COLOMBIA

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)

Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

Last year abstainers

Estimates from key alcohol experts show that the proportion of adult males and females who had been abstaining (last year before the survey) was 31% (males) and 47% (females). Data is for after year 1995.2

High risk drinkers

Data from the 2000–2001 Multi-Country Survey Study. Total sample size $n = 6000$; males $n = 2071$ and females $n = 3929$. Population aged 18 years and above.1
Heavy episodic drinkers

Data from the 2000–2001 Multi-Country Survey Study. Total sample size $n = 6000$; males $n = 2071$ and females $n = 3929$. Population aged 18 years and above. Definition used: at least once a week consumption of six or more standard drinks in one sitting.1

Youth drinking (last year abstainers)

Data from the 2000–2001 Multi-Country Survey Study. Total sample size $n = 1080$; males $n = 384$ and females $n = 696$. Population aged 18 to 24 years. For the age group 15 to 19 years (subsample $n = 357$), the rate of last year abstainers was 11.5% (total), 3.4% (males) and 15.5% (females).1

A 1997 survey of 1730 students in grade 10 from 32 randomly selected public high schools in Bogotá shows that the percentage of study participants who reported having had at least one drink during their lifetime was 86.6%.3

In a study of 2611 children (1253 boys and 1358 girls) aged 6–18 years old from the city of Medellín in Colombia, it was found that 46% of the children drank alcohol (52.5% of boys and 40.5% of girls). The study also found that 25.7% of those aged between 10 and 14 years drank alcohol, whilst 63.5% of children aged between 15 and 18 years old drank alcohol.3

Youth drinking (heavy episodic drinkers)

Data from the 2000–2001 Multi-Country Survey Study. Total sample size $n = 1080$; males $n = 384$ and females $n = 696$. Population aged 18 to 24 years old. For the age group 15 to 19 years (subsample $n = 357$), the rate of heavy episodic drinkers was 10.1% (total), 16.1% (males) and 7.1% (females). Definition used: at least once a week consumption of six or more standard drinks in one sitting.1
Alcohol dependence

According to the 2000–2001 Multi-Country Survey Study (total sample size n = 6019; sample population aged 15 years and above), the rate of last year alcohol dependence was 4.8% (total), 9.8% (males) and 2.2% (females). Alcohol dependence was measured using criteria from the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (10th Revision).¹

Note: These are preliminary, early-release, unpublished data from WHO's Multi-Country Survey Study made available exclusively for this report. Some estimates may change in the final analyses of these data.

A 1987 urban survey of 2800 residents between the ages of 12 and 64 in four cities showed that 8.1% of subjects were considered to be alcoholics.⁶

Traditional alcoholic beverages

Aguardiente (anise-based liquor), guarapo (from sugar-cane) and chicha (alcoholic beverage fermented from maize) and chirrinche (similar to aguardiente but made with herbs) are drunk mainly in the rural areas (home-brewed).

Unrecorded alcohol consumption

The unrecorded alcohol consumption in Colombia is estimated to be 2.0 litres pure alcohol per capita for population older than 15 for the years after 1995 (estimated by a group of key alcohol experts).²

Mortality rates from selected death causes where alcohol is one of the underlying risk factors

The data represent all the deaths occurring in a country irrespective of whether alcohol was a direct or indirect contributor.
Chronic mortality

Note: Chronic mortality time-series measured on two axes, ischaemic heart disease on right axis and the other causes on the left.

Acute mortality

Source: WHO Mortality Database
Note: Caution should be exercised when interpreting the results as death registration level is incomplete.

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

A study of data on road deaths and injuries from 1991 to 1995 in Colombia found that 15% of deaths are attributable to driving whilst under the influence of alcohol.7

In a study looking at homicides that were registered in Cali, Colombia from 1993 to 1998, the bivariate analysis conducted revealed a positive association with alcohol consumption by the victim. Cases that occurred during a fight between individuals or during group fighting also showed an association with alcohol consumption by the victim.8

A cross-sectional study of a random sample of 275 women in Barranquilla, Colombia found that habitual alcohol consumption in the women and in the spouses were factors associated with marital violence.9
The use of drugs and alcohol is a key factor in 80% of child abuse cases in Colombia, reports a recent study conducted by World Vision in Colombia.\(^{10}\)

A 1997 study showed that alcohol consumption is associated with self-perceived academic ability. Students who reported consumption of alcohol during the 30 days prior to the study showed significantly lower self-perceived academic ability than those who did not report alcohol use during the 30 days preceding the survey.\(^3\)

In a study comparing 85 patients with gastric cancer and 170 controls, alcohol consumption was found to be more common among patients with gastric cancer.\(^{11}\)

**Country background information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population 2003</th>
<th>44 222 000</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth (2002)</th>
<th>Male 67.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult (15+)</td>
<td>30 070 960</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% under 15</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)</td>
<td>Male 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**References**


