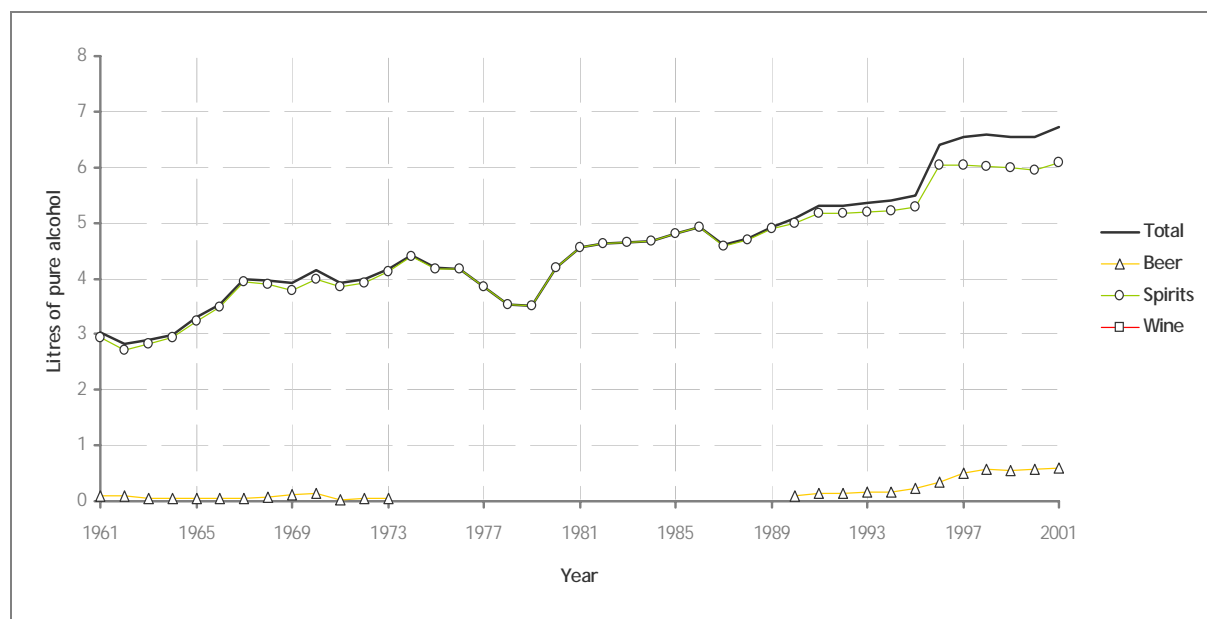


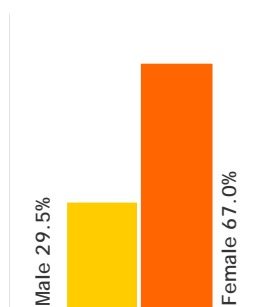
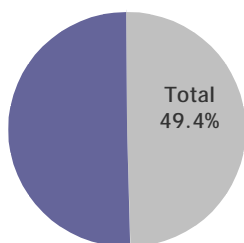
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (THE)

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)



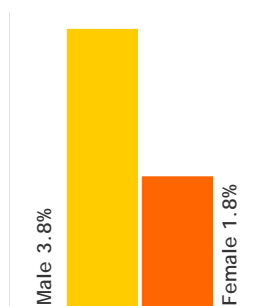
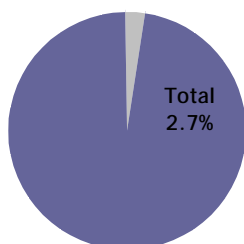
Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

Lifetime abstainers



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 4706$; males $n = 2205$ and females $n = 2501$. Sample population aged 18 years and above.¹

