

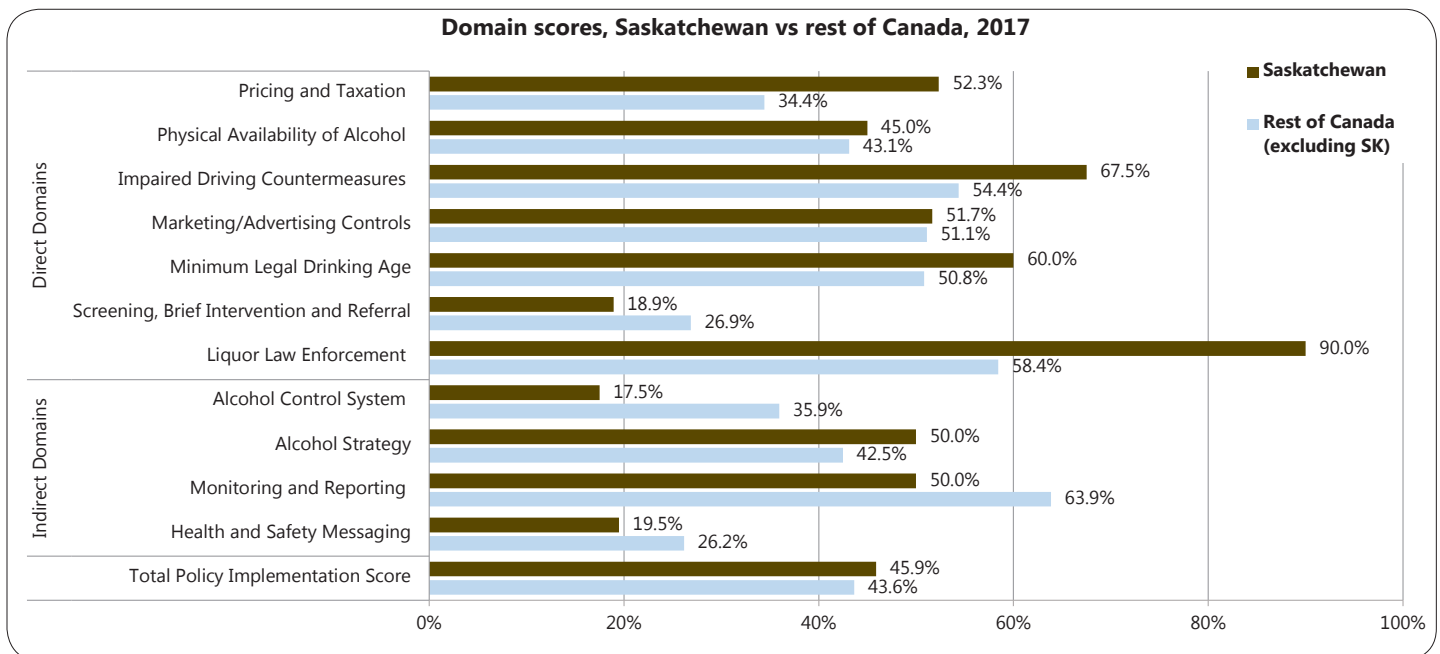
Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Saskatchewan: A Policy Review

Saskatchewan

Population (2016)	1,098,352
Per capita alcohol consumption age 15+*	9.0L pure ethanol**
Overall alcohol harm costs (2014)	\$563M
Net revenue from alcohol (2014)***	\$391M
Type of alcohol retail system	Mixed government/private system

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 Saskatchewan has implemented these gold standard best practices captured in the alcohol policy framework. **Overall, Saskatchewan scored 46% in 2017, which is just 2% above the 44% average for the rest of Canada (excluding Saskatchewan).**










Promising practices in Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan has **minimum prices** for alcohol sold both in off-premise retail stores and on-premise establishments. The minimum prices for off-premise alcohol sales are set to partially reflect the volume of alcohol in the beverage. Further, **sales taxes** on alcohol sold in Saskatchewan are 4% higher than the PST on other consumer goods.
- The **hours of operation** for on-premise establishments and off-premise retail stores are provincially regulated.
- Regulations in Saskatchewan **allow restrictions to be placed on the number of liquor licenses of each type**. There are also retail density restrictions imposed in the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District requiring retail stores to be placed at least 40 km apart.
- **Saskatchewan's interlock program meets gold standard best practices** as it applies to all *Criminal Code* impaired driving offenders, is extended for participants who violate the program in the last 3 months of participation and gets progressively longer for repeat offenders and for those who have a BAC of .16% or higher.

