permitted on TV, radio, in cinemas & outdoors
- Subject to the Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use (ARA) code
  - specifies that adverts may not be transmitted in commercial breaks immediately before/during/immediately after children's programmes
- Code prohibits a range of activities
  - appeal to young people
  - inclusion of youth under-25 drinking alcohol
  - special promotion of higher alcohol content beverages
  - promotion of aggressive or anti-social behaviour
  - promoting the alcohol strength of the beverage as the principal subject of the label

# ARA Code of Commercial Communication of Alcoholic Beverages

## -- additional media rules (for example)

Building a healthy nation through research

- Advertisements will not be placed in any medium aimed specifically at children
- **TV**
  - Programmes with a verifiable 30% or more viewership of persons under the age of 18 may not contain alcohol beverage advertisements
  - Alcohol beverage advertisements may not be flighted between 14h00 and 17h00 on Monday to Friday
  - Alcohol beverage advertisements may not be flighted before 12h00 on Saturday and Sunday
  - In the case of sporting events where the main sponsor is an alcohol beverage company, the 70/30 rule outlined above will still apply
- **Radio**
  - 70/30 rule will apply.
  - No alcohol beverage advertisements will be broadcast between 06h00 and 09h00 and between 14h00 and 17h00 Mondays to Fridays and between 08h00 and 12h00 on weekends
- **Outdoor**
  - No billboards advertising an alcohol beverage brand or product will be placed within 200 meters of schools, community centres and churches



# GROOTMAN OF LAATIE?

VRA VIR DIE VOLLE 750ml.



Geniet Verantwoordelik. Nie te Koop aan Persone Jonger as 18 Nie.

OUTDOOR  
NETWORK



# Content analysis of television food advertisements aimed at adults and children in South Africa

Zandile J Mchiza<sup>1,\*</sup>, Norman J Temple<sup>2</sup>, Nelia P Steyn<sup>3</sup>, Zulfa Abrahams<sup>3</sup> and Mario Clayford<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Chronic Diseases of Lifestyle Unit, South African Medical Research Council, PO Box 19070, Cape Town, South Africa; <sup>2</sup>Centre for Science, Athabasca University, Athabasca, Alberta, Canada; <sup>3</sup>Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation, Human Sciences Research Council, Cape Town, South Africa

Submitted 3 August 2012; Final revision received 21 May 2013; Accepted 29 May 2013

## Abstract

*Objective:* To determine the frequency and content of food-related television (TV) advertisements shown on South African TV.

*Design:* Four national TV channels were recorded between 15.00 and 21.00 hours (6h each day, for seven consecutive days, over a 4-week period) to: (i) determine the number of food-related TV advertisements; and (ii) evaluate the content and approach used by advertisers to market their products. The data were viewed by two of the researchers and coded according to time slots, food categories, food products, health claims and presentation.

*Results:* Of the 1512 recorded TV advertisements, 665 (44%) were related to food. Of these, 63% were for food products, 21% for alcohol, 2% for multivitamins, 1% for slimming products and 13% for supermarket and pharmacy promotions. Nearly 50% of food advertisements appeared during family viewing time. During this time the most frequent advertisements were for desserts and sweets, fast foods, hot beverages, starchy foods and sweetened drinks. The majority of the alcohol advertisements (ninety-three advertisements, 67%) fell within the children and family viewing periods and were endorsed by celebrities. Health claims were made in 11% of the advertisements. The most frequently used benefits claimed were 'enhances well-being', 'improves performance', 'boosts energy', 'strengthens the immune system' and 'is nutritionally balanced'.

*Conclusions:* The majority of food advertisements shown to both children and adults do not foster good health despite the health claims made. The fact that alcohol advertisements are shown during times when children watch TV needs to be addressed.



