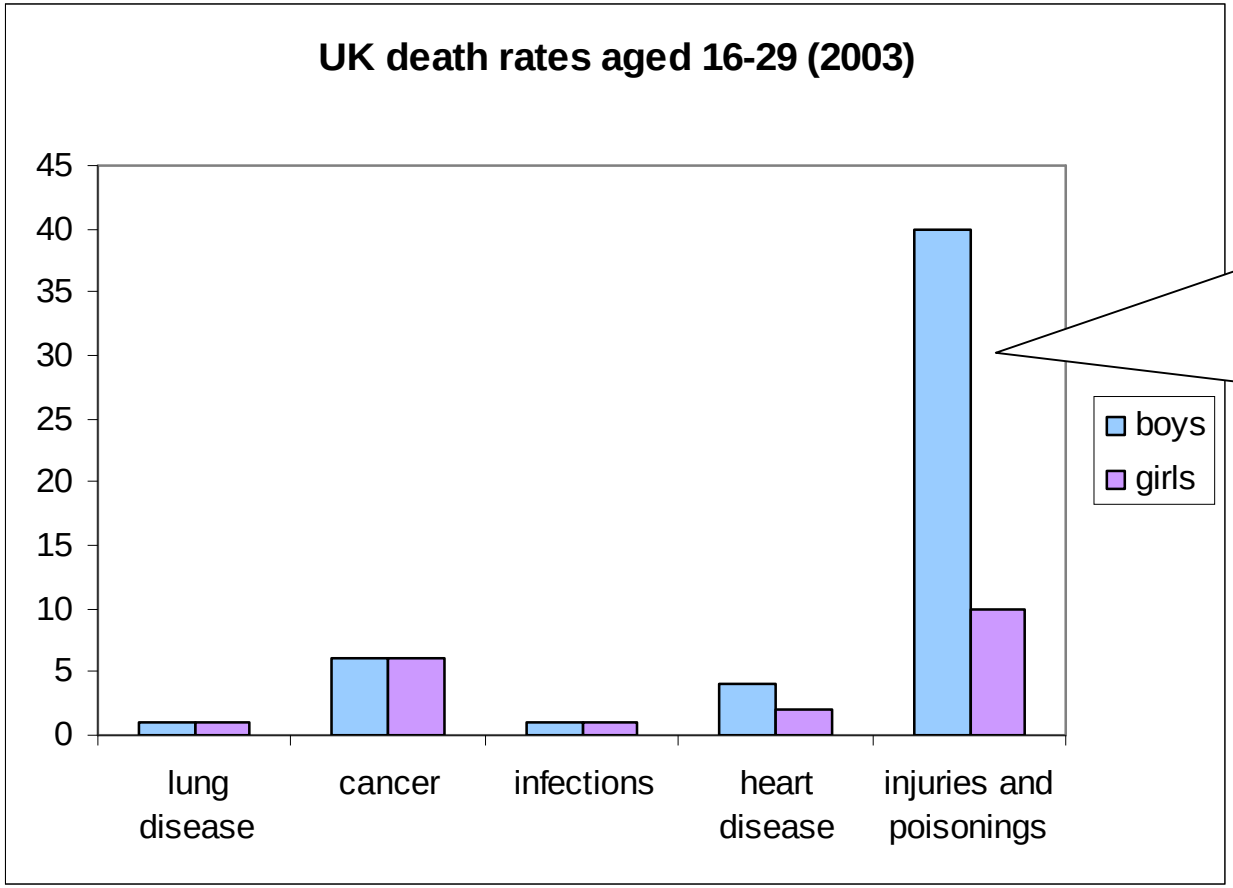
Dangers for the social drinker

Reducing liver deaths

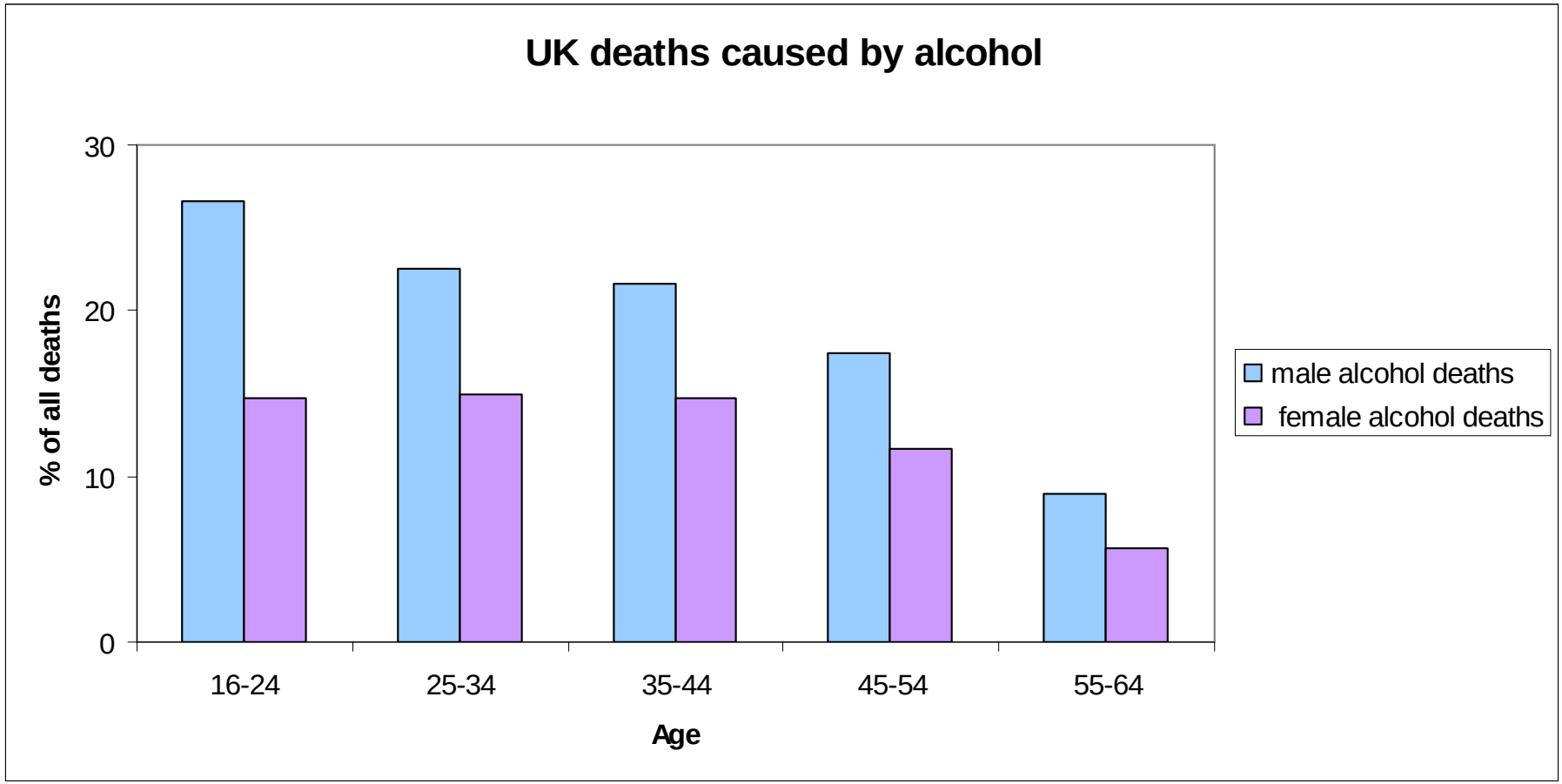


Alcohol attributable fraction

boys 33%

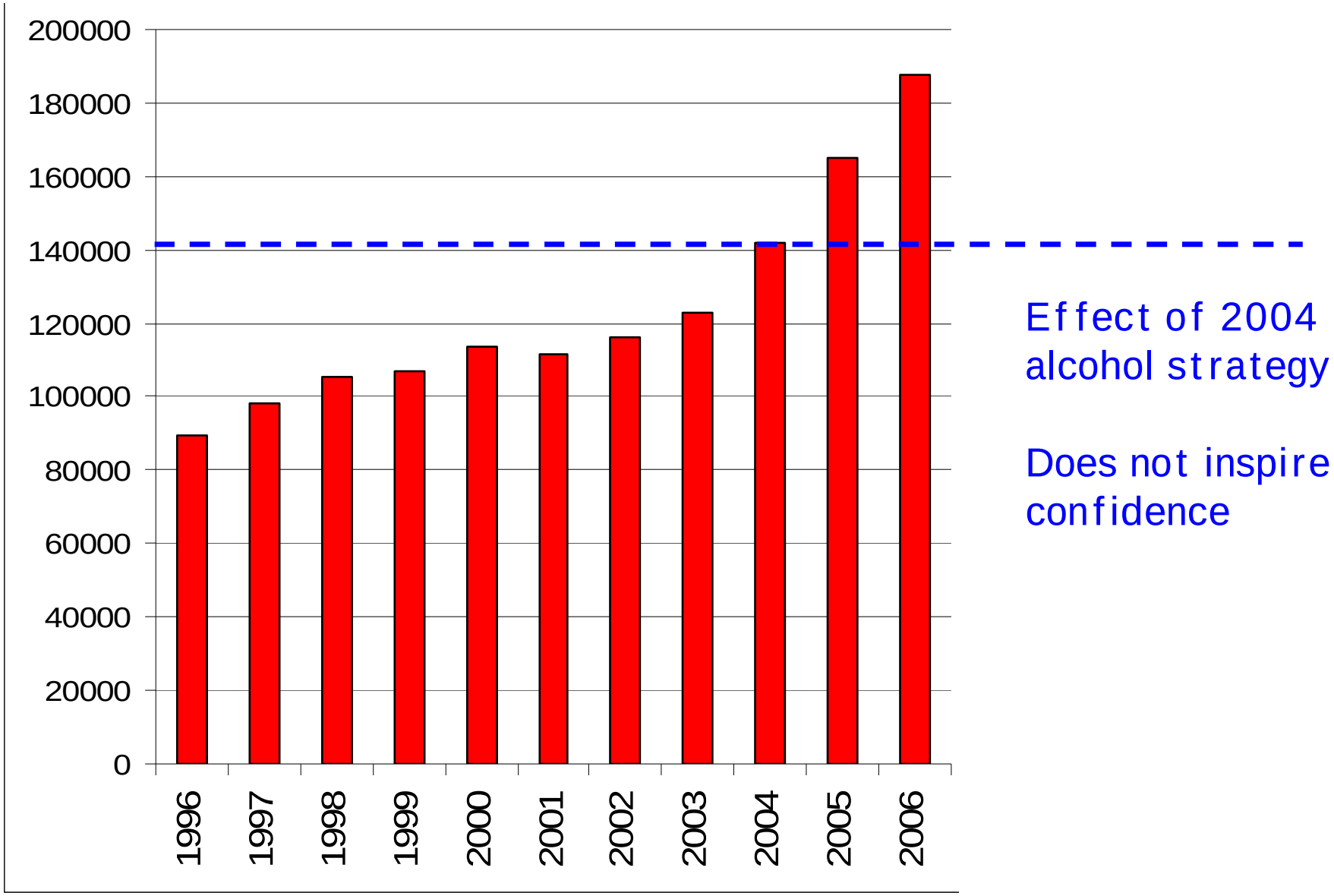
girls 20%

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget_print.asp?ID=1337
Jones et al, northwest PH observatory 2008



Alcohol attributable fractions for England; alcohol attributable mortality and hospital admissions.
Jones,L; Bellis,M.A.; Dedman,D.; Sumnall,H; Tocque,K.
DOH and North West Public Observatory 2008

Alcohol related NHS admissions - ONS 2007



Binge drinkers

Table 5. Top three causes of alcohol-attributable deaths by age and sex

Age	Males Condition	n	Females Condition	n
16-24		185		48
		142		19
		34		18
25-34		249		71
		126		41
		61		33
35-44		382		208
		323		95
		113		48
45-54		827		427
		251		99
		131		89
55-64		802		362
		278		154
		178		69
65-74		388		167
		295		109
