

Retail alcohol monopolies – key in comprehensive alcohol policy

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The most cost effective interventions according to WHO

- Strengthen restrictions on alcohol availability (strong evidence)
- Advance and enforce drink driving countermeasures
- Facilitate access to screening, brief interventions and treatment
- Enforce bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship and promotion

The **Nordic retail monopolies** provide a structured and conscientious environment for purchasing alcohol that **prioritizes public health over profit.**

The monopolies work through various mechanisms, which are aligned with the WHO best buys:

Limiting the alcohol availability

restricting the number of sales outlets
in any given area
limiting the hours and days of sale
enforcing the national age limits

Eliminating promotional pricing strategies:

the retail prices are set according to a transparent pricing scheme and eliminate any sales promotion and other pricing strategies in stores

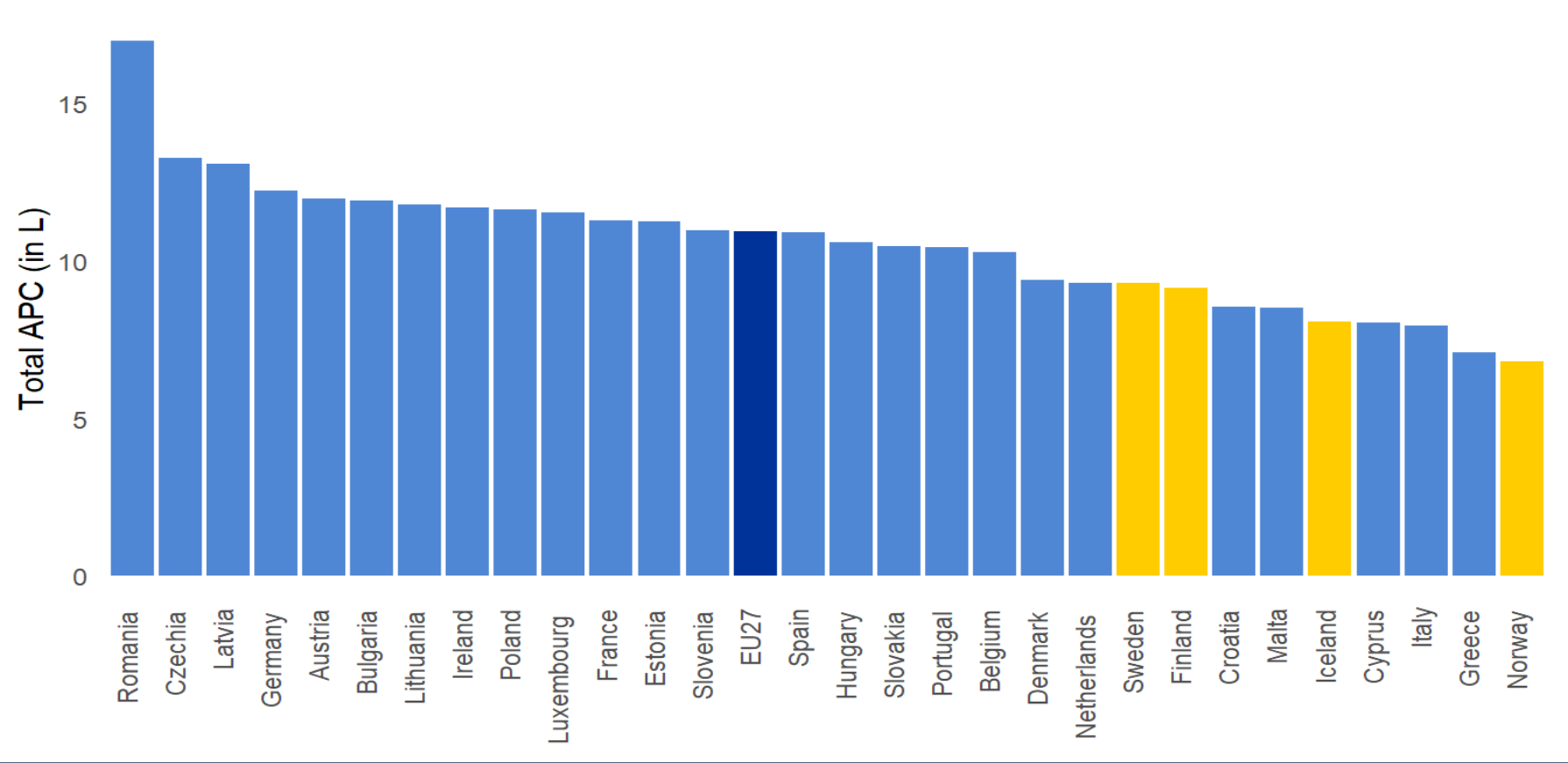
Integration into national alcohol strategies that impose high alcohol excise taxes

