



Labelling on alcoholic drinks packaging

The French experience

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Alcohol and pregnancy: a brief reminder

- o Alcohol passes from the mother's blood to the baby
- o > 6 drinks a day: fetal alcohol syndrome
 - teratogenic effects
 - learning and behavioural disorders
- o > 2 drinks a day / binge drinking: cognitive disorders
- o Alcohol can affect the brain at any stage of pregnancy
- o No known level for safety
 - Safest option: "no alcohol during pregnancy"

History of the French health warning

- o Summer 2004: lawsuit for lack of information
- o August 2004 (law on Public Health): 1st attempt to move forward
- o A step forward: the law of 11th February 2005 on disabilities

« toutes les unités de conditionnement des boissons alcoolisées portent, dans des conditions fixées par arrêté du ministre chargé de la santé, un message à caractère sanitaire préconisant l'absence de consommation par les femmes enceintes »

A lengthy process

- o At the French level:
 - Negotiations with stakeholders: alcohol producers
 - Negotiations with other Ministries
 - Presentation to disabled people's advocacy groups

- o At the European level:
 - Notification of the European Commission under directive 98/34/CE

Outcome

- o Publication of the legal base for the inclusion of a health warning on alcohol labelling
 - “Arrêté”, 3 October 2006
 - Imposes a written message or a graphic one

- o Press campaign + media coverage
 - October 2006
 - October 2007 (implementation)

The French health warning



OR

“La consommation de boissons alcoolisées pendant la grossesse, même en faible quantité, peut avoir des conséquences graves sur la santé de l'enfant.”

le: consumption of alcoholic drinks during pregnancy, even in small amounts, may have serious consequences on the child's health.

Labelling is part of a wider strategy

- o Information for students in schools
- o National media campaign of prevention: communication in feminine as well as general public media
- o Information for pregnant women in their « pregnancy book »
- o Epidemiological monitoring (InVS)
- o Better training for professionals

Our study

- 2004 (before measure was announced):
 - Assess knowledge about alcohol and pregnancy
 - Test various health warnings
 - Results published in 2006 (same time as “arrêté”)

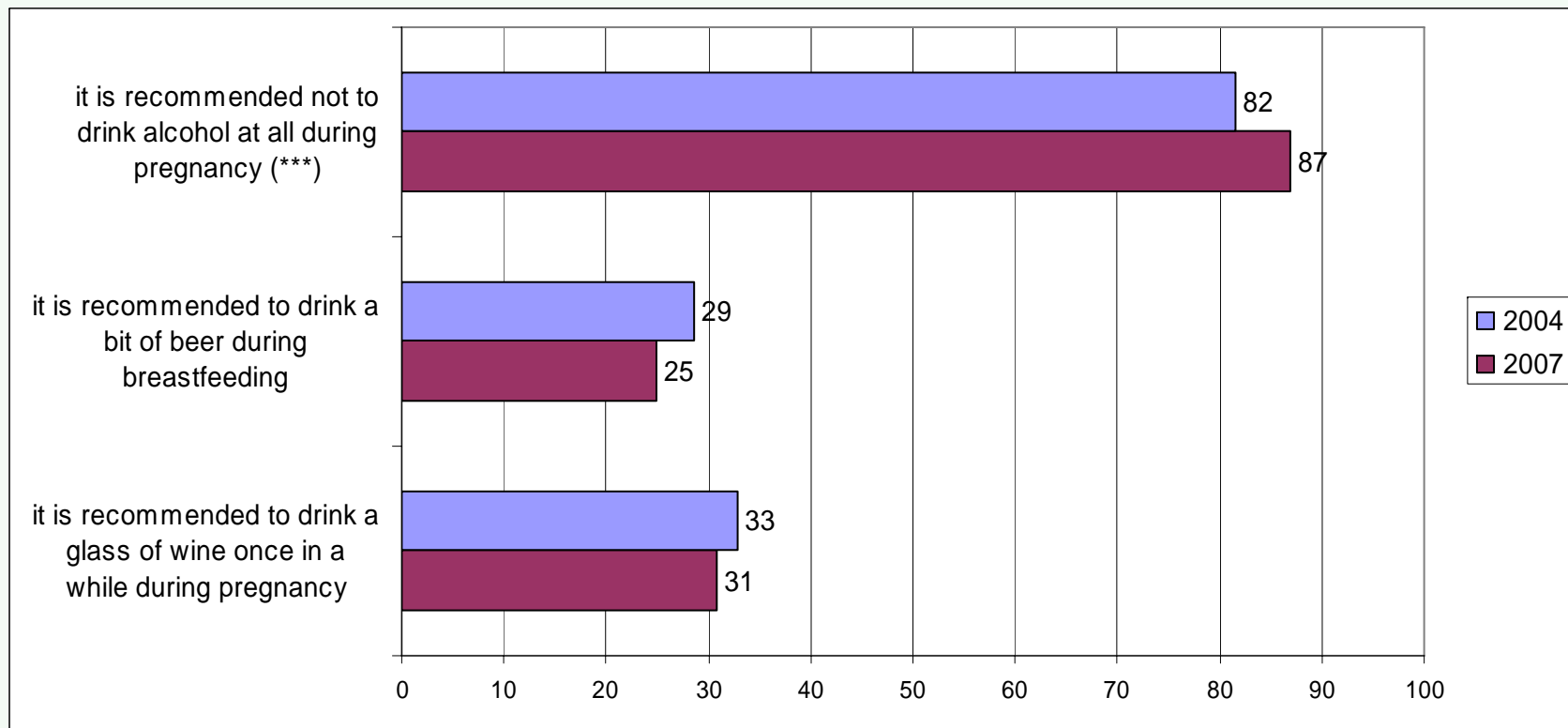
- 2007 (after implementation started):
 - New assessment of knowledge
 - Objective: evolutions since 2004

