

Social Costs of Road Accidents under the Influence of Alcohol and Illegal Drugs in the Czech Republic in 2007 – Part I: Health-related Costs



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BACKGROUND: *The methodology for estimating the social costs of substance use, including estimates of road accidents attributable to substance use, stems from the international guidelines adopted by the WHO (Single et al., 2003). The cost structure distinguishes between direct and indirect costs, with direct costs consisting of healthcare and law enforcement costs and indirect costs involving lost productivity; road accidents also encompass material damage.*

METHOD: *As part of our study looking into the social costs of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs in the Czech Republic in 2007, we asked several institutions (including a major health insurance company and the Czech Ministry of the Interior) to provide us with relevant datasets. The data were grouped into nosological units, and an aetiological factor*

was generated for them. RESULTS: This work presents the direct and indirect health-related costs of road accidents attributable to alcohol and other psychoactive substances; these costs reached CZK 838.7 million in 2007, out of which CZK 648.3 and CZK 190.4 million were attributable to alcohol and other psychoactive substances respectively. This accounted for a total of 12.5% of all health-related costs incurred in relation to traffic accidents. The greatest share of this amount was attributable to indirect costs (82% for alcohol and 71% for illicit drugs), mainly as a result of mortality. Mortality was estimated on the basis of sources other than those provided by the police; the study suggests that some indicators of impaired driving may be underreported.

KEY WORDS: SOCIAL COSTS – ALCOHOL – ILLICIT DRUGS – ROAD ACCIDENTS

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