Restricting marketing:

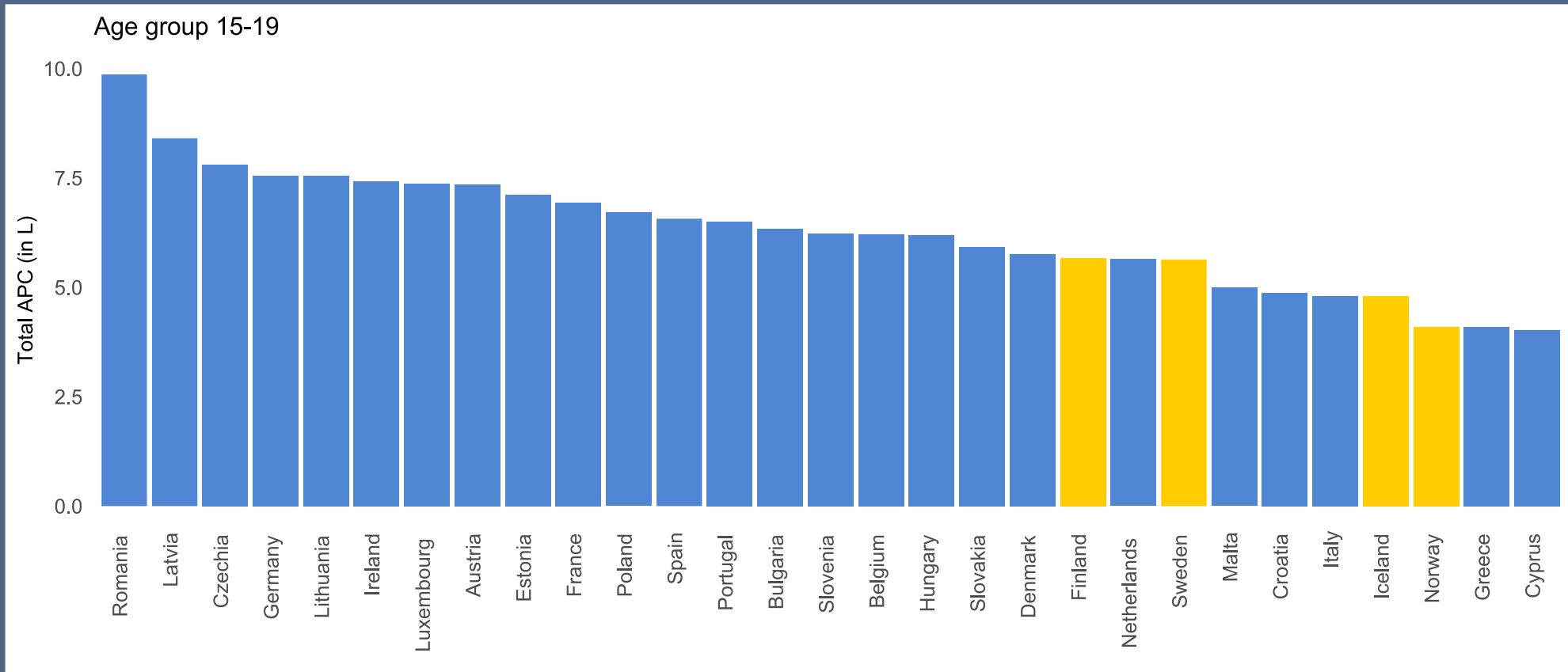
eliminating advertising and other forms of promotion and sales-maximization at points of sale, including on their websites, and all communication forms

