



Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs (NAD) is celebrating 40 years of research publishing. To honour this, we are announcing a **CALL FOR PAPERS** for a thematic issue on state interference in markets in the name of health and welfare:

State monopolies and market regulation as instruments for enhancing welfare and health

The idea of market liberalism as a way of enhancing societal prosperity, good health, and high standards of living is deeply rooted in the dogma of governance in today's world. This is understandable considering that market liberalism has historically speaking led to an overall rise in prosperity. However, there are many areas in which state regulation is required in order to tackle harmful, expensive and immoral counterforces to public health and wellbeing. An example of what can happen when control systems fail is the North American opioid crisis, which is a result of business interests overriding institutional, legal, and professional codes of conduct.

A general trend in all Western societies has been that individual citizens are increasingly seen as responsible for their environment, health, and social well-being through their everyday choices. In this, wellbeing and health are conceptualised as results of rational personal decisions and not that of collective structural adjustments. This agenda has not always been compatible with the Nordic systems, which build on another type of social imagination. Here, the responsibility has – through taxes, legislation, and welfare institutions – been embedded in public tasks with the aims of ensuring universal education, health care, and safety networks. Research shows, for example, that a shift from public structures to individual 'shopping' of health care services creates great inequalities: the outcomes of the system will be more beneficial for people of higher socioeconomic circumstances.

Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs (NAD) kindly invite contributions to a special issue that focuses on the state's ability and right to restrict and regulate the availability of products and services that can harm citizens' health and well-being and lead to inequalities and other social harm. The special issue encourages a wide understanding of state interference. We welcome work for example on ideas and justifications behind market regulation, for example as social investment or ways of protecting vulnerable groups or equal treatment of citizens. The contributions can cover a wide spectrum of topics, but we especially welcome contributions that deal with state monopolies in today's world.

In the Nordic countries, state monopolies have built on the expectation that they limit availability and provide a more 'responsible' outlet (Babor et al., 2022; Sulkunen et al., 2019). Nordic monopolies have long faced both external and internal challenges. Externally, the free circulation of goods and services within the European single market has complicated the position and possibilities of restrictive monopoly policies. Competition from 'offshore markets' (distance sales and cross-border purchases of alcohol, online gambling) have also challenged the premises and market shares of monopoly operators. Internally, declining public support, political will, and media criticism erode the basis of monopolies.

In addition to their public health mission, monopolies on harmful commodities have also been charged with public finance goals: Harmful commodities generate financial surplus, which is attractive to governments and other beneficiaries. Balancing between public health and public finance objectives has created a double, hard-to-reconcile mandate.

Monopoly policies across the Nordic countries and across different harmful commodities have diverged increasingly. Sweden and Denmark have already re-regulated their gambling markets online, allowing the entry of licensed operators, and Finland is about to follow. Most Nordic countries still

operate monopolies on the sales of strong alcoholic beverages, but these are debated in some contexts (Marionneau & Hellman, 2020). In other jurisdictions and parts of the world, new monopolies have been created for other harmful commodities. For example, cannabis monopolies have been established in Canada and Uruguay (Room, 2021). Whether similar configurations will emerge in the Nordics remains to be seen.

We welcome research articles investigating state market regulation, market interference, and monopolies from a wide range of perspectives. Contributions can address the Nordic context but also other parts of the world where monopoly questions are currently debated.

Contributions may focus on (but are not limited to):

- Ideas and justifications behind market regulation, for example as a social investment tool or a way of ensuring safety, protecting vulnerable groups and equal treatment of citizens
- Legal frameworks and legal justifications of market regulations, limit on access and availability of products, as well as monopolies
- Public health implications and harms in monopoly systems
- Comparative studies on different regulation models across jurisdictions or across commodities
- Case studies on the creation or dismantlement of monopolies and their effects and outcomes
- Current internal and external challenges to monopoly operations: e.g. emerging forms of alcohol sales (farm wines, microbreweries, micro distilleries, and distance sales of alcohol); digital developments and global gambling markets (online sales, enforcement, black markets, offshore companies); public support, attitudes, and opinions towards monopoly operation
- Changes and differences in monopoly service framing (for example from strict to service-minded)

All submissions will be subject to independent double-blinded peer review

Submissions of thought pieces and discussion openings are also welcome!

Deadlines

Article concepts and/or abstracts, max. 1 page: 10th of October, 2023

Abstract submission: to mikaela.lindeman@nordicwelfare.org; virve.marionneau@helsinki.fi; tom.kettunen@helsinki.fi

Full manuscripts submissions: Kindly, submit your manuscript between 1.11.2023 and 20.1.2024

Full article submissions are made through the journal's Manuscript Central: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/nad> (tick the box for 'special issue').

Guest editors

Mikaela Lindeman, researcher and editor, PopNAD mikaela.lindeman@nordicwelfare.org

Virve Marionneau, university researcher and head of research group, virve.marionneau@helsinki.fi



References

Babor, T. F., Casswell, S., Graham, K., Huckle, T., Livingston, M., Österberg, E., Rehm, J., Room, R., Rossow, I., & Sornpaisarn, B. (2022). *Alcohol: No ordinary commodity. Research and public policy*. Oxford University Press.

Marionneau, V., & Hellman, M. (2020). What is special about gambling? A comparison of public discourse on Finnish state monopolies in rail traffic, gambling, and alcohol. *Critical Gambling Studies*, 1(1), 40–49.

Room, R. (2021). The monopoly option: Obsolescent or a 'best buy' in alcohol and other drug control. *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs*, 34(2), 215–232.

Sulkunen, P., Babor, T., Cisneros-Örnberg, J., Egerer, M. D., Hellman, C. M. E., Livingstone, C., Marionneau, V. K., Nikkinen, J. T., Orford, J., Room, R., & Rossow, I. (2019). *Setting limits: Gambling, science and public Policy*. Oxford University Press.