		158		90
75+		339		396
		212		194
		207		153

Data from 2005

Chronic heavy drinkers

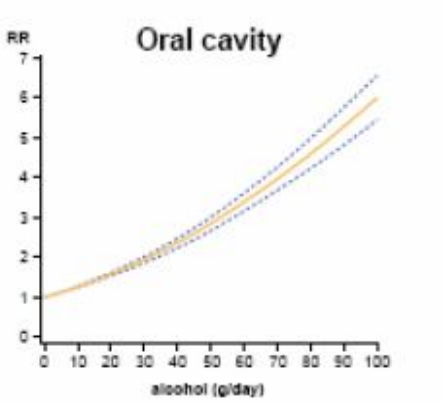
Most health risks start at zero and go up in straight line

There is no ‘safe limit’ for alcohol induced cancer

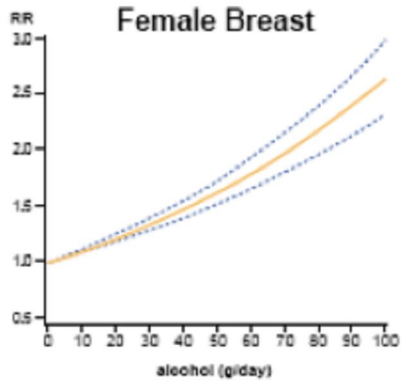
There is a risk / enjoyment balance

Some studies have found that **low levels** of alcohol intake (1-2 drinks a few times a week) can reduce the risk of heart attack for men over the age of 40 and women past menopause.

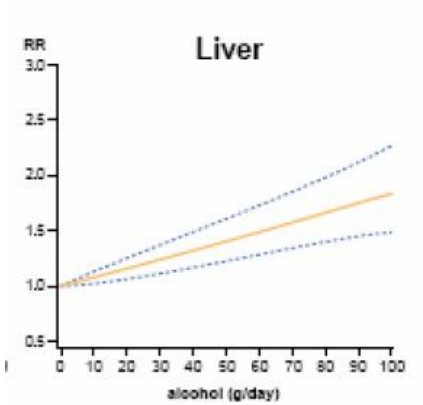
Cancer incidence is doubled by the equivalent of



Mouth 3 bottles of wine / week



Breast 7 bottles wine / week



Liver >10 bottles / week

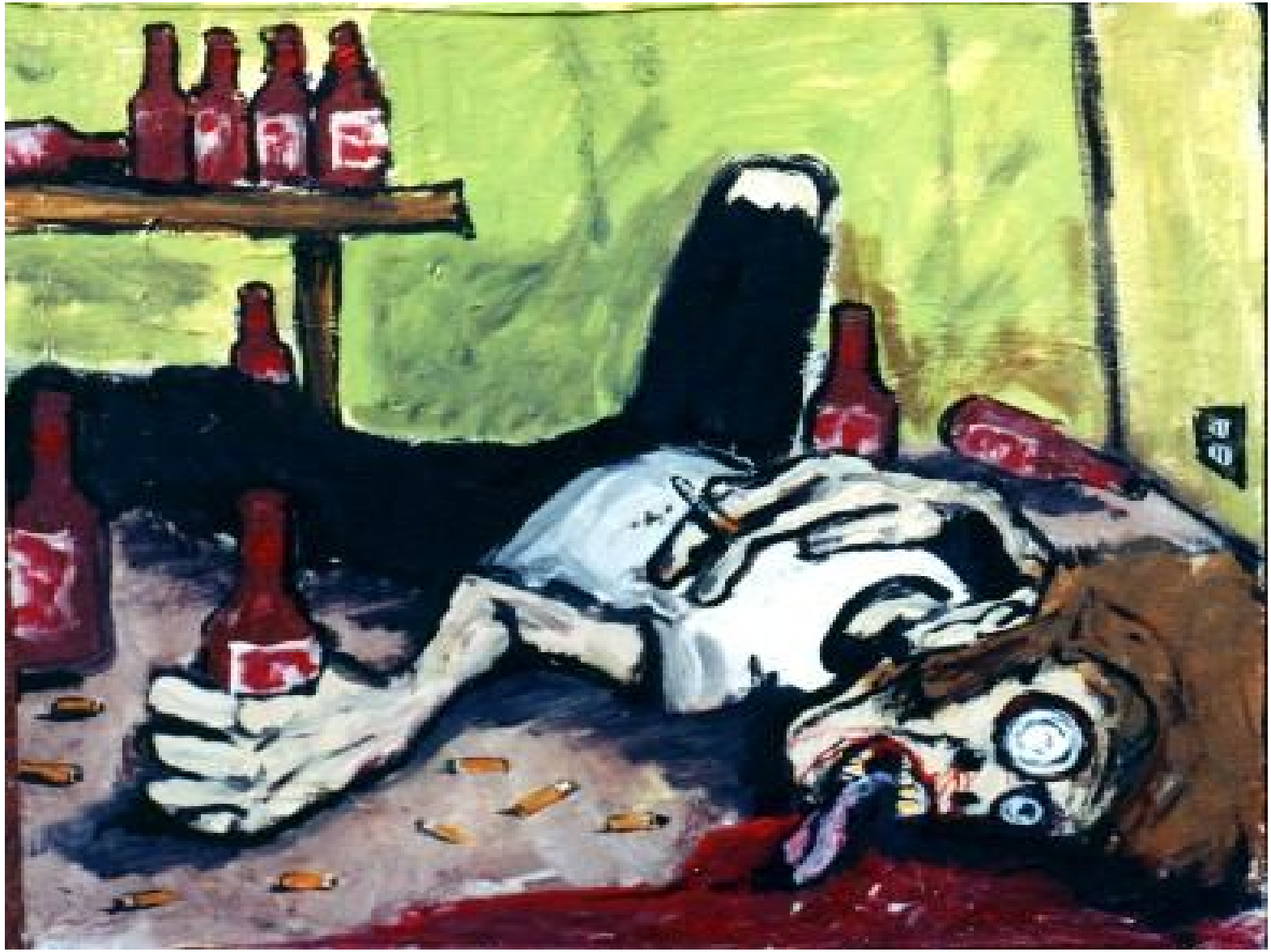
Alcohol in Europe 2006

1 in 9 women will get breast cancer

so small changes are important

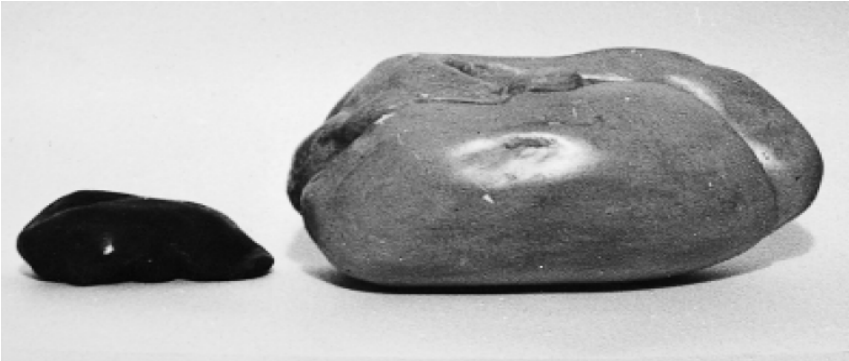
1 in 20 women drinking 3 bottles a week will get breast cancer as a result

