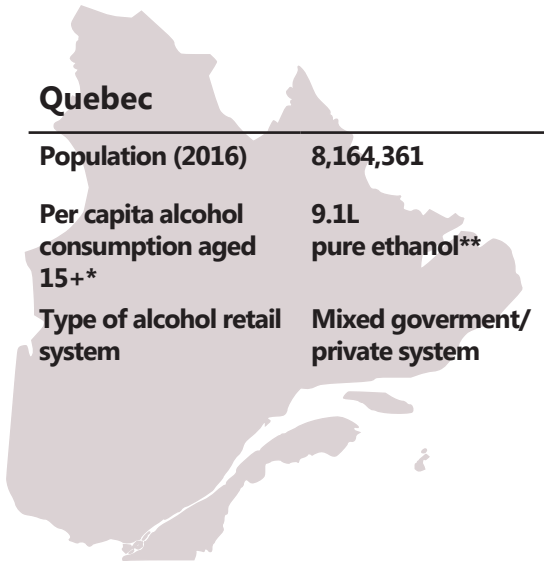
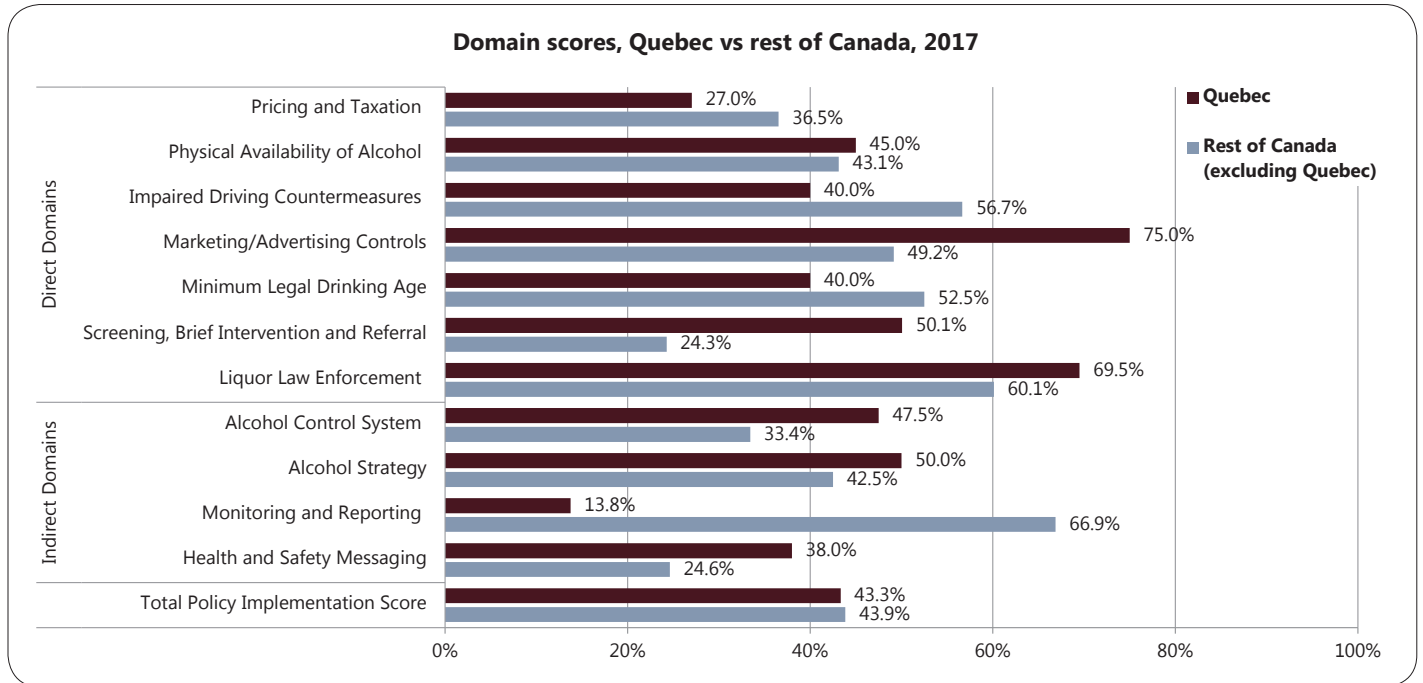


Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Quebec: A Policy Review



The Provincial and Territorial Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation (CAPE) project is a rigorous assessment of whether evidence-based alcohol policies were implemented within each province and territory in 2017. A comprehensive alcohol policy framework was developed, containing gold standard best practices across 11 different policy domains. The first seven domains have evidence of effectiveness as means of directly reducing population level consumption of alcohol and/or related harms. The last four domains are composed of evidence-based strategies that more indirectly facilitate implementation of the first seven domains. See Stockwell et al, 2019^a for the full methodology and findings.

