

COUNTRY REPORTS AND COUNTRY PROFILES

Eurocare Bridging the Gap (BtG) Project:
Third meeting of network

Barcelona, 12th May 2006

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BtG country report on alcohol policy

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Country	Current status of the BtG country reports (2 May, 2006) (1/2)
Austria	There exists an updated WHO country profile and summary. No filled in template or updated ECAS country report.
Belgium	There exists an updated WHO country profile and summary for Belgium. No filled in template or updated ECAS country report.
Bulgaria	We have received an updated version of the WHO alcohol summary and also a meticulously filled in template for the BtG country report. Does not need a lot of work to complete a country report.
Cyprus	We have not received any data from Cyprus.
Czech Republic	We have received an updated version of the WHO documents as well as a complete filled in template for the BtG country report. Does not need a lot of work to complete a country report.
Denmark	From Denmark we have received updated versions of both the ECAS country report and tables and the WHO documents. The counterpart should be able to develop these into a country report with not that much an effort!
Estonia	From Estonia we have just received updates on the WHO documents.
Finland	We have written a manuscript for a BtG country report.
France	From France we have updated WHO documents as well as an updated version of the ECAS country report. This should be quite easy to transform into a country report.
Germany	From Germany we have an updated WHO country profile and updates on the ECAS country report. This should also be quite easy to develop into a BtG country report.
Greece	From Greece we have received an updated version of the WHO alcohol summary as well as a few comments on the ECAS country report.
Hungary	The Hungarians have filled partly in the ECAS alcohol policy questionnaire and also the template for the BtG country report on alcohol policy. This should quite easily be written into a country report format.
Ireland	From Ireland we have updates on the ECAS country report and WHO documents. Should not be too laborious to transform them into a country report.
Italy	From Italy we have not yet received any data, but there exists an ECAS country report.
Latvia	We have a report on alcohol policies from Latvia that does not follow neither the BtG template nor the ECAS country report. This together with the updated WHO alcohol summary, should make it quite easy to develop the material into a country report.

Country	Current status of the BtG country reports (2 May, 2006) (2/2)
Lithuania	From Lithuania we have received a report on alcohol policies as well as a document on law amendments. They have also updated the WHO documents. These should with not too much effort be transformed into a country report.
Luxembourg	From Luxembourg we still have no data, but we have the ECAS country report.
Malta	From Malta we only have updated WHO documents.
The Netherlands	From the Netherlands we have an updated version of the ECAS country report which could be used as a base for a BtG country report.
Norway	From Norway we have updated WHO documents. However, the Norwegians should quite easily be able to update the ECAS report into a BtG report
Poland	From Poland we have received no data.
Portugal	From Portugal we have updates on the WHO documents, but we have the ECAS country report.
Romania	Romania has provided a lot of data, updates of the WHO documents as well as ESPAD data. They have also filled in the template and delivered a manuscript on the BtG country report.
Slovakia	Slovakia has delivered alcohol consumption tables and a manuscript on the BtG country report.
Slovenia	From Slovenia we have received an update of the WHO country profile.
Spain	From Spain we have received the updated WHO documents, but we have the ECAS country report.
Sweden	There exists a draft version of the Swedish country report.
Switzerland	From Switzerland we have received updated on the WHO documents.
Turkey	From Turkey we have updated versions of the WHO documents and also a filled in template, which could be seen as a manuscript on the BtG country report (10/2005)
The United Kingdom	From the UK we have received an updated version of the WHO country profile.

