

Changes in living conditions and their links to alcohol consumption and drinking patterns in 16 European countries, 1950 to 2000

Introduction

This article is a part of the European Comparative Alcohol Study (ECAS), which aims to evaluate alcohol control policies in the European Union (EU) member states and Norway. The project can be divided in four separate areas. These are: 1) Analyses of alcohol control policies, 2) analyses of overall consumption trends, 3) analyses of drinking patterns and, 4) analyses of alcohol-related harm (Norström 1999, 5-7). The ECAS project covers the period 1950-1995, but in this article we have extended the study period to in-

clude the year 2000. Also, Luxembourg, otherwise excluded from the main ECAS project, is included here.

The aim of this article, as a part of the drinking pattern analysis (Simpura & Karlsson 2001), is to examine how changes in living conditions have affected the formation and dynamics of European drinking habits in the latter part of the 20th century. In alcohol research, there are four major categories of explanatory variables that are used to understand the dynamics of drinking patterns and alcohol consumption:

The European Comparative Alcohol Study (ECAS) is an EU-financed research project, jointly carried out by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) and Alcohol and Drug Research Group at the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES), Finland. This article is based on a more detailed and extensive report on the subject (Karlsson & Simpura forthcoming).

1. Changes in alcohol policy systems (availability, opening hours, age limits, special taxes etc.)
2. Changes in economic factors (prices, incomes, purchasing power etc.)
3. Changes in living conditions (age structure, urbanization, family size, use of time, labour force participation etc.)
4. Changes in cultural patterns (modernization, internationalization, tourism, entertainment and communications etc.)

These factors have been extensively discussed in earlier research (see in particular the ISACE Study¹). The following quotation from an analysis of the period from 1950 to 1975 is illustrative:

The industrial world may be entering a new epoch, not only in terms of drinking, but more broadly, in terms of conditions of living and lifestyles. It is highly probable that great changes will still take place in occupational structure and technology, but these changes are not likely to affect people's lives as pervasively as the process of urbanization and the growth of the tertiary sector <i.e., services, TK & JS>. Insofar as the increase in drinking may be interpreted as a historically conditioned and culturally mediated response to changes in social structure, we have little ground for extrapolating from post-war trends into the future (Mäkelä et al 1981, 101).

The ISACE Study covered three countries that are presently EU member states (Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands). Later, some other countries conducted studies of their own, which, unfortunately, are not easily accessible (e.g. unpublished reports exist on Austria, Italy and Sweden). These works are important for the ECAS Study, but need to be complemented with reviews on the remaining EU countries (and Norway) from 1950 onwards.

As a part of the drinking habits analysis, an effort was made in 1999 to collect as much statistical material as possible on changes in living conditions and cultural patterns in Eu-

rope. The goal was to cover the second part of the 20th century for the current EU member states. The following items were selected for analysis:

1. Urbanization, occupational structure and labour force participation
2. Household size
3. Age structure
4. Motor vehicles, televisions and telephones
5. Patterns of time use (leisure)
6. International tourism and migration

Many of the indicators (urbanization, occupational structure and labour force participation, age structure, patterns of time use, tourism and migration) were also included in the ISACE Study (Mäkelä et al. 1981) and in Sulkunen (1983), a comparative study on alcohol consumption and the transformation of living conditions. In addition to these indicators we have used household sizes and the number of motor vehicles, televisions and telephones as further indicators on changes in living conditions. Changes in one of these indicators are not sufficient as such to explain any greater change in drinking habits. However, when examining the changes that have occurred in all these indicators, their significance becomes more apparent for the dynamics and changes in drinking patterns and the level of alcohol consumption.

In the ECAS Study, alcohol policy systems (Karlsson & Österberg 2001) and economic factors (Leppänen et al. 2001) are considered in separate sub-studies. In this article we will only analyse living conditions and cultural patterns, although we are aware of the close relationship that exists between, for instance, economic factors and changes in living conditions. Alcohol policy systems, economic factors and their relationship to living conditions and changes in drinking habits will be discussed separately in the integration of the different parts of the ECAS project.

Overall features of modernization and changes in living conditions in Europe, 1950-2000

The social context, or the social preconditions, of economic development acquired the label of "modernization" in the second half of the 1950s (Therborn 1995, 361). Modernization is distinguished by a rapid growth of resources, which has not always been linear nor evenly distributed and has included several ups and downs. There have also been considerable differences between different countries, and it is not possible to distinguish a specific European form of modernity (Therborn 1995, 14).

Modern societies create and offer more and more options, anything and everything from goods and services to lifestyles and world-views. At the same time, traditions lose their binding meanings and are transformed to options. Choosing between different options again becomes the task of the individual (Eberle 1996). During the 20th century the structuration of tasks has involved a differentiation, or specialization and de-agrarianization. This has resulted in an overall decline of food-producing tasks, while industrial tasks have been relatively prominent in post-agrarian Europe. According to Therborn (1995, 14), means in modern societies have grown immensely and become more evenly distributed than in pre-modern societies, but at the same time large variations exist both across countries and over time. There are also differences concerning the occupational and industrial structure and its organisation. The resulting diversity is not simply one of structure and performance, but is deeply rooted in the social-institutional framework of each society, mainly as a result of historical processes (Davis 1992).

