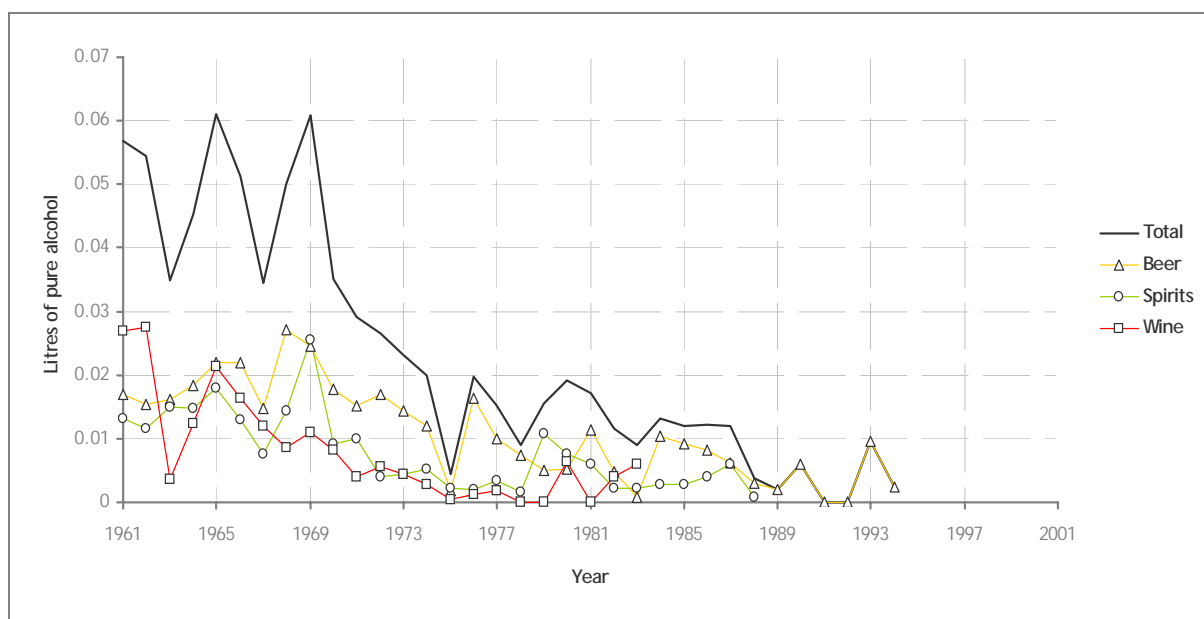


SOMALIA

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)



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

Data collected by the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in 2003 estimates that the extent of alcohol use in Somalia is moderate and that data from the last five years suggest an increasing trend in the use of alcohol.¹

Traditional alcoholic beverages

A locally concocted brew, popularly known as *alaq*, is widely sold in the Somali capital of Mogadishu. *Alaq*, which can contain dangerous chemicals, and is mostly consumed by poor and uneducated youth, constitutes a major problem with cases of deaths and blindness resulting from its consumption.²

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

Alcohol abuse is rapidly increasing and claiming lives in the Somali capital Mogadishu, according to humanitarian and official sources. The increase is related to the large number of unemployed youths and freelance gunmen in the city, "who have nothing better to do". It is believed that nearly 50% of all the crimes committed in Mogadishu are related to either alcohol or drugs. Recently there has been an increase in the number of establishments selling alcohol in the city. More worrying is the growing trend of poor and uneducated youths consuming a locally concocted brew, popularly known as *alaq*, which usually contains dangerous chemicals and can be potentially lethal.²

Country background information

Total population 2003	9 890 000	Life expectancy at birth (2002)	Male	43.0
Adult (15+)	5 142 800		Female	45.7
% under 15	48	Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)	Male	218
Population distribution 2001 (%)			Female	223
Urban	28	Gross National Income per capita 2002	US\$	*
Rural	72	*Estimated to be in the low income range (\$735 or less) In Somalia, it is estimated that 99% of the population are Muslim.		

Sources: Population and Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat, World Bank World Development Indicators database, The World Factbook 2003, The World Health Report 2004

References

1. *World Health Organization/World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean Questionnaire for Regional Situation Analysis on Drug Abuse 2003*. Cairo, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.
2. [Anonymous]. Alcohol and drug abuse on the rise in Mogadishu. *Somali News*, 25 June 2002 (<http://www.hamarey.com/index.php/article/articleprint/527/-1/4/>, accessed 24 February 2004).