

# Alcohol Statistics Briefing

Prepared by National Alcohol Information Resource,  
Information Services Division

June 2004

This compendium of statistics has been produced by the National Alcohol Information Resource (NAIR), which works as part of the Substance Misuse Programme, based at the Information Services Division (ISD) of NHS National Services Scotland.

NAIR supports the improvement in the health and well-being of those affected by alcohol problems in Scotland through the provision of expert advice and information. This support is provided through a broad programme of work at both national and local level. Recent activities include contribution to the development of the SIGN guidelines 'The management of harmful drinking and alcohol dependence in primary care'; the launch earlier this year of the national alcohol information website and the publication this month of alcohol profiles for each Alcohol Action Team in Scotland.

If you would like to know more about NAIR, or the wider work of the Programme please contact us at:

Telephone 0131 275 6232

Address: National Alcohol Information Resource  
Substance Misuse Programme  
NHS National Services Scotland  
Area 143a, Gyle Square  
South Gyle Crescent  
Edinburgh  
EH12 9EB

e-mail [Lesley.Graham@isd.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Lesley.Graham@isd.scot.nhs.uk)  
[Ian.Grant@isd.csa.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Ian.Grant@isd.csa.scot.nhs.uk)

or visit the alcohol information website at:

[www.alcoholinformation.isdscotland.org](http://www.alcoholinformation.isdscotland.org)

**In real terms, alcohol, is now 49% more affordable than in 1980**

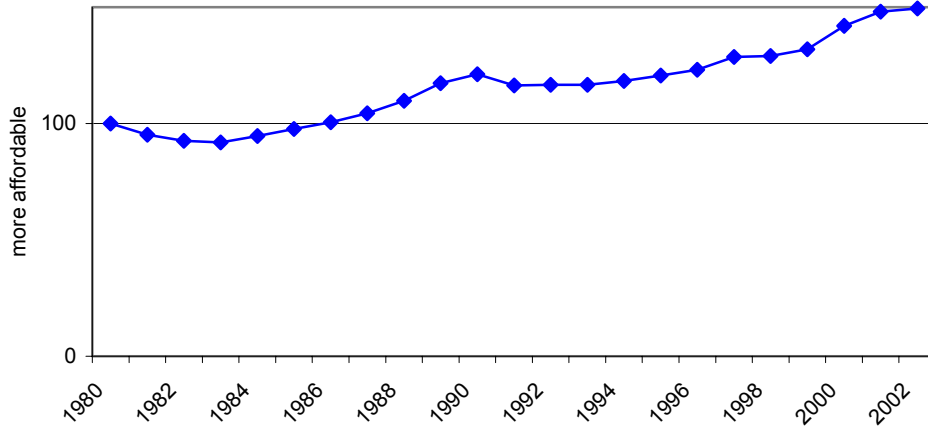


Figure 1. Index of the affordability of alcohol, United Kingdom, 1980 to 2002  
Indices (1980 = 100)

Affordability of Alcohol gives a measure of the relative affordability of alcohol by comparing the relative changes in the price of alcohol with changes in Households' Disposable Income over the same period (with both allowing for inflation). It is now calculated in the following way:

$$(\text{Real Households' Disposable Income} / \text{Relative Alcohol Price}) * 100$$

