

Alcohol: Where's the Harm?
Alcohol Action Ireland Conference,
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Alcohol, Crime & Harms to others: International & National context

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International Context

Alcohol's harm to others

- “ Injuries . assault, homicide, traffic crashes, workplace accidents
- “ Neglect or abuse . to a child, to a partner
- “ Default on social role - as a family member, friend or worker
- “ Property damage . to clothing or car, or house
- “ Toxic effect on other (FAS)
- “ Loss of amenity or peace of mind . kept awake, being frightened

Source: Room R (2011). The harm of alcohol to others. WHO Collaborative project

Alcohol, Crime & HTOs

“ Nuisance factor

- . Noise in neighbourhood
- . Loss of sleep
- . Littering of alcohol cans/bottles
- . Harassment in the streets
- . Fear of crime

“ Safety Issues

- . Vandalism/property damage
- . Child left in unsafe situations
- . Drunkenness (public/ private)
- . Drunks, easy prey for criminal harm

Alcohol, Crime & HTOs

“ Alcohol related crime/offences (IRL)

- . Serving alcohol to those under 18 yrs
- . Serving alcohol to someone who is drunk
- . Serving alcohol to u18s in a private home without explicit consent of parent
- . Drunk driving
- . Drunkenness
- . Public Order
- . Minor assault
- . Serious assault
- . Sexual assault
- . Domestic violence
- . Homicide

Alcohol, Crime and harm: The International Evidence

Alcohol and Crime . Evidence . .

“ Violent crime involving alcohol

- . Overall estimate 50% of assailants were drinking prior to offences (Graham et al 1998, Kershaw et al 2008)

“ Drinking patterns can influence risk

- . As aggressor or victim (Rossow 1996, English, 1995)

“ Density of Alcohol Outlets in a single location (Livingston 2008)

“ Frontloading drinks before going out

- . two and half times more likely to be involved in fights (Hughes et al 2008)

. . Alcohol and Crime - Evidence

“ Drinking Context is critical

- . Public drinking environments, pubs, bars, clubs
- . Key Environmental factors associated with alcohol violence
 - “ Cultural expectations
 - “ The effect of alcohol
 - “ Patron characteristics
 - “ Risk factors in the environment
 - “ Staff behaviour (Graham & Homel 2008)

“ Systemic review of environmental factors (Hughes et al 2011)

- . Social factors . permissive environment ±anything goesq drinks promotions, games, dancing, drunk customers
- . Staffing factors . poor staff control and practice, low staff to patron ratio
- . Physical factors . poor ventilation, poor cleanliness, crowding, noise, low lighting, high temperature, shabby décor

