

Mediterranean countries – Italy, Spain, France and Greece. The European Union estimates the damages caused by consumption of alcoholic beverages at 125.0 bn EUR per year. In the EU countries, 195,000 people on average die of alcohol-related injuries, liver disease, tumors etc. every year. It is worth pointing out that in the European Union, every seventh death (14 %) in males and every thirteenth (7 %) in females aged 15–64 is related to alcohol consumption, which means about 95,000 males and 25,000 females per year (12 % of all deaths). It is the third most common cause of early deaths and illnesses in the EU, following smoking- and high blood pressure-related diseases. Alcohol is linked to the deaths of young people (15–29 years) at 5 % globally, 25 % in Europe and, unfortunately, 33 % in Eastern Europe. Around 55 million adults in Europe are at risk of alcohol addiction (consuming more than 40 g/day).

Millions of people are at the risk of addiction to alcohol abuse.

Alcohol as a chemical molecule has been accompanying mankind for several millennia. Current data and meta-analysis of studies suggest that consumption of 100–200 g of ethanol per week (15–30 g/day, equivalent to about 0.5 l of beer or 100–200 ml of wine) can be tolerated (not recommended!), on condition that there is a two-day gap between consumption. Alcohol-induced damages are very influential on the health and have profound psycho-social and economic consequences for the society.

## Literature/Suggested Reading

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