Another characteristic of modernity has been emancipation in terms of different kinds of rights, such as the emancipation of individ-

uals, workers or women. The increasing number of women occupied, especially in the service sector, serves as a good indicator on this. This has also had a bearing on how people spend their time. More time is being devoted to leisure, and the countries also seem to have become more homogenous in their allocation of time (Gershuny 1993).

Post-World War II Europe has experienced a series of remarkable demographic changes, one of the most prominent features being an ageing population. Also, the proportion of adults living alone decreased between 1950 and 1970, and, correspondingly, the number of married couples reached its highest level around 1970. Since then the development has gone in the opposite direction (Therborn 1995, 37). Diminishing household sizes and a considerable increase in one-person households since the 1970s can be attributed to a shift towards more independent life-styles. Although the demographic development has been similar, there are still considerable differences between the countries (Simons 1992, 57-58).

The emergence and spread of modern means of communication (motor vehicles, aeroplanes) and telecommunication (televisions, telephones, cellular phones) also serve as good indicators of the modernization process. Modern means of transportation have greatly diminished the natural barriers (long distances, geographic obstacles etc.) for traditional communication and transportation. This is also true in telecommunication, as the number of telephones and more recently of cellular phones has skyrocketed. The introduction and spread of the television has also had a great influence on how people interact and socialize with each other.

The latter part of the 20th century is characterized by a growth in international tourism. As people have got more disposable leisure time, tourism has become an increasingly important leisure activity. The movement of

Table 1. Classification of the countries according to the most favoured alcoholic beverage

	Wine countries	Beer countries		Former spirits countries
1950s	France Greece Italy Portugal Spain	Austria Belgium Denmark Germany	Ireland Luxembourg UK Sweden	Finland Netherlands Norway
1960s	France Greece Italy Portugal Spain	Austria Belgium Denmark Germany	Ireland Luxembourg Netherlands UK	Finland Norway Sweden
1970s	France Greece Italy Portugal Spain	Austria Belgium Denmark Finland Germany	Ireland Luxembourg Norway UK	Sweden
1980s	France Greece Italy Portugal Spain	Austria Belgium Denmark Finland Germany	Ireland Luxembourg Norway Sweden UK	
1990s	France Greece Italy Portugal Spain	Austria Belgium Denmark Finland Germany	Ireland Luxembourg Norway Sweden UK	

different ethnic groups within Europe has also been lively. Ethnic homogeneity in Europe peaked in around 1950. The historical trend has since been reversed by labour scarcity in the booming European economies and by refugee flows both within and from outside Europe (Therborn 1995).

Classification of countries

We have divided the countries included in the ECAS study in three different subgroups according to the most favoured type of alcoholic beverage in each country. This division into *wine countries*, *beer countries*, and *former spirits countries* is widely used in alcohol research

(see e.g. Mäkelä et al. 1981; Sulkunen 1983).

In order to group the countries in different categories we must examine how the consumption structure by type of most favoured beverage has developed from 1950 onwards (Table 1.). The classification is based on the Brewers' Association of Canada's figures on recorded alcohol consumption by type of beverage (Hurst et al. 1997).

In 1950 five of the 16 countries now under study were classified as wine countries. These were the Mediterranean EU countries and France. Seven countries were classified as beer countries including the Central European EU countries (except France and the Netherlands) and Denmark. Four countries were at the time classified as spirits countries, that is, Fin-

land, Norway, Sweden and, somewhat surprisingly, the Netherlands. In 1950 as much as 71 per cent of the alcohol consumed in the Netherlands came from spirits. Ten years later the Dutch percentage on spirits had dropped dramatically, while beer had taken over as the most favoured beverage. In 1970 the wine countries remained the same but the number of beer countries had increased to ten. At that time Sweden was the only country that could be classified as a spirits country, which it also remained until the late 1970s. In 1995 eleven countries were classified as beer countries and the remaining five countries as wine countries.

Based on the development of the most favoured beverage we have arrived at the following classification. All the Mediterranean countries, including France, go in the category of wine countries. The beer countries consist of the Central European countries and Denmark, and the third category, the former spirits countries, is made up of Finland, Norway and Sweden. Classified as a spirits country in the 1950s, the Netherlands is counted among the beer countries in this article.

Statistical material and methods

For statistical material on living conditions, we have tried to use sources providing comparable data over time and between the different countries. To ensure maximum comparability we have mostly used statistics compiled by the United Nations (UN) and other UN affiliated organisations, such as the ILO. Other statistical sources that we have used are the National and International Tourism Statistics compiled by the OECD and the Statistical Yearbook of Sweden, which contains very detailed statistics on several European countries.

Finding comparable and comprehensive statistics proved, however, hard and sometimes even impossible. The long study period

and the fact that 16 quite heterogeneous countries are included in the study inevitably leads to incomparability of statistical data both over time and also between the different countries.

Despite the shortcomings of the data, the statistics provide a comprehensive picture on the development of living condition indicators in the current EU member states. Still, the shortcomings of the data material mean that we cannot perform any elaborate statistical tests on the relationship between changes in living conditions and changes in the level of alcohol consumption. Based on the emerging trends and changes, we can, however, analyse and discuss the effects that changes in living conditions might have on the drinking habits and levels of overall alcohol consumption in the different EU member states.