Irish Evidence

Population Level

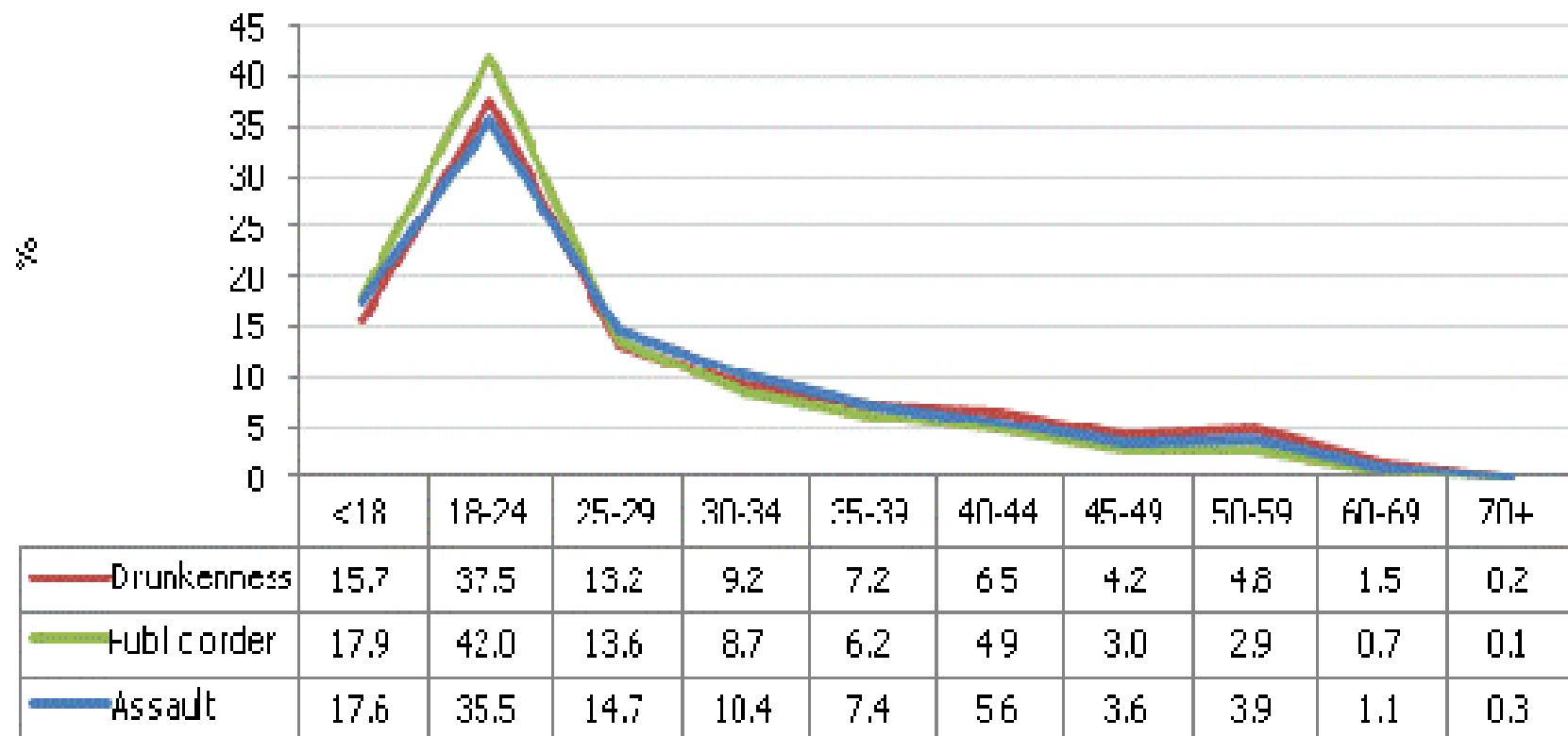
Drunkenness, Public order, Assaults

A profile of alcohol related offences 2003-2007 (Garda . PULSE system)

- “ **Males** accounted for the majority of offenders (83%-88%)
- “ **18-24 year age** group responsible for 40% of offenders
- “ Higher proportion of female minor offenders than female adult offenders
 - “ drunkenness 21% vs. 11% and assaults 26% vs. 16%
- “ Half of all offences occurred at the **weekend**.
- “ Half of adult offences occurred between **midnight and 4am** and peaked at 2 am.

Source: Mongan et al (2009) Social consequences of harmful use of alcohol in Ireland. Health Research Board.

Comparison of drunkenness, public order, and assault offenders, by age (2003-2007)



