

Embargoed until 10:45am – 22 February 2008

## Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2007

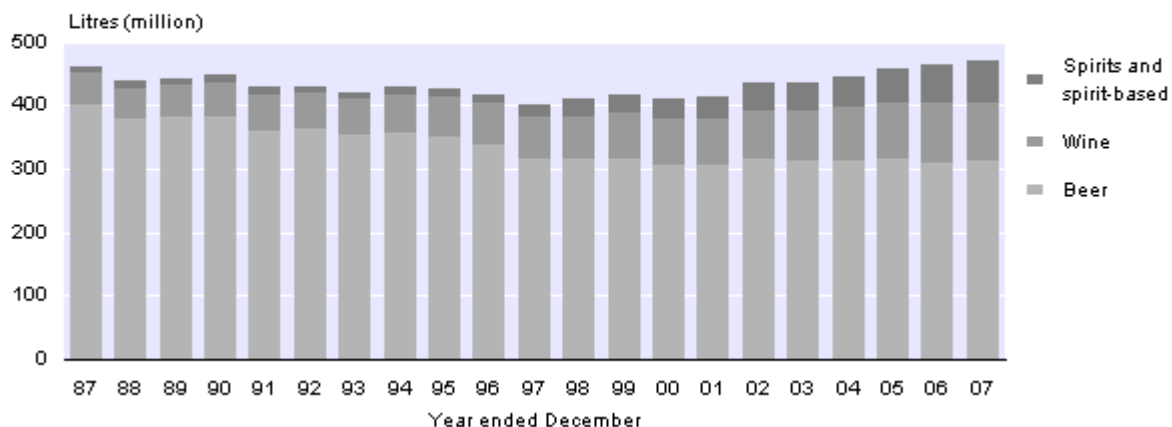
### Highlights

In the December 2007 year:

- The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption rose 1.4 percent to reach a new high.
- An increase in spirit-based drinks accounted for the rise in the total volume of spirits.
- The volume of pure alcohol available per head of population aged 15 years and over, decreased for the first time since 2003.
- Beer as a proportion of the total beverage available for consumption fell to 66.4 percent.
- Wine available for consumption recorded its first fall since 2001 and contributed nearly one-fifth to the total beverage available.
- The volume of tobacco available for consumption increased to reach a new high since the time series began in 1973.

### Total Alcoholic Beverage Available for Consumption

By type  
1987–2007



Geoff Bascand  
Government Statistician

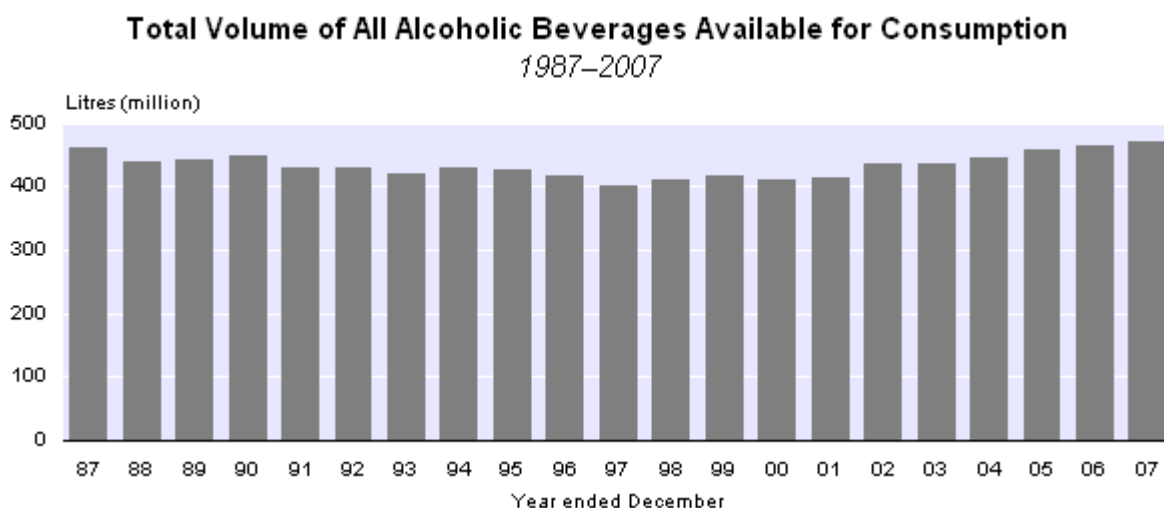
22 February 2008  
ISSN 1178-0401

There is a companion Media Release published – [Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2007.](#)

## Commentary

### Total alcoholic beverage available for consumption

Compared with the December 2006 year, the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption during the December 2007 year increased 6.4 million litres to reach a new high of 470.3 million litres. Contributing to the increase were rises in the volume of spirits, (up 5.3 million litres) and beer, (up 2.7 million litres), while the volume of wine fell 1.6 million litres.