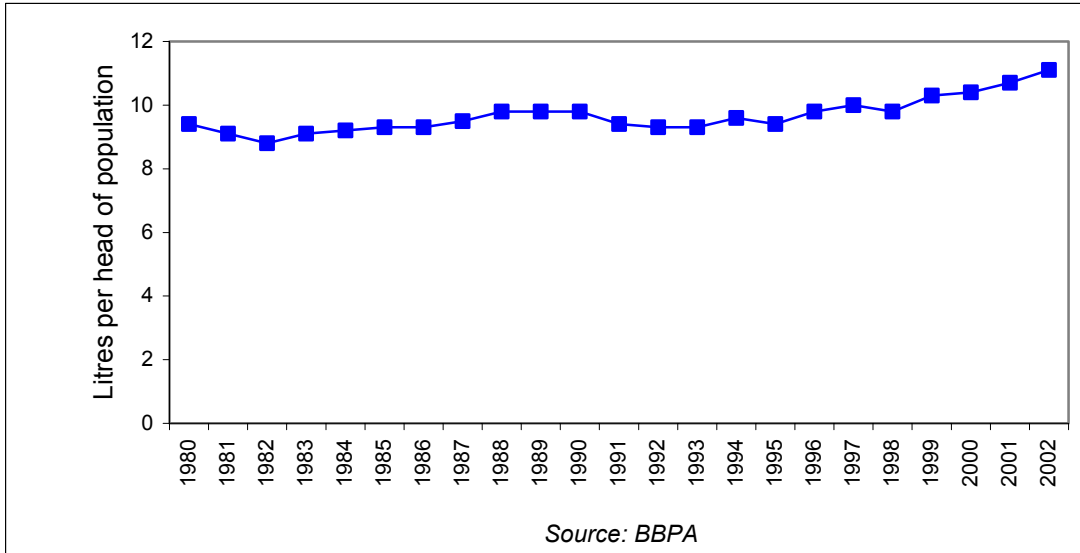
If the affordability index is above 100 then alcohol is relatively more affordable than in the base year, 1980. For example, in 2002 alcohol prices were 229.4% higher than in 1980, but after taking inflation and households' disposable income into account, alcohol was 49.4% more affordable, as shown by the affordability index of 149.4.

Source: *Statistics on alcohol: England, 2003. Department of Health*

## UK alcohol consumption is rising

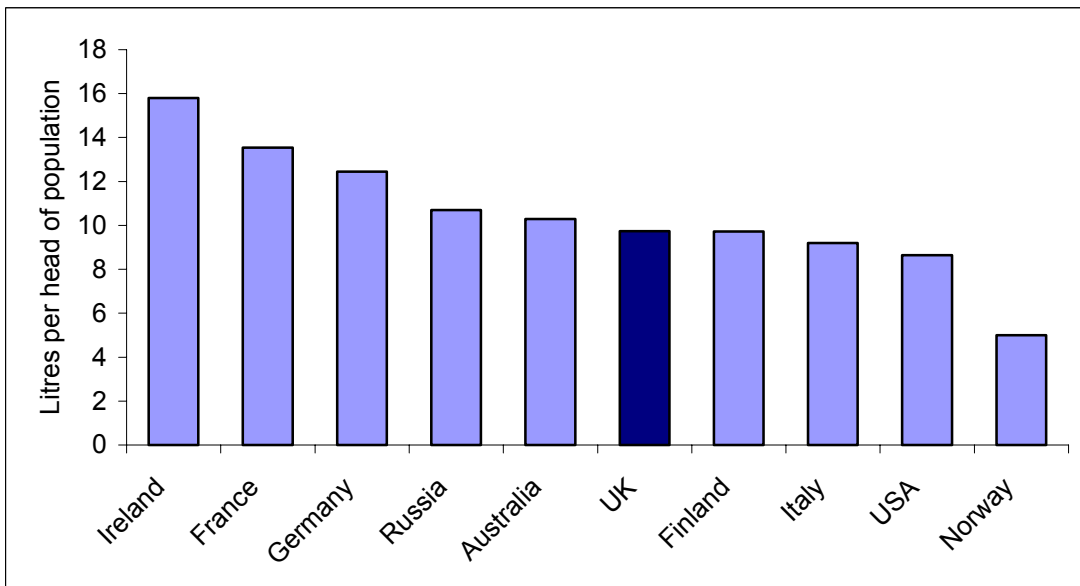
- Over the last 10 years, there has been a 20% increase in UK alcohol consumption. In 1993 it was 9.3 litres per head and had risen to 11.1 litres per head by 2002.