Typically the first sign of alcohol related liver disease is a massive haemorrhage from liver failure

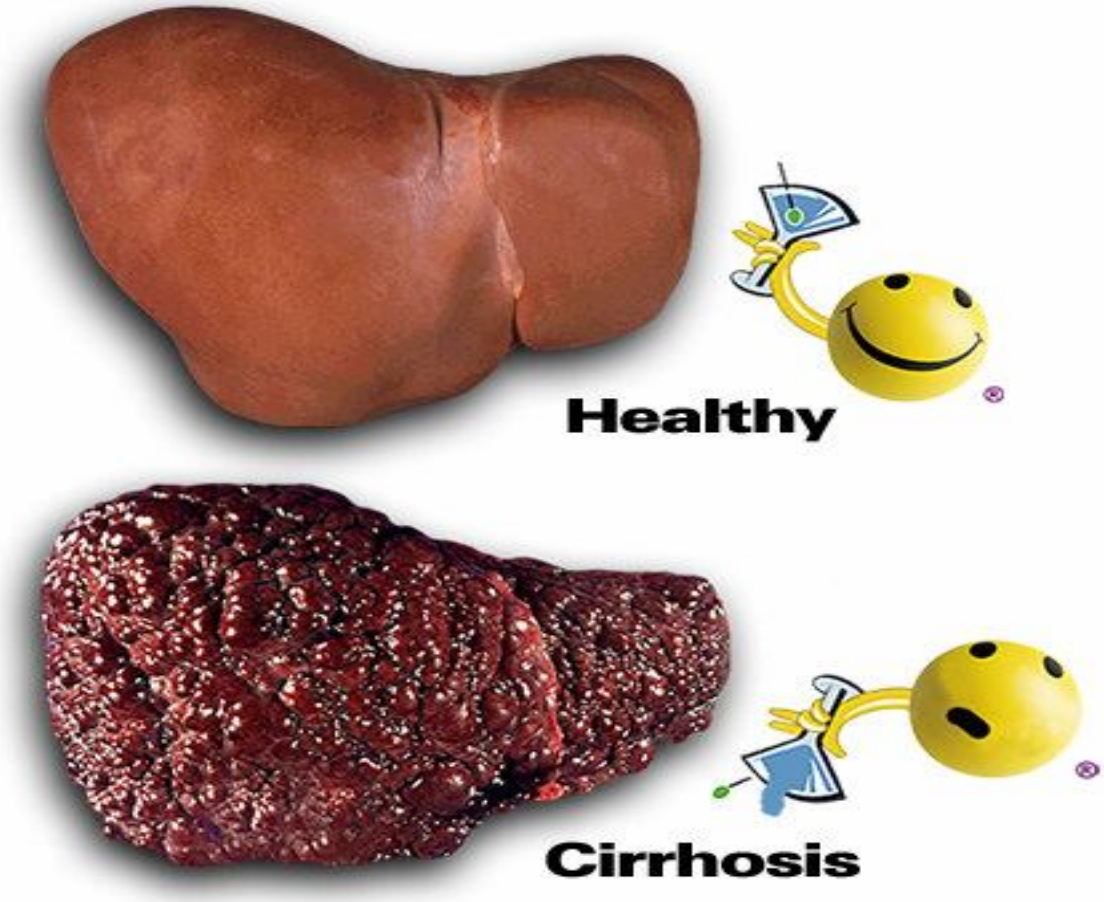


Several weeks of really heavy drinking is enough to turn your liver into Foie Gras

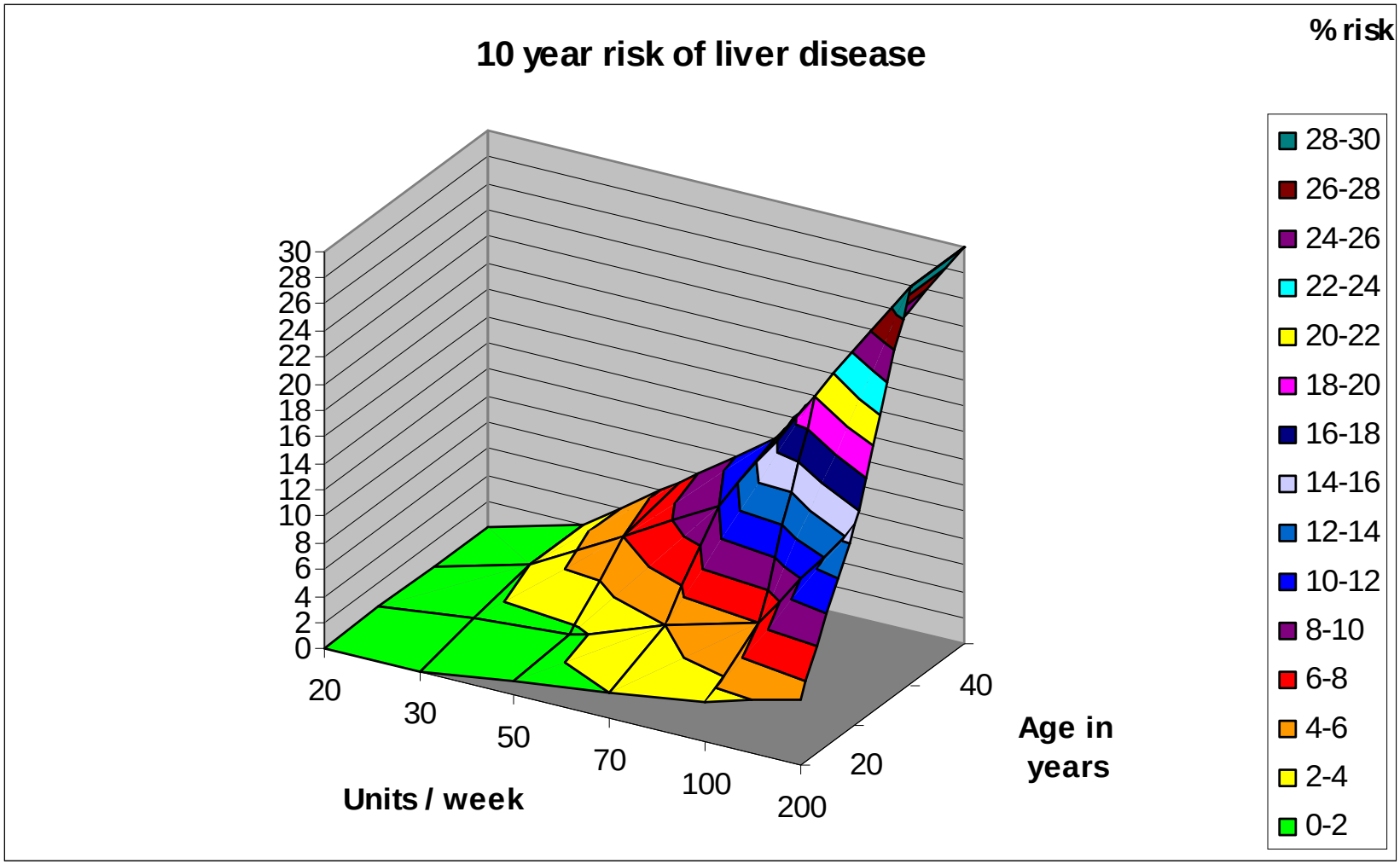
Fortunately the next stage usually tales 10 or more years...



20% of the UK population have a fatty liver



Only 20-30% with lifelong alcohol dependency get cirrhosis


10 year risk of liver disease
% risk
30
28
26
24
22
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
20
30
50
70
100
200
Units / week
20
40
Age in years
28-30
26-28
24-26
22-24
20-22
18-20
16-18
14-16
12-14
10-12
8-10
6-8
4-6
2-4
0-2