Method and population

- o Two phone surveys:
 - before: November 2004
 - after: December 2007
- o Two independent samples:
 - representative of the French population aged 15 +
 - quota samples (gender, age and householder's occupation, after stratification by region and city size)
 - 2004: 1,003 people / 2007: 1,006 people
- o For some questions: desired response not provided

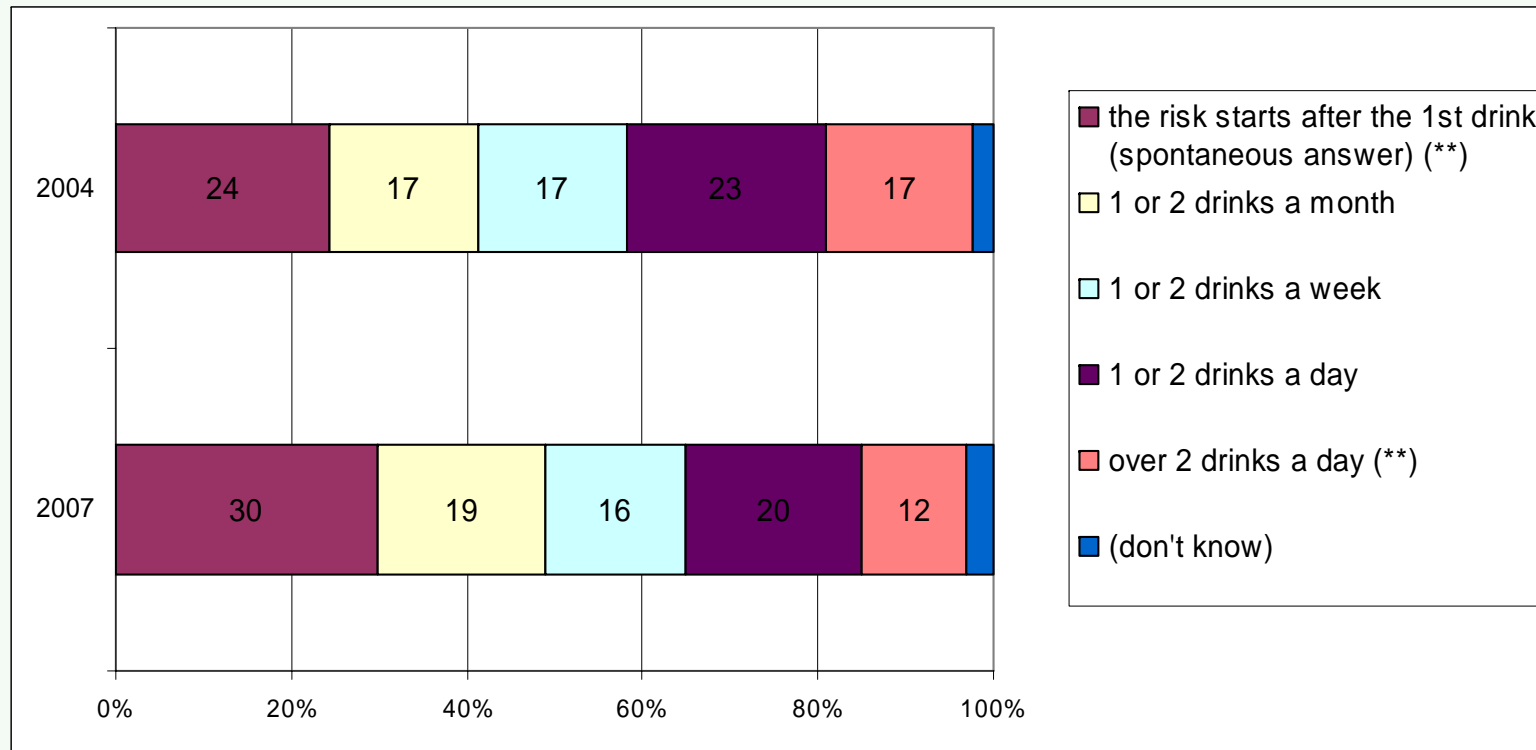
Results: Recommendations

% people thinking these ideas are right in 2004 and 2007



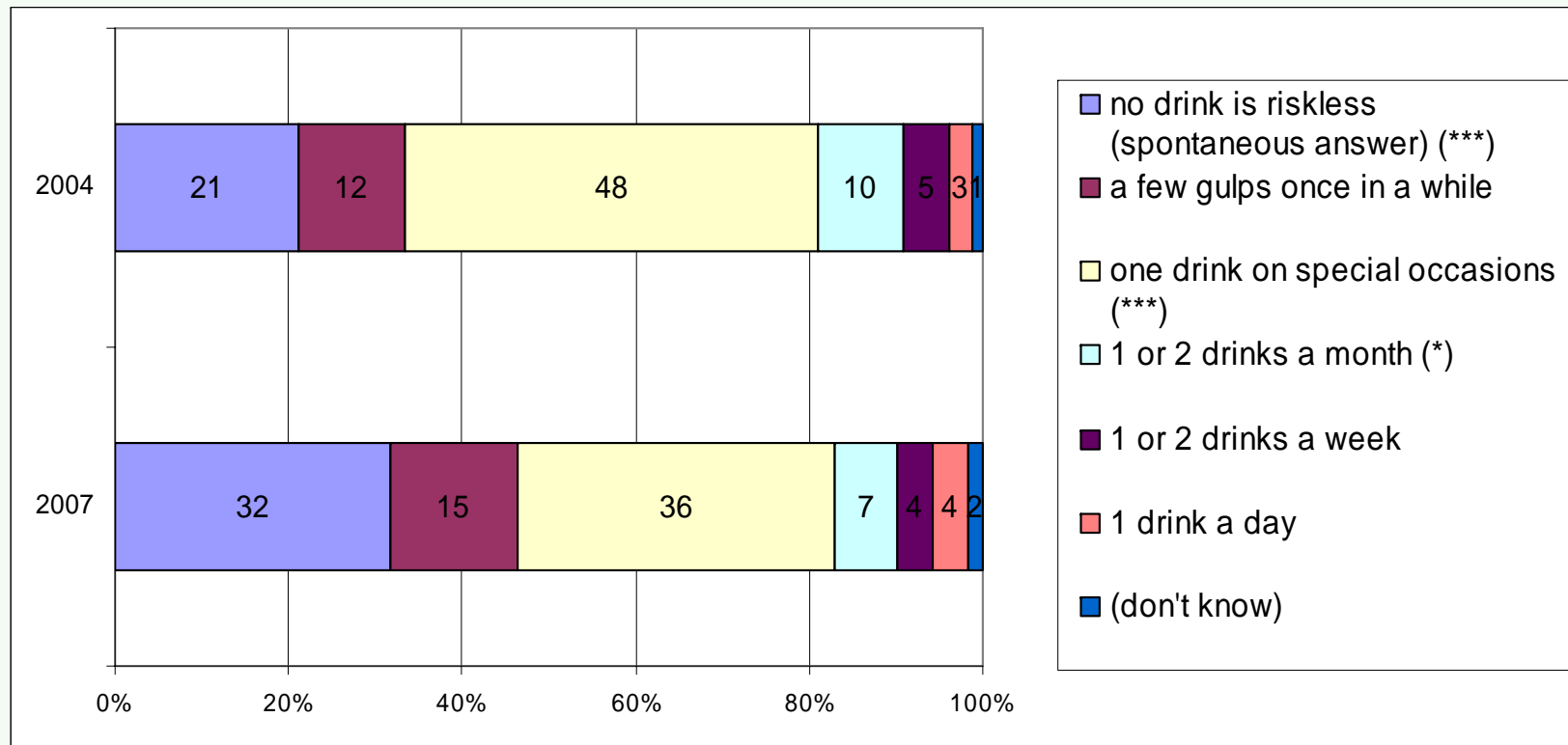
Results: Risk level (1/2)

