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Minimum alcohol pricing: health fascism is back [1]

Written by **Blog Editor** [2] | Monday 14 May 2012

In response to the announcement today on Scotland's minimum alcohol pricing, Sam Bowman, Head of Research at the Adam Smith Institute released the following comment:

"Minimum alcohol pricing is a miserable, Victorian-era measure that explicitly targets the poor and the frugal, leaving the more expensive drinks of the middle classes untouched. It's regressive and paternalistic, treating people as if they're children to be nannied by the government.

"To make things worse, all signs suggest that the minimum price will be successively raised once it's in place. This is what happened in the UK with alcohol and tobacco taxes, which are now among the highest in the world. It's like boiling a frog ? bring in a low minimum price that only affects the most marginalized part of society, the poor, and raise it gradually every year without people noticing.

"The reality is that Britain does not have a drink problem. The definition of "binge drinking" has been redefined so that a grown man drinking more than two pints of lager is considered to be "binging". The number of diseases defined as "alcohol-related" has tripled in the last twenty-five years. In fact, we drink less than we did ten years ago, less than we did one hundred years ago, and far less than we did in the 19th Century. Hysteria about drinking alcohol is a red herring invented by the health lobby. Health fascism is back with a vengeance, and minimum alcohol pricing is just another brick in the wall."

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