

Alcohol-Related Harm Trends in High-income Countries with Declines in Adolescent Consumption

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Context

- Alcohol is a leading cause of preventable death, illness & injury
- Adolescent consumption has declined in high-income countries since the early 2000s (Vashishtha et al., 2020)

Vashishtha R, Pennay A, Dietze P, Marzan MB, Room R, Livingston M. Trends in adolescent drinking across 39 high-income countries: exploring the timing and magnitude of decline. European Journal of Public Health. 2021;31(2):424-31.



Context



Alcohol consumption
vs.
Alcohol-related harms

Context



The current study:

A review of the trends in adolescent alcohol-related harms in countries where consumption has also declined.

Methods – Eligibility Criteria

Population:

- Adolescents aged 10-19 (or including these ages)
- 19 Countries reported via Vashishtha et al. as having a minimum 30% reduction in past-month drinking

Intervention:

- Studies spanning 2005-2019 (mostly)

Outcome:

- Alcohol-related harms = health system-based measure of harm



Methods

- Primary Outcome → Change in rates of alcohol-related harms between the start and end of each study period.
- 10% threshold for determining change

26 Records with 5+ year timespans



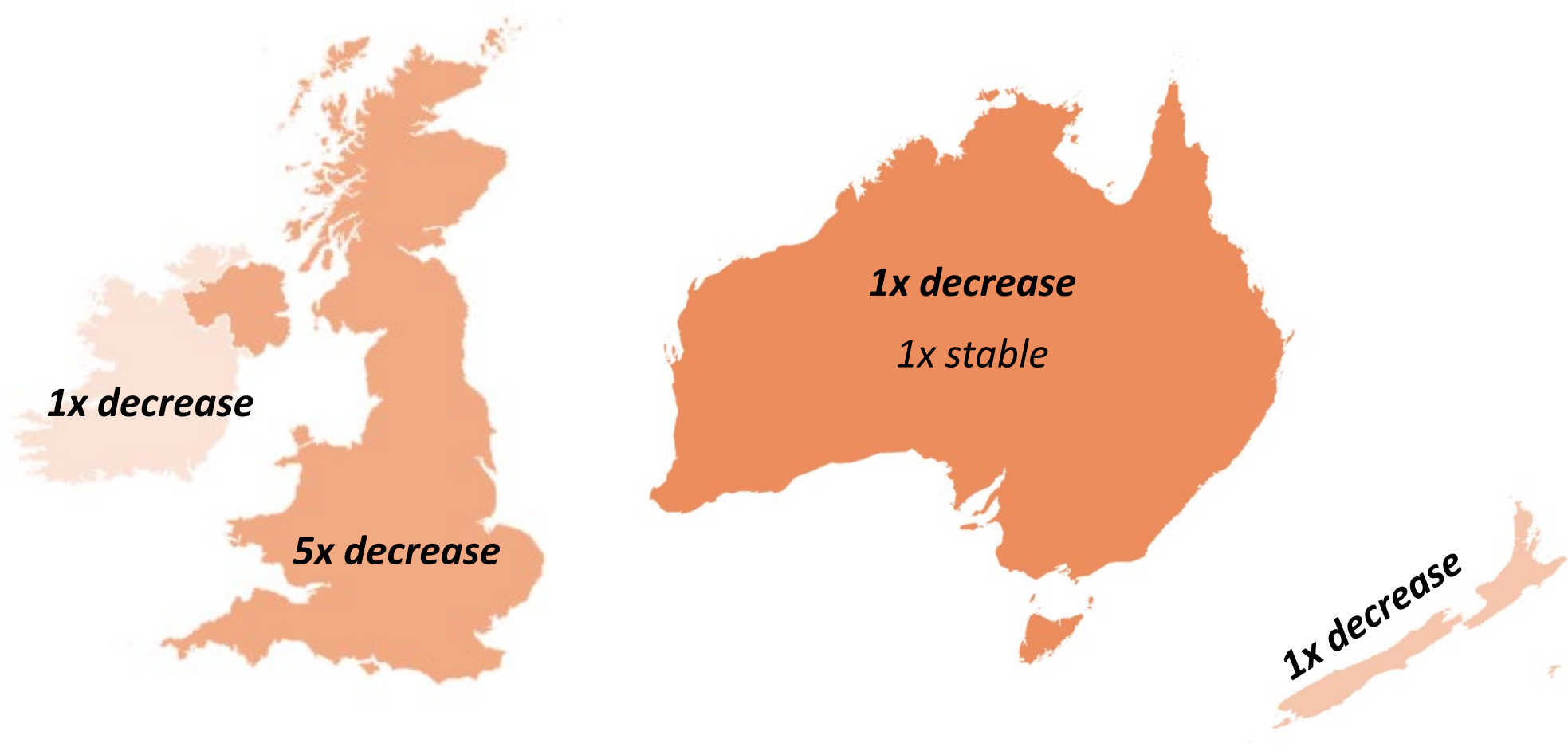
Results – Harm Trends in Anglosphere Countries



Note: n = 9 for studies with timespans over 5 years.