At what quantity does alcohol consumption during pregnancy become dangerous for the baby's health? (% , 2004 and 2007)



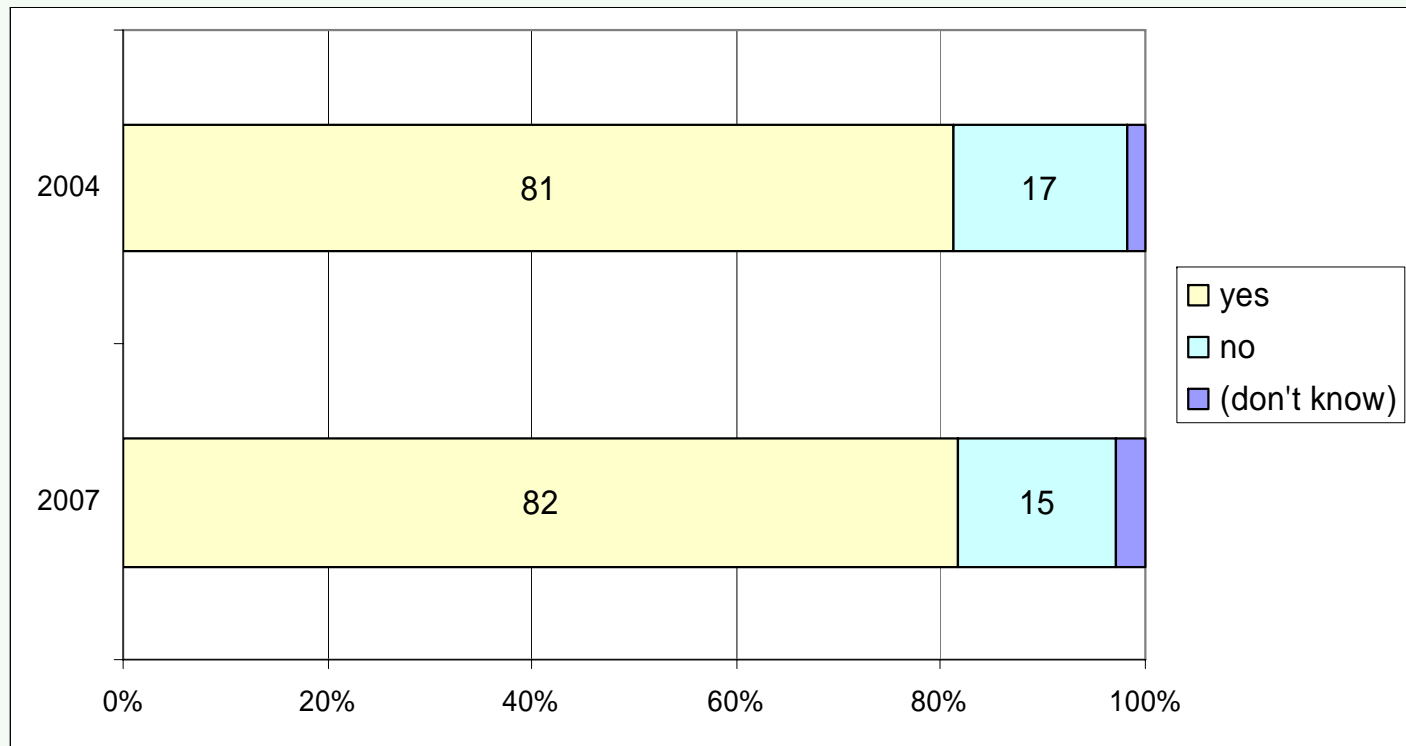
Results: Risk level (2/2)

How much alcohol can a pregnant woman drink without taking a risk with her baby's health? (% , 2004 and 2007)