The country reports according to their current status:

15 countries	7 countries	8 countries
Austria	Denmark	Bulgaria
Belgium	France	Czech Republic
Cyprus	Germany	Finland
Estonia	Ireland	Hungary
Greece	Latvia	Romania
Italy	Lithuania	Slovakia
Luxembourg	Netherlands	Sweden
Malta		Turkey
Norway		
Poland		
Portugal		
Slovenia		
Spain		
Switzerland		
The UK		

SCALING ALCOHOL POLICIES ACROSS EUROPE

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Introduction:

- The scaling of alcohol policies is a part of the Bridging the Gap (BtG) -project, initiated by Eurocare.
- One of the tasks we were commissioned to do in the BtG -project was to update the previous work of the European Comparative Alcohol Study (ECAS) and create a scale to measure the strictness of alcohol policies in the BtG countries.
- The countries involved in the BtG are all current EU member states as well as some applicant countries plus Norway and Switzerland.
- In the present exercise we have concentrated on scaling alcohol policies for one year (2005), but the scale is constructed in a way that it can and should be used in monitoring changes in alcohol policies over time.

Previous attempts to create a scale to rank alcohol control policies:

Davies P. & Walsh B. (1983): Alcohol Problems and Alcohol Control in Europe. London & Canberra: Croom Helm.

Hilton M. & Johnstone B. M. (1988): International trends in alcohol consumption: a report on a symposium. Contemporary Drug Problems 15:4, 685-716.

Young People and Alcohol in Europe. (1994): A tool for monitoring consumption and institutional action policies. Rome: Osservatorio permanente sui giovani e l'alcool.

Anderson P. & Lehto J. (1995): Evaluation and monitoring of action on alcohol. WHO Regional Publications European Series No. 59. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Karlsson, T. & Österberg, E. (2001) A scale of formal alcohol control policy in 15 European countries, Nordic Studies on alcohol and drugs, 18 (English supplement), 117-131.

Creating the BtG scale:

- The previous scales and especially the ECAS scale (Karlsson & Österberg, 2001) was used as starting point for the BtG scale exercise.

- Same six subgroups of alcohol control were used as in the ECAS scale and a new subgroup, *alcohol taxation*, was added.

- The scale consists of the following subgroups:
 1. Control of production and wholesale
 2. Control of distribution
 3. Personal control (age limits)
 4. Control of marketing
 5. Social and environmental controls (BAC limit)
 6. Public policy
 7. Alcohol taxation

The pros of a quantitative scale:

- Gives a concise overview of the existence of various types of alcohol policy measures in different countries.
- Allows us to illustrate how different alcohol policy measures have evolved over a longer period of time.
- Helps us to identify turning points and big changes in countries alcohol policies.
- Offers an easy instrument in comparing different countries with each other.
- Allows us also to rank countries according to how strict or comprehensive their alcohol policies are (this should be done with extreme caution!)

The cons of a quantitative scale:

- Measures only formal alcohol control.
- Cannot (in practice) be comprehensive.
- Does not take into consideration how effectively different laws and regulations are enforced.
- A drawback in using *alcohol taxation* as an indicator is that it does not take into consideration the purchasing power in different countries.
- Suits mainly for measuring alcohol policies at a national level.
- When used carelessly and unwary of its shortcomings a scale like this can do more harm than good.

Creating the BtG scale:

- The scoring of the scale was validated by using a kind of Delphi technique. This was done by asking 14 experts in the field of alcohol research to review and comment on the weights given by us to the different subgroups of alcohol policy.
- Taking into consideration the views of the experts we came up with the following division of points:

Subgroup of alcohol control	Points in the scale	Share of total score
1. Control of production and wholesale of alcohol	2	5.0 %
2. Control of distribution of alcohol	10	25.0 %
3. Personal control (age limits)	4	10.0 %
4. Control of marketing	3	7.5 %
5. Social and environmental controls (BAC limits)	4	10.0 %
6. Public policy	1	2.5 %
7. Alcohol taxation.	16	40.0 %
TOTAL	40	100.0 %

The BtG scale for measuring the strictness of alcohol control policies

Country:

Control of production and wholesale of alcohol (2 p.)					
1. State monopoly for the production or wholesale of					
Beer (½ p.)		Wine (½ p.)		Spirits (1 p.)	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Points: 0/2

Control of distribution (10 p.)					
2a. State monopoly for off-premise sale of ⁱ					
Beer (1 p.)		Wine (1 p.)		Spirits (2 p.)	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2b. No state monopoly, but a restrictive license system for off-premise sale of					
Beer (½ p.)		Wine (½ p.)		Spirits (1 p.)	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Special permanent restrictions on sales days (1 p.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes and sales hours (1 p.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes in off-premise sale of alcoholic beverages. ⁱⁱ					
4. Other special permanent restrictions on places of sale (1 p.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes for off-premise sale of alcoholic beverages.					
5. Special permanent restrictions on sales days (1 p.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes and sales hours (1 p.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes in on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages.					
6. Other special permanent restrictions on places of sale (1 p.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes for on-premise sales of alcoholic beverages.					

