

Comparability of data and related sources

Statistics are based on a census of all provincial and territorial liquor authorities. Financial data are reconciled with annual reports of the liquor authorities. Non-financial data are edited for consistency and completeness and respondents are contacted to confirm or to explain variations.

The value of sales of alcoholic beverages excludes all general sales tax and the value of returnable containers. Until December 31, 1990, the federal sales tax was included in the value of sales at the retail level. With the introduction of the federal goods and services tax (GST) on January 1, 1991, the GST was imposed on the retail value of sales rather than included in the value of sales. In order that the value of sales remain comparable with the values of prior years, the goods and services tax has been added to the value of sales.

Per capita sales by value and volume are based on the population of inhabitants of 15 years of age and over. This is in accordance with the practice of Health Canada in presenting trends that are more realistic in the consumption of alcoholic beverages. This allows comparability with other countries and the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as they also present alcohol per capita data using the population of inhabitants of 15 years of age and over. The population estimates are based on CANSIM table 051-0001 Estimates of Population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces, and territories, annual (persons).

Volume of sales of alcoholic beverages in litres of absolute alcohol is calculated by multiplying the sales volume by the percentage of alcohol content. In the case of spirits, the percentage of alcohol content is 40% with the exception of liqueurs (20%) and spirit coolers (5%). The percentage of alcohol content for most wines ranges between 11% and 12%. Consequently, the conversion rate used for wines is estimated at 11.5%. However, some wines may have an alcohol content above or below this range. The conversion rate used for wine based coolers is 5%. The conversion rate used for beer is also estimated at 5%. The alcohol content of most beers ranges between 4% and 6.5%.