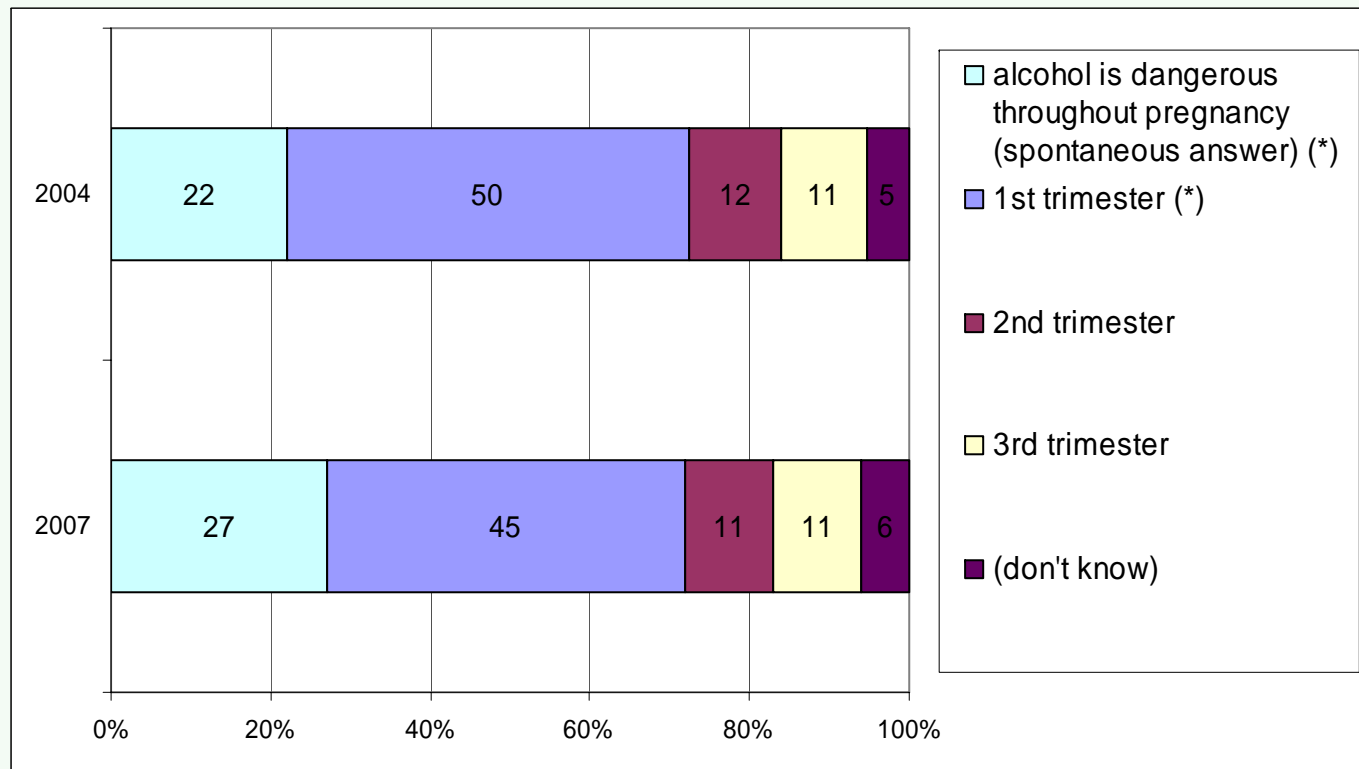
Results: Drunkenness

Can getting drunk once during pregnancy be dangerous
for the baby's health? (% , 2004 and 2007)