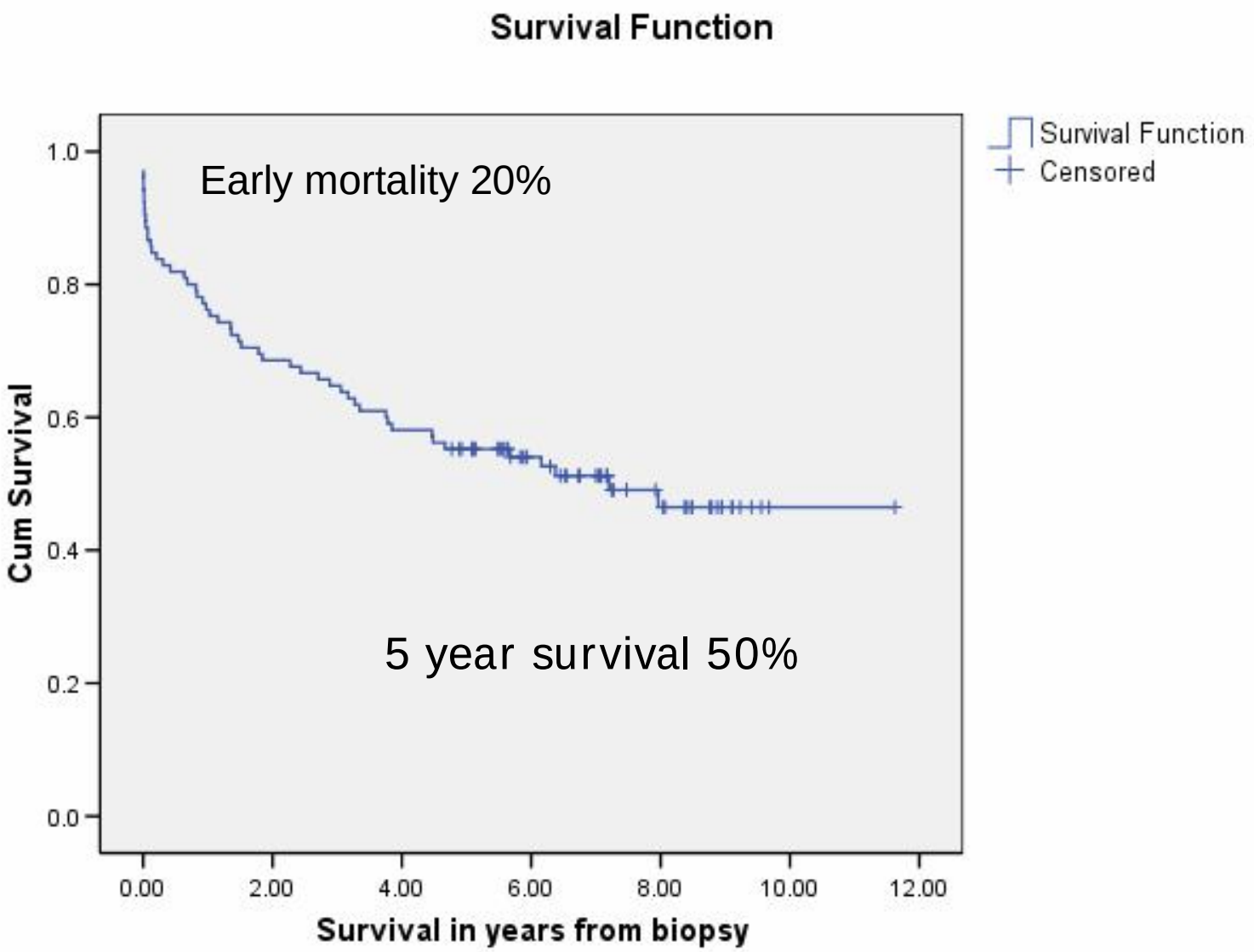
Mortality at first presentation – published data

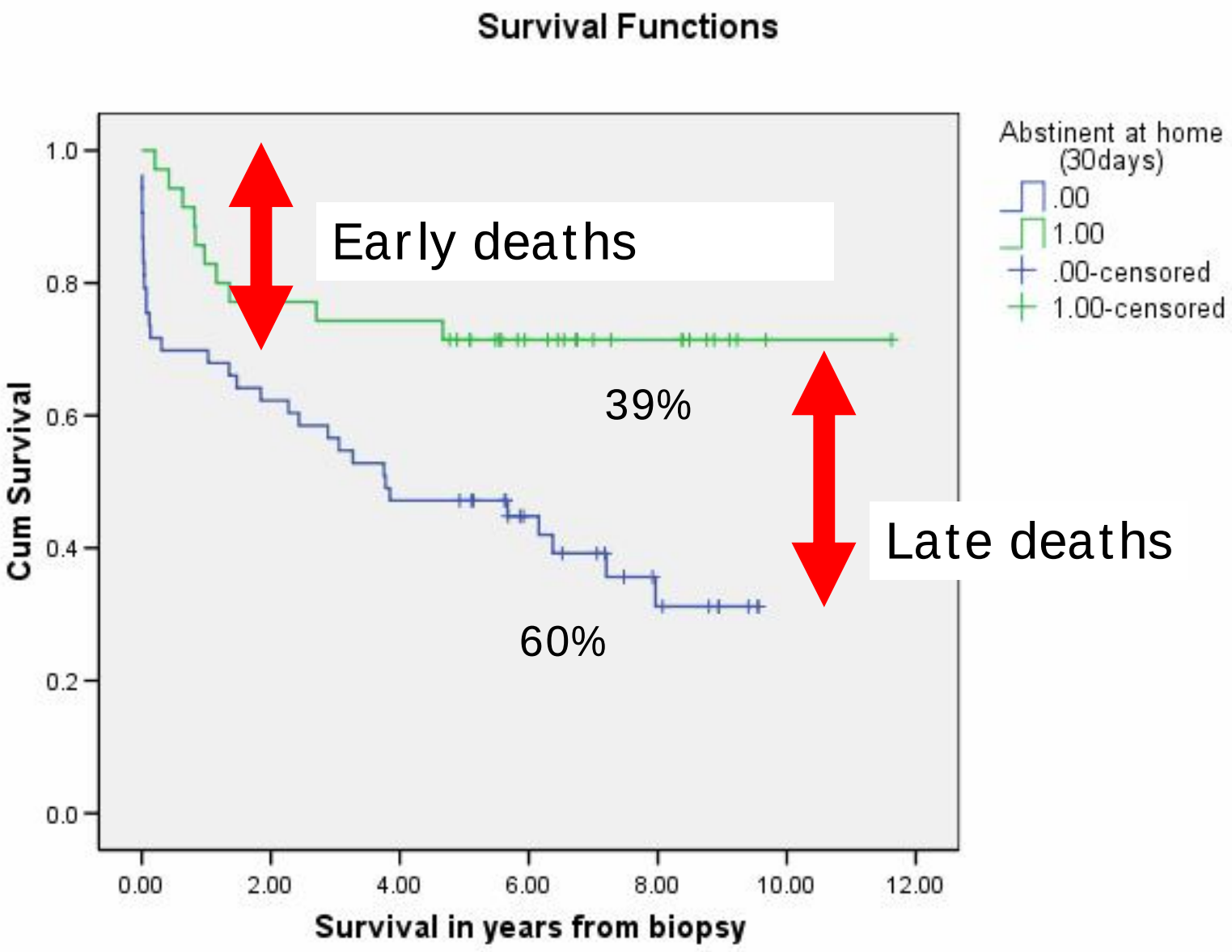
Variceal bleeding	25%	30 day
Jaundice	25-50%	30 day
Ascites	35%	1 year

Liver disease develops silently,

But presents fatally

100 consecutive patients with biopsy proven ALD + cirrhosis




Survival Functions
Cum Survival
1.0
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
0.00
2.00
4.00
6.00
8.00
10.00
12.00
Survival in years from biopsy
Abstinent at home (30days)
.00
1.00
.00-censored
1.00-censored
Early deaths
39%
Late deaths
60%

Late deaths

35% of people with alcohol cirrhosis die a late death

To reduce late deaths:

Keep people alive

Late deaths

35% of people with alcohol cirrhosis die a late death

To reduce late deaths:

Keep people alive

Liver / GI services are historically based in 1970's

Liver disease is not recognised as a speciality

Many GI consultants have had no training
in a liver unit

Late deaths

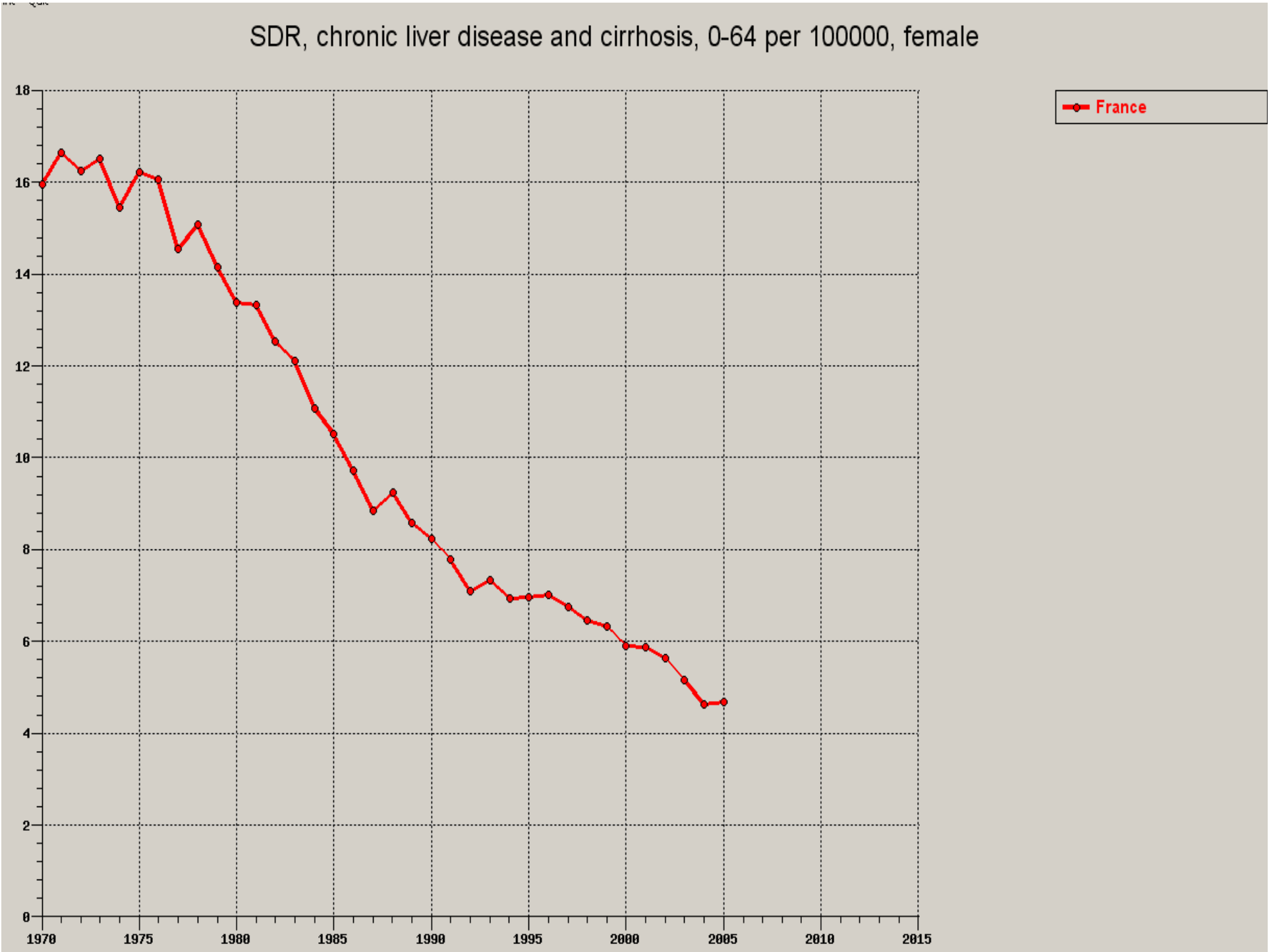
35% of people with alcohol cirrhosis die a late death

