

Scotland

Alcohol Profile

There are **16,560 places** you can buy alcohol in Scotland:



11,405 on-sales premises (pubs and restaurants)



5,155 off-sales premises (supermarkets and shops)

Scottish Liquor Licensing Statistics 2020-21.

In 2023, **1 in 5 people** drank more than the Chief Medical Officer's low-risk guidelines.

This includes **14% of women** and **28% of men**.



Scottish Health Survey 2023



Parental drinking was a concern identified for **19% of children** on the child protection register in Scotland.

Children's Social Work Statistics 2021-22.

1 in 6 of ambulance callouts in 2019 were alcohol related.

Manca, F. et al (2021).



33% of S2 students and **59% of S4 students** in Scotland drink alcohol.

10% of S2 students and **33% of S4 students** in Scotland drink alcohol at least once a month.



Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021- 2022.

Alcohol consumption accounted for **8% of the burden of disease** in Scotland in 2015.

This includes years in poor health, hospital admissions, and deaths due to alcohol.

Scottish Public Health Observatory 2018.

There were **35,187 alcohol-related hospital admissions** in 2021-22.

Someone is hospitalised because of alcohol **every 15 minutes**.

Alcohol related hospital statistics 2021-22.



In 2024, **1,185 people** lost their lives due to conditions caused solely by alcohol.

Alcohol-specific deaths 2024 (NRS, 2025)

The **true number** of alcohol deaths is **over 3 times as high** when including conditions such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases.

NHS Health Scotland.



Every year, alcohol costs Scotland at least **£3.6 billion**. This includes:

Health service	£268m
Social care	£231m
Crime	£727m
Productive capacity	£866m



The Societal Cost of Alcohol Misuse in Scotland for 2007.

For full references and explanatory notes, visit www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/alcohol-information/local-alcohol-profiles

About Alcohol Focus Scotland

Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS) is the national charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol harm.

Alcohol Focus Scotland is a Registered Scottish Charity (SC009538) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (Scottish Company No. SC094096)

Alcohol is seen as an integral part of Scottish life which contributes to the economy.

However, alcohol also:

- Causes more than 200 health conditions and is linked to seven types of cancer
- Causes relationship breakdowns, family difficulties, and makes children feel unsafe
- Costs Scotland immeasurable damage to individuals and those around them, and at least £3.6 billion each year



The Scottish Government has significant powers to legislate and protect people from alcohol harm

On 17 April 2024, the Scottish Parliament voted to:

- ✓ Continue MUP beyond the end of April 2024
- ✓ Increase MUP to 65p per unit from 30 September 2024



What we need next:

- An **automatic uprating mechanism** to link MUP to affordability into the future
- An **alcohol harm prevention levy** on retailers' profits from MUP, to support local action on preventing alcohol harms and improving treatment and recovery support



Alcohol Focus Scotland

We are the national charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol harm.

We want to see fewer people have their health damaged or lives cut short due to alcohol, fewer children and families suffering as a result of other people's drinking, and communities free from alcohol-related crime and violence.

To help achieve this vision, we campaign for evidence-based policies to reduce alcohol-related harm.



For more information on our work, please visit alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk or follow us on Twitter @AlcoholFocus