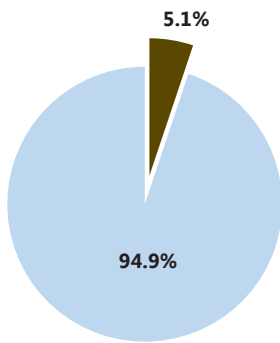
*Adjusted to account for unrecorded alcohol consumption. **Equivalent to 530 standard drinks (1 standard drink contains 17.05mL of pure alcohol and is equivalent to 341mL of 5% beer; 142mL of 12% wine; or 43mL of 40% spirits). *** Net income of liquor authorities, total taxes, and other revenue. See CAPE report for full list of data sources.^a

Strengthening alcohol policies in Saskatchewan

Policy Domain		Score	Selected recommendations
DIRECT DOMAINS	 Pricing and Taxation	52% D-	Ensure minimum prices are set at a rate per standard drink (e.g. 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 Saskatchewan-specific inflation rates to ensure alcohol does not become less expensive relative to other goods over time.
	 Physical Availability	45% F	Expand the legislated restrictions on outlet density to areas beyond the Northern Saskatchewan Administration district. Limit the availability of alcohol by reducing trading hours ; do not allow early morning alcohol sales (i.e. before 11:00am) or late-night sales (i.e. after 8pm for off-premise retail stores and 1am for on-premise establishments). Consider placing a cap on the number of drinks that a patron can be served at one time at on-premise establishments such as restaurants or bars.
	 Impaired Driving Counter-measures	68% C+	Strengthen the graduated licensing program (GLP) for new drivers in Saskatchewan by increasing the minimum start age to 16 years even for those who have participated in driver education courses, and lengthening the program to a minimum of 3 years. Introduce nighttime driving restrictions for stage 2 drivers and introduce zero tolerance rules for cannabis and illicit substances for GLP drivers.
	 Marketing and Advertising Controls	52% D-	Require mandatory pre-screening for all alcohol ads by an independent authority to confirm compliance with content restrictions prior to publication. Assign an independent authority to enforce advertising restrictions in Saskatchewan.
	 Minimum Legal Drinking Age	60% C-	Increase the minimum legal drinking age ; 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	19% F	Collaborate with health care professionals to develop screening, brief intervention and referral (SBIR) practice guidelines and tools to be implemented in a health care setting and online or consider adopting the SBIR resource developed by the College of Family Physicians. Online tools can increase accessibility, especially among younger populations or those not accessing health care in a clinical setting. Implementation of SBIR tools should be tracked in order to inform future SBIR activities.
	 Liquor Law Enforcement	90% A	Both on-premise establishments and off-premise retail stores should be inspected a minimum of once per year with more frequent checks based on risk. Decrease the recertification period of the responsible beverage service program Serving It Right Saskatchewan (SIRS) to 2 years to help ensure those selling alcohol are kept up-to-date with current laws and best practices for enhancing the safety of drinking environments.
INDIRECT DOMAINS	 Alcohol Control System	18% F	In order to retain a strong government alcohol control system, at a minimum, place a moratorium on further privatisation of off-premise retail stores and phase out liquor delivery services; prohibit ferment on premise outlets, which encourage the bulk sale of inexpensive alcohol. Ensure the alcohol retailer and regulator report to a ministry with a mandate to protect health and/or safety and that there are legislated earmarked funds to support prevention initiatives and health messaging .
	 Alcohol Strategy	50% D-	Develop an alcohol-specific government endorsed strategy that includes a range of evidence-based public health policies and is developed independently from the alcohol industry . Ensure the strategy has dedicated funding, an identified leader with a public health and/or safety focus to facilitate implementation, and systems in place to monitor implementation and effectiveness.
	 Monitoring and Reporting	50% D-	Ensure that the alcohol consumption and harm indicators that are tracked (e.g. alcohol consumption, alcohol-related morbidity, mortality and crime) are made publicly available at least annually through a centralized system in order to support effective monitoring of trends in consumption and harms.
	 Health and Safety Messaging	20% F	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 that are accompanied by pictorial images. Ensure that legislated health and safety messages displayed in all on-premise establishments and off-premise retail stores include a variety of health-focused messages .
Total Policy Implementation Score		46% F	A comprehensive list of gold standard best practice alcohol policies is available in Appendix C of the full CAPE report²¹.

Saskatchewan: selected findings, 2017

Saskatchewan alcohol retail stores, 2017



■ Government retail stores ■ Private retail stores

Best practice is 100% government-run alcohol retail stores

Saskatchewan minimum prices per standard drink, 2017

Off-premise alcohol retail stores



(price per standard drink for an average strength beverage)

