

# Beer etiquette

**How Europeans enjoy a beer**

A report by SABMiller



# Sit yourself down with a beer and read on...

Beer is big business in Europe and it's also a growing industry, with beer volumes increasing by more than 6%<sup>1</sup>. It plays a part in many Europeans' social lives but the role it plays is different, with each country displaying its own unique and varied beer drinking culture.

As one of the world's largest brewers selling beer in over 60 countries across six continents, SABMiller is an industry expert. In Europe alone, the company has 19 breweries, over 12,000 employees, and last year produced a staggering 7 billion pints.

As a company committed to continuously analysing consumer behaviour, SABMiller has harnessed its expertise to reveal the latest beer drinking cultural trends in two exclusive reports.

These reports have been developed from research conducted by an independent marketing insight and brand development consultancy, Added Value, through online interviews with over 7,500 people across 15 European countries. A total of 500 people were interviewed in each country.

This first report focuses on the etiquette of beer drinking with key findings and each nationality's idiosyncrasies analysed throughout.

## Snapshot of findings...

- Romanians are the most generous beer drinkers in Europe... see page 9
- Czech and Slovakian men top the European chivalry index when it comes to picking up the bar bill when out with their partners... see page 4
- British women lead the way when it comes to paying their way when on a date... see page 4
- Belgium is home to Europe's biggest round... see page 9
- The Swedes and Danes are Europe's true beer drinkers... see page 6