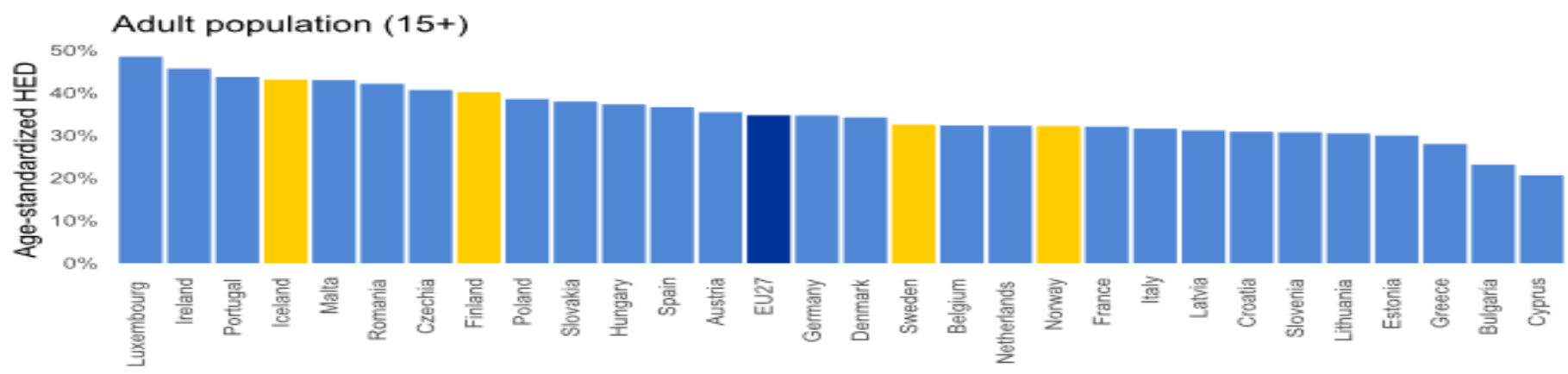
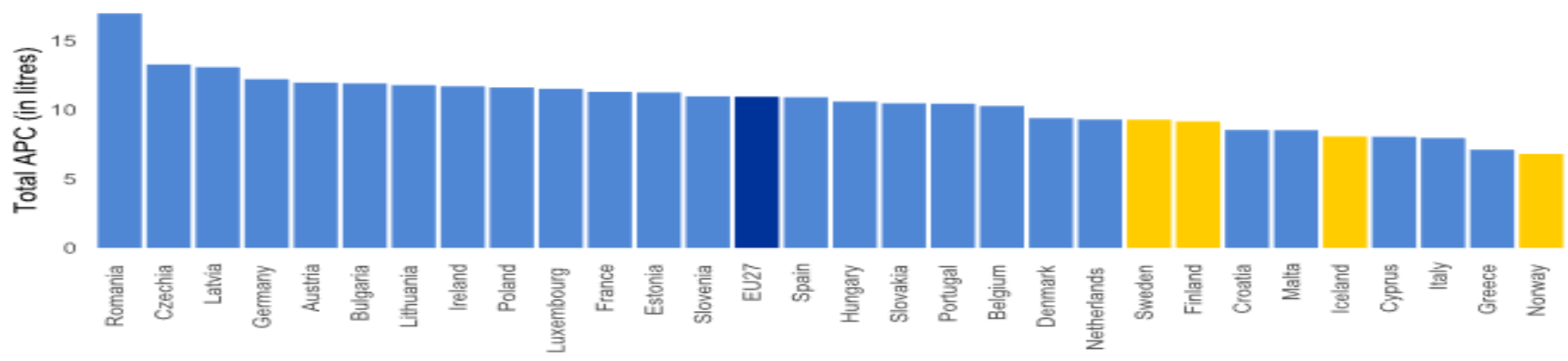
The outcome?