Changes in living conditions and drinking habits in 16 European countries

Urbanization, occupational structure and labour force participation²

The trend concerning the degree of urbanization has been quite similar in all the countries (Table 2). In the 1950s and 1960s, the majority of the countries were predominantly rural. This changed, however, during the 1960s, and in 1970 all countries except Portugal were classified as urban. The degree of urbanization increased until the 1980s after which the trend has levelled out. The lowest degree of urbanization is, not surprisingly, found amongst the wine countries. An obvious explanation is that the agricultural sector is larger in the wine-growing countries than in the other country categories.

The highest degree of urbanization is found in the beer countries, with Ireland and Austria showing a slower pace of urbanization than

Table 2. Urban and rural population in 1950-1995, per cent*

Country	1950/51		1960/61		1970/71		1980/81		1990/91		1995	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Austria	49	51	50	50	52	48	55	45	65	35	56⁴	44
Belgium	63⁵	37	66	34	87	13	95⁴	5	97⁴	3	97⁴	3
Denmark	49	51	47	53	67	33	84	16	85	15	85⁴	15
Finland	32	68	38	62	51	49	60	40	62	38	64	36
France ¹	59	41	63	37	70	30	73	27	74	26	74	26
Germany	71	29	..	..	80⁴	20	83⁴	17	84⁴	16	87⁴	13
FRG	71	29	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
GDR	69	31	72	28	74	26	76	24	76	24	..	..
Greece	37	63	43	57	65	35	58	42	59	41	65⁴	35
Ireland	42	58	46	54	52	48	56	44	57	43	58⁴	42
Italy	45	55	48	52	64⁴	36	67⁴	33	69⁴	31	67⁴	33
Luxembourg	58⁵	42	62	38	68	32	78	22	85	15	89⁴	11
Netherlands ²	55⁵	45	80	20	78	22	88	12	89	11	89⁴	11
Norway	32	68	32	68	66	34	71	29	73	27	73⁴	27
Portugal ²	31	69	23	77	26⁴	74	30	70	34⁴	66	36⁴	64
Spain ³	37	63	43	57	55	45	64	36	64	36	77 ⁴	23
Sweden	44	66	73	37	81	19	83⁴	17	83	17	83⁴	17
UK	81	19	80	20	78	22	88	12	89⁴	11	89⁴	11

* the majority is marked with bold print

.. data not available

¹1950 data from 1954, 1960 data from 1962 and 1995 data from 1993

² Not strictly comparable due to differences in definition of "urban".

³ (Spain). 1980 data from 1978.

⁴ WHO Health for All Data Base. European Region

⁵ (Belgium, Luxembourg). 1950 data from 1947

Source: Miettinen A. 1997; UN Demographic Yearbook 1970, 1963, 1952, 1997; UN Statistical Yearbook 1990/91

the rest of the beer countries. In the former spirits countries we notice that Sweden has had a very high degree of urbanization, resembling the United Kingdom in this respect. Finland clearly deviates from the other Nordic countries in having a relatively low urbanization degree throughout the whole study period. This is explained by the late industrialization and the relatively large agricultural sector.

In the 1950s the employed population in Europe was fairly evenly divided between the three sectors (agriculture, industry and service) of economic activity. There were, however, also great differences between the countries. Countries that in the 1950s had, and indeed still have, the largest agricultural sector

are the Mediterranean countries and Ireland. Austria and Finland have also had a fairly high degree of the economically active population working in the agricultural sector. The rapid growth of the service sector is a common feature for all the countries. Women's participation in the labour force has also increased considerably since the 1950s. Their share in the European labour force has risen to over 40 per cent much because of the increased importance of the service sector, which today accounts for almost 80 per cent of the female employment in Europe (Miettinen 1997, 49).

Urbanization, industrialization, the rapid growth of the service sector, higher female la-

bour force participation as well as a diminishing agricultural sector are common features for all the studied countries. If we are to assume that changes in living conditions have an impact on the drinking habits should then not also the drinking habits have become more uniform? Not necessarily. As we can see from Figure 1 the overall level of alcohol consumption in the wine countries has been decreasing throughout the study period. This is true especially for France, where alcohol consumption decreased from almost 20 litres per capita in the 1950s to approximately 12 litres per capita in 1995. A similar pattern is evident in the other wine countries, with the exception of Greece. Both the beer countries and the former spirits countries show, however, an overall increase in the level of alcohol consumption. Based on this, we can conclude that the correlation between changes in urbanization and occupational structure and changes in the level of alcohol consumption are different depending on which category the countries belong to.

In France, for instance, the increase in urbanization coincided with a remarkable decrease in the level of alcohol consumption. The reduction in alcohol consumption can partly be explained by an increased availability of clean drinking water in the 1950s and 1960s and by changes in the people's lifestyles and living conditions (Hurst et al. 1997). It also coincided with the movement of population from rural to urban regions and with the "industrialization" of viticulture. Although wine consumption is considered to be a part of everyday life in the whole of France, there are considerable differences in the drinking habits between different regions. The decrease in alcohol consumption is mainly explained by a dramatic decline in wine consumption, especially in the French wine-growing regions, where also the consumption levels are higher (Moser 1992, 103). The conclusion can be drawn that when the rural population

migrated to the cities they adopted new and different lifestyles, new careers and at the same time new drinking habits, too.

In Finland, the situation is totally different. Unlike in France, alcohol consumption in urban Finland has been on a substantially higher level than in rural areas (see e.g. Simpura 1987). When Finns moved to the cities in great numbers in the 1960s and 1970s, they, too, adopted new lifestyles and new drinking habits. In their case, however, this resulted in a substantial increase in the level of alcohol consumption, not a decrease as in France. With this example in mind it is fairly easy to see that urbanization and a diminishing agricultural sector have probably had an effect on the European drinking habits and also that the effect varies from one country to another depending on the country's historical, economic and cultural background.