Results – Harm Trends in Anglosphere Countries

Decreases or Stability



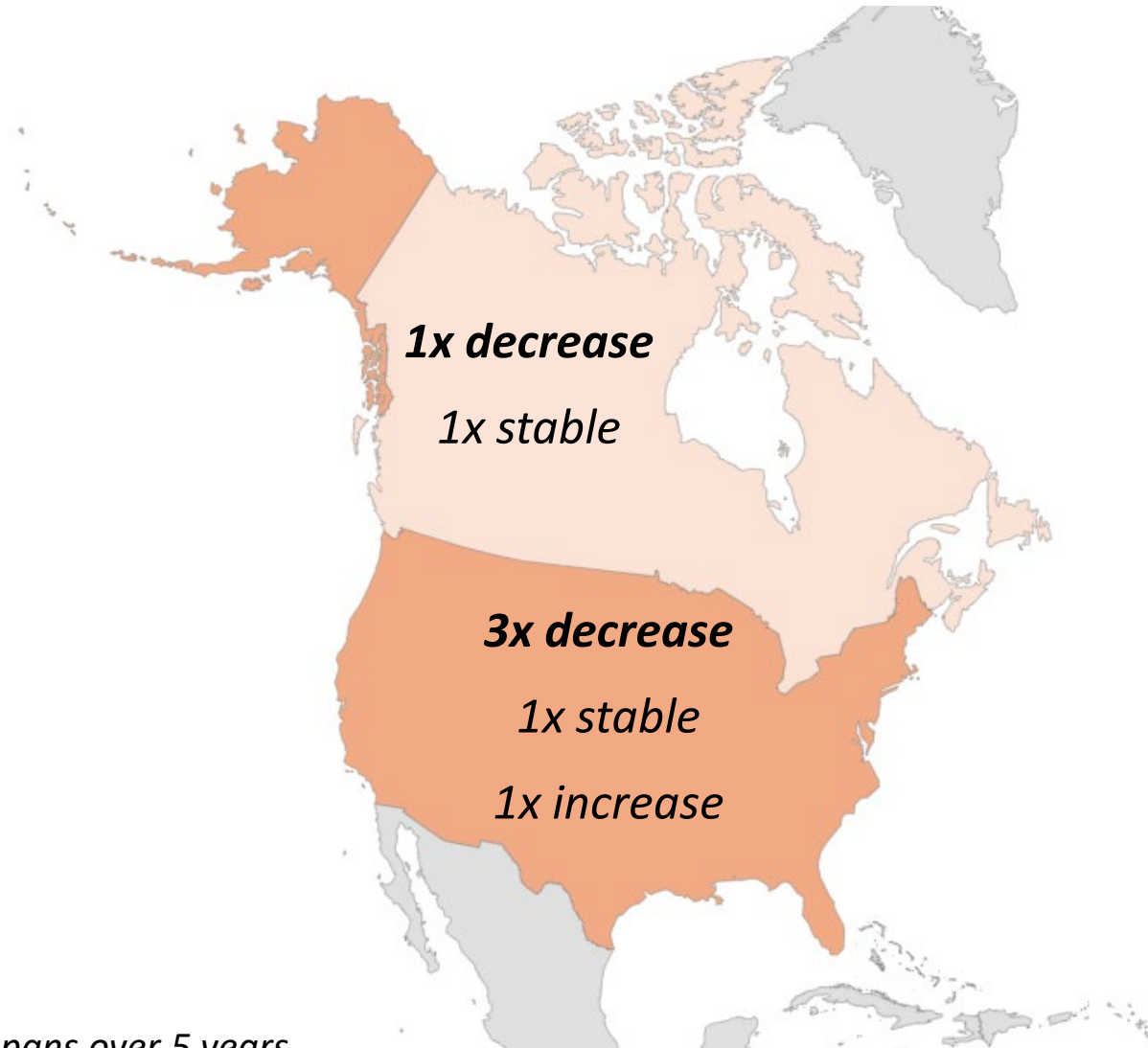
Note: n = 9 for studies with timespans over 5 years.

