

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 03 December 2012 10:31  
**To:** Alcohol Consultation  
**Subject:** Minimum pricing of Alcohol

Please find response received in Social Policy Unit. The consultation on introducing minimum pricing in Northern Ireland ended on 26 June 2011 and we are forwarding reply to you for consideration in light of the ongoing consultation covering this issue recently launched by the Home Office.

[REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 30 November 2012 20:40

[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** TRIM: Minimum pricing of Alcohol

I am writing in response to the consultation document on the minimum pricing of alcohol.

I do not support the proposals for the following reasons

1. The evidence does not support the proposal. Finland, where alcohol is very expensive, has one of the highest alcoholism rates in the western world. In France, where alcohol is much cheaper (and which I visit frequently), there are fewer incidents of excessive drinking. Thus, price alone is not the problem
2. I think the document confuses two issues. One is the problem on young people over indulging, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. The second is the effect of long term drinking of the middle aged (and, often, middle class).

In respect of the first, it is a matter of culture. The problem is not new- as far back as the middle ages the British had a reputation of bad behaviour caused by drunkenness. I think it is naive to think that young people will not find a way of getting hold of drink, or turn to other substances if alcohol is too costly. The evidence from prohibition America shows this. If the problem is that of young people drinking at home before setting off for nights out the owners of venues should face stiffer penalties if they serve people who are already drunk. Its a matter of culture, not price

The second group will not be deterred by price as most of the drinks they consume are already above the minimum price. All you will do is make life harder for poor, but responsible, drinkers. Those of us who can afford it will carry on regardless.

I would urge a rethink on this matter. Using cost as a means of changing social behaviour is a very crude approach and will not, ultimately, be successful

[REDACTED]