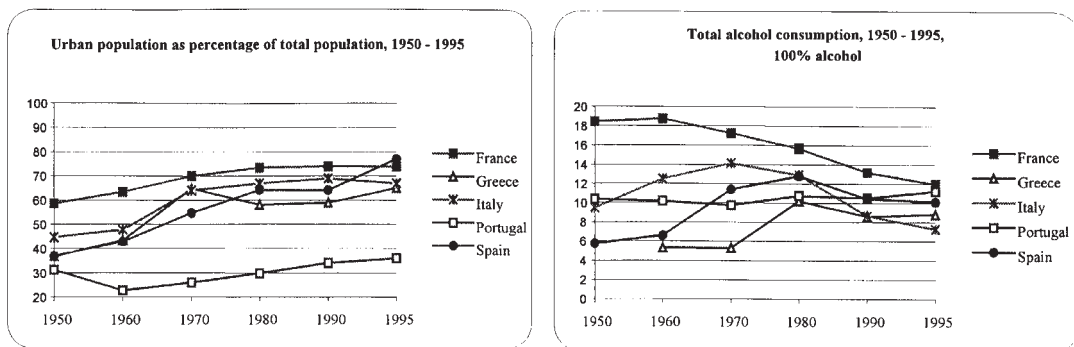
Household sizes³

The average size of households is diminishing in all EU countries (Table 3). There are, however, also clear differences between the countries. The largest households are mainly found amongst the wine countries, such as Spain, Portugal and Greece. However, the household size statistics is headed by Ireland, which has also had the highest proportion of children born to single-parent households. This can of course be explained by Catholicism, which does not allow the use of birth control. Other countries where single-parent families are common are Belgium, the United Kingdom and Austria. And yet, the most common family type is still one where both parents live with their children (Miettinen 1997).

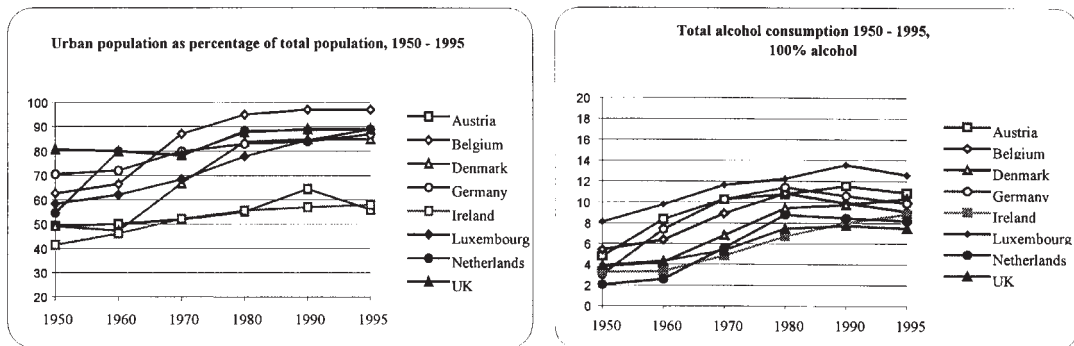
How can changes in household size affect the dynamics of drinking habits? Diminishing household sizes hardly causes people to change their drinking habits. The fact that we can distinguish a trend towards smaller household size across Europe can, however, be seen

Figure 1. Urban population as percentage of total population vs. level of total alcohol consumption, 15 EU countries (+Norway), 1950-1995

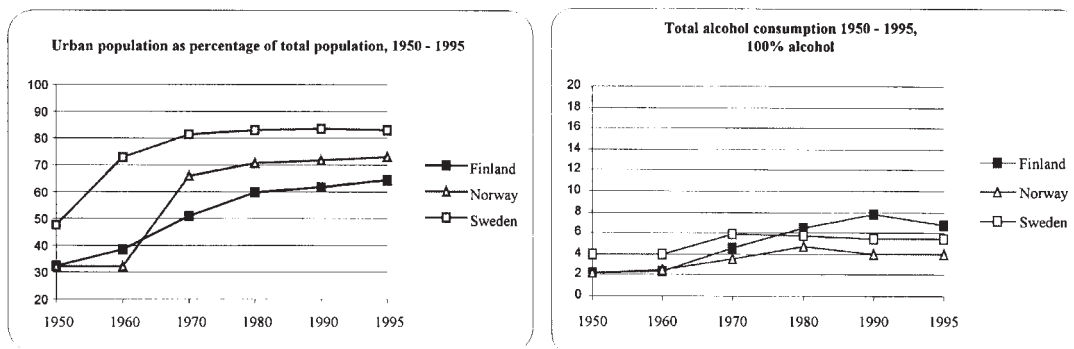
Wine countries



Beer countries



Former spirits countries



Source: Miettinen A. 1997; UN Demographic Yearbook 1970, 1963, 1952; UN Demographic Yearbook 1997: UN Statistical Yearbook 1990/91. WHO Health for All Data Base 1999; Hurst et al. 1997