Per capita consumption in the EU



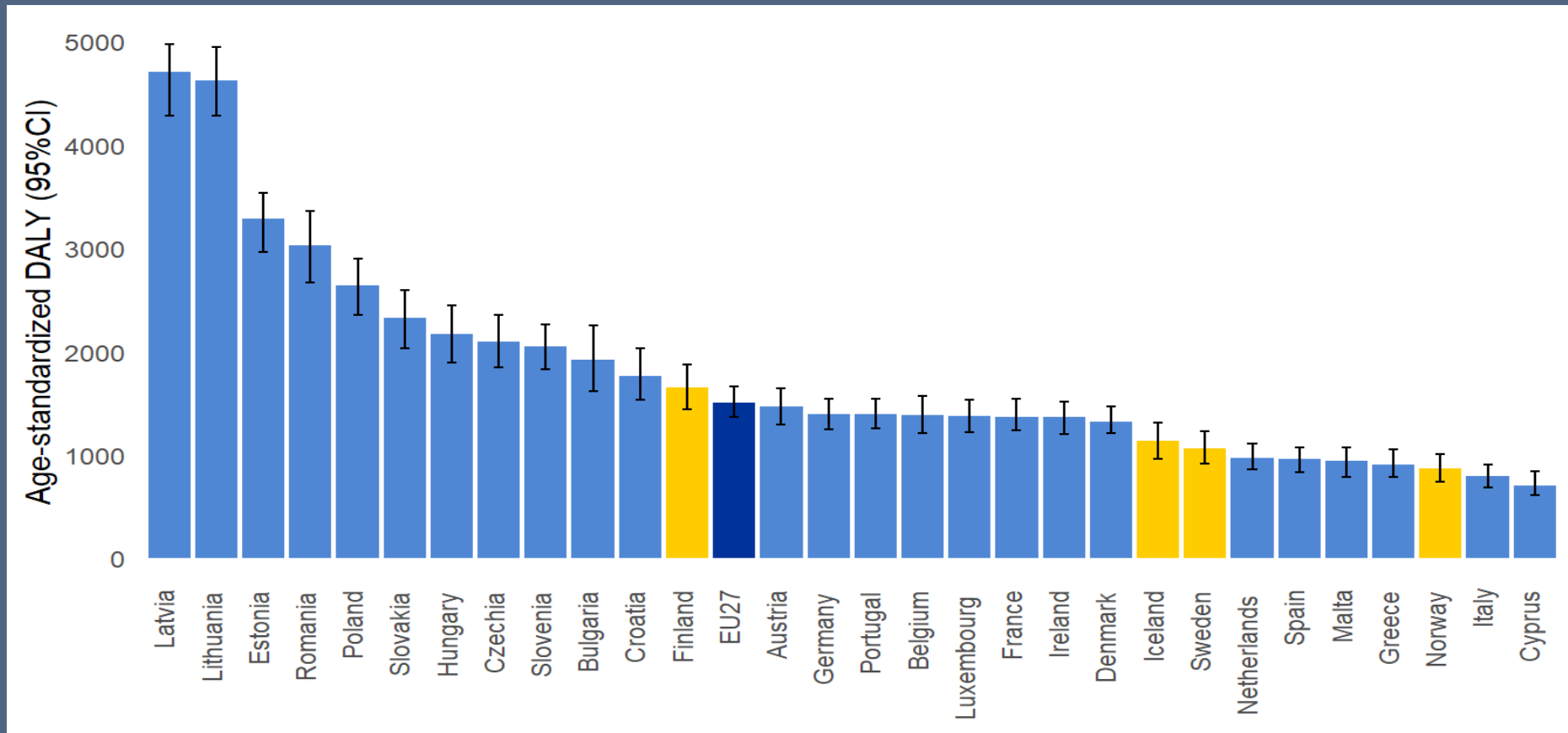
Per capita consumption 15-19 of age in EU