Points: 0/10

Personal control (4 p.)	
7. Legal age limit for off-premise sales at least	
	Yes
20 for some alcoholic beverages (2 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 for some alcoholic beverages (1 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Legal age limit for on-premise sales at least	
	Yes
20 for some alcoholic beverages (2 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 for some alcoholic beverages (1 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Points: 0/4

Control of marketing (3 p.)	
9. Restrictions on alcohol advertising & sponsorship:	
	Yes
Ban on all national alcohol advertising & sponsorship (3 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ban on alcohol national advertising for some alcoholic beverages (2 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Statutory control on national alcohol advertising for some alcoholic beverages (1 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voluntary code on national alcohol advertising and sponsorship (½ p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Points: /3

Social and environmental controls (4 p.)	
10. Drunk driving:	
	Yes
BAC less than 0.05% (4 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAC 0.05% (2 p.)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Points: /4

Public policy (1 p.)
11. National alcohol prevention or education programme (1 p.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes.

Points: 0/1

Alcohol taxation (16 p.)				
12. Excise duty on strong alcoholic beverages per litre of 100 % alcohol				
44 € + (4 p.)	22 - 44 € (3 p.)	11 - 22 € (2 p.)	6 - 11 € (1 p.)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Excise duty on intermediate products per litre of 100 % alcohol				
20 € + (4 p.)	10 - 20 € (3 p.)	5 - 10 € (2 p.)	2.75 - 5 € (1 p.)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Excise duty on wine per litre of 100 % alcohol				
14.96 € + (4 p.)	7.48 - 14.96 € (3 p.)	3.74 - 7.48 € (2 p.)	2.05 - 3.74 € (1 p.)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Excise duty on beer per litre of 100 % alcohol				
14.96 € + (4 p.)	7.48 - 14.96 € (3 p.)	3.74 - 7.48 € (2 p.)	2.05 - 3.74 € (1 p.)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Points: /16

Total points: /40

The current status of the BtG scale for measuring the strictness of alcohol policies:

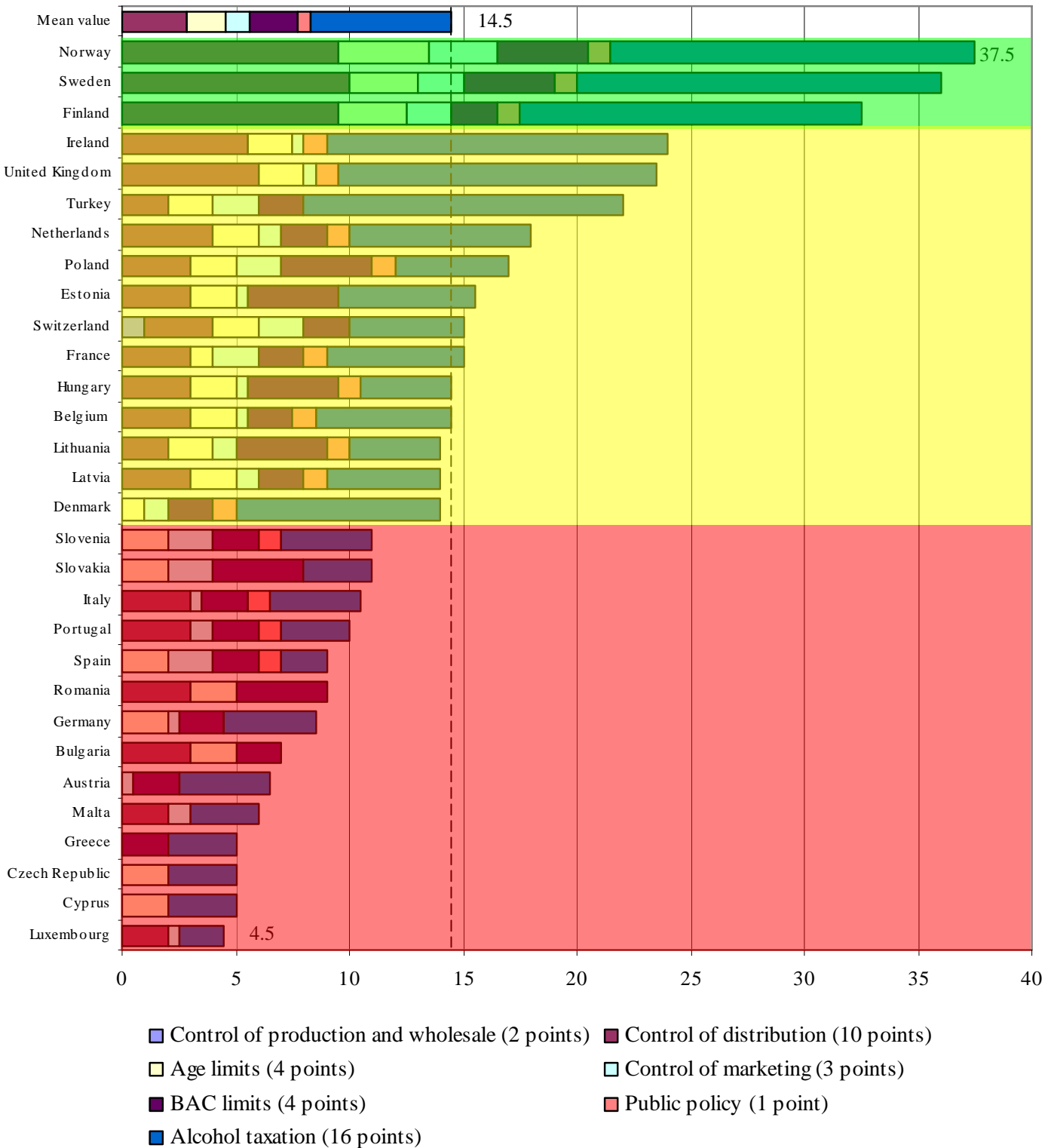
Have not commented the scale	Have commented the scale
Austria Bulgaria Chech Republic Cyprus Estonia France Greece Hungary Ireland Lithuania Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Poland Portugal Romania Slovenia Sweden Switzerland The UK	Belgium Denmark Finland Germany Italy Latvia Norway Slovakia Spain Turkey

Results:

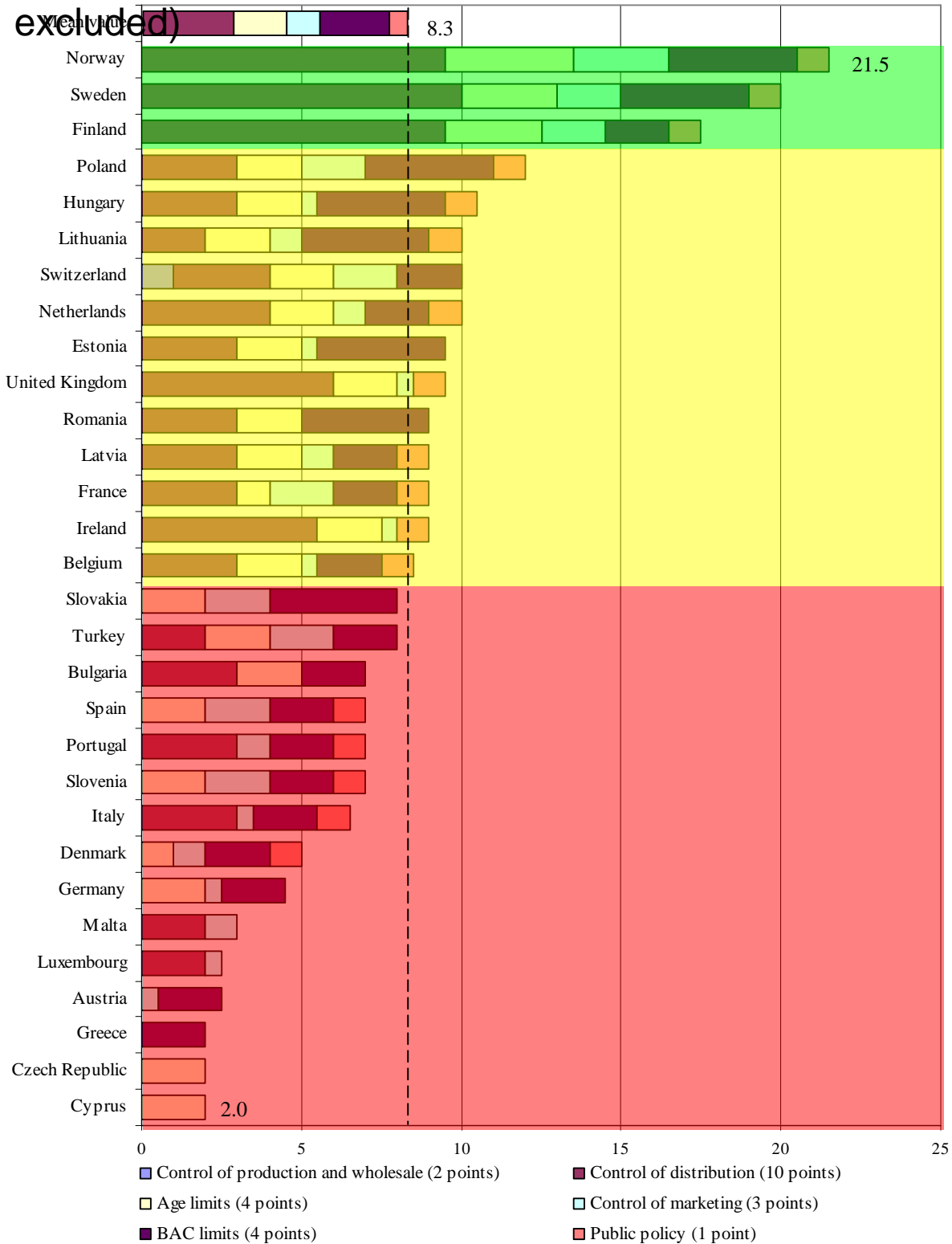
- When applied to the BtG countries (30 countries) the mean score of the scale exercise was **14.5 points**. The **highest score (37.5)**, was granted to **Norway**, and the **lowest (4.5)** was received by **Luxembourg**. The division of points according to subgroups was as follows:

Subgroup of alcohol control	Mean score	Max. score
1. Control of production and wholesale of alcohol	0.0	2
2. Control of distribution of alcohol	2.9	10
3. Personal control (age limits)	1.7	4
4. Control of marketing	1.1	3
5. Social and environmental controls (BAC limits)	2.1	4
6. Public policy	0.6	1
7. Alcohol taxation.	6.2	16
TOTAL	14.5	40

Strictness of alcohol policies in the BtG countries in 2005 according to subgroups of alcohol control



Strictness of alcohol policies in the BtG countries in 2005 according to subgroups of alcohol control (alcohol taxes excluded)



Conclusions:

- Quantifying alcohol policy measures is difficult, if not sometimes impossible, but enables us to get an overview of trends in alcohol policies in several countries at a glance.
- Results received from scaling activities as for instance ours should always be interpreted carefully, by clearly acknowledging the flaws of such an approach.
- In our mind the pros of an alcohol policy scale, when carefully used, clearly overweighs the cons.
- When correctly used an alcohol policy scale can be used both as an versatile instrument in gathering basic knowledge on alcohol policies as well as an indicator on