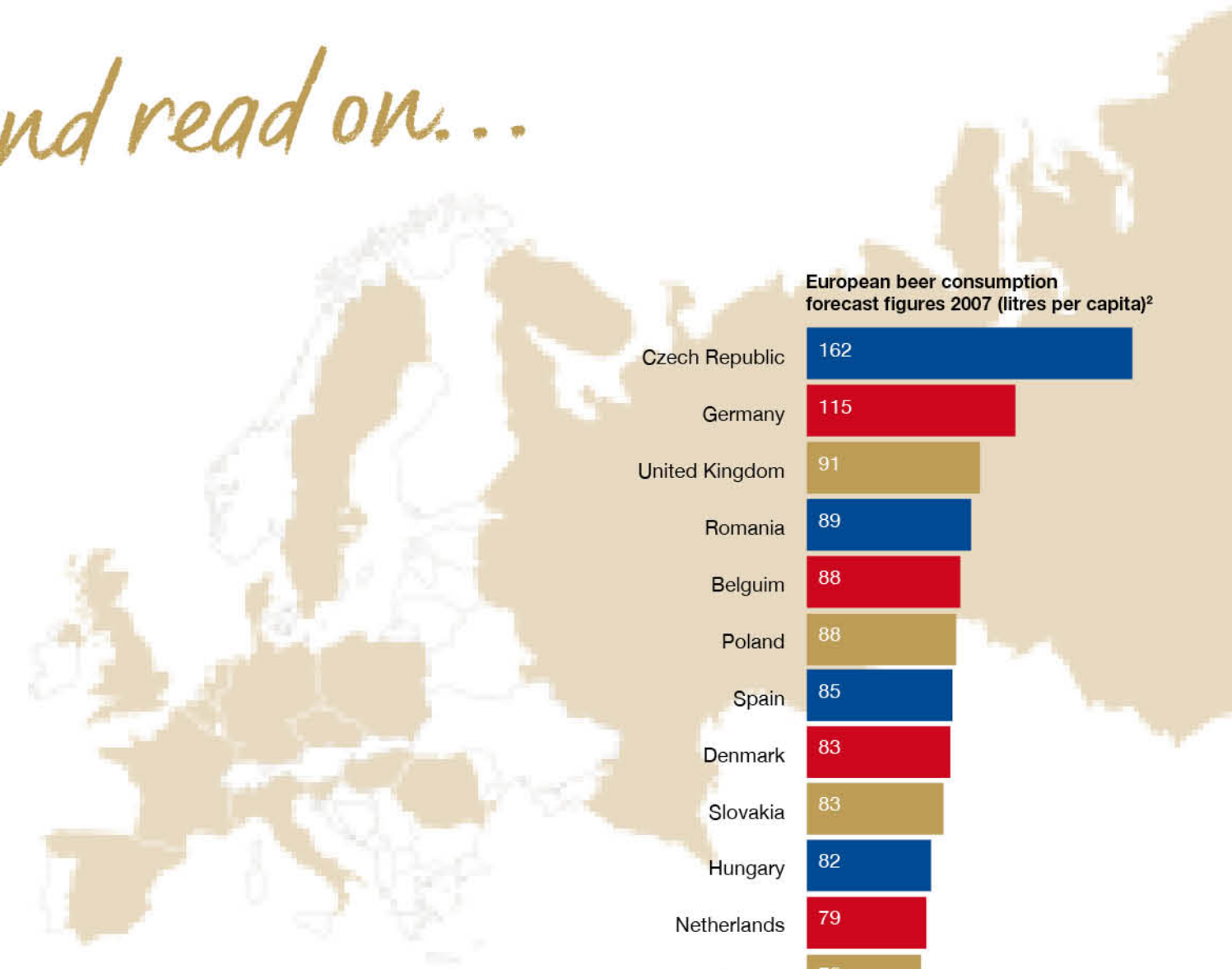
### About SABMiller

SABMiller's brands include premium international beers Peroni Nastro Azzurro, Pilsner Urquell and Miller Genuine Draft, as well as favourite regional brews including Tyskie Gronie in Poland, Dreher Classic in Hungary and Ursus Premium in Romania.

## Contents

1 National drinking profiles	page 2
2 The art of chivalry	page 4
3 A sense of occasion	page 6
4 The continental dating rules	page 8
5 Europe's most generous beer drinkers	page 9

<sup>1</sup> European beer volumes grew by 6.2% in 2006. Source: Plato Logic 2007 data



Countries in gold on the map relate to markets interviewed

<sup>2</sup> Source: Canadean, 2007



# How do you compare?

When it comes to beer etiquette – the social behaviour displayed during beer drinking occasions – are you like your fellow countrymen or do you have more in common with your European neighbours?

In terms of **celebrity** beer buddies, Bruce Willis is a popular guy! From the countries polled on which well known person they'd like to have a beer with (UK, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania), the film star featured as a favourite choice with four out of five countries. Michael Schumacher, Brad Pitt and George Clooney all featured across three of the countries' polls. Politicians also featured as a top three choice in four out of the five countries.

Looking at five key social behaviours – from how nationalities pay for their beers through to the occasions where beer is most and least acceptable – we've created a profile of each country's typical beer drinker.



How do you usually pay for one round/order?



If you were buying drinks for several people, what is the maximum number of people you would be prepared to buy for in one round/order?



Would you be prepared to buy drinks for other people if you were not sure whether you would get one bought for you in return on the same occasion?



When you go out for a drink with your current partner, who do you expect to pay for the drinks?



Do you think it is acceptable\* to drink beer on the following occasions: a first date, a wedding and a business meeting?

\*Over 50% was deemed as acceptable

## Russia

- Split the cost** (57%)
- 4.6 people per order**
- Definitely** would buy (43%)
- Men say: **split cost** equally (50%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (60%)
- No:** business meetings, weddings, first dates

## Netherlands

- Pay for the whole order** (70%)
- 6.6 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (48%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (73%). Women say: **split cost** equally (57%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## Belgium

- Pay for the whole order** (81%)
- 7.1 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (49%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (72%). Women say: **split cost** equally (52%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## France

- Pay for the whole order** (73%)
- 5.3 people per order**
- Definitely** would buy (40%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (85%). Women say: **split cost** equally (36%)
- No:** business meetings, weddings, first dates

## Spain

- Pay for the whole order** (55%)
- 6.4 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (36%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (67%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (49%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## Hungary

- Pay for the whole order** (70%)
- 5.3 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (49%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (96%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (67%)
- Yes:** weddings  
**No:** first dates, business meetings