Table 3. Average size of households 1960-1990/91

Country	1960	1970	1980/82	1990/91
Austria	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.5
Belgium	3.0 ²	3.0	2.7	2.5
Denmark	3.0	2.7	2.4	2.2
Finland	3.3	3.0	2.6	2.4
France	3.1 ¹	3.1	2.7	2.6
Germany	..	..	..	2.5
FRG	2.9 ²	2.7	2.5	..
GDR	2.5 ³	2.6	..	..
Greece	3.8 ²	3.4	3.1	3.0
Ireland	4.0 ⁴	3.9	3.6	3.3
Italy	3.6	3.4	3.0	2.8
Luxembourg	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.6
Netherlands	3.6	3.2	2.7	2.4
Norway	3.1	3.0	2.7	2.4
Portugal	3.9	3.7	3.3	3.1
Spain	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.3
Sweden	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.1
United Kingdom	3.1 ¹	2.9	2.7	2.5
All countries average	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.6

.. data not available

¹ 1960 data from 1962

² 1960 data from 1961

³ 1960 data from 1964; ⁴ 1960 data from 1966

Source: Miettinen A. 1997; UN Demographic Yearbook 1963; UN Demographic Yearbook 1962; UN Demographic Yearbook 1968

as an indicator of changes in the social and cultural structures of people's lives. The correlation between alcohol consumption and household size differs depending on which category the country belongs to. Both the former spirits countries and beer countries show a similar correlation, i.e. the smaller the household sizes, the higher the overall level of alcohol consumption.

In the wine countries, however, the correlation has been the opposite. The changes that have occurred in the social and family structures have also had an impact on meal routines. Wine drinking over family dinner is still a common feature in the wine countries although it does not occur as often as before. Instead, other beverages, such as beer or mineral water have substituted wine at the meal.

In Italy, for instance, about 91 per cent of the people drink tap water or mineral water with each meal, while only 40 per cent have wine over lunch and 35 per cent with their evening meal. The fact that wine has lost its popularity as a meal drink has undoubtedly lowered the level of alcohol consumption, keeping in mind how much wine consumption contributes to the overall level of alcohol consumption in Italy (Hurst et al. 1997).

Age structure

The average age of the population in the EU member states has risen during the whole study period. Fewer children and increased longevity have affected the population structure in all European countries. Since the

1970s the dependency ratio⁴ has diminished, mainly due to the decreasing number of child-births. During the past decade, however, the dependency ratio has started to rise again in the Nordic and Central European countries. In the near future the ratio can be expected to start to rise also in the Southern European countries and Ireland, when the proportion of the population aged 65 or over begins to increase (Miettinen 1997).

The development in the age structure has been very homogenous in the Nordic countries. Among the wine countries, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain constitute a uniform group, with France as somewhat of a deviant case. Countries such as France, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands seem in some aspects closer to the former spirits countries than to the Central European beer countries (Miettinen 1997, 7).

Age is closely related to individual patterns of drinking. Older generations more often tend to maintain traditional drinking patterns. The age structure seems, however, to have had little direct effect on per capita alcohol consumption figures (Mäkelä et al. 1981, 27). There is not much that can be said about the relationship between changes in the age structure and changes in the level of alcohol consumption, based on the information we have gathered. Studies show (see e.g. Simpura 1987 and Mustonen et al. 1999) that throughout the study period alcohol consumption in the former spirits countries has been on a higher level in the younger age groups and vice versa. In the United Kingdom, the consumption level in different age categories resembles the situation in the Nordic countries. The situation in Austria or Germany is quite the opposite, with age groups over 40 years having the highest level of alcohol consumption (Kraus & Bauernfeind 1998; Uhl & Springer 1996).

There is very little data available from the wine countries regarding this issue. According

to Italian studies made by Osservatorio Permanente sui Giovani e l'Alcool, age groups between 45 to 54 years have had the highest alcohol consumption during the whole study period, consuming approximately twice as much alcohol as those in the age group from 15 to 24 years. This applies to both men and women. The situation in Spain has differed somewhat from that in Italy. According to a Spanish study from 1980 (Enriquez de Salamanca 1984), the highest level of alcohol consumption was found in the age group 30 to 49 years.

Motor vehicles, television, and telecommunication

In the following we will examine changes that have occurred in the number of motor vehicles, television sets and telephones since the 1950s (Table 4.). These three items will serve as indicators of the modernization process by representing three kinds of means of interaction and communication.

The number of motor vehicles has been rising in all countries throughout the study period. This is especially true for the former spirits countries where the development has been almost identical. Among the beer countries, Ireland is once again the deviant. The reason mainly lies in the slower economic development and the slower pace of urbanization than in the rest of the beer countries. Amongst the wine countries, Portugal and Greece deviate the most from the rest of the group, the reasons being much the same as for Ireland.