The scores presented in this summary reflect the degree to which Quebec has implemented these gold standard best practices captured in the alcohol policy framework. **Overall, Quebec scored 43% on the extent to which these gold standard best practices have been implemented in the province, 1% below the average of 44% for the rest of Canada (excluding Quebec).**











Promising practices in Quebec



- Quebec has some **alcohol marketing and advertising control policies** in the regulations that extend beyond the requirements of the national broadcasting code and include restrictions on placement of ads outside of on-premise establishments and advertising free alcohol by on-premise establishments. They are one of the only jurisdictions to have a mandatory pre-screening process set in the regulations for alcohol advertising that is overseen by an independent authority (Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux).
- Quebec is one of the few jurisdictions to have a **risk-based licensing and enforcement program** in place for both on-premise establishments and off-premise stores with inspections planned based on licensees' risk-rating and any recorded liquor law violations.
- Quebec has a **graduated licensing program** in place for new drivers with a .00% BAC limit that extends three years beyond completion of the program.

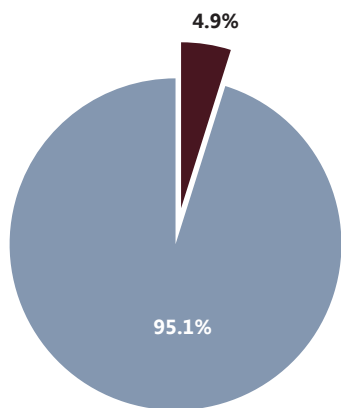
*Adjusted to account for unrecorded alcohol consumption. **Equivalent to 534 standard drinks (1 standard drink contains 17.05mL of pure alcohol and is equivalent to 341mL of 5% beer; 142mL of 12% wine; or 43mL of 40% spirits). See CAPE report for full list of data sources.^a

Strengthening alcohol policies in Quebec

Policy Domain		Score	Selected recommendations
DIRECT DOMAINS	 Pricing and Taxation	27%	Apply minimum prices to all types of alcohol (not just malt-based products) at a rate per standard drink (=17.05mL pure alcohol of at least \$1.75* per standard drink for off-premise retail stores and \$3.50* per standard drink for on-premise establishments after taxes with no exceptions (*2019 prices). Update all alcohol prices annually to reflect Quebec-specific inflation rates to ensure alcohol does not become less expensive relative to other consumer goods over time; prices should reflect the volume of alcohol in the beverage and alcohol sales taxes should be set at a higher rate than other consumer goods.
	 Physical Availability	45%	Limit the availability of alcohol by reducing trading hours . At the very least, ensure that new legislation on alcohol does not continue to increase availability of alcohol by increasing hours of sale. Do not allow early morning alcohol sales or late-night sales without exceptions e.g. special events.
	 Impaired Driving Counter-measures	40%	Impose administrative penalties for individuals with .05% BAC levels with minimum licence suspensions of 3 days and mandatory vehicle impoundment for the first offence and a minimum licence suspension of at least 7 days for the second offence; record violations on the driver abstract for at least three years and apply a licence reinstatement fee.
	 Marketing and Advertising Controls	75%	Implement additional marketing and advertising restrictions limiting the quantity and type of permissible alcohol ads across both traditional and digital media; restrictions should also apply to special occasion permit holders. Strengthen sponsorship restrictions to further limit exposure to youth and direct targeting of youth or young adults.
	 Minimum Legal Drinking Age	40%	Consider increasing the legal drinking age to at least 19 , as in other jurisdictions; give consideration to graduated drinking policies that grant phased-in legal access to alcohol by limiting the amount and type of alcohol that can be purchased in specific settings between the ages of 19 and 21.
	 Screening, Brief Intervention/Referral	50%	Consider implementing funded online or in-person screening programs to complement the existing brief intervention and referral tools available from Educ'Alcool and Alcochoix+; track implementation of screening, brief intervention and referral (SBIR) activities to inform future SBIR activities. Collaborate with health care providers in order to increase the proportion of physicians or other clinical staff who routinely ask adults 18+ about their alcohol use .
	 Liquor Law Enforcement	70%	Maintain the current risk-based licensing and enforcement program for all types of both on-premise establishments and off-premise retail stores (and special occasion permits) and increase the number of inspectors dedicated to alcohol enforcement. Implement mandatory evidence-based responsible beverage service training programs for all staff, managers and volunteers involved in and overseeing the service of any alcohol.
INDIRECT DOMAINS	 Alcohol Control System	48%	Maintain the present alcohol monopoly of the SAQ with an increased focus on the protection of the health and safety of the public. Sustain legislated earmarked funds to support prevention initiatives and health messaging ; ensure protection of public health and safety are explicit objectives in the mandate of the control system.
	 Alcohol Strategy	50%	Implement an alcohol-specific government-endorsed strategy that includes a range of evidence-based public health policies, is developed independent from alcohol industry and updated every five years to build on the existing Interdepartmental Action Plan. Ensure the strategy has dedicated funding , an identified leader with a public health and/or safety focus to facilitate implementation, and that monitoring systems are in place.
	 Monitoring and Reporting	14%	Implement systematic tracking of key alcohol harm indicators (in addition to alcohol consumption) with public reporting of all indicators made available at least annually through a centralized system in order to support effective monitoring of trends in consumption and harms. Have an identified leader with a health and safety focus responsible for monitoring alcohol harm; make specific funding and/or staff resources available to support these monitoring initiatives.
	 Health and Safety Messaging	38%	Implement legislated enhanced alcohol labels as a manufacturer requirement with health and safety messages, standard drink information and national low-risk drinking guidelines; labels should have prominent, rotating messages with pictorial images. Implement legislated health and safety messages to be displayed in all on-premise establishments and off-premise retail stores which include a variety of health-focused messages; and have liquor control boards use a range of media platforms to communicate health and safety messaging.
Total Policy Implementation Score		43%	A comprehensive list of gold standard best practice alcohol policies is available in Appendix C of the full CAPE report².