## Italy

- Split the cost** (52%)
- 5.6 people per order**
- Definitely** would buy (45%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (91%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (49%)
- No:** business meetings, weddings, first dates

## Romania

- Split the cost** (52%)
- 6.5 people per order**
- Definitely** would buy (59%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (92%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (60%)
- Yes:** weddings  
**No:** first dates, business meetings

## UK

- Pay for the whole order** (82%)
- 5.9 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (48%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (82%). Women say: **split cost** equally (57%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## Denmark

- Pay for the whole order** (65%)
- 6.4 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (49%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (81%). Women say: **split cost** equally (67%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## Sweden

- Pay for the whole order** (82%)
- 4.9 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (46%)
- Men say: **Split cost** equally (61%). Women say: **split cost** equally (78%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## Poland

- Pay for the whole order** (60%)
- 5.5 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (45%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (92%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (51%)
- Yes:** first dates, weddings  
**No:** business meetings

## Germany

- Split the cost** (63%)
- 5.7 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (47%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (85%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (63%)
- Yes:** weddings  
**No:** first dates, business meetings

## Slovakia

- Pay for the whole order** (75%)
- 5.5 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (48%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (97%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (58%)
- No:** business meetings, weddings, first dates

## Czech Republic

- Split the cost** (61%)
- 5 people per order**
- Probably** would buy (43%)
- Men say: **men pay** for the drinks (97%). Women say: **men pay** for the drinks (72%)
- Yes:** weddings  
**No:** first dates, business meetings



2 The art of chivalry

Is romance brewing?

Chivalry is not dead amongst Europeans as a massive 8 out of 10 European men (81%) believe they should pay for their partner's drinks on an evening out. However, they could save themselves some money because women don't expect a free ride – 43% of European women expect to split the bill equally and 7% would expect to pay for all the drinks.



It's a familiar story – as a relationship progresses women stop expecting men to keep buying their drinks. However, in steadfast Germany, where 67% of men expect to buy beers on the first date, this number rises to 85% when out with a current partner – the highest % increase in Europe. Other countries with similarly positive rises were Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic and France.

This figure contrasts with Russian men, who become less generous as familiarity sets in. Whilst 92% of men are happy to pay for the drinks when on a date, this figure plummets by almost half (to just 50%) when they're with a current partner. As the graphs opposite illustrate, similar decreases were found in the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Spain and Denmark.

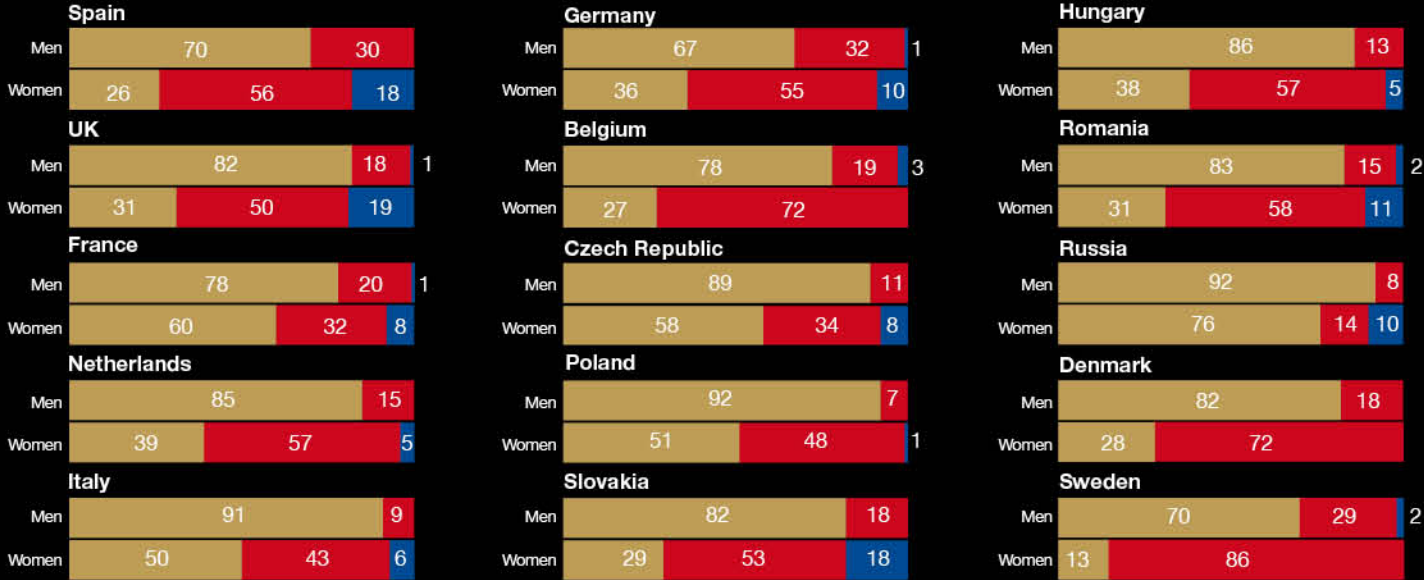
The only countries to retain a willingness to pay for the drinks regardless of being on a new date or with a current partner are the UK, Italy and Poland where men maintained the same standard.

