

# ALCOHOL IN THE WORKPLACE. PROFESSIONAL DRINKING CULTURE AND RISK MANAGEMENT AMONG BARTENDERS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Alix BOIROT,<sup>1</sup> Géraldine CAZORLA,<sup>1</sup> Patrizia CARRIERI and Marta LOTTO<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Aix Marseille Univ, Inserm, IRD, SESSTIM (Economic and Social Sciences of Health and Medical Information Processing),  
Marseille, France

[alix.boirot@inserm.fr](mailto:alix.boirot@inserm.fr), <https://sesstim.univ-amu.fr/fr>

## **Abstract** (250 words max): (239)

**Context:** Bartenders are a population at risk of high alcohol consumption. The incidence of liver and bile duct cancer, as well as mortality due to malignant tumors, and the risk of premature death before the age of 65 are higher in this professional sector when compared to other industries in various countries. There is an intricate relationship between alcohol consumption and professional cultures, particularly in occupations like bartending, where alcohol is central to the work environment.

**Goal:** Our study investigates reasons behind bartenders' drinking, when they were most likely to drink, and which tactics they used to manage alcohol consumption. Our results could help inform and refine health interventions, making them more tailored and responsive to the needs of this professional group.

**Method:** 22 semi-structured interviews with bartenders and 320 hours of participant observation - 38 participants in total

**Results:** Alcohol consumption appears to be deeply rooted and normalized in this professional environment. Professional alcohol consumption among bartenders is multi-faceted and serves several functions: commercial, ritual, team management, and self-management. The following strategies were cited to reduce/manage alcohol consumption: preventing themselves from drinking during the week; preparing a bottle for non-alcoholic shots for them, which could be mistaken for alcohol by customers; shifting from nighttime to daytime work; changing the place of work; consulting a psychologist or leaving the hospitality industry.

**Conclusion:** Alcohol presents different professional functions for bartenders. They implement ad hoc harm-reduction strategies that could be systematized.

**Keywords** (5max): alcohol harm-reduction, bartenders, workplaces, drinking cultures, qualitative research