Figure 2. Litres per head of 100% alcohol (Population aged 15 and over)



## UK average alcohol consumption is broadly in line with worldwide consumption figures in the developed world

Figure 3. Litres per head of 100% alcohol – an international comparison 1999 (Population aged 15 and over)

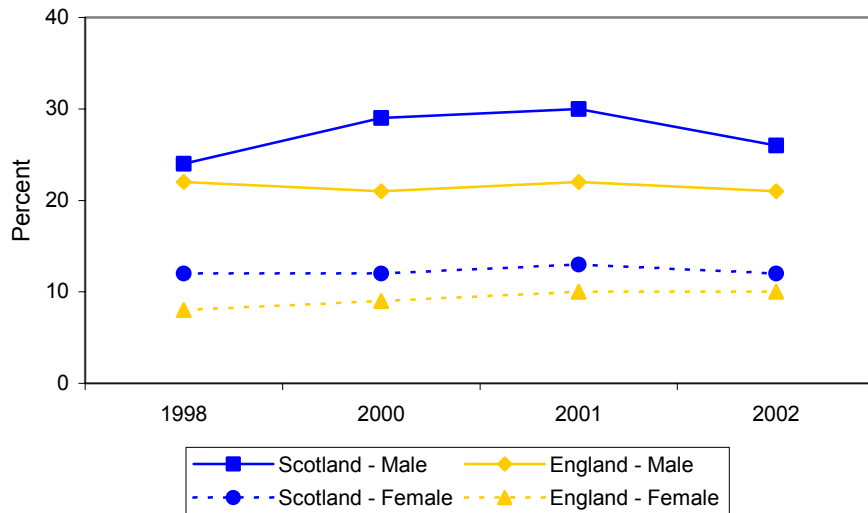


Source: WHO, Global Alcohol Databank

\*calculated from official statistics on production, sales, import and export, taking into account stocks whenever possible

## Adults in Scotland are more likely to exceed daily benchmarks than adults in England

Figure 4. Exceeding Double Daily Benchmarks on heaviest drinking day in last week, England and Scotland, 1998 to 2002



Source: General Household Survey

## Young people aged 16-24, in Scotland, drink more than other age groups

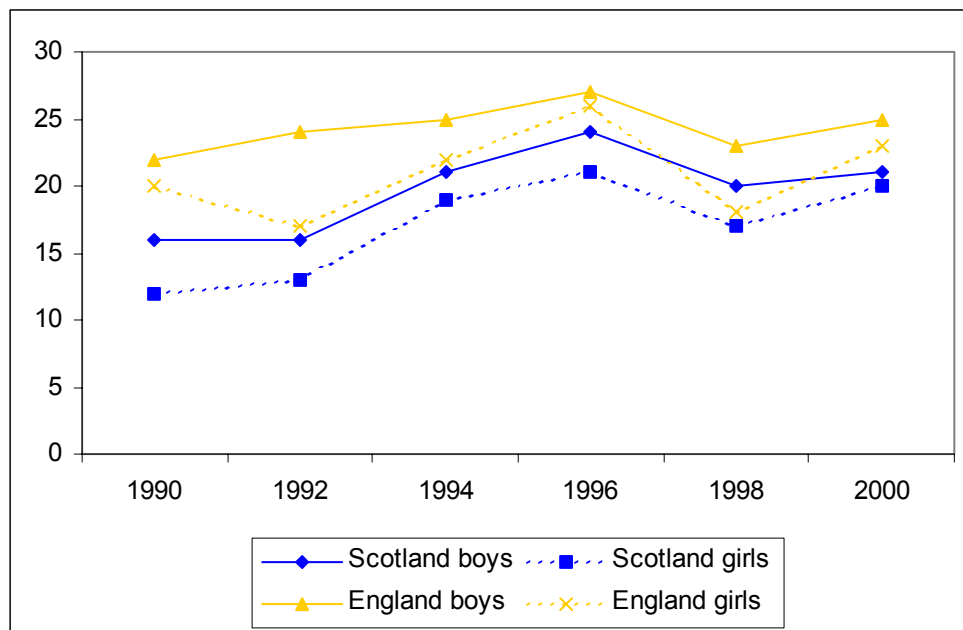
- 43% of young men aged 16-24 drank over 21 units in the previous week, compared to 35% of 25-34 year olds and 31% of 35-44 year olds
- 24% of young women aged 16-24 drank more than 14 units in the previous week, compared to 18% of 25-34 year olds and 15% of 35-44 year olds
- 62% of young men aged 16-24 drank 8 units or more on their heaviest drinking day compared to 50% of 25-34 year olds and 45% of 35-44 year olds
- 49% of young women aged 16-24 drank 6 units or more on their heaviest drinking day compared to 34% of 25-34 year olds and 26% of 35-44 year olds