It's not just men who treat new and established partners differently. British and Spanish women's willingness to pay for drinks also diminishes once they're in a relationship. Whilst 19% of British women and 18% of Spanish women expect to pay for the drinks when with a new partner, this falls to just 6% of women in both countries when with a current partner.

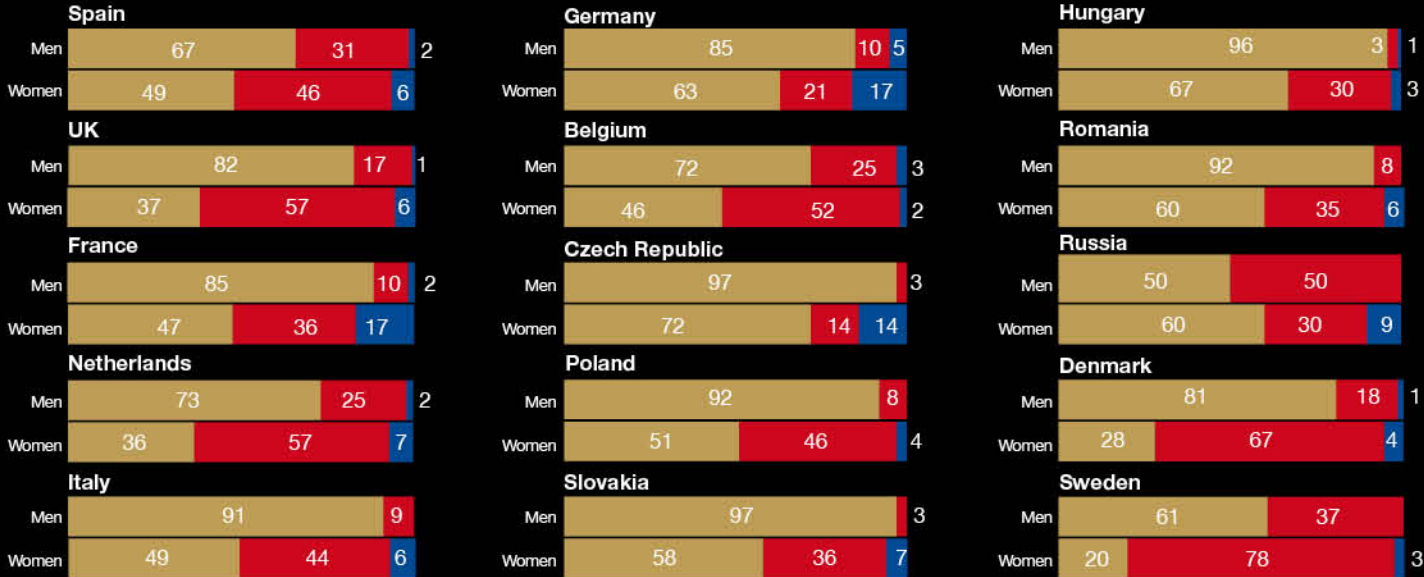
When it comes to who makes the best partners on dates:

- Women looking to be wined and dined by potential partners should go to Russia or Poland as men in these countries top the table when it comes to buying the drinks for a first date. Most men (92%), in both countries say they would expect to pay for all the drinks during an evening out. This puts them firmly ahead of the French, the widely considered romantics of Europe, where only 78% of men feel they should foot the bill.
- Czech and Slovakian men are the most committed to treating their current partners (97% in both countries).
- If you're a man who fancies being treated, then head to the UK because British women are the most likely in Europe to think they should buy all the drinks (19%). They are closely followed by Spanish and Slovakian women, both polling 18%.
- For those for whom equality is paramount, men should go for a beer with Belgian women because 72% of them believe the bill should be split 50/50, and women should head for Germany where 32% of men expect the bar bill to be split equally.

If you were to go for a drink with a potential partner, who would you expect to pay for the drinks?



When you go out for a drink with your current partner, who do you expect to pay for the drinks?





### 3 A sense of occasion

# Where we most like to enjoy a beer

Europeans have a very different sense of occasion for when a beer is seen as acceptable or not ...



If you are considering a business trip abroad then Sweden is the place to go for all beer lovers. The Swedes are the most likely in Europe to enjoy a beer during a business meeting (47%). The Swedes are closely followed by the Spanish – 43% of whom believe that it's fine to enjoy a beer during a business meeting, and interestingly, more Russians think it's acceptable to drink beer at a business meeting than at a wedding (31% compared to 25%). At the other end of the scale is the Netherlands where only 15% of people would drink beer on this occasion.

People from the Czech Republic enjoy celebrating a new marriage with a beer – the Czechs are three times more likely to drink beer at a wedding than a Russian reveller, and four times more likely than an Italian. For those attending a wedding abroad, be mindful that toasting the happy couple with a beer is not always appropriate. Whilst the Dutch and Danes are perfectly matched because 89% of people in both countries are happy to drink beer at weddings, guests at Italian weddings should be more cautious. Only 23% of Italians think it's acceptable to drink beer.

However, there is one occasion that the majority of Europeans agree on . . . and wine snobs should look away now!

Europeans emphatically believe beer and food are perfect partners, with 81% thinking it is acceptable to drink beer with a family meal and 79% saying they would drink it with dinner in a restaurant.

#### Europe's True Beer Lovers

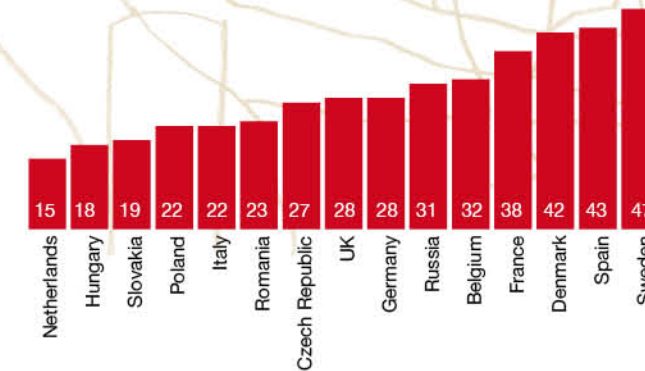
The Nordic nations of Denmark and Sweden are the most likely to have a beer in their hand at any social occasion.

The Danes are the most accepting European nation of drinking beer at a family meal at home (95%) and at a wedding (89%), whilst the Swedes top the league for drinking beer on first dates (77%), business meetings (47%) and with dinner in a restaurant (96%).