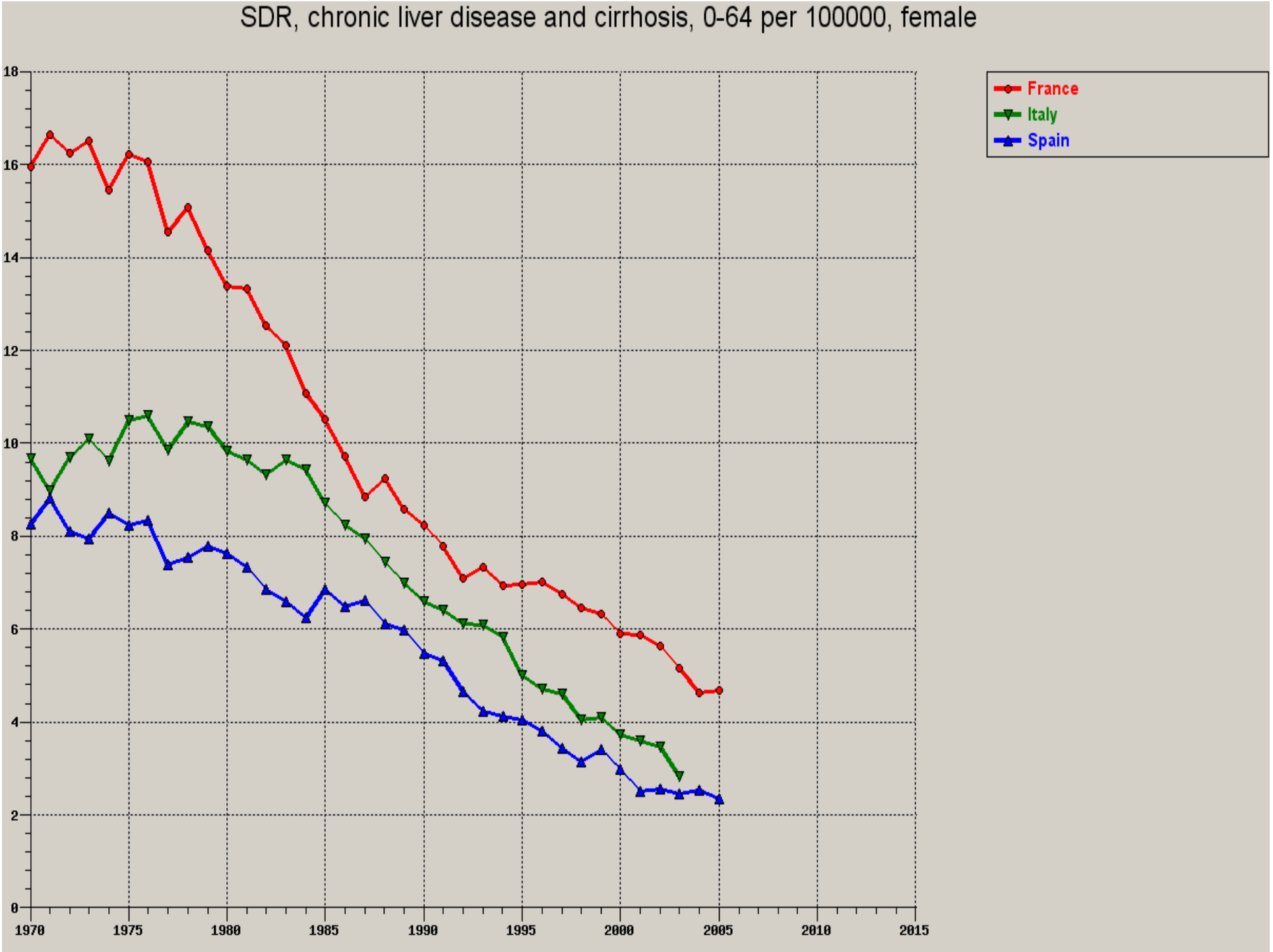
To reduce late deaths:

Keep people alive (next talk)

Enable more people to stop drinking

To prevent early deaths requires a completely different approach….


SDR, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, 0-64 per 100000, female
France
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015


SDR, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, 0-64 per 100000, female
France
Italy
Spain
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015