Results – Harm Trends in North America



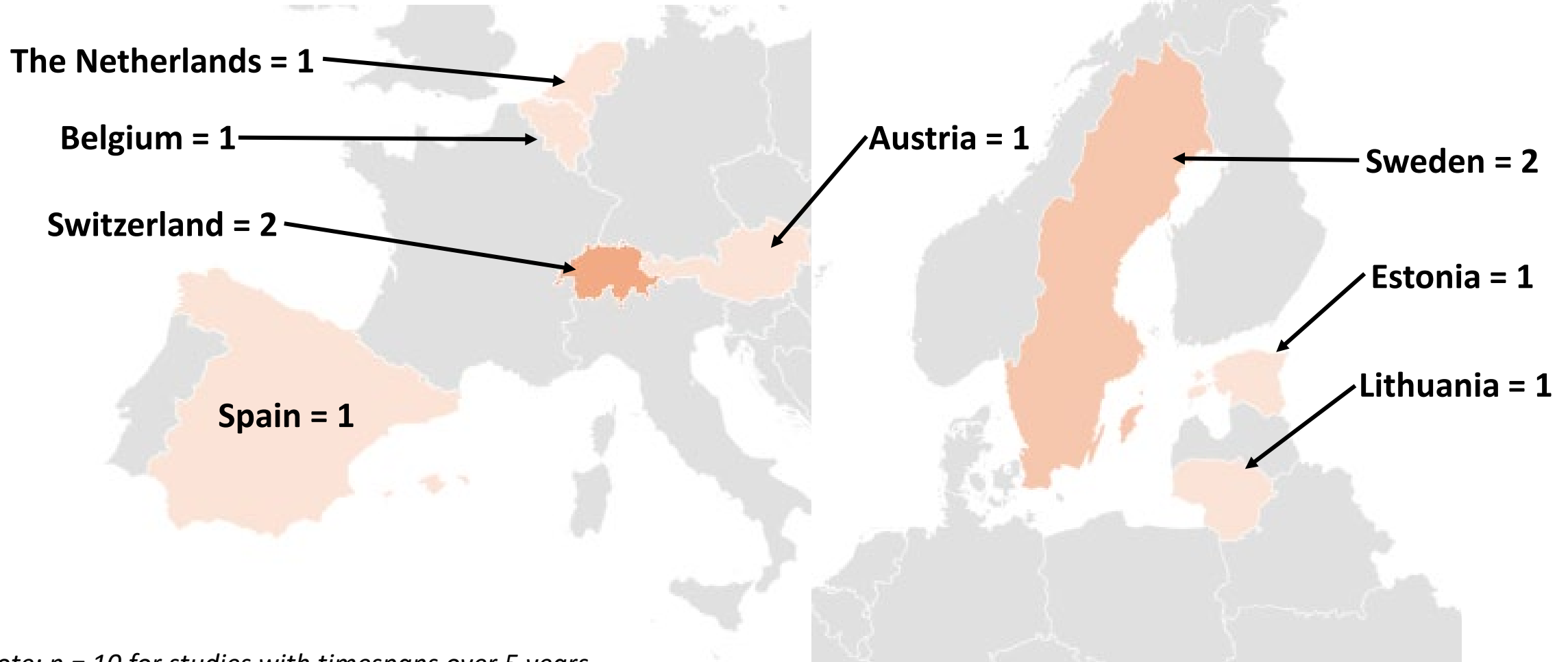
Note: n = 7 for studies with timespans over 5 years.

Results – Harm Trends in North America



Note: n = 7 for studies with timespans over 5 years.

Results – Harm Trends in Europe



Note: n = 10 for studies with timespans over 5 years.

Results – Harm Trends in Europe (n=11)

Country	Trend Direction
Sweden	Decrease
Spain	Decrease
Austria	Decrease
Sweden	Decrease

Country	Trend Direction
Estonia	Stable
Lithuania	Stable
Switzerland	Mixed

Country	Trend Direction
Switzerland	Increase
Belgium	Increase*
The Netherlands	Increase

Key Findings

Anglosphere Region:

- Most consistent evidence for declines in alcohol-related harms

North America Region:

- *Mostly* declining trends in alcohol-related harms
- Possible increases for college populations

Mainland Europe Region:

- Most contradictory & increasing trends
- Possible increases for student populations

Conclusions

Both alcohol-related harms and consumption are declining for adolescents in Anglosphere countries.

To a certain extent, harms are declining in North America too – But there are some subpopulation increases in harms, despite declining consumption rates overall.

Evidence for Europe indicates mixed findings for alcohol-related harms against a backdrop of broadly declining consumption rates.



Thank you!

UPCOMING NDRI EVENTS *(note: registrations are open)*

NDRI webinar

23 November 2024

Drug checking around Australia: A snapshot of services, recent findings, and insights for the festival season

2025 NDRI symposium

4 March 2025

Challenges and opportunities: reducing AOD-related harm in 2025 and beyond *(in-person and online)*

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