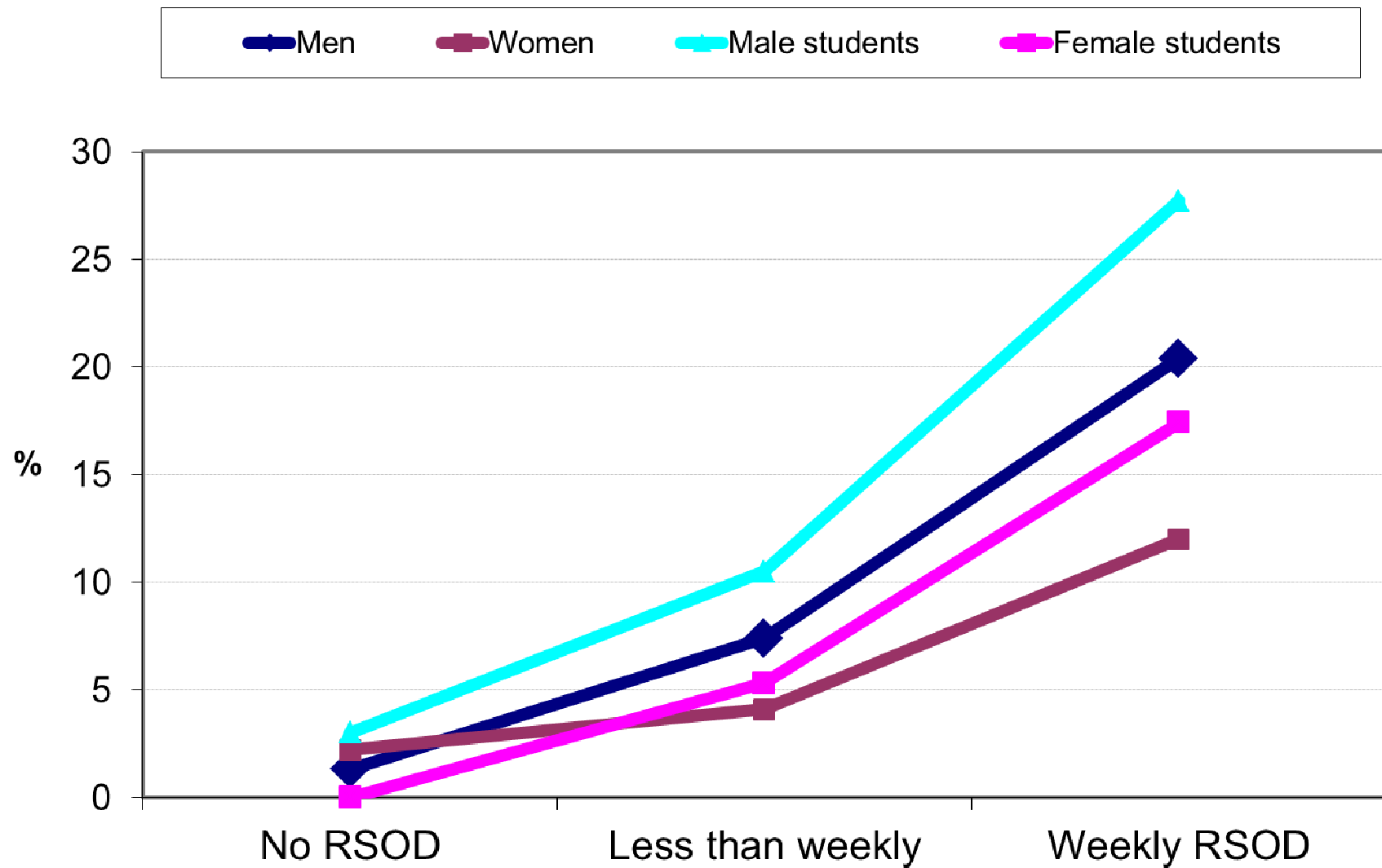
Source: Mongan et al (2009) Social consequences of harmful use of alcohol in Ireland. Health Research Board.

