



Editorial Note on Alcohol law

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Abstract

Alcohol laws are laws in relation to the manufacture, use, being under the influence of and sale of alcohol (also known formally as ethanol) or alcoholic beverages that contains ethanol. Common alcoholic beverages include beer, wine, cider, and distilled spirits (e.g., vodka, rum, gin). The United States defines an alcoholic beverage as, "any beverage in liquid form which contains not less than one-half of one percent of alcohol by volume", [1] but this definition varies internationally. These laws can restrict those who can produce alcohol, those who can buy it (often with minimum age restrictions and laws against selling to an already intoxicated person), when one can buy it (with hours of serving and/or days of selling set out), labelling and advertising, the types of alcoholic beverage that can be sold (e.g., some stores can only sell beer and wine), where one can consume it (e.g., drinking in public is not legal in many parts of the US), what activities are prohibited while intoxicated (e.g., drunk driving), and where one can buy it. In some cases, laws have even prohibited the use and sale of alcohol entirely, as with Prohibition in the United States from 1920 to 1933.

Outright prohibition of alcohol

Some countries forbid alcoholic beverages or have forbidden them in the past. People trying to get around prohibition turn to smuggling of alcohol – known as bootlegging or rum-running – or make moonshine, a distilled beverage in an unlicensed still.

Canada

Canada imposed prohibition at the beginning of the 20th century, but repealed it in the 1920s.

India

In India, manufacture, sale or consumption of alcohol is prohibited in the states of Bihar, Gujarat, Manipur and Nagaland, as well as the union territory of Lakshadweep. Prohibition has become controversial in Gujarat, following a July 2009 episode in which widespread poisoning resulted from alcohol that had been sold illegally.

All Indian states observe dry days on major religious festivals/occasions depending on the popularity of the festival in that region. Dry Days are specific days when the sale of alcohol is banned, although

consumption is permitted. Dry days are also observed on voting days. Dry Days are fixed by the respective state government. National holidays such as Republic Day (26 January), Independence Day (15 August) and Gandhi Jayanthi (2 October) are usually dry days throughout India.

Nordic countries

Two Nordic countries (Finland and Norway) had a period of alcohol prohibition in the early 20th century. In Sweden, prohibition was heavily discussed, but never introduced, replaced by strict rationing and later by more lax regulation, which included allowing alcohol to be sold on Saturdays.

Following the end of prohibition, government alcohol monopolies were established with detailed restrictions and high taxes. Some of these restrictions have since been lifted. For example, supermarkets in Finland were allowed to sell only fermented beverages with an alcohol content up to 4.7% ABV, but Alko, the government monopoly, is allowed to sell wine and spirits. The alcohol law in Finland was changed in 2018, allowing grocery stores to sell beverages with an alcohol content up to 5.5% ABV.^{[4][5][6]} This is also the case with the Norwegian Vinmonopolet and the Swedish Systembolaget (though in Sweden the limit for allowed ABV in supermarkets is 3.5%.)

United States

Main articles: Prohibition in the United States and Alcoholic beverage control state. Detroit police inspecting equipment found in a clandestine brewery during the Prohibition era. In the United States, there was an attempt from 1919 to 1933 to eliminate the drinking of alcoholic beverages by means of a national prohibition of their manufacture and sale. This period became known as the Prohibition era. During this time, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States made the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages illegal throughout the United States.

Prohibition led to the unintended consequence of causing widespread disrespect for the law, as many people procured alcoholic beverages from illegal sources. In this way, a lucrative business was created for illegal producers and sellers of alcohol, which led to the development of organized crime. As a result, Prohibition became extremely unpopular, which ultimately led to the repeal of the 18th Amendment in 1933 via the adoption of the 21st Amendment to the Constitution.