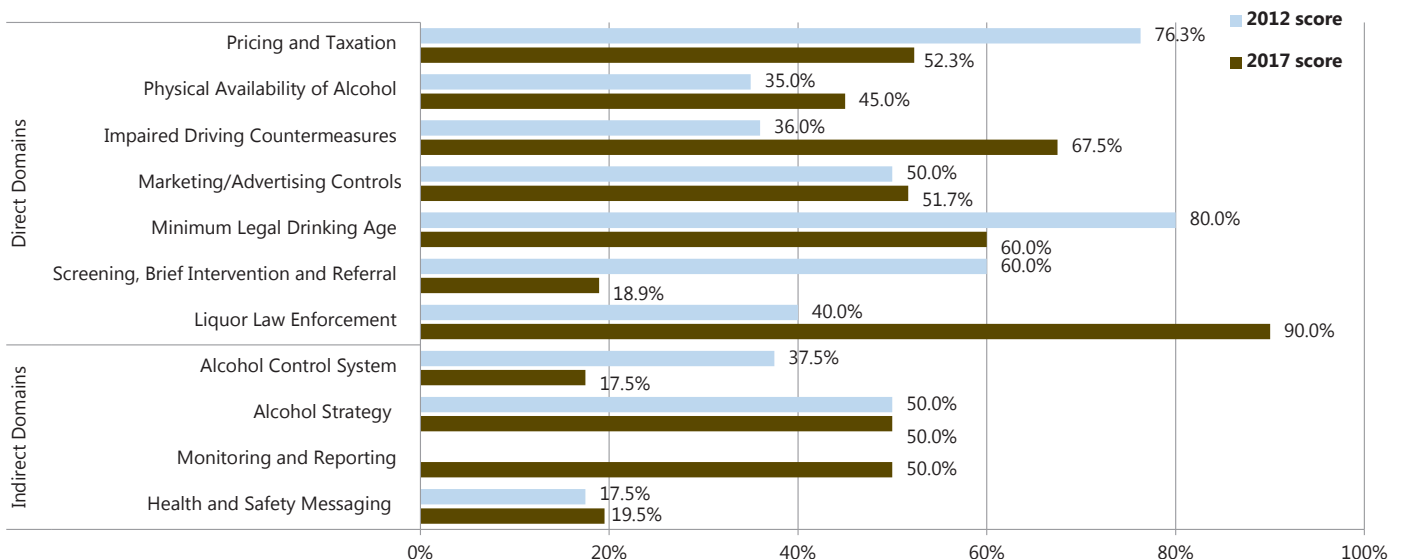
On-premise establishments (restaurants, bars, etc.)



(price per standard drink for an average strength beverage)

Note: On-premise minimum beer price shown here is an average of two minimum beer prices.

Domain scores, Saskatchewan, 2012 vs 2017

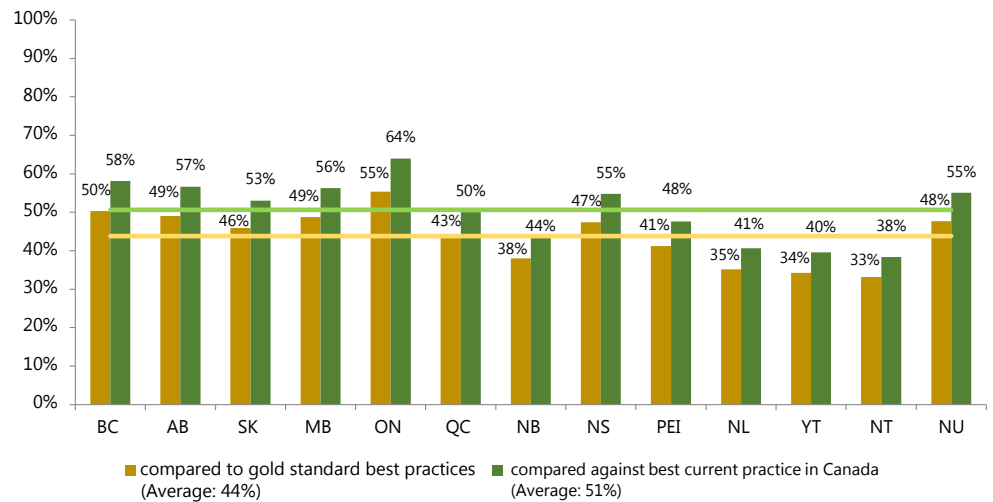


Note: policy indicators may have changed between 2012 and 2017 thus scores reflect best practices at the time of data collection.

How does Saskatchewan stack up against other provinces and territories?

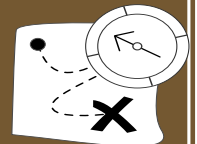
Even though the provinces and territories scored poorly overall in relation to gold standard best practices, many examples of strong alcohol policy components were found across Canada. **In fact, if a province or territory chose to implement all of these best current practices that were identified they 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).

Total policy implementation scores by province and territories, 2017



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

- 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 report²⁴.
- Position liquor boards within ministries directly concerned with health and safety rather than with finance and economic development.
- Reconsider the treatment of alcohol as an ordinary commodity to be sold by private retailers as this leads to greater consumption and related harm.
- Learn from other provinces' and territories' experiences with successful implementation of effective alcohol policies (see Best Practice Leaders identified on P11 of the full report²⁴).
- Government should take action in concert with NGOs and other stakeholders to implement a combination of population level policies prioritising the first seven policy areas as identified in this summary
- 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.



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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.