Quebec: selected findings, 2017

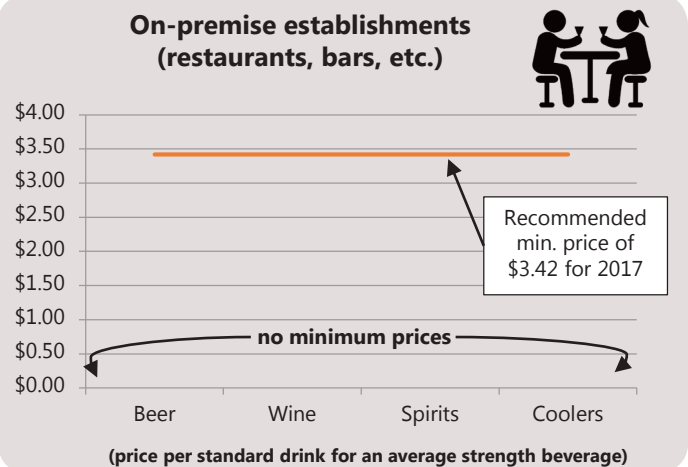
Quebec alcohol retail stores, 2017



■ Public retail outlets ■ Private retail outlets

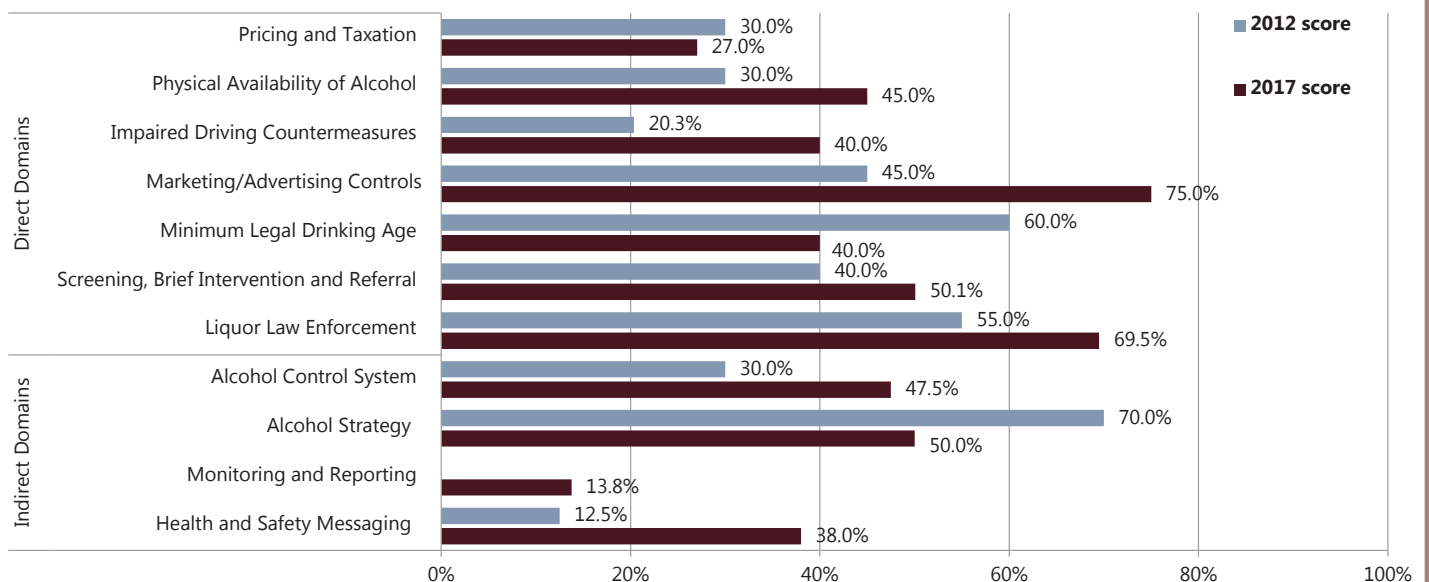
Best practice is 100% government-run alcohol retail stores

