

# Response ID ANON-Z6PT-8J13-T

Submitted to Alcohol: Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP): Continuation and Future Pricing: Consultation  
Submitted on 2023-11-21 09:12:37

## Ministerial Foreword

### Questions

1 Do you think Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) should continue?

Yes

2 If MUP continues, do you agree with the proposed Minimum Unit Price of 65 pence?

Yes

3 We invite comments on the Scottish Ministers' proposal to continue MUP, and the proposed Minimum Unit Price of 65 pence.

Comment below:

NB Since there do not appear to be comment boxes for questions 1 & 2, we use this box to explain the reasoning behind the answers given by The Salvation Army to all 3 questions, clearly indicating which sections address which question.

#### Question 1

Every day, The Salvation Army works with individuals in Scotland who are consuming alcohol and are experiencing associated harms. It is through this work that we witness first-hand the devastating effect alcohol dependency can have on individuals and their friends and families.

Prior to the MUP policy being introduced in Scotland, The Salvation Army was particularly concerned by the fact that alcohol was available for 14 p per unit in some areas of Scotland 1. This type of cheap alcohol tended to be purchased by harmful drinkers (including young, underage drinkers), with evidence suggesting that the alcohol consumption of the heaviest drinkers will also be affected by price 2. The Salvation Army remains concerned that, should the policy not continue, these exceptionally low prices could return, along with an increase in associated harms.

The Salvation Army has been greatly encouraged by the benefits associated with the introduction of the MUP policy in 2018. The Salvation Army is particularly encouraged by the evaluation analysis which indicated MUP was associated with a 13.4% reduction in deaths wholly attributable to alcohol consumption 3. These findings mirror that of previous research by Sheffield University which shows that as alcohol becomes more affordable, the number of alcohol-related deaths and hospital admissions increases 4.

These findings show that Minimum Unit Pricing can make a difference and help save lives. It is with this in mind that The Salvation Army reiterates its support for Minimum Unit Pricing.

#### Question 2

Whilst The Salvation Army is not expert in this level of economic modelling, we do believe that should the policy continue, it should be on the basis of saving as many lives as possible within realistic consumer terms.

With this in mind, The Salvation Army supports the introduction of the 65 pence price.

However, The Salvation Army also acknowledges that the price level will have a varying impact depending on external factors, such as inflation. The Salvation Army therefore advocates that the minimum unit price is set by secondary legislation to enable ministers to vary the price as circumstances change.

#### Question 3

The Salvation Army is clear that this policy itself is not a silver bullet for addressing alcohol related deaths or harms. The Salvation Army is clear that action needs to incorporate increased access to support services that help tackle the reasons why people have turned to alcohol in the first place.

However, The Salvation Army believes that Minimum Unit Pricing still has a role to play within a wider set of policies and action aimed at reducing alcohol-related harms.

The Salvation Army acknowledges that within the framing of this consultation, the Scottish Government has made clear that this measure should to be enacted within a context of wider support: "MUP alone was not intended to address the needs of this group where alcohol treatment and care services are key."

Addressing the price and availability of alcohol through legislation are consistently recognised as effective, public health interventions and The Salvation Army continues to encourage other Governments to learn from Scotland's approach. The Salvation Army hopes to see the Scottish Government continue with this policy and help develop a lasting legacy in supporting people experiencing harm through alcohol.

## FOOTNOTES

1 The Four Steps to Alcohol Misuse, Alcohol Focus Scotland, Scotland Health Action on Alcohol Problems, Balance, the North East Alcohol Office and Our Life, November 2011

2 Model-based Appraisal of the comparative impact of Minimum Unit pricing and taxing policies in Wales

3 Evaluating the impact of minimum unit pricing for alcohol in Scotland: A synthesis of the evidence, Public Health Scotland, 2023.

4 Model-based Appraisal of the comparative impact of Minimum Unit pricing and taxing policies in Wales: Interim report - an update to the 50 p MUP example (Cardiff: Welsh Government 2017)

## About you

What is your name?

Name:

Major David Cavanagh

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

The Salvation Army - Scotland Office

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us the type of organisation for which you are providing a response.

Other

If other, please share the type of organisation in the box provided:

Third sector service provider in the field of addictions, including alcohol

Further information about your organisation's response

Please add any additional context:

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response with name

Do you consent to Scottish Government contacting you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

What is your email address?

Email:

scotland@salvationarmy.org.uk

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.

I consent

## Evaluation

Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Slightly satisfied

Please enter comments here.:

The consultation would have been improved by asking for comments on questions 1 and 2, allowing respondents to explain the reasoning behind their replies.

In this case, we have included comments on these in the comment box for question 3.

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:  
Slightly satisfied

Please enter comments here.: