



Summary: Alcohol habits in Denmark 2023

In this report, we examine the alcohol habits of adults in Denmark in 2023. The report is based on data from a survey of 3,020 citizens aged 18-74. The data collection was conducted by the Voxmeter research institute, and the data is nationally representative in terms of sex, age, and geographical region.

The full report is available in Danish here: <https://www.cancer.dk/forebyg-kraeft/alkohol/rappporter-og-forskning-paa-alkoholomraadet/>

For questions concerning the report – please contact LIV@cancer.dk

Alcohol consumption

Most Danes aged 18-74 (83%) report that they drink within the Danish Health Authority's recommendations of a maximum of 10 units per week. 11% exceed the weekly alcohol consumption recommendation, while the rest answered 'don't know' to the question. The highest percentages of those drinking above the Danish Health Authority's recommendation for weekly alcohol consumption are among the 18-29 and 60-74 age groups (16% and 15% respectively). Older people tend to drink alcohol more frequently than younger ones, while the youngest age group more often gets drunk. 15% of individuals who consume alcohol on a weekly basis always or often keep track of their weekly number of units. One in five of those exceeding the Danish Health Authority's recommendation of a maximum of 10 weekly units wish to reduce their alcohol consumption.

Reasons for drinking or not drinking alcohol

The three most common reasons for drinking alcohol – among those who drink alcohol at least once a month – are that it is social/enjoyable (79%), that it tastes good (72%), and that it is relaxing/de-stressing (47%). The most frequent reasons for not drinking alcohol – among those who rarely or never drink – are the desire to be fresh the next day (28%), that it doesn't fit their lifestyle (26%), that it is unhealthy (23%), and a dislike of being under the influence (22%). Additionally, one in five state that there is no particular reason (20%).

Experiences with too much alcohol

Within the last year, one in four have consumed so much alcohol that the next day they wished they had drunk less. 40% have not experienced this within the last year but have in the past. Many have experienced negative consequences of their alcohol intake, including blackouts (42%), conflicts and arguments (32%), and sexual contact that they regretted afterwards (22%). One in three have been injured due to alcohol (34%). Most people aged 18-74 have experienced someone else's drunkenness negatively impacting a social gathering (79%).

Experiences with Danish Drinking Culture

One fifth find it difficult to be part of social gatherings where alcohol is consumed if they do not drink themselves (21%). Among 18-29-year-olds, this applies to one third (32%). Among those who consume alcohol, one in ten occasionally or often drinks because it is expected, and not because they want to. This proportion increases with higher alcohol consumption. Almost one in four of 18-74-year-olds occasionally serves alcohol to guests because it is expected, and not because they want to. More than four out of ten have



experienced peer pressure to drink more alcohol than they wished to. The proportion that has experienced this peer pressure decreases with age. One fifth have declined to participate in a social event because they did not want to drink alcohol. This proportion decreases with age. One fifth miss alcohol-free alternatives when they are at parties and/or in other social contexts.

Attitudes Towards Alcohol Culture in Denmark

Over half believe that alcohol consumption among Danes is too high (56%). Nearly 9 out of 10 (88%) desire 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' to alcohol in social contexts. Danes perceive driving (85%) and pregnancy (79%) as the most accepted reasons for not drinking alcohol in Denmark. Conversely, lack of desire to drink is seen as an accepted reason by only 43%.

Age Limits for Purchasing Alcohol - Awareness and Attitudes

Just under half (47%) of Danes aged 18-74 are aware of all the age limits for purchasing alcohol in Denmark. Approximately half of the Danes (54%) believe there should be an age limit of 18 years for purchasing all alcohol regardless of the alcohol content. 33% disagree, while 14% answer 'do not know'. Support for an 18-year age limit for purchasing all alcohol is higher the older the respondents are. Six out of ten (63%) support stricter enforcement of laws regarding the sale of alcohol to young people. Almost seven out of ten (68%) support automatic ID-checks via payment cards.

Attitudes Towards Structural Prevention Measures

Nearly half of 18-74-year-olds (44%) think it should be mandatory to display nutritional content and calories on alcoholic beverages, as is the case with food products. 14% are against, while the rest are neither for nor against or answer 'do not know'. 28% think there should be a minimum price for alcohol, setting a limit for how cheap a drink can be. 36% are against the proposal. The price of alcohol in retail is seen as appropriate by most (60%) - 11% think it is too expensive, and 12% think it is too cheap. Currently, upper secondary schools are allowed to sell alcohol to their students, regardless of the students' age. Only one fifth of 18-74-year-olds think it should be this way (21%). Just over half believe there should be an age limit (either 16, 17, or 18 years) below which upper secondary schools should not sell alcohol. 15% think it should not be allowed to sell alcohol to students at upper secondary schools at all.

Awareness of the Link Between Alcohol and Cancer

When 18-74-year-olds are asked openly (unprompted awareness) about which diseases they believe alcohol increases the risk of, 25% mention cancer. Presented with a list of diseases and conditions that alcohol possibly increases the risk for, 54% tick off cancer (prompted awareness). There is even lower awareness of the link between alcohol and specific types of cancer. For example, only one in ten knows that alcohol increases the risk of breast cancer (prompted: 10%). Most associate alcohol with liver cancer (prompted: 45%). Seven out of ten (71%) believe there is a need for information about alcohol increasing the risk of cancer. Nearly half (47%) think it would be a good idea to make it mandatory to inform about the link between alcohol and cancer on alcoholic beverages.



Awareness of the Danish Health Authority's Recommendations on Alcohol

More than 8 out of 10 cannot specify the Danish Health Authority's recommendation to drink a maximum of 10 drinks per week - neither for men nor women (85%). 7% correctly state that the Danish Health Authority recommends a maximum of 10 drinks per week for both men and women aged 18 and over. The rest can specify the limit of a maximum of 10 drinks for one sex, but not the other. More than 8 out of 10 (86%) are not aware of the Danish Health Authority's recommendation that adults aged 18 and over are advised to drink a maximum of 4 drinks on the same day - neither for men nor women. 6% correctly state for both men and women that the Danish Health Authority recommends a maximum of 4 drinks on the same day.

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<https://www.cancer.dk/forebyg-kraeft/alkohol/rapporter-og-forskning-paa-alkoholomraadet/>

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