Alcohol and cultural factors in the EU 15

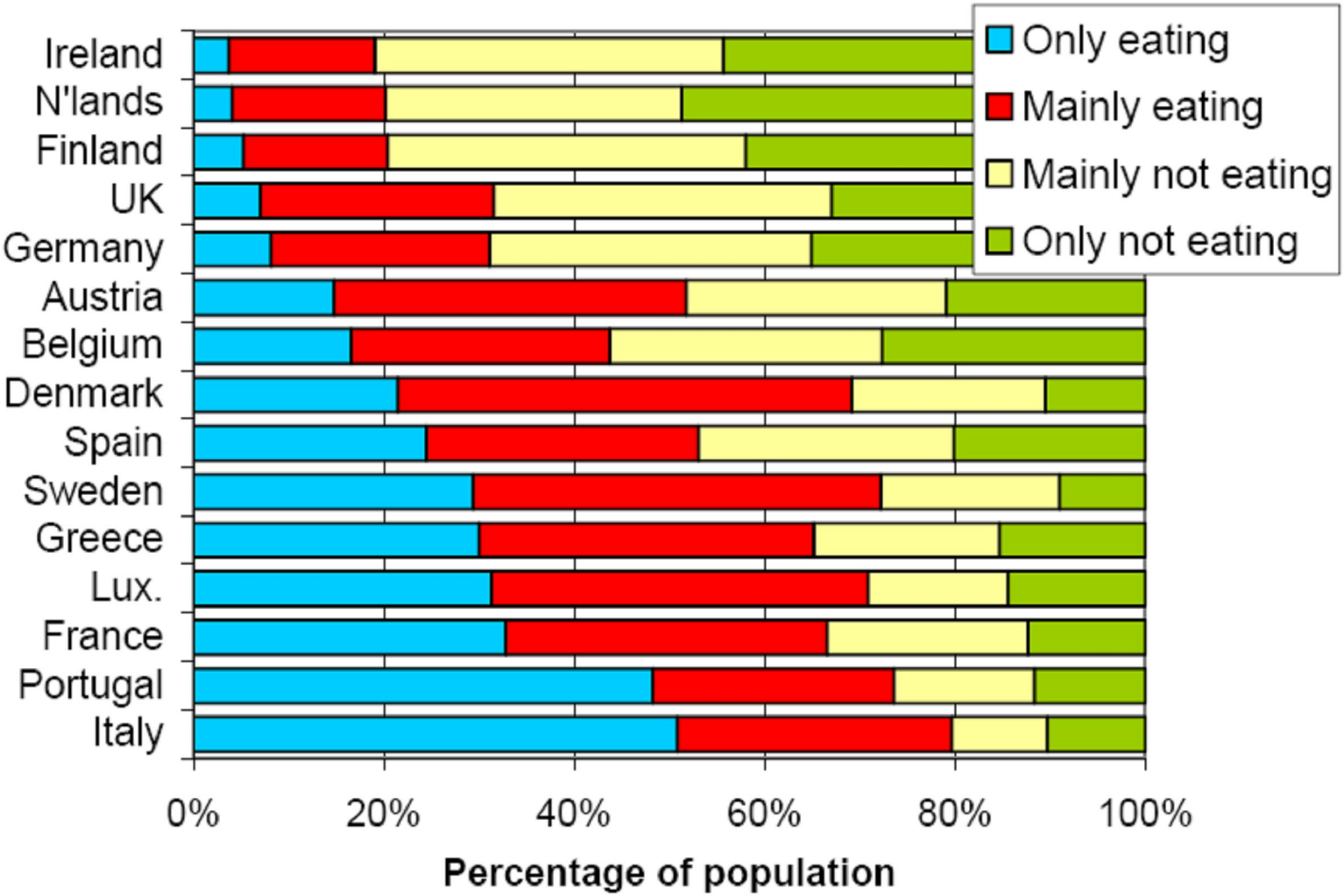
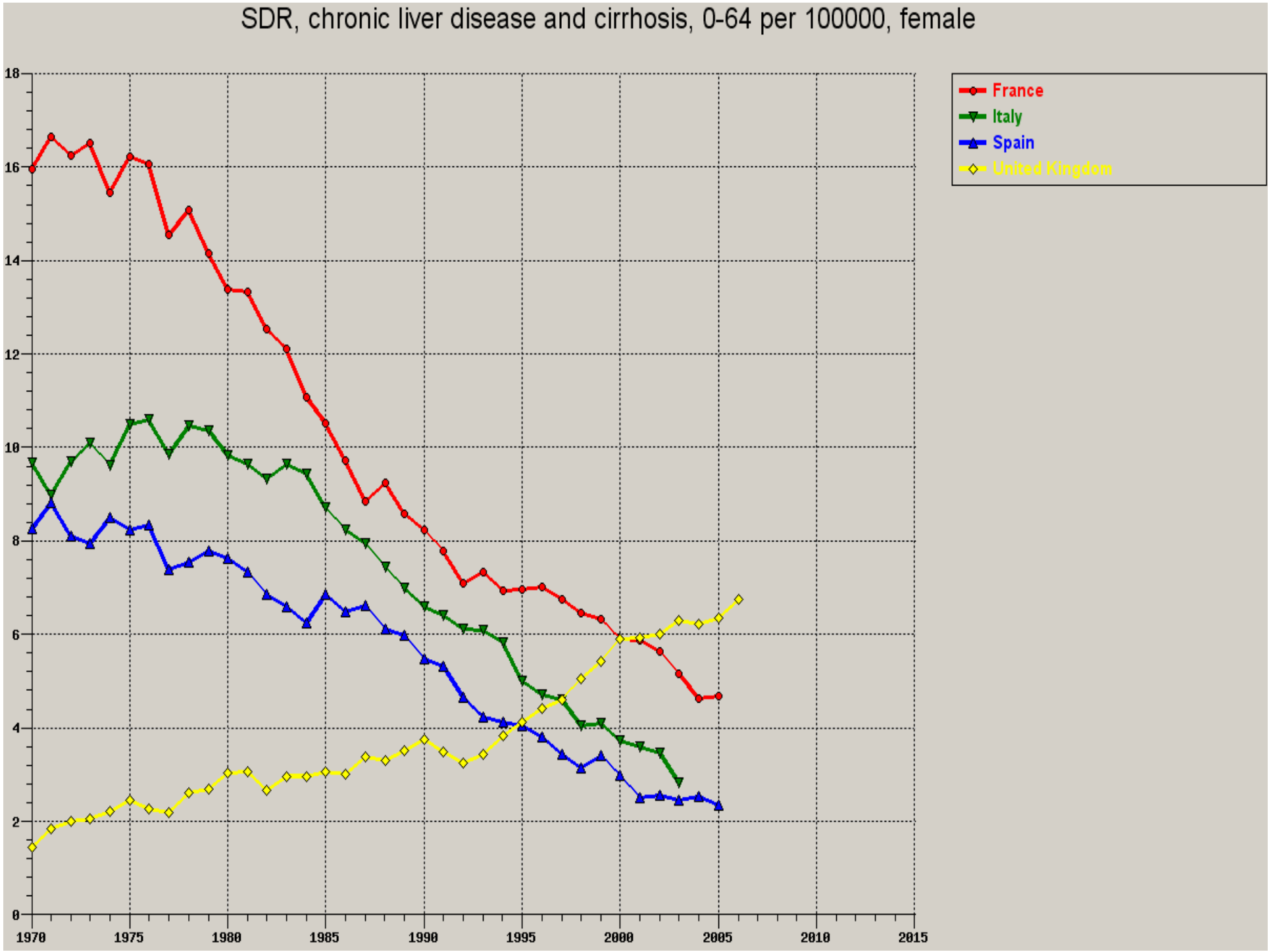


Figure 4.9 Drinking with meals in the EU15. **Source**: Eurobarometer data (Eurobarometer 2003)