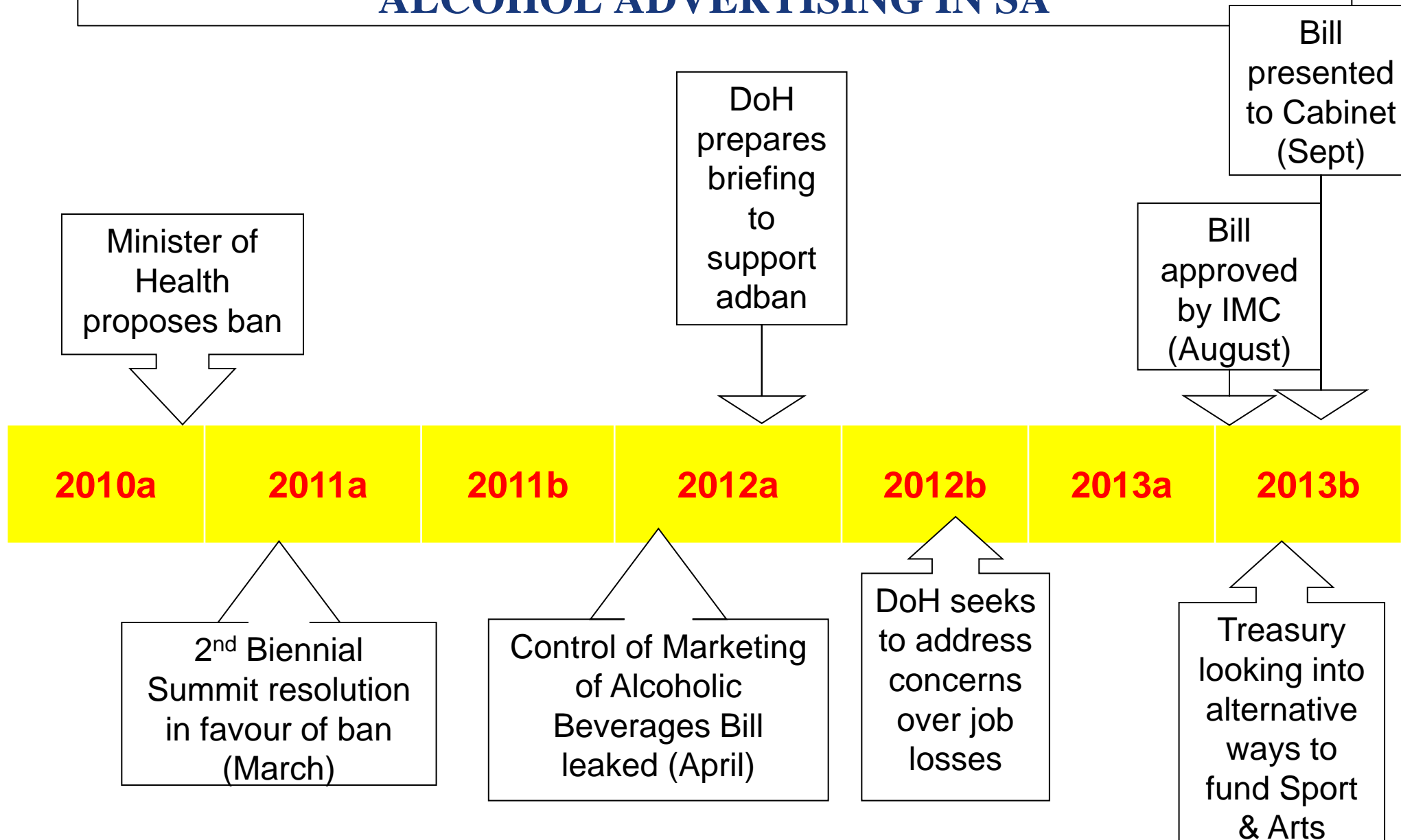
ch

**Keywords**  
Television viewing  
Food-related adverts  
Health claims  
South African television



## Section 2

# CHRONOLOGY OF STATE ACTION TO IMPOSE A BAN ON ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN SA



## 35 Resolutions



**21. Immediate implementation of current laws and regulations that permit the restriction of the time, location and content of advertising related to alcohol and in the medium term banning of all advertising of alcoholic products in public and private media, including electronic media**

**The short term intervention will include measures that will ensure that alcohol will not be marketed at times and locations where young people may be influenced and the content of the advertising should not portray alcohol as a product associated with sport, and social and economic status**

**22. Banning on all sponsorship by the alcohol industry for sports, recreation, arts and cultural and related events**

## What is government thinking?

SOUTH

The Department believes that advertising leads to increased consumption, and that people respond to alcohol ads, and not just the brand. This results in increased alcohol consumption – and therefore increased alcohol harm. Advertising starts people drinking at younger ages, as adverts make the product seem attractive and glamorous. From an ethical point of view – it is wrong to allow products to be promoted and advertised, as if they do not cause any harm - this is unethical.

So should we allow *the promotion and marketing* of a product that we know is insidious? Moreover, a select number of people will have little option but to drink to dangerous levels due to addiction to the product. The industry will say that it is not the drink, but the drinker that is dangerous; we think that, because of the nature of the product, it is both! Alcohol is no ordinary commodity and therefore needs different approaches.

h



### Econometrix Report (2013) p. 109

The alcohol and advertising industries on the other hand would want us to ignore best practice and evidence garnered from local and international experts and have us focus on the one area that has been shown in research to be the least effective, that is, public education.

Public education and awareness campaigns are only successful if accompanied by legislative measures such as the restriction of advertising and increasing the price of alcohol. We intend to implement all these measures and not just one or two.



Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini.



- **August 2013 the Draft Control of Marketing of Alcoholic Beverages Bill approved by Inter-ministerial Substance Abuse Committee (comprised 12 Ministries, chaired by Social Development)**
  - **Government cannot ignore harms any longer (economic costs, road deaths, crime & violence)**
  - **Industry efforts to curb harms not working**



## Section 3

# ACTION BY INDUSTRY AND RELATED (?) OTHERS OPPOSING AN ALCOHOL ADVERTISING BAN

## Heading for a nanny state?

April 18 2012 at 08:29am

South Africans do not know what is good for them, our health authorities believe. Having just engaged in a protracted war on smoking, officials are now taking on liquor advertising, and readying for the next battle: your diet.

Our government should look at stricter control of liquor advertising and other measures in its arsenal, rather than trying to regulate behaviour and bludgeon enterprise.

Opinion: Grist for the marketing mill

## Curbing alcohol abuse by banning ads is like trying to cure Aids with beetroot

By: Chris Moerdyk: @chrismoerdyk

3 May 2011 11:13  2 comments  BizLike

The next month or so will see media, sponsorship, advertising and marketing companies assessing the financial impact of a ban on alcohol advertising. The SABC has been the first to have the courage to stand up and be counted by telling Parliament that it will lose R400 million a year.