### Total pure alcohol available for consumption

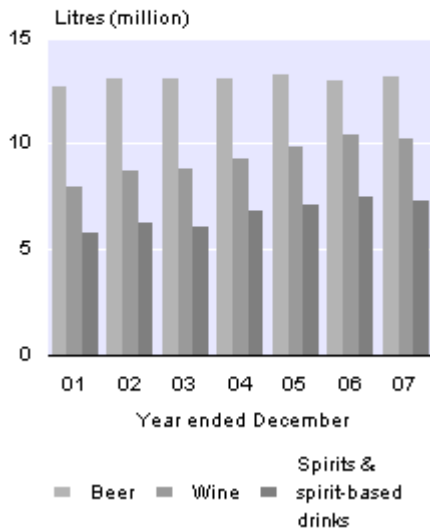
The pure alcohol available for consumption time series are a measure of the alcohol content contained within the various alcoholic beverages.

The total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption was 30.7 million litres during 2007, a decrease of 0.3 percent compared with the 2006 year. The volume of pure alcohol available from wine fell 1.7 percent (to 10.2 million litres), and spirits, down 1.3 percent (to 7.3 million litres). The total volume of pure alcohol available from beer was 13.2 million litres, an increase of 1.3 percent.

The volume of pure alcohol available per head of population aged 15 years and over decreased 1.6 percent to 9.2 litres from the December 2006 year. The decrease for the December 2007 year follows a period of consecutive increases over the last three years.

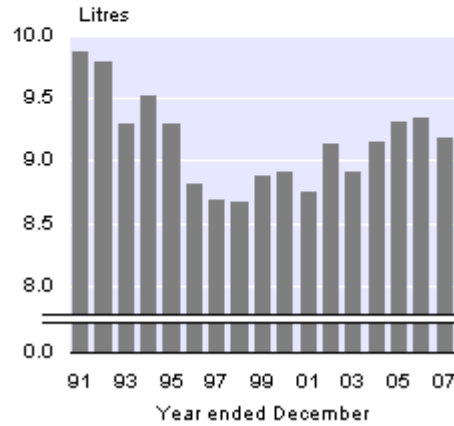
### Total Litres of Pure Alcohol Available for Consumption

By beverage type  
2001–2007



### Litres of Pure Alcohol Available for Consumption

Per head of population aged 15 years and over  
1991–2007

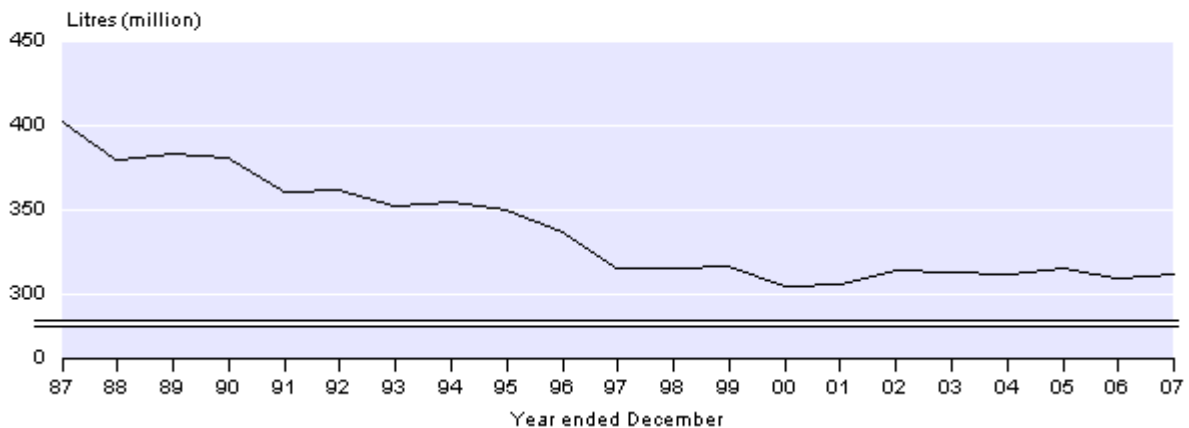


## Beer

Compared with 2006, the volume of beer available for consumption in 2007 rose 0.9 percent to 312.2 million litres. Although beer is still the most popular type of alcoholic beverage, as a proportion of the total beverage available for consumption it has once again declined, down to 66.4 percent. The proportion of beer has been in decline since 1992 when its proportion to total beverage available for consumption was 84.2 percent.