The number of television sets and telephones betray a similar pattern. In the case of the current EU member states the most prosperous and technologically advanced countries have topped the statistics, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. Countries lagging behind in this development are the ones with the slowest economic development (Portugal,

Table 4. Motor vehicles, televisions and telephones per 1,000 inhabitants, 1950-1995

Country	1950		1960		1970		1980		1990		1995							
	Mot. ¹	TV ⁵	Tel ⁹	Mot. ²	TV	Tel ¹⁰	Mot.	TV ⁶	Tel.	Mot. ³	TV	Tel.	Mot.	TV	Tel.			
Austria	8	1	55	48	16 ⁶	93	178	192	193	309	296	401	421	481	589			
Belgium	38	16	75	78	43 ⁶	118	238	216	211	335	395	369	420	452	551			
Denmark	28	10 ⁶	161	78	74 ⁶	224	270	266	339	330	362	641	369	535	566			
Finland	9	..	78	36	7 ⁶	129	175	221	249	277	321	497	442	497	535			
France	40	10	56	112	30 ⁶	91	307	201 ⁷	172	371	297	460	500	406	623 ¹³			
Germany	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	511	..	..	
FRG	16	14 ⁶	53	65	61 ⁶	100	248	272	225	389	370	464	..	403	680			
GDR	..	4 ⁶	..	..	34 ⁶	71	79	282	123	168	342	189	..	788	239 ¹¹	
Greece	1	..	10	4	..	22	39	201 ⁷	117	128	156	291	249	196	468			
Ireland	34	1	25	56	14	52	151	172	104	222	225 ⁸	197	279 ⁴	276	265 ¹³			
Italy	9	8 ⁶	24	34	32 ⁶	67	207	181	171	312	234	338	477	263	533			
Luxembourg	37	0	75	103	15	..	306	208	..	479	245 ⁸	..	516	..	..	
Netherlands	16	9	70	40	47 ⁶	132	217	223 ⁷	260	316	296	485	405	495	661 ¹¹			
Norway	2	0	133	54	2 ⁶	194	232	220	294	332	294	453	457	355	503			
Portugal	8	..	16	15	..	40	69	38	78	133	141	138	220	177	263			
Spain	3	0	21	7	5 ⁶	54	94	174	136	224	252	316	361	396	400 ¹²			
Sweden	45	2 ⁶	218	143	81 ⁶	340	306	310	537	368	380	797	457 ⁴	392	684			
UK	47	128	101	95	194 ⁶	150	239	293	267	307	404	477	405	435	524			
Average	21	14	73	61	44	117	197	216	217	294	295	407	406	409	505	446	452	500

.. data not available

¹ 1950 data from 1952² 1960 data from 1959³ 1980 data from 1979⁴ 1990 data from 1989⁵ 1950 data from 1955⁶ Number of licenses⁷ 1970 data from 1969⁸ 1980 data from 1979⁹ 1950 data from 1949¹⁰ 1960 data from 1959¹¹ 1990 data from 1988¹² 1990 data from 1987¹³ 1990 data from 1985

Source: Statistisk årsbok för Sverige 1950-1952, 1959-61, 1972, 1981, 1994, 1999; Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1993; Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1997; Statistisk årsbok för Sverige 1956-58, 1959-61, 1972, 1984, 1999; Televisiönättilasto 1991, 1996

Greece and Ireland). The increase in the number of telephone connections seems, however, to have levelled out at the beginning of the 1990s. A possible explanation to this is the introduction of cellular phones in the late 1980s, especially in the Nordic countries.

In the last couple of decades the differences between the countries regarding the number of motor vehicles, televisions and telephones have become smaller. This development indicates that the economic and technological gap between the countries has narrowed down and that these items are no longer perceived as luxury items, but rather as everyday necessities. The changes must be seen as a part of a greater socio-economic change that has had a profound impact on the formation of our everyday lives.

What kind of impact might technological breakthroughs have had on people's lives and more specifically on their drinking habits? The habit of travelling by car between the home and the working place has, for instance, had an impact on drinking during or immediately after the workday. Technological innovations have undoubtedly affected the way in which people interact and socialize with each other and how they spend their time. As there is a close link between drinking and sociability (Partanen 1991, 217), the introduction of new forms of telecommunication, like television, also affects the people's way to socialize and therefore has a bearing on their drinking habits. Television has profoundly changed people's daily routines and could be regarded as an alternative to going to the theatre or the cinema. The increase in the number of telephones has also had an impact on sociability by making it possible for people to communicate with each other without having to be in the same place. It is too early to say how sociability and drinking habits will be influenced by the rising numbers of mobile phones. They will, however, allow people to move and socialize more freely and still be reachable by phone.

It is impossible to know exactly how these modern technological innovations have affected drinking habits in different countries. What we do know for sure is that these innovations of technology have greatly influenced our use of time.

Patterns of time use

The same problems that apply to most demographic data material also apply to data concerning patterns of time use. The availability of comparative statistical data, especially from the 1950s and 1960s, is poor and very hard to obtain. Nevertheless, we are able to form an overview of the changes that have occurred in the pattern of time use in Europe since the 1950s-60s (Gershuny 1993).

The countries have become increasingly similar in their allocation of time for work and leisure, resulting in shorter paid working hours for men and shorter domestic working time for women (Gershuny 1993, 582). At the same time women's participation in the working life has increased, much because of the growth of the service sector. As the paid working hours have decreased, there has been an increase in disposable leisure time (Gershuny 1992, 10-11). What people do in their increased leisure time is to a great extent determined by the socio-cultural heritage of the different countries, including religion and family values. In the Catholic Mediterranean countries, for instance, communal religious celebrations have traditionally had a prominent role in the people's leisure patterns. This is true even today despite the decline in religious belief. On the other hand, the United Kingdom, mainly Protestant and with a history of early urbanization and industrialization, lacks this dimension of sociability in leisure patterns (Clark 1992, 240-241). In the latter part of the 20th century we have also witnessed a commercializing of leisure. Activities like outdoor recreation, sporting activities etc.

have become industrialized and commercialized, both in terms of the production of commodities used in leisure activities and in the services for those interested in these activities. At the same time leisure has become more private. Activities that used to be undertaken in larger social groups have become functions of the individuals.

