ECUADOR

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)

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

Lifetime abstainers

A 1995 survey showed that in the population aged 12 to 49 years, the lifetime prevalence of alcohol consumption was 76.4%. With respect to the preceding month, the prevalence of alcohol consumption was 51.2%.

Estimates from key alcohol experts show that the proportion of adult males and females who had been abstaining (last year before the survey) was 20% (males) and 40% (females). Data is for after year 1995.
Heavy and hazardous drinkers

According to the 2003 World Health Survey (total sample size \( n = 679 \); males \( n = 438 \) and females \( n = 241 \)), the mean value (in grams) of pure alcohol consumed per day among drinkers was 29.7 (total), 38.8 (males) and 11.8 (females).\(^1\)

Heavy episodic drinkers

A 1995 survey showed that in the population aged 12 to 49 years, in the month preceding the survey, 19.7% of the persons interviewed had consumed alcohol to excess – i.e. they had gotten drunk on more than one occasion.\(^2\)

Youth drinking (lifetime abstainers)

Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size \( n = 714 \); males \( n = 309 \) and females \( n = 405 \). Population aged 18 to 24 years old.\(^3\)
Youth drinking (heavy episodic drinkers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These are preliminary, early-release, unpublished data from WHO's World Health Survey made available exclusively for this report.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

Alcohol dependence

Alcoholism has a prevalence of 7.7% in the population over 15 years of age.2

Traditional alcoholic beverages

*Aguardiente (Fire-water)*, also known as *Puro (Pure)* or *Caña (Cane)* is the traditional Ecuadorian liquor. It is basically sugar-cane juice fermented and distilled. It has a very high alcoholic content (approximately 40% to 50% if factory-made and 50% to 70% if not made in a factory).4

*Anisados (anisette)* are alcoholic drinks with aniseed flavours. They usually have an alcoholic content of approximately 30–35%.4

Unrecorded alcohol consumption

The unrecorded alcohol consumption in Ecuador is estimated to be 1.0 litre pure alcohol per capita for population older than 15 for the years after 1995 (estimated by a group of key alcohol experts).3

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

Up to 30% of all traffic accidents are alcohol- or drug-related. In the first three months of 1981 there were 158 accidents caused by persons driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the province of Pichincha; deaths occurred in 58% of these accidents.5

Alcoholism has been cited as one of the growing reasons for medical consultations, after depression and epilepsy.2

In May 2000, the Alcoholic Rehabilitation Centre of Cuenca launched a mental health programme in four rural areas, covering a total population of approximately 40,000 inhabitants. At the start of the programme, the main problems of the rural communities were identified. Alcohol abuse was one of the main problems highlighted. Children and women complained that fathers and husbands presented alcohol abuse, wasted money, beat them and were frequently absent from their jobs. It was generally agreed that most problems were closely related to alcohol consumption.6

Country background information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population 2003</th>
<th>13,003,000</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth (2002)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>67.9</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult (15+)</td>
<td>8,712,010</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>% under 15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population distribution 2001 (%)</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>Urban</td>
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<td>Gross National Income per capita 2002</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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References