Chris Moerdyk's profile and articles

Build

# BUSINESSREPORT

## Drinks makers oppose ad ban

April 17 2012 at 05:00am

By Ann Crotty

## Banned booze ads will only affect the economy - badly

20 JUN 2013 10:09 | STAFF REPORTER

Opinion: Grist for the marketing mill

## Advertising lessons from apartheid and the Nazis

By: Chris Moerdyk: @chrismoerdyk

17 May 2011 12:02  2 comments  BizLike

The one thing that society should have learnt from apartheid, the Nazis and other failed coprocracies\* is that banning things is a simple, often politically correct procedure that initially appeases the masses but which ultimately leads to political self-destruction. Throughout history, despotic governments have tried to main social equanimity by banning all sorts of things, including books, liquor, movies and in the case of the early days of apartheid - television.



Chris Moerdyk's profile and articles

Show next

▼ more options

# Jobs Battle Brewing As Booze Ads Ban Looms

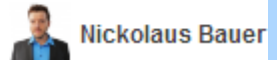
Donwald Pressly, The Star Business Report, 6 July 2011

# The Star



## Banning alcohol advertising not the answer - experts

South Africa | Sunday 14 July 2013 - 6:14am



### Benefits of ban on liquor advertising dubious at best

The Times Editorial | 12 June, 2013 00:34

# City Press



### Aaron Motsoaledi: Nanny from hell

Dave Steward  
27 August 2013

Dave Steward on the state's increasing intrusion into the private lives of citizens

PRIVATE L **politicsweb** TIES

Scientific opinion on these issues is not uniform and it creates an opportunity for both sides to be selective in the evidence they employ to advance their positions.

This tendency is worrying if evident among those who peddle their doctrines from disarmingly respectable academic positions. And this explains why industry critics who adopt this prohibitionist approach are opposed to engaging with the liquor industry.



- Tshepo Matsepe, co-owner of advertising company Kena Media, spearheaded opposition to adban
- He organised a petition against the ban garnering over 9300 signatures to submit to Parliament

*Open Letter to  
Soul City / PhuzaWise  
Management*

**RE: PROPOSED ALCOHOL  
ADVERTISING BAN**

During our engagement with yourselves we noted your total disregard for the potential loss of employment and business opportunities in the advertising sector.

**Allow me to remind your organization that:**

1. The advertising sector is made up of hard working entrepreneurs who earn their living through honest labour.
2. We earn our keep. The bread on our tables is earned through the sweat of our brows.
3. You, on the other hand, earn your living by adopting projects that appeal to compassionate donors. You then go around lobbying donor funds for your advocacy work. As career donor seekers, your work ethic is of questionable merit.
4. You continue to vilify our industry by creating the false impression that our industry is responsible for the high levels of alcohol abuse in parts of our society. Your suggested solution to this challenge is a total ban on all forms of liquor advertising. This will not go unchallenged.
5. It is an open secret that your real interest in the alcohol advertising debate is the amount of donor funds you can secure by positioning yourselves as "the good guys".
6. You can rest assured that your relentless attempts to influence government on alcohol advertising policy will not succeed as our government is able to think for itself.
7. You need to be aware that South Africans have decided to roll up their sleeves and work for their own development. In this regard, we have decided to do away with NGOs of your ilk that commercialise our plight by converting our developmental challenges into donor fund fodder.
8. We want to run our own companies, to employ our brothers and sisters in our communities but your attempt to ban liquor ads will prevent us from doing so. I suggest you find more admirable ways of attracting donor funds instead of vilifying the advertising industry.

Regards

**Tshepo Matsepe**





...ation through research

LIQUOR AND ADVERTISING –  
WOULD A BAN HELP REDUCE ABUSE?  
And are there unintended consequences?

**The 2013 Econometrix  
Report**



# Selected argument from liquor industry & others against a ban (1)

Building a healthy nation through research

- **No clear evidence of a link between alcohol advertising and consumption**
- **Re youth drinking –parental education, poverty, unemployed are more NB**
- **Various effects of alcohol advertising ban:**
  - **Harm to the economy (job losses, black economic empowerment):**
    - **R4.39 bn loss to economy – with broadcasting industry, sporting bodies, advertising agencies, printing, publishing & related manufacturing sectors (e.g. billboard manufacturers) esp. affected**
    - **R7.412 bn impact on GDP (0.28%)**
    - **11 954 jobs will be lost**
  - **Losses in personal freedoms & consumers' ability to make informed choices**
  - **Consumers will pay more**
  - **Will hurt Sports (including development & transformation in sport) & also the Arts (esp. music)**
  - **Existing big brands will benefit (will hurt new entrants) – anti competition**
  - **Will promote illicit liquor market**
  - **Will not address harms**

## Selected argument from liquor industry & others against a ban (2)

Building a healthy nation through research

- People buy drugs yet there is no overt advert advertising
- Some countries (e.g. Canada, Denmark, New Zealand) have recently recinded their ad bans

---

- In some countries (e.g. New Zealand) alcohol advertising is increasing yet consumption is declining
- 60% of South Africans don't drink despite advertising, so advertising can't be that powerful (Adrian Botha, ARA)
- Cannot learn from tobacco advertising ban – in particular, no burgeoning cell phone industry to take up the space adspace
- “Proven approaches [to addressing alcohol problems] include improved education, good enforcement and strong self-regulation” (Adrian Botha, ARA)
- SAB believes focus should be only on drinking patterns associated with harm [**individual focus**]
- Intervention will not stop with tobacco & alcohol, will be a slippery slope

NEWSPAPER: THE NEW PAPER  
DATE: 06 SEPTEMBER 2013  
AUTH: ADRIAN BOTHA

# No quick fix to alcohol abuse

## Advertising ban simply not enough to combat the scourge of alcohol abuse in the country, as stats show

I FULLY acknowledge that alcohol misuse and abuse is a problem in South Africa and my industry has for more than 24 years striven to reduce alcohol-related harm by combating abuse and promoting only the responsible use of alcohol beverages by those who choose to drink and who are not at risk.

