

# 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](http://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

## The Scottish Government should:

- ✓ Retain **minimum unit pricing**, uprate it to at least 65p per unit, and link it with affordability to optimise the policy and save more lives
- ✓ Introduce statutory restrictions on **alcohol marketing** to protect children and young people
- ✓ Restrict the display and promotion of **alcohol in shops** so it is only visible to those wanting to browse or purchase alcohol
- ✓ Ensure alcohol products are labelled with health information, including drinking guidelines and health warnings, ingredient and nutrition information
- ✓ Introduce an **alcohol harm prevention levy** on retailers who sell alcohol, and use the funds for local prevention, treatment, and care services



## 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](https://alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter @AlcoholFocus