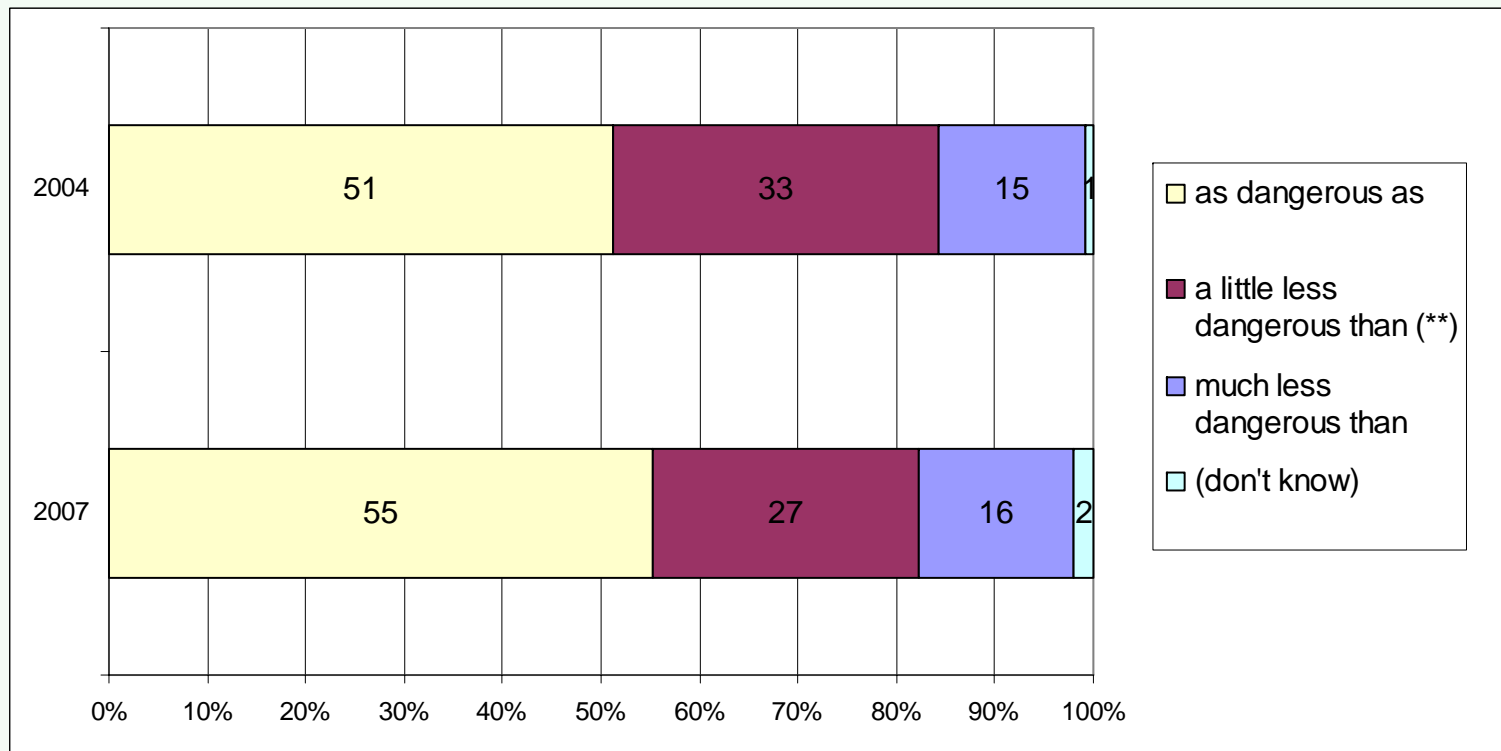
Results: Pregnancy stage

During what pregnancy stage is alcohol consumption the most dangerous for the baby's health? (% , 2004 and 2007)



Results: Alcohol equivalence

If a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, are beer and wine [...] spirits for the baby's health? (% , 2004 and 2007)



Association between knowledge and information exposure

OR adjusted for gender, age and education

	Question (desired response)	2004 Reference (n=993)	2007	
			Unexposed (n=556)	Exposed (n=434)
1	it is recommended to drink a glass of wine once in a while during pregnancy (you think it is wrong)	-1-	0.8 *	1.4 *
2	it is recommended to drink a bit of beer during breastfeeding (you think it is wrong)	-1-	0.9	1.1
3	it is recommended not to drink alcohol at all during pregnancy (you think it is right)	-1-	1.1	2.6 ***
4	at what quantity does alcohol become dangerous (risk starts after the 1st drink)	-1-	1.2	1.5 **
5	what quantity is riskless (no drink is riskless)	-1-	1.4 **	2.2 ***
6	getting drunk once can be dangerous (yes)	-1-	0.8	1.6 **
7	pregnancy stage during which alcohol is most dangerous (danger throughout pregnancy)	-1-	1.2	1.3
8	beer and wine vs. spirits (as dangerous)	-1-	1.0	1.5 **

Conclusion (1/2)

- o Positive evolutions:
 - Social norms -> “no alcohol during pregnancy”

- o Association with being exposed to information
 - Causation?

- o Persistent distinction between fermented drinks and spirits
 - Stumbling block for prevention in the field of alcohol

Conclusion (2/2)

- o Long-term evolution?
- o Impact on alcohol consumption during pregnancy?
- o Increased awareness in the general public
 - Attributable to the publicity that surrounded the measure rather than to the health warning itself

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