

## Thou doth protest too much: how the minimum unit price influenced retailers

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**Introduction:** The Northern Territory (NT) set a Minimum Unit Price (MUP) of alcohol in 2018. This measure has been vehemently opposed by alcohol retailers, prior to and post implementation of the policy. Despite this, there is no evidence that the MUP negatively impacted the alcohol industry, however exact estimates of the impact are yet to be made. This study aims to estimate the impact of the MUP on retail sales.

**Methods:** The 3-year evaluation of the MUP used retail sales data to display alcohol consumption in the NT by liquor category and price point the year before and after the MUP. This data was extracted from the graphs presented in the report, which was used to estimate the total retail value of alcohol sold before and after the MUP by liquor category. State-wide alcohol wholesaler data was used to evaluate the repetitiveness of the retail data.

**Results:** The retail data used in the study accounts for 31% of the total alcohol market in the NT. Retail data substantially over represents the drop in cask wine consumption (71%) compared to wholesaler data (51%). Revenue from cask wine dropped by 42% after the introduction of the MUP. Despite a 6% decrease in sales of pure alcohol, retailers had an increase in revenue of 1%.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** The MUP appears to have had a negligible impact on the revenue of alcohol retailers in the NT. Retail sales data an invaluable data source for evaluating the impacts of alcohol pricing policy.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** Alcohol retailers should be legislatively required to regularly produce retail sales data. Retailers have demonstrated that this does not impose a high administrative burden on their businesses.

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