Alcohol abuse is a multifaceted problem to which there is no "silver bullet" solution and it is not helpful to propagate the idea that a simple advertising ban will solve the problem.

Firstly, the World Health Organisation's (WHO's) global strategy does not suggest an advertising ban, as is often claimed by certain government representatives, NGOs and academics, but simply talks about regulating marketing so the South African government would be out of step with the WHO if it chooses this option.

Secondly, there is never any mention by the same government representatives, NGOs and academics of studies that show that advertising has little impact on youth drinking, on abuse and even on overall consumption. Obviously these studies are ignored because they don't fit in with certain objectives.

Thirdly, there is an admission that abstinence in South Africa is high (the WHO figure I have is 65.2% lifetime abstainers) and I have to ask the simple question: if advertising is so powerful that it can make people drink why do so many in this country, all of whom are exposed to the same advertising, choose not to do so?

Fourthly, the examples of France, Norway and Sweden as countries that have "success-



### Analysis

ADRIAN BOTHA

#### KEY POINTS

- Alcohol abuse is a multifaceted problem to which there is no 'silver bullet' solution
- The World Health Organisation's (WHO's) global strategy does not suggest an advertising ban
- If advertising is so powerful that it can make people drink, why do so many in this country, all of whom are exposed to the same advertising, choose not to do so?
- A study by Econometrix in June this year showed that there was no statistical relationship between advertising expenditure and the consumption of alcohol in SA
- The government and industry should rather commit to developing, implementing and supporting a broad array of targeted intervention programmes to achieve substantial reductions in irresponsible consumption

fully" restricted advertising are often provided and I find this ironic as Scandinavia is widely regarded as an area of problematic drinking (even by WHO), and a 1999 report by the French parliament evaluating the effectiveness of France's advertising ban (Loi Evin), concluded that no effect on alcohol consumption could be established and that it had been "ineffective" in reducing high risk drinking patterns.

In addition, on May 31 last year, the European School Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) released the 2011 ESPAD report on substance use among students in 36 European countries.

Of particular interest are the following quotes from the study which certainly appear to confirm the lack of impact of the Loi Evin: "An increase in the proportion of students who had consumed alcohol at least 20 times during the past 12 months was reported between 2007 and 2011; Cyprus (from 16% to 20%), France (from 20% to 24%) and Monaco (from 12% to 24%)."

"At the same time, however, an increase in consumption was reported by students in Cyprus, France, Hungary and Montenegro between 2007 and 2011."

Fifthly, claims are often made that the ban on tobacco advertising has been a success in reducing smoking but I must point out that in the recently published study into youth in Gauteng by the Bureau for Marketing Research at Unisa, it was found that smoking had increased among school pupils and particularly among girls.

Claims are also made by certain government ministers that, after the tobacco ban, job losses did not materialise and that employment and sponsorships would therefore not be impacted should a similar course be followed on alcoholic beverages. The facts are, however, that tobacco advertising and sponsorships were far smaller and occurred at the time of the introduction of cellphones with the two major operators desperate to get their prod-

ucts known and completely filling the gap.

This is no longer the case and, for example, Cricket SA was recently unable to find sponsors for two of the game's formats and the courageous men's hockey team who fought so hard to qualify for the Olympics struggled to find support.

To simply believe that there will be others waiting in line to take over the sports and cultural sponsorships of the liquor industry is naive in the extreme.

Research released by Econometrix in June this year showed that there was no statistical relationship between advertising expenditure and the consumption of alcohol in South Africa. Qualitative and quantitative research showed that policy efforts to reduce per capita alcohol consumption levels by means of regulating or banning liquor advertising may prove ineffective, and should this course of action be pursued, the results could be a severe negative impact on the economy.

The total annual impact (including the multiplier impact) is estimated at R7.412bn in 2011 prices or a 0.28% GDP reduction, the total impact on employment is estimated at 11954 jobs and total tax income will decrease by R1.783bn.

The government and industry should rather commit to developing, implementing and supporting a broad array of targeted intervention programmes to achieve substantial reductions in irresponsible consumption and a substantial improvement in public health.

Adrian Botha director of the Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use



healthy nation through research

## National

# Alcohol ban will hurt economy, says Sacci

26 AUG 2013 18:14 | SAPA

Recommend 60 Tweet 60 Share 0



Restricting marketing of liquor will have a negative effect on the industry and the economy, says the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Opinion & Analysis / Columnists



## Throw off our nappies and rein in all those nannies

BY LEON LOUW, 11 SEPTEMBER 2013, 05:30

## Booze ad ban: SA will lose out on R5.7bn

Sep 16 2013 23:33 Sapa

Recommend 63 0

Cape Town - A proposed ban on alcohol advertising will result in a loss of R4.3bn for sports development and cost the broadcast media R1.4bn, said the Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use.



