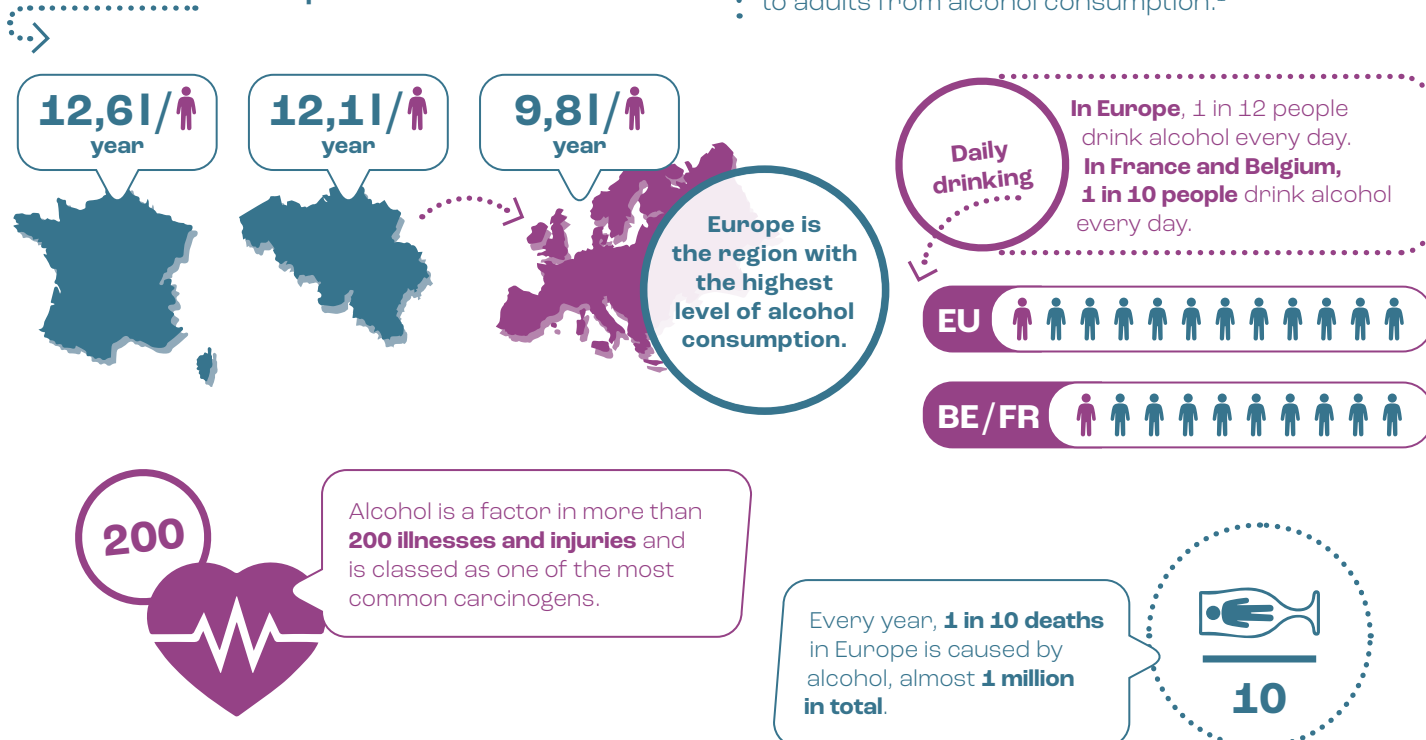


How to reduce the health risks linked to alcohol consumption?

Recommendations for a cross-border, cross-disciplinary and European approach.

- All too often, alcohol consumption is viewed solely as a problem linked to addiction. No alcohol consumption is without risk, however. In France and Belgium, the recommendation is not to exceed the **10/2/0 reference points** in order to minimise the risk to adults from alcohol consumption.¹

Pure alcohol consumption



SATRAQ project partners have put forward 3 recommendations

- 1 EDUCATION**
Improve **people's knowledge of the health risks** posed by alcohol consumption. Knowing the risks and the recommended guidelines is a starting point for changing consumption habits.
- 2 TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS**
in health and social care, including partner health care providers, on the question of alcohol. Improve access to training and resources for professionals.
- 3 EUROPE-WIDE STRATEGY**
Adopt a substantive strategy across the European Union to support effective prevention policies at all levels.

Alcohol misuse starts above the **10/2/0 reference points** and in some cases (e.g. children, pregnant women, while driving, illness) any amount can be classed as misuse.

The 10/2/0 reference points:

- ↳ No more than 10 standard units per week,
- ↳ No more than 2 standard glasses per day,
- ↳ Several days in the week where no alcohol is taken.

1. Excluding pregnancy and specific medical conditions.

The findings

Alcohol consumption is often overlooked due to a lack of awareness about its impact on health and about the reference points consistent with safe drinking.

Health and social care professionals often feel they lack the authority and are poorly equipped to tackle the issue of alcohol with their patients.

The lack of a joined-up EU policy holds up the delivery of effective measures, particularly in border regions.

Our recommendations



EDUCATION

Raise awareness about the impact of alcohol consumption on health as a way to encourage better lifestyles.

- ↳ Provide better information on the effects of alcohol consumption on health (e.g. sleep, mental health, medical conditions, etc.).
- ↳ Increase awareness about safe drinking reference points (10/2/0).
- ↳ Improve access to resources that people can use to measure their own alcohol consumption.
- ↳ Promote efforts to reduce risk and promote healthy lifestyles among people of working age who may be misusing alcohol.
- ↳ Set up a cross-border information portal to facilitate access to support and monitoring resources.



TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

in health and social care, including partner health care providers, on the question of alcohol.

- ↳ Increase expertise among health and social care professionals for initial and ongoing training. In Wallonia, draw from experience of France, where coordination among agencies has enabled effective delivery of Early Detection-Quick Intervention (RPIB) training.
- ↳ In training (RPIB) sessions:
 - Use role play simulations to improve knowledge of systems and resources.
 - Empower professionals to tackle the question of alcohol.
 - Ensure a cross-disciplinary approach to training professionals to contribute to the development of local cross-border networks.
 - Equip health and social care professionals to spot problem drinking.



EUROPE-WIDE STRATEGY

Adopt a substantive strategy across the EU to support effective prevention policies at all levels.

- ↳ Make alcohol a genuine public health issue in Europe through an "alcohol awareness strategy" broken down into national action plans in each Member State.
- ↳ Adopt EU mandatory labelling legislation requiring producers to indicate the number of standard units on alcoholic drinks containers and encourage the use of public health labels and messages on containers (e.g. icon of a pregnant woman, etc.).
- ↳ Promote efforts to support Early Detection-Quick Intervention (RPIB) under the Cancer Plan for Europe initiative.
- ↳ Support public health initiatives to address misuse, as well as addiction.
- ↳ Enable public health promotion agencies to access EU funding programmes.
- ↳ Improve care provision for patients living in areas covered by Organised Cross-border Access to Care Services (Zoasts) in relation to alcohol and prevention.