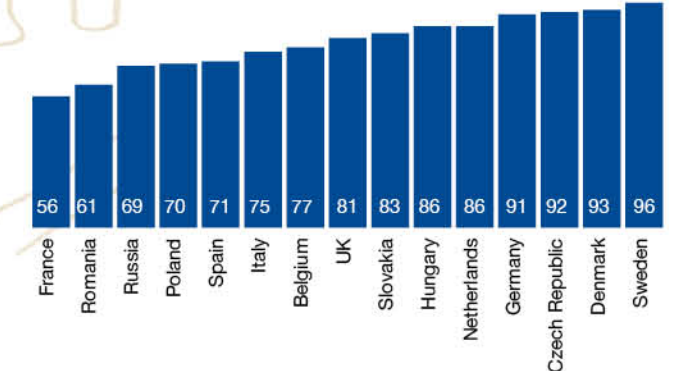
On which of the following occasions would you think it acceptable to drink beer?

Results given in %

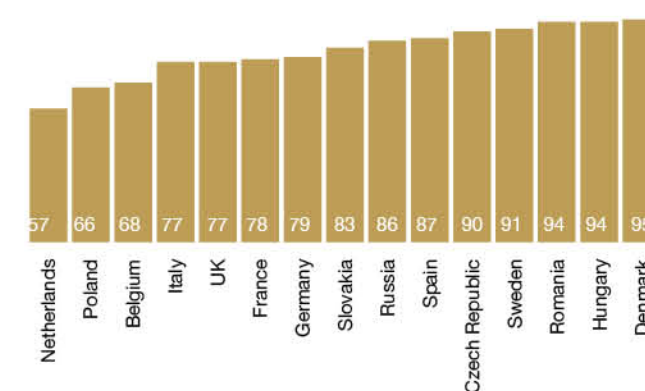
At a business meeting or event



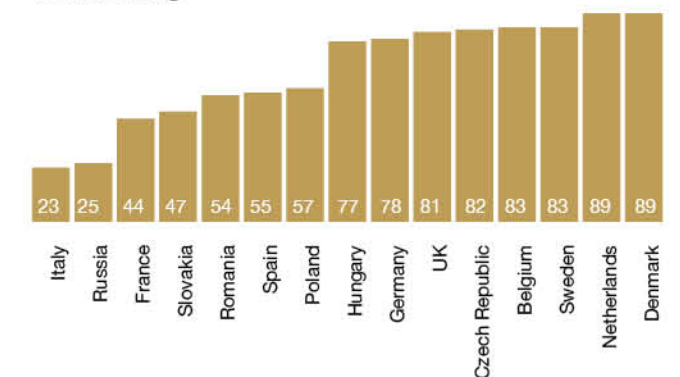
With dinner in a restaurant



At a family meal at home

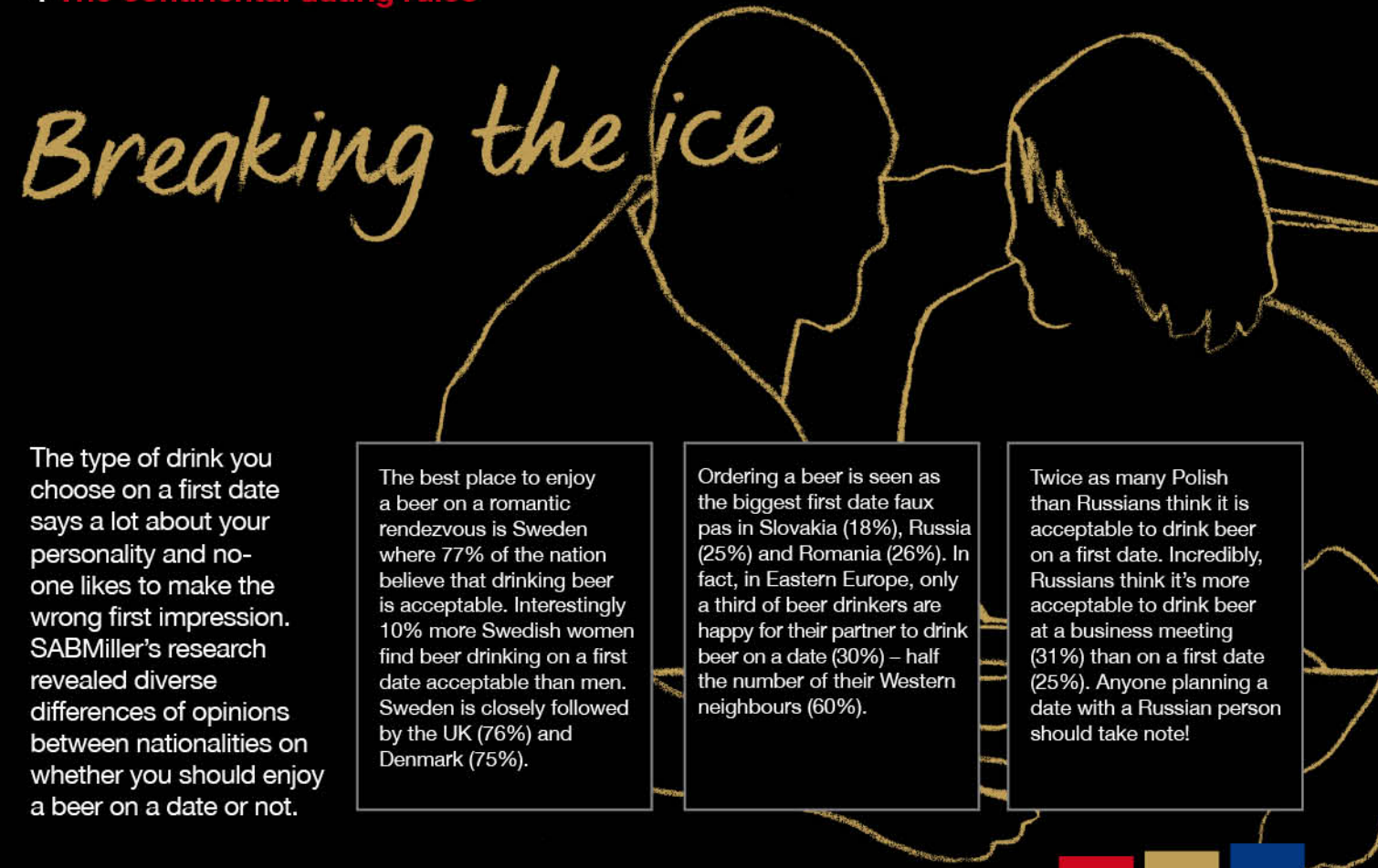