The increase in leisure time has undoubtedly influenced the drinking habits and the level of drinking by increasing the amount of drinking occasions (Sulkunen 1983; Mäkelä et al. 1981, 27). This assumption is further supported by the fact that industrialization, urbanization and changes in the nature of working discipline has secluded drinking from the work place. As a result, drinking has become a leisure activity and a symbol of free time. In the Nordic and English-speaking countries, in particular, drinking could be seen as symbolizing the shift from work to leisure. In the wine countries where wine has had an important role as a meal drink and source of nutrition the effect has not been as pronounced (Mäkelä et al. 1981, 28-29).

According to Clark (1992, 249), the most essential qualities of leisure include sociability and the opportunities for it. Because of the strong link between drinking and sociability, drinking has a central role in people's leisure time. Going to a pub after a football match in England and having an after-ski party in the Italian Alps are good examples of the link between drinking, sociability and leisure. Drinking has become an integrated part of leisure and also more freely available at different leisure activities over the study period, at least in the Nordic countries (Mäkelä et al. 1981, 25). The drinking habits in the beer drinking Central European and the wine drinking Mediterranean countries have also been influenced by the changes in living conditions and the changes in patterns of time use. To identify these changes exactly is, however, difficult. If not else, it seems that drink-

ing has become more accepted in different kinds of social settings and situations than before (Mäkelä et al. 1981, 30).

International tourism and migration

Comparative data for tourism flows to and from different EU member countries is very hard, if not impossible, to obtain due to considerable differences in the methods employed by countries to collect international tourism statistics (Latham 1998, 45). The same applies to migration statistics (Salt 1981, 135-136).

Since 1950, cross-border tourism in Europe has grown immensely. The average annual growth of tourist arrivals in Europe was from 1950 to 1960 almost 20 per cent. The growth has since decreased somewhat, rising to 12.5 per cent from 1960 to 1970, and 7.3 per cent from 1970 to 1980. From 1980 to 1990 the annual growth rate had decreased to approximately 4 per cent. In spite of this, Europe accounted for approximately 60 per cent of all tourist arrivals in the world in 1994 (Latham 1998, 45-47). There were seven EU member states among the world's top 15 destinations for international tourism⁵ and eight EU member states in the top fifteen generators of international tourism⁶ (Latham 1998). Over 50 per cent of the tourist arrivals in Europe are made by Europeans themselves and mostly by people from the EU member states (Latham 1995). Countries such as Spain, Greece, Italy and Austria have economies highly dependent upon the tourist industry (Clark 1992).

The breakthrough of mass tourism in Europe occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. Contributing factors included improved communications and improved economics. People in the Nordic countries, too, until now quite secluded from the rest of Europe, began to make more frequent holiday trips to the Central European and Mediterranean countries.

People from the Central European countries travelled, and indeed still travel, mostly to their neighbouring countries and the Mediterranean countries (Italy, Spain). The tourist flows from the Mediterranean countries are directed mostly to countries in the same region and also to the Central European countries (Germany, France). The main travel destinations for tourists from the Nordic countries are the Mediterranean countries (Spain, Portugal, and Italy) and, of course, the other Nordic countries (National and International Tourism Statistic 1974 - 1985).

The migratory tradition in Western Europe is very strong. Since World War II the principal flows of migration have been between the Mediterranean countries and the more industrialized economies of Northwest and Central Europe (Salt 1981, 134-135). The labour force migrations from the Mediterranean are a long-established trend of the European migration scene. In the 1950s-60s the migration flows were especially rapid from Italy (to Switzerland and France) and also within the Nordic countries, especially from Finland (to Sweden). Characteristic for this time period was also the West German demand for "Gasterbeiter" from Italy and from outside Europe, from North Africa and Turkey in particular.

The 1973 oil crisis slowed down the migration flows in Europe. Worker emigration rates fell sharply and only Italian workers were able to move freely. Migration from the relatively underdeveloped South European countries to the more developed Central and Northwestern European countries continued, although not as rapid as before (Salt 1981, 137-139). Migration in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s roughly followed the same pattern. The amount of asylum seekers has, however, increased dramatically in the 1990s, much because of the crises in nearby regions. The intra-European (EU) migration flows will continue in the future and possibly even increase because of the single European market and

intra-European labour mobility (Trends in international migration 1992, 34-35).

What kind of impact may mass tourism and migration have on people's drinking habits then? The increased interaction of people coming from different cultural backgrounds has made it easier for them to discover and adopt new food recipes and alcoholic beverages. A case in point is English food and drink that has undergone a transformation since the beginning of mass tourism to mainland Europe, with vastly increased consumption of wine and garlic (Clark 1992, 243). Tourism and drinking are also linked because of the close connection between drinking and sociability. Every year, many people choose to travel abroad as a part of a tourist group not just to see the sights but also for the enforced intimacy and social contact involved in a two-week trip to the Mediterranean (Clark 1992, 249).

The main flows of intra-European migration and tourism go in opposite directions. Migration may also have an impact on the drinking habits. For instance, migrants may introduce the native population to new drinking styles (Mäkelä et al. 1981, 29) or the migrants are introduced to new drinking habits by the native population and may eventually adopt them as their own. In addition, mass tourism and migration have increased the interaction between people from different cultures both within and outside Europe. The increased human contacts have also made people more adaptive to the introduction of new habits and traditions which have been foreign to their own culture (Clark 1992, 242-243).