## Booze ad ban could backfire

August 21 2013 at 02:46pm

By Fred Jacobs

Related Stories

- ➔ [Booze ad misconception](#)
- ➔ [Cape backs down on booze by-law](#)
- ➔ ['Where smoking went, booze will follow'](#)

**In dealing with liquor, it is necessary to learn from the mistakes made in the war on smoking, says Fred Jacobs.**



## Section 3

# SUPPORT FOR AN ALCOHOL ADVERTISING BAN FROM CIVIL SOCIETY

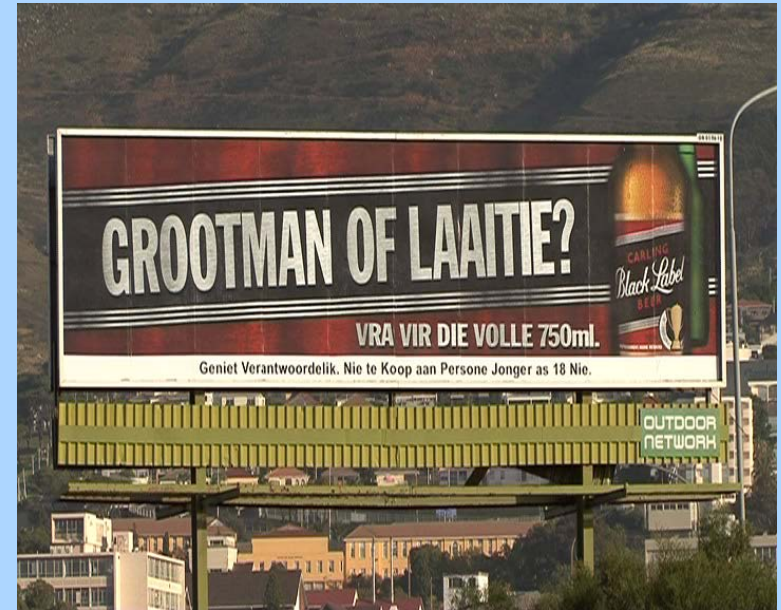


The South African Health News Service

Home Cancer & Tobacco Control OurHealth

## SAB forced to pull beer ad

by Health-E on June 11, 2010 in Alcohol, Tobacco & Drugs, Public Health & Health Systems



**iOL** news

iOL Home

Crime & Courts

Politics

South Africa

Africa

World

Opinion

Back Page

Speci

Western Cape

Gauteng

Mpumalanga

Limpopo

Eastern Cape

North Wes

## ASA accepts SAB withdrawal of billboard ad

June 21 2010 at 03:04pm  
By Lyse Comins



- **Soul City very active in supporting alcohol advertising ban – e.. through buying ad space in *Mail & Guardian* & hosting a Critical Thinking Forum**

November 2012





Phuza Wize

Sponsored feature

# Advertising fuels consumption

Joanne Corrigan

It is a facet of human nature that if we recognize a problem and wish to change it, we wish to do so in a manner that requires as little change and as few sacrifices as possible.

The smoker who starts having trouble breathing, wishes to cut-down rather than stop smoking entirely, the man with a heart attack wants to eat less pies rather than none at all or the new mother who wants both time with her child yet also her independence.

The degree to which change without sacrifice is possible depends entirely upon the problem at hand.

I suggest that we consider where on this spectrum of sacrifice-for-change, alcohol advertising falls.

## Alcohol advertising is effective

First off, we need to acknowledge that alcohol advertising does indeed increase drinking. Multi-billion dollar companies would not be spending hundreds of millions of rands advertising alcohol if it was ineffective. To think otherwise is simply naive.

Indeed, a research review of all longitudinal studies between 1990 and 2008 assessed the impact of advertising on more than 38000 young people and found that out of 13 studies, 12 demonstrated that exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with higher initiation of drinking as well as heavier drinking in a dose-response type relationship (risks proportional to the amount of advertising seen).

But does this mean we should ban alcohol advertising?

## The trade-off

Until South Africans recognize that alcohol abuse is an important problem in need of urgent change, the need for making any type of trade-off to address this will not be accepted. Do most of us know, for example, that South Africans rank amongst the top 5 heaviest drinkers in the world? Or that we have the highest rates of alcohol-related harm in the world: 10 fold the global average of male violence, double the global average of road deaths and amongst the highest rates of HIV, TB and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in the world? Weekend binge drinkers cause most of the harm, not alcoholics. In a country where alcohol is one of the top 3 leading causes of death and disability what good reasons are there for us to be promoting drinking so heavily?

Many in the advertising industry suggest we should continue to advertise alcohol to save jobs in the media industry, but should we promote jobs at any cost? One of the most admirable features of humanity is that we do not knowingly support industries that are harmful. This is why we test consumer products for safety, such as medications or motor vehicles and is why we do not promote tobacco, cocaine or child labour.

Alcohol is a dangerous product, causing the loss of approximately 130 lives per day in South Africa. Is saving 130 lives a day worth the estimated R3 billion projected loss in advertising (Moerdyk, 2011)? How does this balance with the further R38 Billion annual cost of alcohol to our economy incurred through alcohol-related violence, crime, HIV, absenteeism,

low productivity, and incarceration, for example? A recent economic study has indicated very clearly that the economic benefits of the alcohol industry, which tend to accrue to the wealthier sectors of society, are more or less equally matched by the economic costs of alcohol abuse, which tend to accrue to the poorest sectors of society.

## Alcohol advertising limits our freedom of choice

Why do South Africans not know these things about alcohol? Why do so many South Africans falsely believe that it is only harmful to drink excessively if you are driving or pregnant?

