

COOK ISLANDS

Alcohol consumption

Data from the Statistics Office show that in 1993 the total per capita consumption of absolute alcohol (for people aged 15 years and over) was approximately 9.7 litres. This included 7.1 litres of beer, 0.68 litres of wine and 1.92 litres of spirits. Beer was the source of 73% of the total pure alcohol consumed in the Cook Islands in 1993. Most of this consumption would be by local people rather than by tourists as in 1994 it was estimated that tourists spent only 1200 person-days in the nation.¹

Traditional alcoholic beverages

Alcoholic home brews are made from rice, pineapple, oranges and *nu uri* (green coconut). In the Cook Islands, green coconuts are used for medicines so when they are used for making home brew, the drink was thought of as having medicinal properties. Another type of home brew is made from *Papaa* (European) hops and malt.²

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

In 1989, there were 41 alcohol-related injuries caused by motor vehicle accidents and 27 assault injuries that were alcohol-related. There were four recorded deaths from alcohol-related accidents.³

Country background information

Total population 2003	21 008	Life expectancy at birth (2002)	Male	69.2
Adult (15+)	13 440		Female	74.2
% under 15	36	Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)	Male	21
Population distribution 2001 (%)			Female	19
Urban	59	Gross National Income per capita 2002	US\$	5060
Rural	41			

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

References

1. McDonald D, Elvy G, Mielke J. Alcohol in the South Pacific: the mid-1990s. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 1997, 16(4):383–390.
2. *Kaikava me kare Inuinu: The place of alcohol in the lives of Cook Islands people living in Aotearoa New Zealand*. ALAC Research Monograph Series: No. 7. Wellington, Sector Analysis, Ministry of Health for the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand, 1997.
3. Duignan P, Casswell S. *A report on the workshop on the prevention of alcohol-related injury in the Pacific Islands*. Auckland, Alcohol Research Unit, Department of Community Health, University of Auckland, 1990.