Quebec minimum prices per standard drink, 2017



Note: Quebec sets an off-premise minimum price for malt-based beverages only.

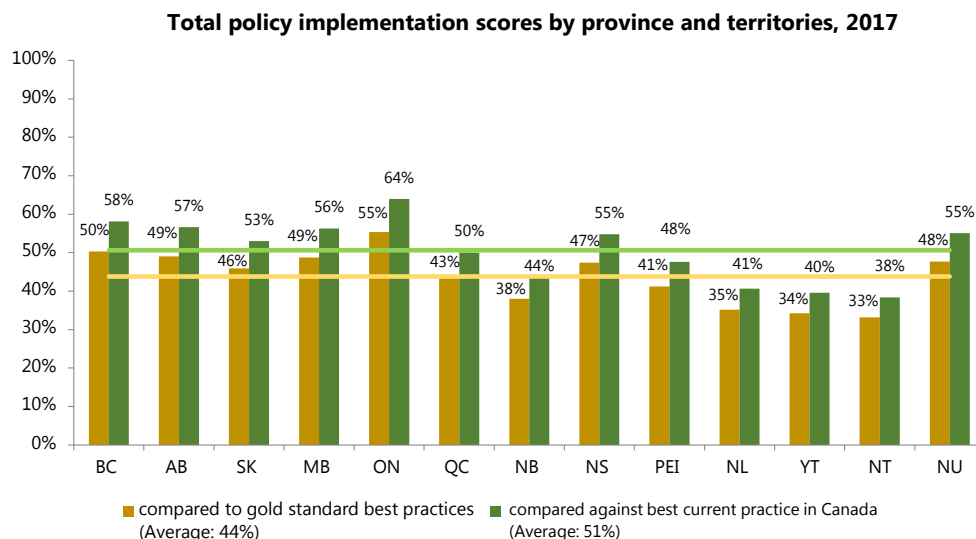
Domain scores, Quebec, 2012 vs 2017



Note: policy indicators may have changed between 2012 and 2017 thus scores reflect best practices at the time of data collection.

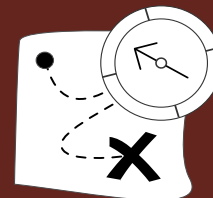
How does Quebec stack up against other provinces and territories?

Even though the provinces and territories scored poorly overall in relation to gold standard best practices, many examples of strong alcohol policy components were found across Canada. **In fact, if a province or territory chose to implement all of these best current practices that were identified they would have scored 87% (Grade A).** Based on these best current practices identified across all jurisdictions, the scores were scaled up to show how the provinces and territories measure up against best current practices in Canada (green bars).



Next steps for reducing alcohol-related harms and costs in Quebec

- In light of the substantial and increasing harm from alcohol use, give greater priority to funding and implementing effective alcohol policies such as those outlined in this summary and in the full report².
- Make sure that regulations are put into practice and sufficiently enforced to have an influence on commercial practices.
- Reconsider the treatment of alcohol as an ordinary commodity and instead limit low prices and extensive promotion and marketing, as this leads to greater consumption and related harm.
- Inform the public about the risks of alcohol, including the comparative risks of alcohol and other substances, to create a more supportive climate for enacting effective policies. This can be achieved with initiatives such as mandatory warning labels on all alcohol containers and clear and consistent public health messaging on a range of health topics.
- Carefully document policy changes and regularly monitor and evaluate alcohol-related public health and safety outcomes to better inform future policy development.



Suggested citation: Stockwell, T., Wettlaufer, A., Vallance, K., Chow, C., Giesbrecht, N., April, N., Asbridge, M., Callaghan, R.C., Cukier, S., Davis-MacNevin, P., Dube, M., Hynes, G., Mann, R., Solomon, R., Thomas, G., Thompson, K. (2019). Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Quebec: A Policy Review. Victoria, BC: Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research, University of Victoria.

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✉ To learn more about the Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation Project, read other jurisdictional summaries and download the full federal and jurisdictional reports, visit alcoholpolicy.cisur.ca or email cisur@uvic.ca.