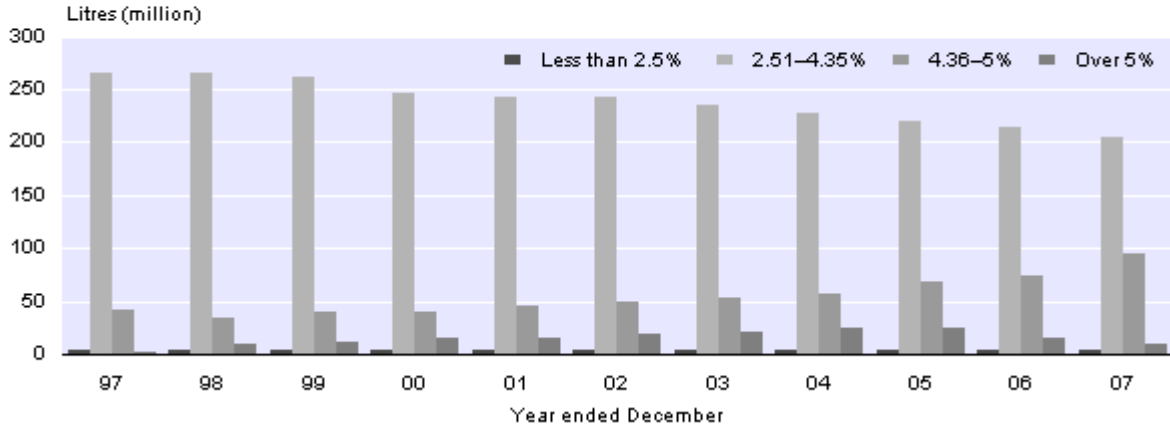
### Volume of Beer Available for Consumption

1987–2007



While the total increase in the volume of beer available for consumption in 2007 was 2.7 million litres, there were more interesting movements within the beer-strength categories. The volume of beer with an alcohol content of between 4.36 and 5 percent continued to rise and increased 19.1 million litres from 2006. By contrast, beer with an alcohol content of between 2.51 and 4.35 percent; and an alcohol content greater than 5 percent, both decreased by 9.6 and 6.6 million litres, respectively. Although beer with an alcohol content of between 2.51 and 4.35 percent contributed two-thirds of the total volume of beer available for consumption in 2007, this level has continued to decrease.

**Volume of Beer Available for Consumption**  
*By alcohol content*  
 1997–2007



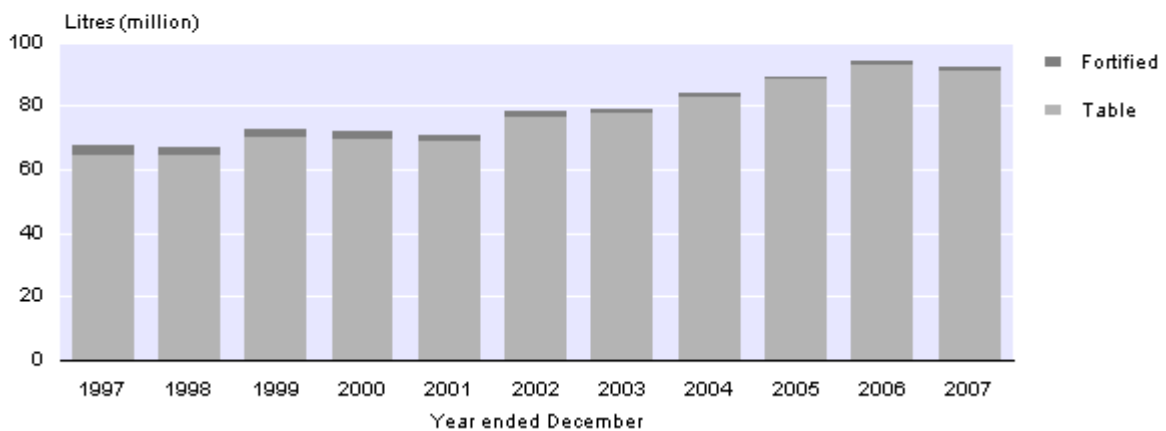
**Wine**

The total volume of wine available for consumption was 92.1 million litres in the year ended December 2007, down 1.7 percent compared with the previous year. This is the first drop in the volume of wine available for consumption since 2001. Wine contributed 19.6 percent of the total available beverage in 2007, compared with 20.2 percent in the previous year.