SDR, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, 0-64 per 100000, female
France
Italy
Spain
United Kingdom
0
2
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8
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16
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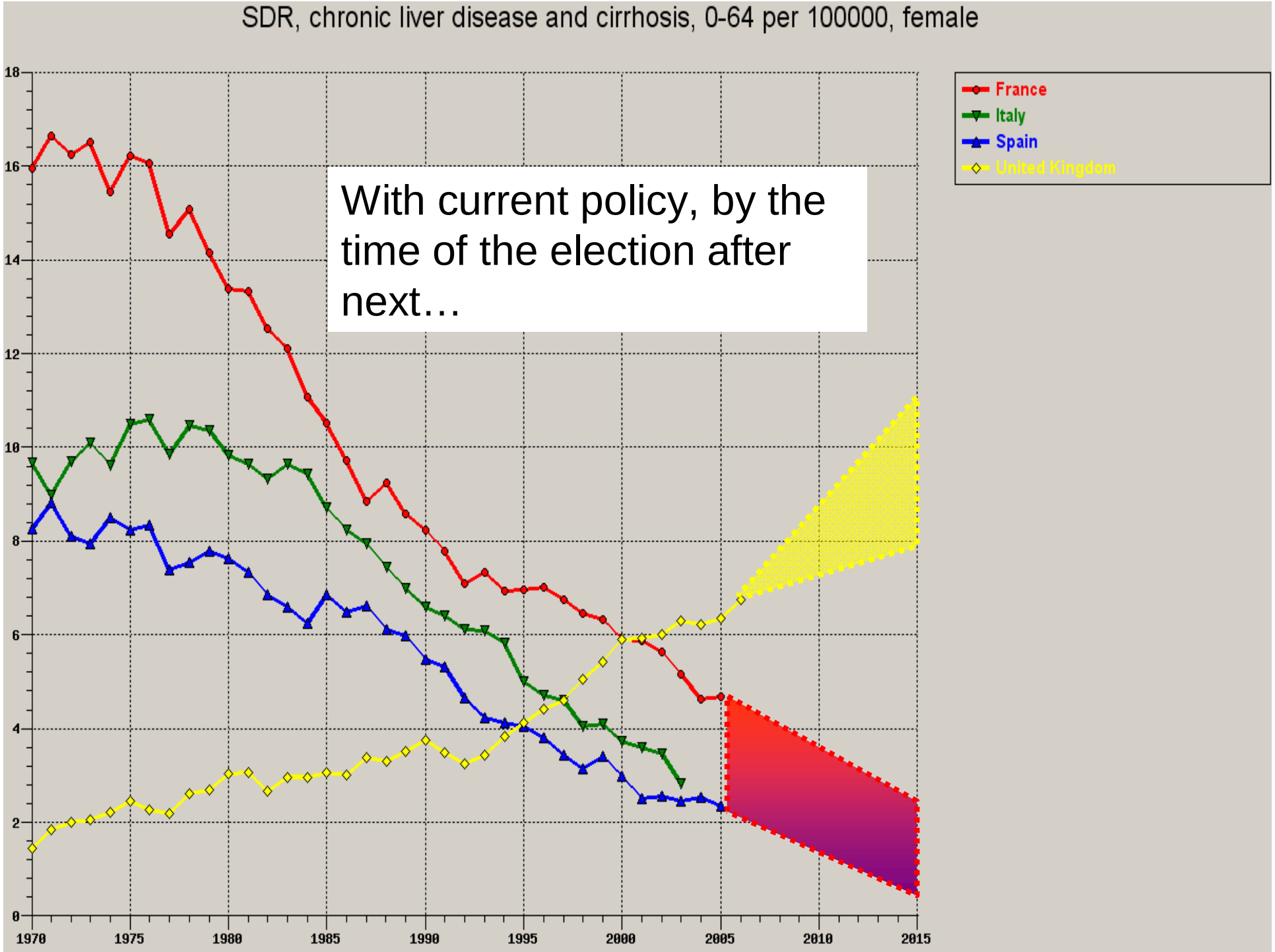
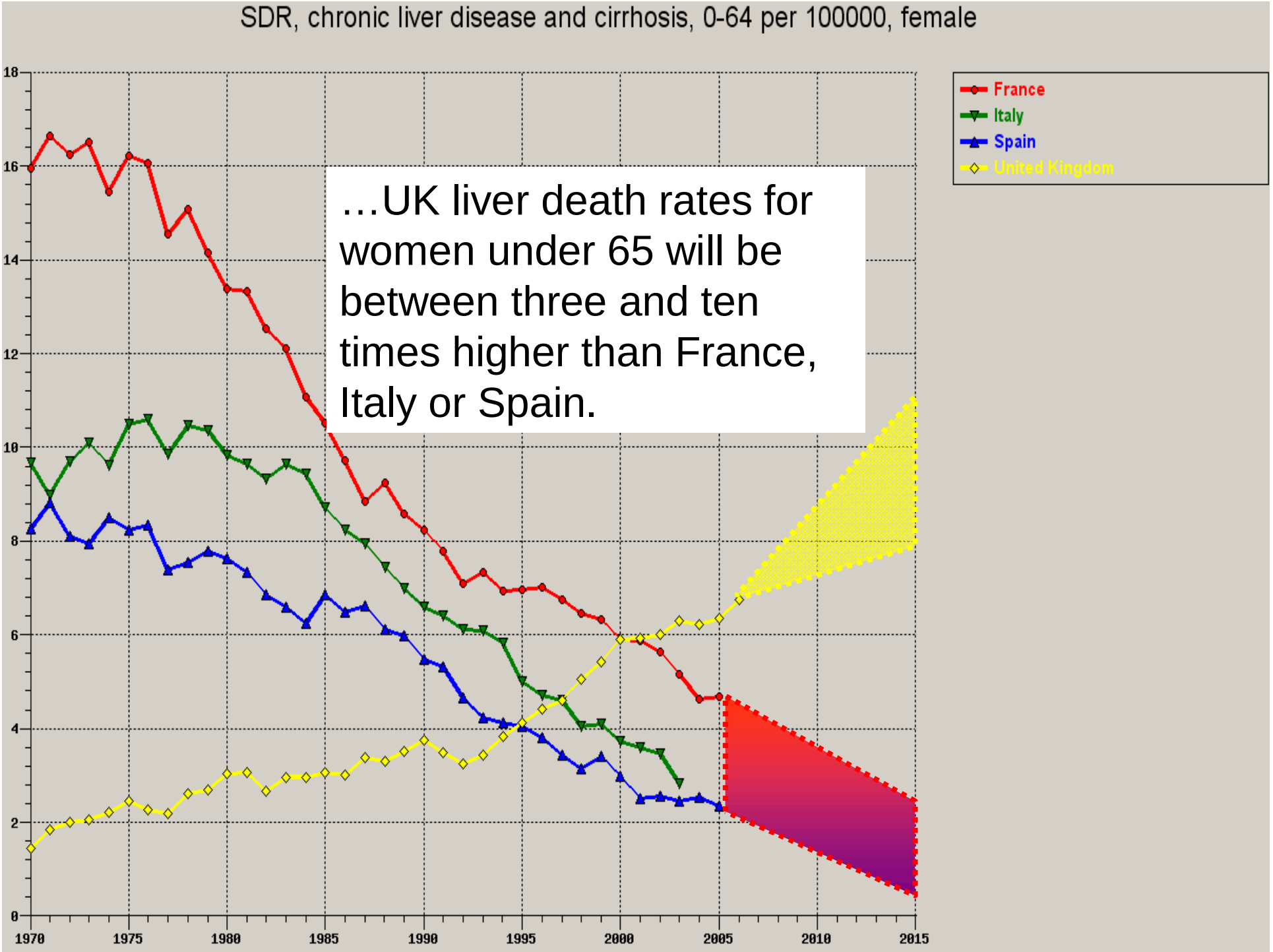
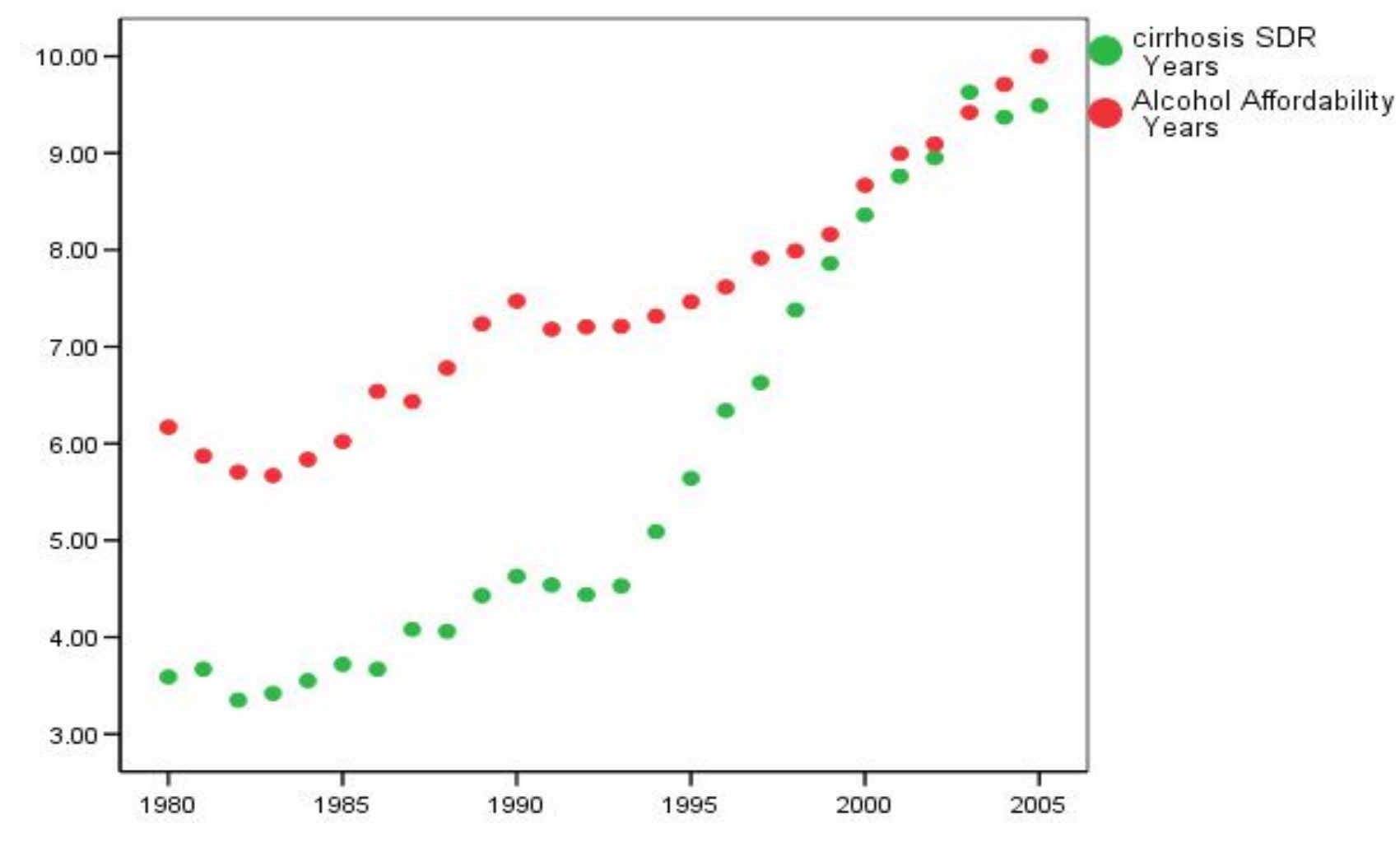
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015


SDR, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, 0-64 per 100000, female
France
Italy
Spain
United Kingdom
With current policy, by the time of the election after next…
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015


SDR, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, 0-64 per 100000, female
France
Italy
Spain
United Kingdom
…UK liver death rates for women under 65 will be between three and ten times higher than France, Italy or Spain.
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015

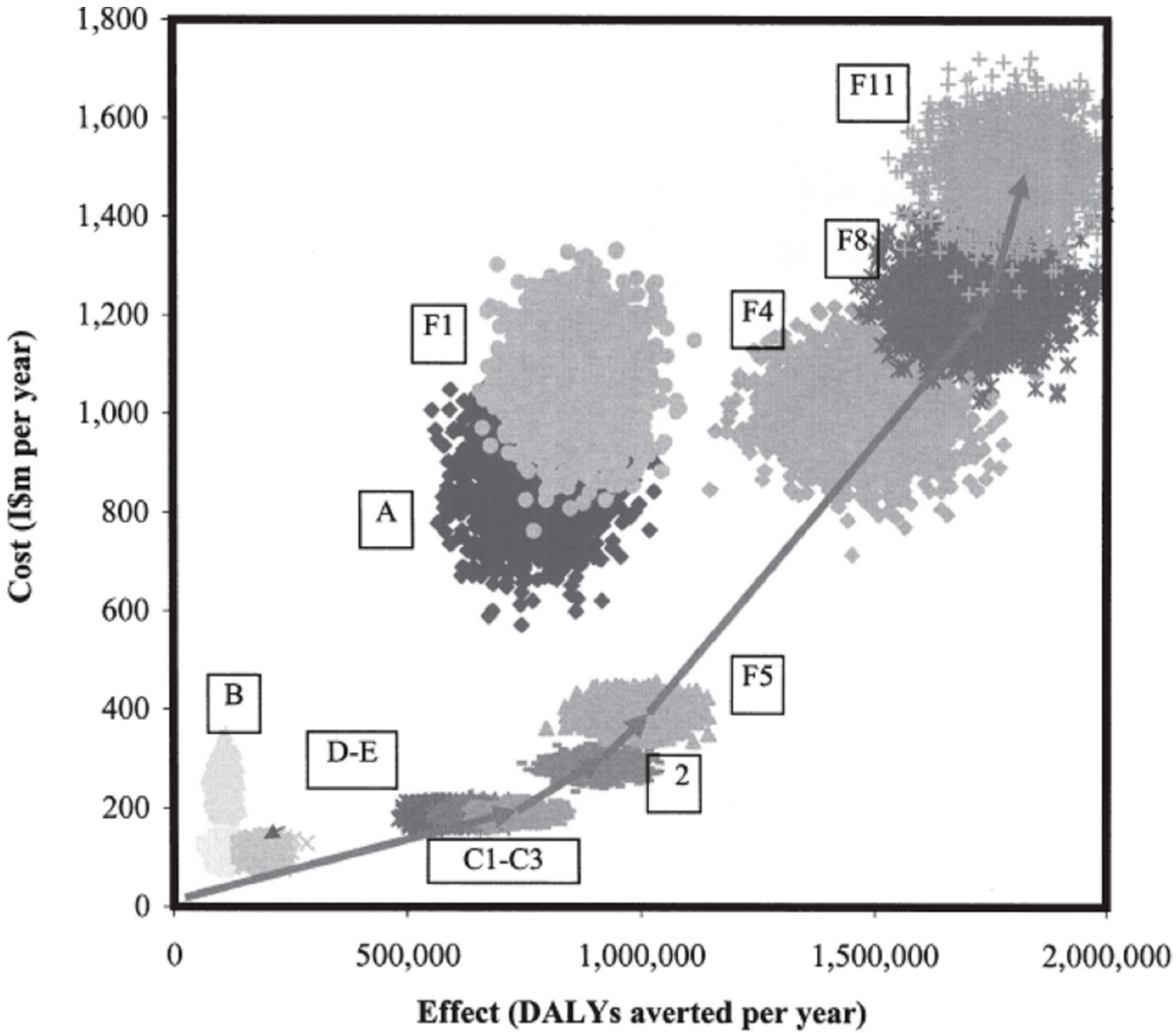


UK Liver death rates are directly linked to the affordability of alcohol.