At a wedding





#### 4 The continental dating rules



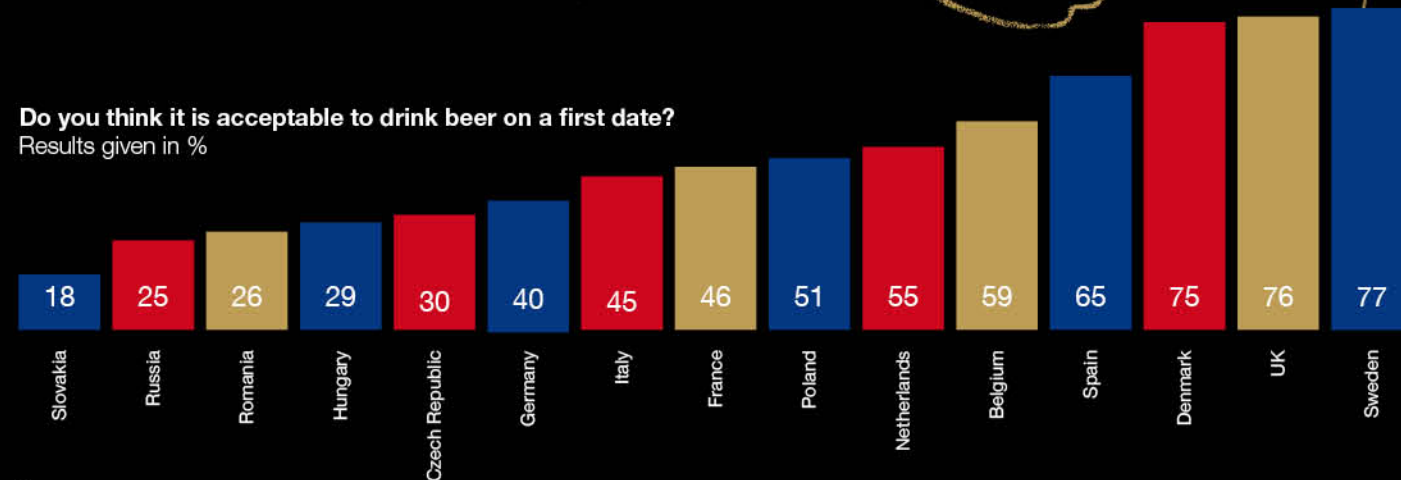
The type of drink you choose on a first date says a lot about your personality and no-one likes to make the wrong first impression. SABMiller's research revealed diverse differences of opinions between nationalities on whether you should enjoy a beer on a date or not.