Individual level: Self reported alcohol related violence

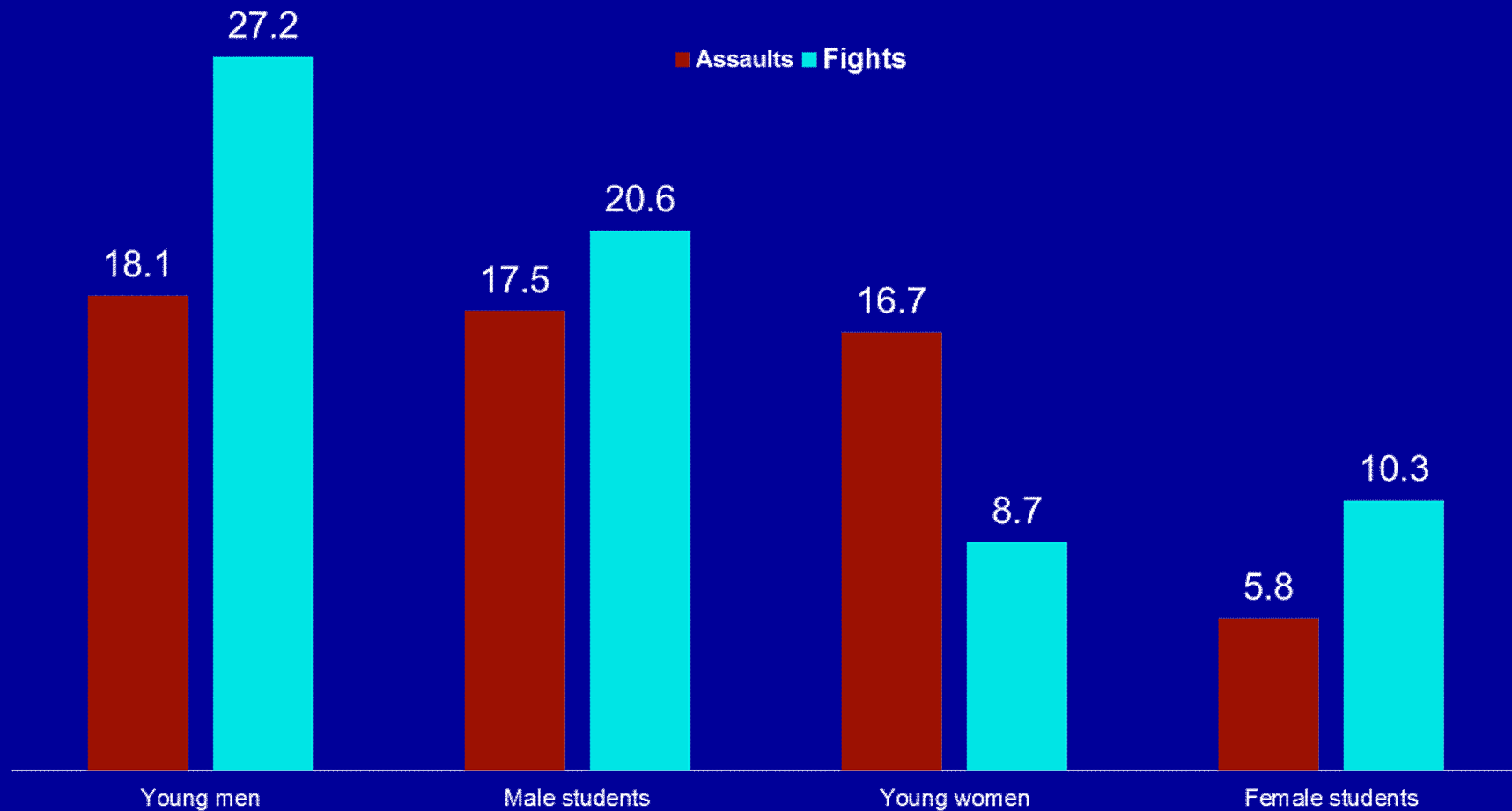
General population (NDS) & College students (CLAN)

Factors most associated with alcohol related violence
(flights, assaults) were
"Regular risky drinking,
"gender (male) and
"age (younger)

Involvement in Fights



Self reported Alcohol-related violence in Ireland (NDS & CLAN)



Source: Hope A & Mongan D (2011). A profile of self-reported alcohol-related violence in Ireland, *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 38, 237-258.

Alcohol Policy Challenges

- “ Policy response to date . one sided and inadequate (Seymour & Mayock 2009)
- “ Nightlife has social and economic value
- “ Needs better management
 - . Licensing Laws with clear public health objectives
 - . Ban on cheap promotions
 - . Enforcement of licensing laws
 - . Review of density of outlets
 - . Community action with multiple components