Table wine (up to 14 percent alcohol by volume), decreased by 1.7 million litres (1.8 percent) in 2007 compared with the previous year and contributed 99 percent of total wine available for consumption, the same proportion as last year.

The volume of fortified wine (greater than 14 percent alcohol by volume), increased by 50 thousand litres (5.5 percent) in 2007.

**Volume of Wine Available for Consumption**  
*By wine type*  
 1997–2007



## Spirits and spirit-based drinks

The volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks available for consumption rose 8.7 percent to 66.0 million litres during 2007. However, the rate of increase has slowed this year compared with increases seen in the previous three years. Spirits and spirit-based drinks now represent 14.0 percent of the total alcoholic beverage available for consumption. The total share of spirits and spirit-based drinks has increased steadily since 1996.

The volume of spirits (those with more than 23 percent alcohol content) available for consumption fell 11.9 percent to 9.3 million litres in 2007. This is the first time since 2003 that the volume of spirits has dropped below 10 million litres.

The availability of spirit-based drinks (those with less than 23 percent alcohol content) continued to rise in 2007, as it has done each year since the time series began in 1995. The volume available in the 2007 year of 56.7 million litres increased by 6.6 million litres (13.1 percent) when compared with the 2006 year.

In the year ended December 2007, the volume of pure alcohol available for consumption from spirit-based drinks with a lower alcohol content increased by 14.2 percent, while that for spirits with a higher alcohol content decreased by 11.9 percent. Despite these movements, the total volume of pure alcohol available from spirits and spirit-based drinks fell only 1.3 percent.



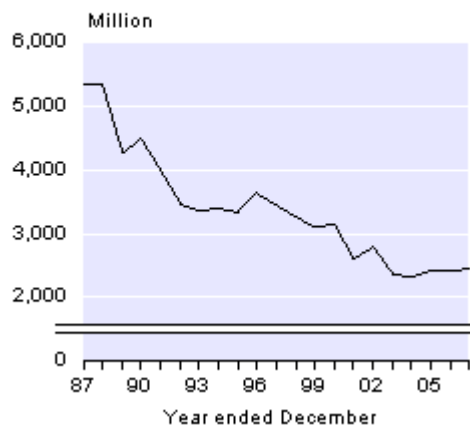
## Cigarettes and tobacco

During the December 2007 year, the number of cigarettes available for consumption was virtually unchanged for the third consecutive year at 2.4 billion.

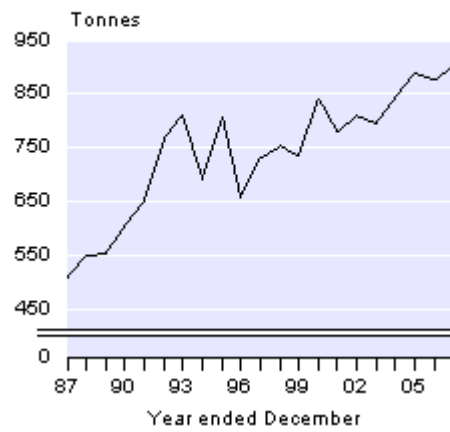
The number of cigarettes available for consumption has generally been decreasing since they peaked at 6.3 billion in 1977. The number of cigarettes available this year is now 61.5 percent less than the high point reached 30 years ago.

The volume of tobacco available for consumption rose 2.8 percent to a new high of 904 tonnes in 2007 compared with 2006 and was 83.3 percent higher than the lowest amount recorded in 1985.