Discussion and concluding remarks

The development of living conditions in post-World War II Europe shows that the same trends have emerged in all the current EU

member states. Some of the most important changes we recognize are increasing urbanization, de-agrarianization and the emergence of the service sector. The degree of urbanization is closely linked to changes in the occupational structure and labour force participation. It is therefore not surprising to discover that the two go hand in hand. The growing importance of wage labour has had a fundamental effect on life styles and consumption. It has widened the gap between production and consumption, modified our use of time as well as affected human relationships in general (Sulkunen 1983, 278). The economic development of the countries can also explain some of the differences in the urbanization figures and in the numbers of modern means of communication such as television sets and motor vehicles. Migration and tourism flows are also closely linked with the economic situation in different countries.

While we can distinguish similar patterns in the development of living conditions in the EU member states, this is not the case in the development of alcohol consumption. Overall alcohol consumption in the wine countries has been decreasing, while the consumption levels have been on the rise in the beer and former spirits countries. We can only speculate if this development is going to continue or stabilize in the future and lead to a homogenisation of the consumption levels. As the decrease in alcohol consumption in the wine countries is primarily due to a decline in wine consumption, especially in the rural areas, the changes in living conditions such as urbanization have undoubtedly contributed to the decreased consumption levels. It also seems that modernization processes such as de-agrarianization, the emergence of new means of communication and changes in the patterns of time use have decreased the consumption levels in the wine countries. In contrast, in the former spirits countries and to some extent in the beer countries, too, the same processes

seem to have led to an increase in the level of alcohol consumption (Simpura 1998, 1301-1302).

Also, we can distinguish a qualitative homogenisation of drinking patterns in the EU member states (Simpura 1998, 1302): the general trends as to the preferred beverages are very similar. Beer has increased its popularity in the traditional wine and spirits drinking countries and although its popularity has decreased slightly in some of the traditional beer-drinking countries, it is still the most favoured beverage by far. The consumption structure in the wine producing Mediterranean countries and France is today, however, still largely dominated by wine, whereas in Greece and Spain beer and spirits have become more popular, somewhat closing in on wine's position as the most favoured alcoholic beverage.

There is no direct "functional" link between the living conditions and drinking habits, at least not at an individual level. The links are collective and the process through which alcohol gets its new use values is a cultural one, even though it is the living conditions that determine the character of the new use values (Sulkunen 1983). Therefore, the effects that changes in living conditions have on people's drinking habits have varied considerably from country to country depending on the countries' historical and, more importantly, cultural backgrounds. It seems that countries which are predominantly Roman Catholic (or Greek Orthodox) are more patriarchal and have more "traditional" views on family values and gender roles, which might also have a bearing on the formation of drinking habits. On the religious map of the EU we can easily identify the Roman Catholic countries in the southern parts of Europe. Luxembourg, Austria, Belgium and, of course, Ireland are predominantly Roman Catholic, too. The Netherlands and Germany do not have a dominant religion, while the United Kingdom and the Northern European countries are predomi-

nantly Protestant (Anglican and Lutheran) (Therborn 1995).

Finally, we can conclude that the modernization process in the EU member states shows clear similarities and that modernization in fact emerges as a broad common denominator across Europe. It seems, however, that the modernization of drinking habits has different features in different countries. In the former spirits countries, for instance, modernization has been used to explain increasing alcohol consumption, whereas the situation in the wine countries has been the opposite (Simpura 1998, 1303). The changes in living conditions - which we can see as part of the modernization processes - have produced almost opposite results in different countries and at different times. This also applies to the development of drinking habits and alcohol consumption in the EU member states during the latter part of the 20th century.

NOTES

1. ISACE: The International Study on Alcohol Control Experiences. See e.g. Mäkelä, K. et al. 1981

2. Although the data set is almost complete there are a few question marks concerning the comparability of these figures. This is largely because the definition of 'urban' has changed during the study period and because the definition varies considerably from country to country (Miettinen 1997, 8).

3. Due to differences in measurements and definitions of terms, figures regarding household data are even less comparable than other demographic data. Therefore comparisons between countries should be done with caution (Miettinen 1997, 35-39).

4. The proportion of persons under 15 years and over 64 years to the population aged 15-64.

5. France, Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, Austria, Germany, Greece.

6. Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Sweden.

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Summary

Thomas Karlsson & Jussi Simpura: *Changes in living conditions and their links to alcohol consumption and drinking patterns in 16 European countries, 1950 to 2000*

The aim of this article, as part of the drinking pattern analysis of the ECAS project, is to examine how changes in living conditions have affected the formation and dynamics of European drinking habits in 1950-2000.

The development of living conditions in post-World War II Europe shows that the same trends have emerged in all the current EU member states. Some of the most important changes we recognize include increasing urbanization and the emergence of the service sector.

While we can distinguish similar patterns in the development of living conditions in the

EU member states, this is not the case in the development of alcohol consumption. Overall alcohol consumption in the wine countries has been decreasing, while the consumption levels have been on the rise in the beer and former spirits countries.

The changes in living conditions – which we can see as a part of the modernization process – have produced almost opposite results in different countries and at different times. This also applies to the development of drinking habits and alcohol consumption in the EU member states during the latter part of the 20th century.

Key Words: Living conditions, culture, modernization, drinking habits, alcohol consumption, Europe, European Union