Most of the messaging we get about alcohol is from the alcohol industry that has a vested interest in selling more alcohol. What gives the liquor industry the right to constantly bombard us (including people under the age





## ISSUES IN PUBLIC HEALTH

# A total ban on alcohol advertising: Presenting the public health case

Charles Parry, Nadine Harker Burnhams, Leslie London

Evidence from burden of disease and economic costing studies amply indicate that the public health burden from hazardous and harmful use of alcohol in South Africa warrants drastic action. Evidence that banning alcohol advertising is likely to be an effective intervention is reflected in WHO strategy documents on non-communicable diseases and harmful use of alcohol. Studies on young people furthermore support arguments refuting the claim that advertising only influences brand choice. Given the weakness of relying on industry self-regulation, the government is considering legislation to ban alcohol advertising, resulting in heated debate. Tobacco control and studies investigating the

effect of alcohol advertising bans on consumption and alcohol-related deaths point to the effectiveness of such action – ideally supplemented by other policy interventions. Arguments against an advertising ban include possible communication sector job losses, but these are likely to have been exaggerated. Banning alcohol advertising will necessitate greater scrutiny of digital media, satellite television and merchandising to reduce the likelihood of subverting the ban.

*S Afr Med J* 2012;102(7):602-604.



Why the ANC will win handsomely next year

Anthony Butler explains why, in his view, the ruling vote share will hold up at next year's general election



healthy nation through research

Home National Africa World Opinion Markets Economy Business

Archive

## OPINION: Good case for a total ban on alcohol advertising

BY CHARLES PARRY, NADINE HARKER BURNHAMS AND LESLIE LONDON, AUGUST 08 2012, 08:34

# CAPE TIMES

Article rank ■■■■ | 5 Jul 2012 | Cape Times | Leslie London, Charles Parry and Neo Morojele

## Ban booze adverts and reduce harm

City Press | 19 August 2012

### Voices

**D**espite the propaganda, the debate about banning alcohol advertising has nothing to do with prohibition. You will still be able to buy your beer, should you wish, and no one in an ivory tower is trying to stop that. It's just that companies such as SAB will not be able to advertise their products in the ways they have had the freedom to do thus far – freedoms which have led to increased drinking among young people and to hazardous drinking – all findings well documented in scientific literature. The scientific community is far from divided about the association between alcohol advertising and problem drinking among young people. Why else would the World Health Organisation identify restrictions on advertising as a key element of effective intervention to address problem drinking? It is also wrong to claim that, of South Africans who consume alcohol, "a minority are at risk of abusing it". South Africans who drink exceed at problem drinking – we are among those countries with the highest per capita consumption per drinker per year, and fully a third of our drinkers do so at risky levels.

## Ban in good spirit

Don't be bamboozled by pro-advert arguments, writes **Lesley London**

Advertising plays a key role in this phenomenon, as confirmed by Mabalane Munda's response to Vincom's Maphai last week (City Press, 12 August). There is plenty of evidence to confirm that exposure to alcohol advertising increases the likelihood that young people will start drinking, will start drinking at a younger age, and will drink more dangerously. Advertising alcohol products is not a problem facing people "who have taken the position not to consume alcohol", but young people whose life decisions can still be influenced by role models, peers and public advertising. For that reason alone, restricting the advertising of alcohol makes

sound public health sense, and has nothing to do with morality or religion. It is also illogical to think that advertising is about brand choice when SAB already owns most beer brands in the country but spends billions on adspend. If you examine its advertising, it is obvious the purpose is to get more people to drink and people to drink more. Job losses may result from alcohol advertising restrictions, but the same argument was used in response to tobacco advertising laws, and those advertising companies relocated to other product advertising. Moreover, we know now that the combination of tobacco advert restrictions

coupled with other health promotion measures has reduced smoking among young people – evidence of the effectiveness of advertising restrictions from a public health perspective. Far from being a piece of religious or moral zealotry, restriction of alcohol advertising is based on consistent scientific evidence and is sound public health. The only demons bedeviling the debate about banning alcohol advertising are the pieces of misinformation that prevent the public making up its mind on the basis of evidence. London is professor and head of the School of Public Health and Family Medicine at the University of Cape Town



**Cochrane  
Review proposal**

Restricting or banning of alcohol advertising to reduce alcohol consumption in adults...16-Aug-2013

**Restricting or banning of alcohol advertising to reduce alcohol consumption in adults and adolescents**  
**Review information**

**Authors**

Nandi Sleghted<sup>1,2</sup>, David C Plenaar<sup>3</sup>, John E Ataguba<sup>4</sup>, Jimmy Volmink<sup>5,6</sup>, Tamara Kreda<sup>6</sup>, Mlienga Jere<sup>7</sup>, Charles DH Parry<sup>8,9</sup>

## Main issues/flaws:

1. **Commissioned by industry**
2. **Deflects problems away from regulated to unregulated sector**
3. **Tries to blame alcohol problems on small minority of users**
4. **Claims SA is mature alcohol market & should not be strongly regulated**
5. **Deflects view that advertising used to attract new drinkers**
6. **Admits that a ban on alcohol advertising will not result in zero rand advertising expenditure, but then assume ATL & BTL adspend on alcohol will be zero if there is a total ban, & uses this in calculation of job losses**
7. **Cites old references to support view that there is inconclusive evidence for an effect of advertising on alcohol consumption - more recent studies point to a consistent association**

# Alcohol ad report 'flawed and industry funded'

CHARLES PARRY AND LESLIE LONDON

**A**N INORDINATE amount of space has been given in the media to the Econometrix report released in June on the economic impact of a ban on alcohol advertising. To date, it has largely been unquestioned. Indeed, it has been welcomed by those in the industry who commissioned the study, the Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use.