**Cigarettes Available for Consumption**  
*1987–2007*



**Tobacco Available for Consumption**  
*1987–2007*



For technical information contact:  
Denise Carlson or Alex Bayley  
Christchurch 03 964 8700  
Email: [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

# Technical notes

## General

The statistics contained in this release are a measure of the amounts of alcoholic beverage and tobacco released to the market and therefore available for consumption. They do not necessarily apply to actual consumption. Information is not available to measure the change in level of stocks that may be held pending sale and therefore not yet consumed. The figures also exclude the production of alcoholic beverages by households.

## Beer

The volume of beer available for consumption is obtained from New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) figures on beer produced for local consumption on which duty has been paid, and Statistics New Zealand external trade statistics. Domestically produced beer with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content is excluded from these statistics. The estimates of beer available for consumption also excludes beer produced by private individuals with home-brewing equipment.

The volume of alcohol available from beer is calculated using the five categories used to calculate excise duty. These categories being:

1. Not more than 1.15 percent alcohol volume (external trade statistics only).
2. More than 1.15 percent but not more than 2.5 percent alcohol volume.
3. More than 2.5 percent but not more than 4.35 percent alcohol volume.
4. More than 4.35 percent but not more than 5 percent alcohol volume.
5. More than 5 percent alcohol volume.

The volume of beverage in each category is multiplied by 0.0115, 0.01825, 0.04, 0.04675, and 0.051, respectively. This converts the volume of beer available for consumption to the volume of alcohol available for consumption.

The factor of 0.04 was chosen to calculate the volume of alcohol available for consumption of beer containing more than 2.51 percent but not more than 4.35 percent alcohol because the majority of beers produced in this range are made up of 4.0 percent alcohol content.

## Wine

The volume of wine available for consumption is obtained from NZCS figures on wine produced for local consumption on which duty has been paid, and Statistics NZ external trade statistics. Domestically produced wine with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content is excluded from these statistics. The estimates of wine available for consumption also excludes wine produced by private individuals with winemaking equipment.

The volume of table wine available is multiplied by 0.11 and the volume of fortified wine is multiplied by 0.18 to calculate the volume of alcohol available in these wines. Results of the "Study of the Alcohol Content of Alcoholic Beverages" conducted by the DSIR between 1976 and 1987 are used to determine the average alcoholic content of table and fortified wine.

## Spirits

The volume of spirits and spirit-based beverages available for consumption is obtained from NZCS figures on locally produced/bottled spirits on which duty has been paid, and Statistics NZ external trade statistics.

The data used to calculate available spirits is expressed in absolute alcohol content. However, spirit-based beverages which have an alcohol content of less than 23 percent are expressed in litres. The volume of alcohol content in spirit-based drinks is calculated using the five categories used to calculate excise duty. These categories are:

1. Not more than 2.5 percent alcohol volume.
2. More than 2.5 percent but not more than 6 percent alcohol volume.
3. More than 6 percent but not more than 9 percent alcohol volume.
4. More than 9 percent but not more than 14 percent alcohol volume.
5. More than 14 percent but not more than 23 percent alcohol volume.

The volume of beverage in each category is multiplied by 0.015, 0.045, 0.08, 0.11, and 0.18, respectively. This converts the volume of spirit-based drinks available for consumption to the volume of alcohol available for consumption.

## **Alcohol per person**

Statistics NZ quarterly population estimates are used.

## **Cigarettes and tobacco**

The amount of cigarettes and tobacco available for consumption is obtained from Statistics NZ external trade statistics and NZCS figures on tobacco products cleared for local consumption on which duty has been paid.

## **More information**

For more information, click on these links from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website: [alcohol for consumption statistics](#) or [cigarettes and tobacco statistics](#).

## **Copyright**

Information obtained from Statistics NZ may be freely used, reproduced, or quoted unless otherwise specified. In all cases Statistics NZ must be acknowledged as the source.

## **Liability**

While care has been used in processing, analysing and extracting information, Statistics NZ gives no warranty that the information supplied is free from error. Statistics NZ shall not be liable for any loss suffered through the use, directly or indirectly, of any information, product or service.

## **Timing**

Timed statistical releases are delivered using postal and electronic services provided by third parties. Delivery of these releases may be delayed by circumstances outside the control of Statistics NZ. Statistics NZ accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

### **Next release ...**

*Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2008 will be released in February 2009.*

Statistics New Zealand: The first source of independent information for your key decisions.

## Tables

The following tables can be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print and export the contents of the file.

### List of tables

1. Alcohol and tobacco available for consumption
2. Alcohol available for consumption, volume of pure alcohol available