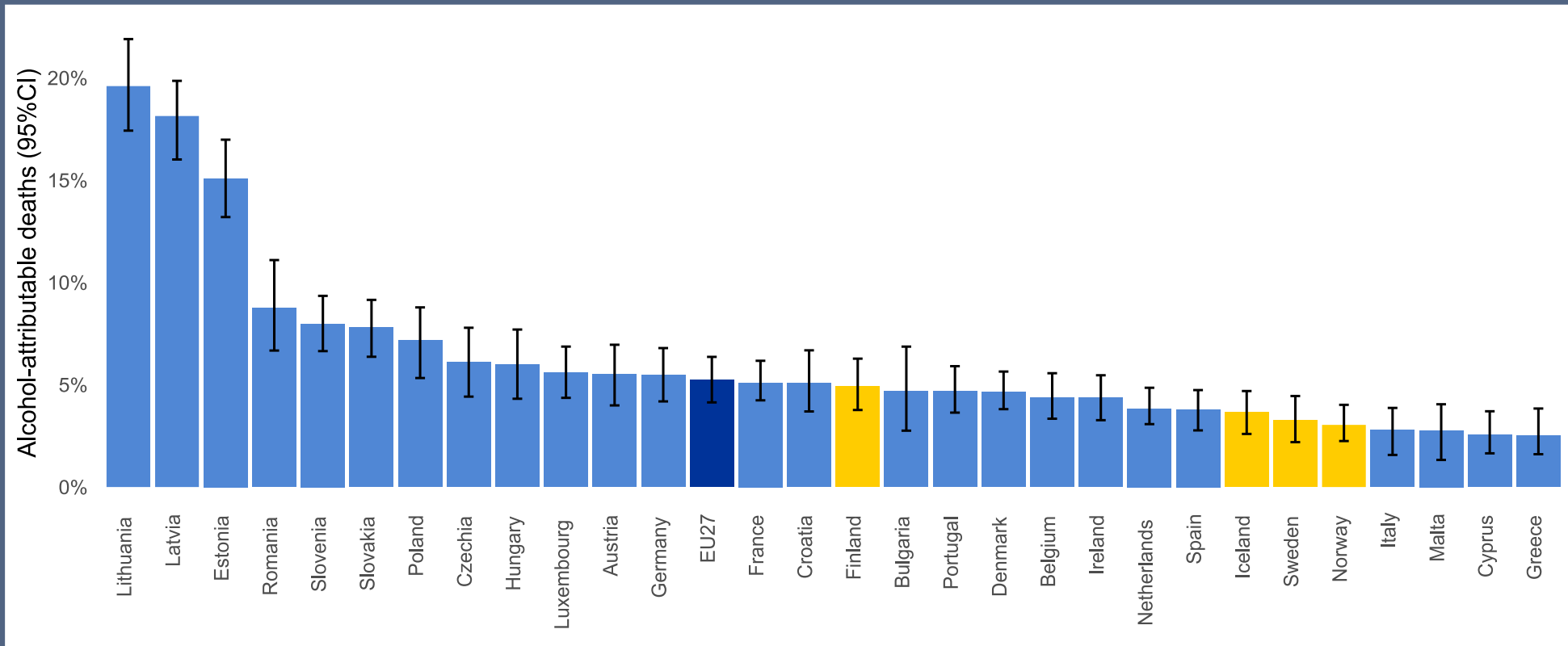


Heavy episodic drinking still high

Disability Adjusted Life years in EU (DALYs)



Alcohol-attributable deaths in the EU



Some conclusions for the future

- Retail monopolies must have public health and welfare as their goal and primary mission
- They must be a "cornerstone" in a comprehensive alcohol policy based on a broad consensus in international research.
- The EU membership showed that a public health monopoly is compatible with EU law and can work within the EU market.
- They can both operate in a non-discriminatory manner between products/producers and defend public health.

More conclusions

- Historically, experience shows that privatization of stronger beer, for example, in Sweden, led to increased consumption, especially among young people.
- If the alcohol monopolies are abolished (or lose their exclusive rights), a number of studies have shown that the risk of increased consumption, health/social damage and increased costs for society increases. But, new studies are needed....

Some more unexpected conclusions?

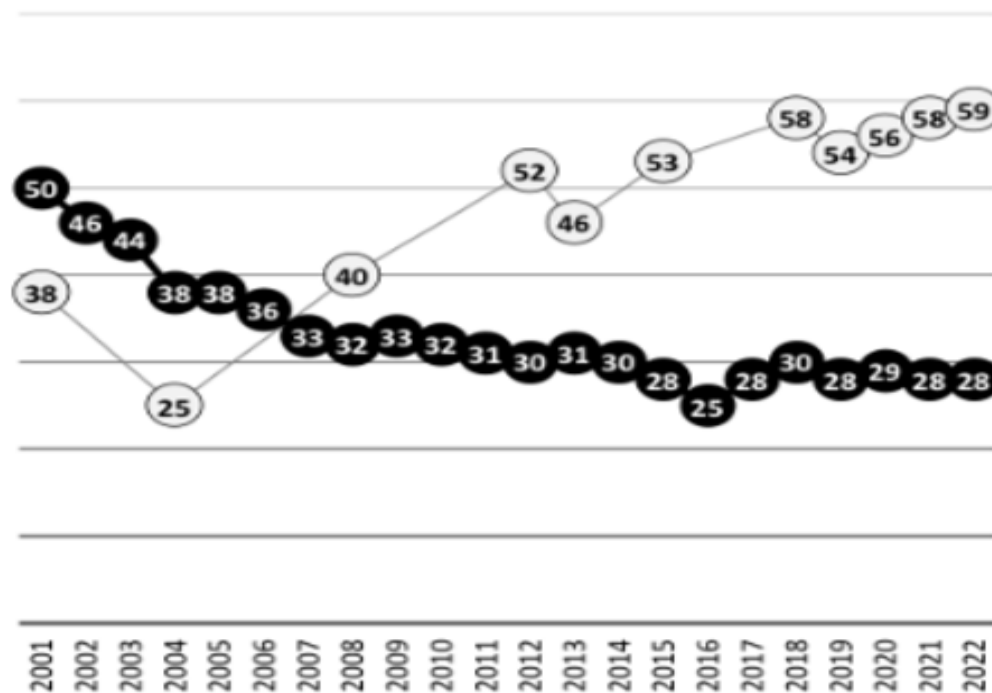
- Public health-motivated alcohol monopolies can unexpectedly be an effective way of treating all products and producers (national and international) equally.
- The demand for equal treatment throughout the country has led to the same availability of a wide range of products – regardless of where in the country you live.



A majority of the population in the Nordic countries still has confidence that a retail monopoly can help reduce alcohol consumption and the harmful effects of alcohol.

One example of increased public support

(Systembolaget still have over 70% of registered sales)



Confidence in Systembolaget (% Very high or fairly high)

Allow the sale of strong beer, wine and spirits in grocery stores (% Very or fairly good suggestions)

Thank you and hope you will
have a constructive discussion
today!