The article "Alcohol advert ban pros, cons" (The Star, August 6) quotes from the report without questioning its claims.

However, given the approval by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Substance Abuse of the Health Minister's plan to ban alcohol advertising, one must understand the report and the attention it has been given in the context of the liquor industry's strategy to counter the government's plans to reduce harmful use of alcohol.

Far from concerns about the ineffectiveness of banning advertising, industry's prime concern is likely to be about reduced sales and profits. This report can, and should, be challenged on several grounds.

First, it tries to deflect the problems associated with the regulated sale of alcohol to the unregulated sector when the evidence shows all outlets are responsible.

Second, it tries to pin the major cost of abuse on the use patterns of a relatively small percentage of the population who drink to excess on occasions and/or on a regular basis. This is a claim that runs counter to published evidence. In fact, a third to a quarter of drinkers in South Africa drink at problematic levels. By Econometrix's own statistics, over 10 percent of adults are binge drinkers and 7 percent drink at hazardous rates.

This translates to about 4 million and 2.5 million adults respectively, hardly an

inconsequential number. Further, the report claims that South Africa is a mature alcohol market and should not be strongly regulated in terms of alcohol advertising.

This is not so, as the report's own data shows substantially less than 50 percent of adults drink, so there's much profit to be made by expanding the market.

The report also works hard to deflect the view that advertising is used to attract new drinkers. World Health Organisation (WHO) reports acknowledge growing evidence from youth studies that points to the impact of alcohol marketing on initiation of youth drinking and riskier patterns of youth drinking. Studies show that alcohol advertising influences young people's behaviour, normalises drinking and brings about positive beliefs about drinking.

The report's authors also choose to cite an old (2000) report by the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse as the basis for a claim that there is only inconclusive evidence of the effects of alcohol advertising on consumption. More recent studies point to a consistent association. These studies are the basis for the increasing recognition by WHO of the need to address alcohol advertising as a key preventive strategy.

Furthermore, the Econometrix study, by looking at local trend data on adspend and consumption over a seven- to eight-year period, claims there is no link between advertising and consumption of branded alcohol and home brew. This is a simplistic analysis that ignores the complexities likely to exist in such a relationship (such as differences by age and socio-economic status).

By their own admission, adspend and consumption rose together for three years (2003/4 to 2005/6) but then consumption dropped over the next five years while

adspend increased. It would be important to know what other factors might have contributed to the drop and one should also consider whether it would not have been greater without the significant adspend.

It should also be noted that information from industry sources (released in the publication SA Wine Industry Statistics (SAWIS) Number 37, 2013), in contrast to the WHO figures, has indicated a small increase in per capita consumption of alcohol from 5.05 litres per capita (in 2009) to 5.14 litres (last year) with an increase in each year since 2009. This suggests Econometrix would have come up with different findings had they used SAWIS data.

The report argues that banning alcohol adverts will have a R7.4 billion impact on the GDP. This is open to question as spending will occur elsewhere.

Finally, the solutions to addressing alcohol abuse in the report are those shown to be ineffective – such as increasing consumers' education and limiting alcohol adverts on radio and TV until after 9pm.

The liquor industry has been able to use their support for these weak interventions in preference to known effective measures to deflect criticisms that they are not concerned about the health problems associated with harmful use of alcohol.

Based on the best global evidence, WHO, in its Global Status Report on Noncommunicable Diseases, rates enforcing bans on alcohol advertising among the top 10 best buys for addressing non-communicable diseases – evidence that the Econometrix report cannot easily wish away.

● Professor Charles Parry is director of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit at the South African Medical Research Council and Professor Leslie London is with the School of Public Health and Family Medicine at the University of Cape Town.

The Star, Thursday 15th August 2013

## Main issues/flaws:

8. **Weights studies equally regardless of quality, size or scope**
9. **By looking at local trend data on adspend & consumption (from WHO data) over 7-8 year period claims there is no link between the two (ignoring complexities that are likely to exist: e.g. differences by age/SES)**
10. **Possibly would have come up with different findings had they used the SAWIS data**
11. **Argue that banning alcohol advertising will have a R7.4 billion impact on GDP (?able as spending will occur elsewhere)**
12. **Solutions to addressing alcohol abuse (e.g. increasing the education of consumers and limiting alcohol advertising on radio/TV till after 9pm) - ineffective or weak**

# Alcohol ad report 'flawed and industry funded'

CHARLES PARRY AND LESLIE LONDON

**A**N INORDINATE amount of space has been given in the media to the Econometrix report released in June on the economic impact of a ban on alcohol advertising. To date, it has largely been unquestioned. Indeed, it has been welcomed by those in the industry who commissioned the study, the Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use.

The article "Alcohol advert ban pros, cons" (The Star, August 6) quotes from the report without questioning its claims.

However, given the approval by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Substance Abuse of the Health Minister's plan to ban alcohol advertising, one must understand the report and the attention it has been given in the context of the liquor industry's strategy to counter the government's plans to reduce harmful use of alcohol.

Far from concerns about the ineffectiveness of banning advertising, industry's prime concern is likely to be about reduced sales and profits. This report can, and should, be challenged on several grounds.

First, it tries to deflect the problems associated with the regulated sale of alcohol to the unregulated sector when the evidence shows all outlets are responsible.

Second, it tries to pin the major cost of abuse on the use patterns of a relatively small percentage of the population who drink to excess on occasions and/or on a regular basis. This is a claim that runs counter to published evidence. In fact, a third to a quarter of drinkers in South Africa drink at problematic levels. By Econometrix's own statistics, over 10 percent of adults are binge drinkers and 7 percent drink at hazardous rates.