The best place to enjoy a beer on a romantic rendezvous is Sweden where 77% of the nation believe that drinking beer is acceptable. Interestingly 10% more Swedish women find beer drinking on a first date acceptable than men. Sweden is closely followed by the UK (76%) and Denmark (75%).

Ordering a beer is seen as the biggest first date faux pas in Slovakia (18%), Russia (25%) and Romania (26%). In fact, in Eastern Europe, only a third of beer drinkers are happy for their partner to drink beer on a date (30%) – half the number of their Western neighbours (60%).

Twice as many Polish than Russians think it is acceptable to drink beer on a first date. Incredibly, Russians think it's more acceptable to drink beer at a business meeting (31%) than on a first date (25%). Anyone planning a date with a Russian person should take note!

**Do you think it is acceptable to drink beer on a first date?**  
Results given in %



#### 5 Europe's most generous beer drinkers

# Who's likely to buy you a beer?

Romanians are the most generous beer drinkers in Europe. They are the most likely to buy you a drink without expecting one in return and have the highest percentage of people willing to pay for an order of more than 10 drinks for their friends (19%).

Also high in the generosity stakes is Russia, which despite buying Europe's smallest number of drinks per order, had the second highest number of respondents who said they would 'definitely buy' someone a drink regardless of whether one was guaranteed in return (43%).

When it comes to paying for drinks, Britons and Swedes are the most likely to pay the whole bar bill (82% in both countries) whilst Germans (63%) prefer to split the cost between the group. Interestingly, the Swedish are also the least likely to commit to buying someone a drink if the favour was not likely to be returned.

For those who prefer to split the bill, the Dutch are the most relaxed because 82% are happy to split the bill equally rather than meticulously work out exactly who drank what. In contrast, only 3% of drinkers in the Czech Republic would split the bill on this basis.

Head to Belgium if you're part of a large group because Belgian beer drinkers buy for the highest number of people. Belgians are happy to buy for 7 people per order whilst Russian drinkers prefer to limit their order to just 4 people, the lowest number in Europe.



"If you were buying drinks for several people, what is the maximum number of people you would buy for in one order?"

Listed are the top 5 countries who would buy the most number of drinks in one order.

**BELGIUM (7.1)**

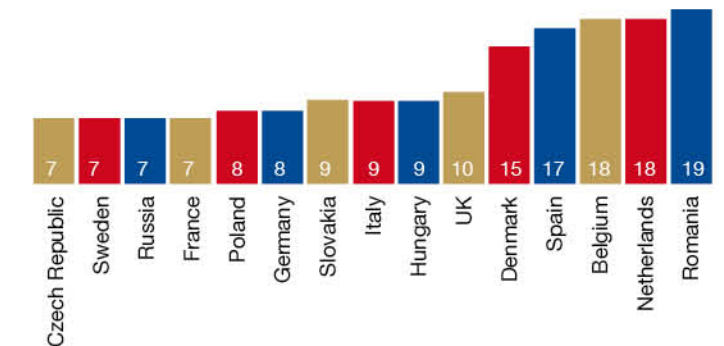
**NETHERLANDS (6.6)**

**ROMANIA (6.5)**

**DENMARK (6.4)**

**SPAIN (6.4)**

**Percentage per country of people prepared to buy for more than ten people in one round**





Live beer!



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