

Summary: Alcohol habits in Denmark 2024

In this report, we examine alcohol habits among 18- to 74-year-olds in Denmark in 2024. The report is based on data from a web-based survey conducted among 3,023 respondents. The data was collected by the research agency Voxmeter in May–June 2024 and is nationally representative with regard to respondents' sex, age, and geographic region.

The full report is available in Danish here:

<https://www.cancer.dk/om-os/udgivelser-og-rapporter/forebyg-kraeft/alkoholvaner-i-danmark-2024/>

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Alcohol consumption

The majority of 18-74-year-old Danes (83%) report that they drink within the Danish Health Authority's recommendation of a maximum of 10 units of alcohol per week. 12% report a weekly alcohol consumption above the recommendation, while the rest answer 'don't know' to the question. The highest percentage of those drinking above the Danish Health Authority's recommendation for weekly alcohol consumption is among 18-29-year-olds (21%), followed by 60-74-year-olds (14%). The 18-29 age group also has the highest prevalence of intoxication and binge drinking. 21% of 18-74-year-olds who drink alcohol in a typical week always or often count their weekly number of alcohol units. One in four has, within the past year, drank so much that the next day they wished they had drunk less. More than one in four of those who drink more than the Danish Health Authorities recommendation of 10 units of alcohol per week, wish to reduce their alcohol consumption.

Experiences with the Danish alcohol culture

One in four people find it difficult to be part of social gatherings where alcohol is consumed if they do not drink alcohol themselves (27%). Among 18-29-year-olds, this applies to more than one third (36%). Among those who consume alcohol, one in ten occasionally or often drink alcohol because it is expected, not because they want to. One in five 18-74-year-olds occasionally or often serve alcohol to guests because it is expected, not because they want to. More than 4 out of 10 have experienced drinking pressure (i.e., being pressured to drink more alcohol than intended). The proportion of those who have experienced drinking pressure decreases with age. 16% state that they have tried to pressure others to drink. Nearly one in four (23%) have declined to participate in a social gathering because they did not want to drink alcohol. The proportion of those who decline decreases with age. One in five miss alcohol-free alternatives when attending parties and/or other social gatherings.

Attitudes toward the alcohol culture in Denmark

6 out of 10 people believe that alcohol consumption among Danes is too high. 9 out of 10 wish for an alcohol culture where everyone accepts a "no thank you" to alcohol, but only half agree that we already have a culture where it is accepted to say "no thank you" in social gatherings.

Attitudes toward structural prevention measures

More than half of 18-74-year-olds (58%) believe that there should be an age limit of 18 years for purchasing all alcohol, regardless of alcohol percentage. 29% disagree, while 13% answer 'don't know'. More than half (54%) think it is a good idea to introduce tests with young control buyers to assess how effectively stores request for an ID, while 17% think it is a bad idea. Nearly 7 out of 10 support introducing automatic ID control via payment cards, while 12% are opposed to this. Just under 7 out of 10 (67%) think it is a good idea to introduce a requirement that stores and supermarkets refrain from placing alcohol near products that appeal to children and young people—9% are against this proposal. When it comes to a proposal of minimum prices on alcohol, more Danes are opposed than in favor (36% against 29%).

Awareness of the link between alcohol and cancer

When 18-75-year-olds are asked openly (unprompted awareness) about which diseases they believe alcohol increases the risk of, 28% mention cancer. When presented with a list of various diseases and conditions that alcohol could possibly increase the risk of, 56% selected cancer (prompted awareness). Both unprompted and prompted awareness of the association between alcohol and cancer are at the highest recorded level, the difference is significantly distinct from most previous years. There is a low awareness of the association between alcohol and individual cancer types. For example, only 12% know that alcohol increases the risk of breast cancer (prompted awareness). Most people associate alcohol with liver cancer (44%) (prompted awareness). 3 out of 4 (76%) believe that there is a need for more information on how alcohol increases the risk of cancer. Half think it would be a good idea to make it mandatory to inform about the link between alcohol and cancer on the label of alcoholic beverages.

Awareness of the Danish Health Authority's recommendations on alcohol

Only one in five (22%) are aware of the Danish Health Authority's recommendation discouraging children and young people under 18 from drinking alcohol. More than one in three (35%) believe the age limit is set at 16 years. More than 8 out of 10 cannot identify the Danish Health Authority's recommendation to drink a maximum of 10 units of alcohol per week—neither for men nor women (83%). Only 8% correctly state that the Danish Health Authority recommends a maximum of 10 alcohol units per week for both men and women aged 18 and over. The rest can state the limit of 10 units of alcohol for one gender, but not the other. Nearly 9 out of 10 (87%) do not know the Health Authority's recommendation that adults aged 18 and over should not drink more than a maximum of 4 units of alcohol on the same day—neither for men nor women. Only 5% correctly state for both men and women that the Health Authority recommends a maximum of 4 units of alcohol on the same day.

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