This translates to about 4 million and 2.5 million adults respectively, hardly an

inconsequential number. Further, the report claims that South Africa is a mature alcohol market and should not be strongly regulated in terms of alcohol advertising.

This is not so, as the report's own data shows substantially less than 50 percent of adults drink, so there's much profit to be made by expanding the market.

The report also works hard to deflect the view that advertising is used to attract new drinkers. World Health Organisation (WHO) reports acknowledge growing evidence from youth studies that points to the impact of alcohol marketing on initiation of youth drinking and riskier patterns of youth drinking. Studies show that alcohol advertising influences young people's behaviour, normalises drinking and brings about positive beliefs about drinking.

The report's authors also choose to cite an old (2000) report by the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse as the basis for a claim that there is only inconclusive evidence of the effects of alcohol advertising on consumption. More recent studies point to a consistent association. These studies are the basis for the increasing recognition by WHO of the need to address alcohol advertising as a key preventive strategy.

Furthermore, the Econometrix study, by looking at local trend data on adspend and consumption over a seven- to eight-year period, claims there is no link between advertising and consumption of branded alcohol and home brew. This is a simplistic analysis that ignores the complexities likely to exist in such a relationship (such as differences by age and socio-economic status).

By their own admission, adspend and consumption rose together for three years (2003/4 to 2005/6) but then consumption dropped over the next five years while

adspend increased. It would be important to know what other factors might have contributed to the drop and one should also consider whether it would not have been greater without the significant adspend.

It should also be noted that information from industry sources (released in the publication SA Wine Industry Statistics (SAWIS) Number 37, 2013), in contrast to the WHO figures, has indicated a small increase in per capita consumption of alcohol from 5.05 litres per capita (in 2009) to 5.14 litres (last year) with an increase in each year since 2009. This suggests Econometrix would have come up with different findings had they used SAWIS data.

The report argues that banning alcohol adverts will have a R7.4 billion impact on the GDP. This is open to question as spending will occur elsewhere.

Finally the solutions to addressing alcohol abuse in the report are those shown to be ineffective - such as increasing consumers' education and limiting alcohol adverts on radio and TV until after 9pm.

The liquor industry has been able to use their support for these weak interventions in preference to known effective measures to deflect criticisms that they are not concerned about the health problems associated with harmful use of alcohol.

Based on the best global evidence, WHO, in its Global Status Report on Noncommunicable Diseases, rates enforcing bans on alcohol advertising among the top 10 best buys for addressing non-communicable diseases - evidence that the Econometrix report cannot easily wish away.

● Professor Charles Parry is director of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit at the South African Medical Research Council and Professor Leslie London is with the School of Public Health and Family Medicine at the University of Cape Town.

The Star, Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2013

## Section 6

# Control of Marketing of Alcoholic Beverages Bill - as approved by Cabinet 18 September 2013 (1)

- **Preamble:**
  - Refers to §27 of Constitution: “State is to take reasonable legislative & other measures to protect health/wellbeing of population”
- **Objectives**
  - to contribute to reduction of alcohol related harm & protection of public health & community well-being by limiting the exposure of public to alcohol marketing by—
    - **restricting the advertisement of alcoholic beverages;**
    - **prohibiting any sponsorship associated with alcoholic beverages; &**
    - **prohibiting any promotion of alcohol beverages**
- **Re restrictions on advertisement bill allows for:**
  - Notices describing the price, brand name, type, strength, origin and composition of the product
  - Must not be visible from outside premises
  - Must be accompanied by prescribed health warning

## Section 7

### Going forward - reflections

Building a healthy nation through

- Govt realises that banning alcohol advertising alone won't be sufficient -- also looking at decreasing allowable BAC levels in drivers, raising drinking age, and licensing shebeens
- **Big battle ahead: MRC & others to testify in Parliament in support of ban (& refuting industry's arguments)**
- Gov't recognises need to compensate sporting bodies in some way for sports sponsorships
- **Plans to establish a Health Promotion Foundation (HPDNet) which among other things promotes alternative messaging about alcohol**
- MRC is completing Cochrane Review looking at the effectiveness of ad bans in decreasing consumption & harm – evidence not that strong – will be recommending proper evaluation of SA ad ban (**interrupted time series analysis**) so that we can strengthen evidence base for policy-making in this area



FORUM

ISSUES IN MEDICINE

Establishing a Health Promotion and Development Foundation in South Africa

A. M. Perez, O. A. Ayo-Yusuf, K. Hofman, S. Kalideen, A. Maker, D. Mokonoto, N. Morojele, P. Naidoo, C. Parry, K. Rendall-Mkosi, Y. Saloojee



The Cochrane Collaboration  
Working together to provide the best evidence for health care



# Addiction

EDITORIAL

doi:10.1111/add.12155

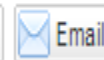


## Why South Africa's proposed advertising ban matters

BusinessDay  
**BDlive**

### SABMiller plans \$2,5bn investment in Africa

BY TISETSO MOTSOENENG AND TEBOGO MAHLAELA, AUGUST 08 2012, 08:26



LONDON - SABMiller plans to invest up to \$2,5bn in Africa over the next five years to build and revamp breweries, its regional head said on Monday, as it looks to slake rising demand for beer in the fast-growing continent.

cparry@mrc.ac.za

**Also Asia**