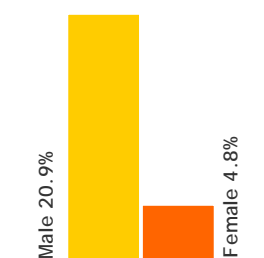
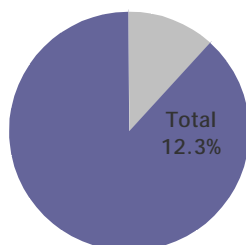
Heavy and hazardous drinkers



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 4706$; males $n = 2205$ and females $n = 2501$. Sample population aged 18 years and above. Definition used: average consumption of 40 g or more of pure alcohol a day for men and 20 g or more of pure alcohol a day for women.¹

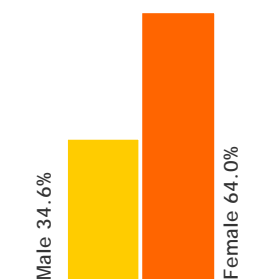
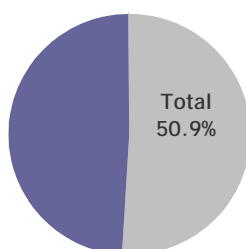
According to the 2003 World Health Survey (total sample size $n = 2440$; males $n = 1588$ and females $n = 852$), the mean value (in grams) of pure alcohol consumed per day among drinkers was 7.4 (total), 9.2 (males) and 4.2 (females).¹

Heavy episodic drinkers



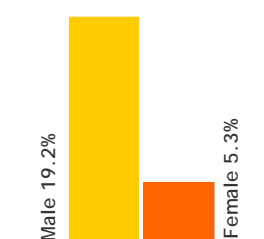
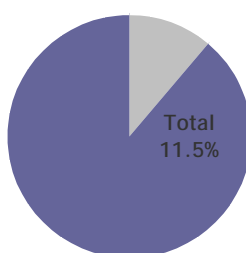
Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 4706$; males $n = 2205$ and females $n = 2501$. Sample population aged 18 years and above. Definition used: at least once a week consumption of five or more standard drinks in one sitting.¹

Youth drinking (lifetime abstainers)



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 786$; males $n = 354$ and females $n = 432$. Sample population aged 18 to 24 years old.¹

Youth drinking (heavy episodic drinkers)



Data from the 2003 World Health Survey. Total sample size $n = 786$; males $n = 354$ and females $n = 432$. Sample population aged 18 to 24 years old. Definition used: at least once a week consumption of five or more standard drinks in one sitting.¹

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.

Traditional alcoholic beverages

In rural settings, alcoholic beverages were self-produced (e.g. rice wine, corn whiskey) rather than purchased.²

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

Indigenous ethnic groups in Laos engaged in ceremonial and ritual drinking. The behavioural norms for this alcohol use were well known and largely adhered to. The duration and amount of drinking varied with the type of event. For example, new year celebrations and weddings involved liberal drinking for most groups. Among the Hmong group, both men and women drank at these ceremonial occasions where larger volumes were consumed over several hours or more. Alcohol use in lowland Lao towns largely replicated village drinking, but with certain important modifications and elaborations. Alcohol was usually purchased (i.e. rice whiskey, beer) rather than made at home. The cultural expectations to drink at ceremonial times was weaker in towns, so that many women chose not to drink. Drinking also occurred at secular rather than ceremonial times, such as on weekends, social gatherings, business meetings, restaurants, and so forth.²

Country background information

Total population 2003	5 657 000	Life expectancy at birth (2002)	Male	54.1
Adult (15+)	3 281 060		Female	56.2
% under 15	42	Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)	Male	146
Population distribution 2001 (%)			Female	131
Urban	20	Gross National Income per capita 2002	US\$	310
Rural	80			

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

References

1. Ustun TB et al. WHO Multi-Country Survey Study on Health and Health System Responsiveness 2000–2001. In: Murray CJL, Evans DB, eds. *Health Systems Performance Assessment: Debates, Methods and Empiricism*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2003.
2. Westermeyer J. Sex differences in drug and alcohol use among ethnic groups in Laos, 1965–1975. *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 1988, 14(4):443–461.