



Australian Bureau of Statistics

4307.0.55.001 - Apparent Consumption of Alcohol, Australia, 2016-17

Quality Declaration

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Alcohol consumption lowest in half a century

Apparent consumption of alcohol per person has dropped to levels not seen since the 1960s, according to data released by the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

"In 2016-17, the total alcohol consumed in Australia was equivalent to 186 million litres of pure alcohol, or 9.4 litres for every person in Australia aged 15 years and over," said Louise Gates, ABS Director of Health Statistics. "This is the lowest annual figure since 1961-62 and it continues the recent downward trend which started around 2008-09. Over three-quarters of alcohol consumed was from either beer (39%) or wine (38%). And while alcohol consumed from wine has declined recently, the drop in beer consumption has been the main driver for falling alcohol consumption with an average decline of 2.4% per year over the last ten years."

"The major categories of alcohol sold are beer, wine, spirits, Ready to Drink (pre-mixed beverages) and cider. Using the average consumption levels for each category, the 9.4 litres of pure alcohol can be expressed as the average Australian aged 15 and over consuming the equivalent of 224 stubbies (375 ml) of beer, 38 bottles (750ml) of wine, 17 bottles (375ml) of cider, four bottles (700ml) of spirits and 33 cans (375ml) of premixed ready to drink varieties. If you keep in mind that around one in five Australians drink very rarely or not at all, that's quite a lot for the rest of us, notwithstanding the amounts discarded or used for non-drinking purposes",

"If 224 stubbies sounds like a lot, contrast that with 1974-75 when Australia reached 'peak beer' and the consumption was equivalent to over 500 stubbies per person."

Other results discussed in the 2016-17 Apparent Consumption of Alcohol (cat. no. 4307.0.55.001) publication include apparent consumption of beer, wine, spirits and Ready to Drink (pre-mixed beverages) and cider. This publication is available for free download from: <http://www.abs.gov.au/>.

Media notes:

- 'Pure alcohol' is the content of an alcoholic beverage that is alcohol - for example a 'standard drink' consists of 12.5 ml of pure alcohol.
- Estimates of 'apparent consumption' are obtained from information related to supply (for example, excise data on alcohol produced for domestic consumption, and data on imports) and do not represent actual consumption.
- No account is taken of changes in stocks, duty-free alcohol imported by individual overseas travellers, or for alcohol that has been stored or cellared, used in the preparation of food or discarded as waste.
- All alcohol available for consumption in a particular year is assumed to have been consumed in that year.

- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source.
 - For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team via 1300 175 070 or media@abs.gov.au (8.30am - 5pm Mon-Fri).
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