The correlation of 0.98 is practically as close as it is possible to get.

So what might an effective alcohol policy look like?

World Health Organisation modelling of evidence based alcohol policy



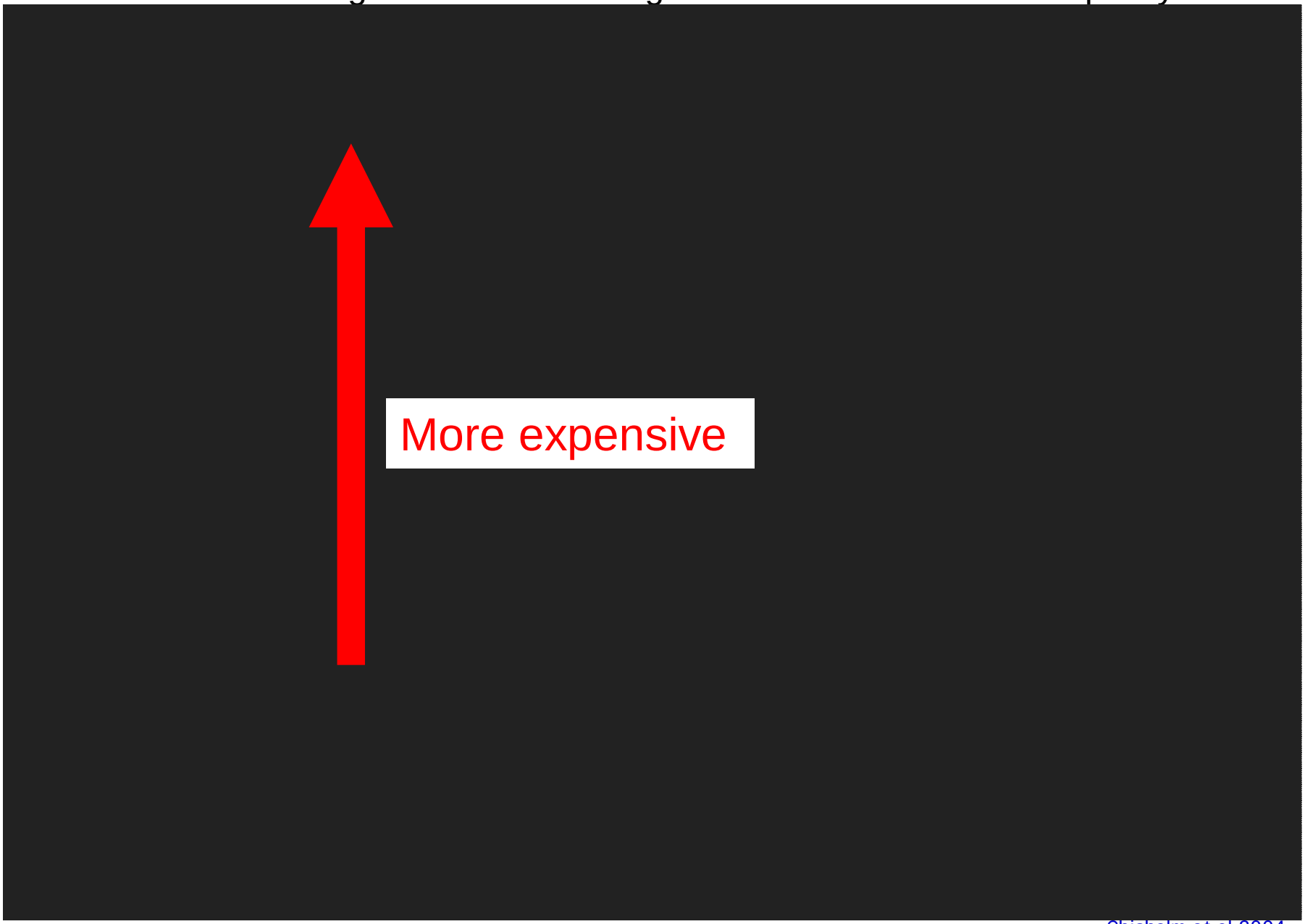
Chisholm et al 2004

World Health Organisation modelling of evidence based alcohol policy

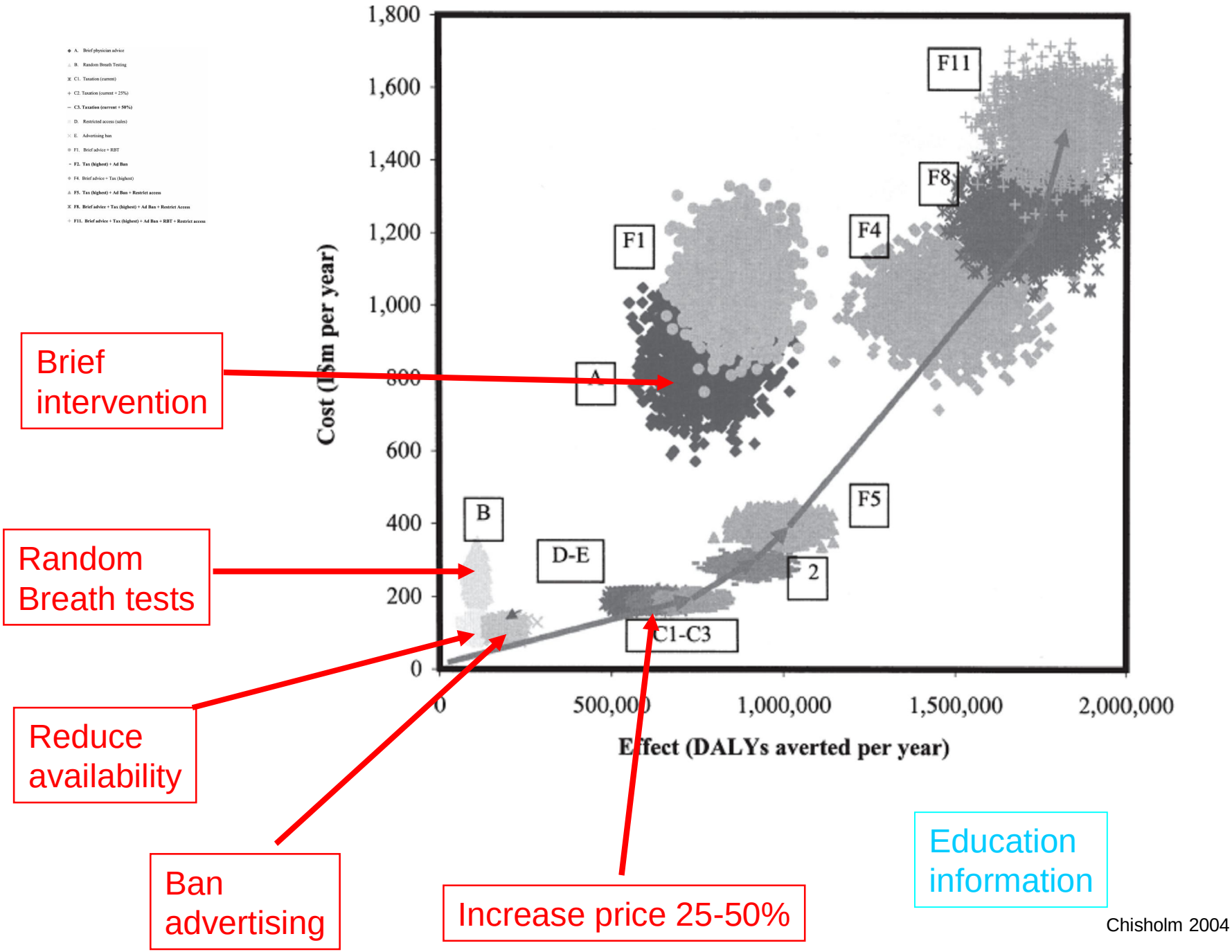
More effective

Chisholm et al 2004

World Health Organisation modelling of evidence based alcohol policy



Chisholm et al 2004



Chisholm 2004

Alcohol Health Alliance

There is a very delicate balance between the price we pay for alcohol and the harm it causes.

One quarter of the UK population drink at hazardous levels – they drink three-quarters of the booze that is sold.

Small but consistent increases in alcohol taxation, are fair, affect heavy and young drinkers the most, and will reduce deaths.

An increase of 25% would provide £4 billion to fund the NHS to detect, intervene and treat alcohol related problems.