Source: Scottish Health Survey 1998

**Schoolchildren in England are more likely to report having drunk alcohol in the last week than Scottish schoolchildren though Scottish schoolchildren are more likely to drink more than 14 units in one week**

- Pupils who had drunk alcohol in the past week in England were more likely to have consumed fewer units than their Scottish counterparts; 23% in England had consumed 14 or more units in the past week compared with 28% of pupils in Scotland.

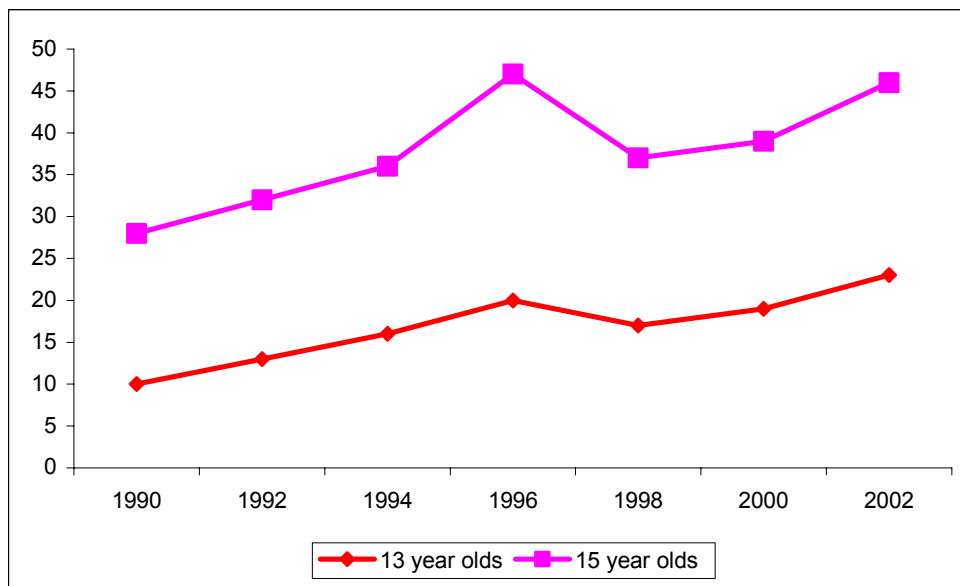
Figure 5. Prevalence of drinking in last week by gender, England and Scotland 1990-2000



Source: NCSR/DH, 2001

**There has been a 60% increase in reported drinking among 15 year olds and more than a 100% rise among 13 year olds in the past 12 years**

Figure 6. Percentage of pupils who reported drinking in the week before the survey by age group: Scotland 1990-2002



Also in 2002;

- Almost a quarter (23%) of all 13 year old pupils and nearly half (46%) of all 15 year old pupils reported drinking at some time in the week before the survey
- 36% of both 13 year old boys and 13 year old girls; 59% of 15 year old girls and 56% of 15 year old boys; who had ever drunk alcohol, reported drinking 5 or more alcoholic drinks on the same occasion in the last 30 days.
- 14% of 15 year old pupils who had ever drunk alcohol reported having had unprotected sex on at least one occasion in the last year as a result of drinking alcohol.
- 11% of 13 year olds reported staying off school on at least one occasion in the last year as a result of drinking alcohol.

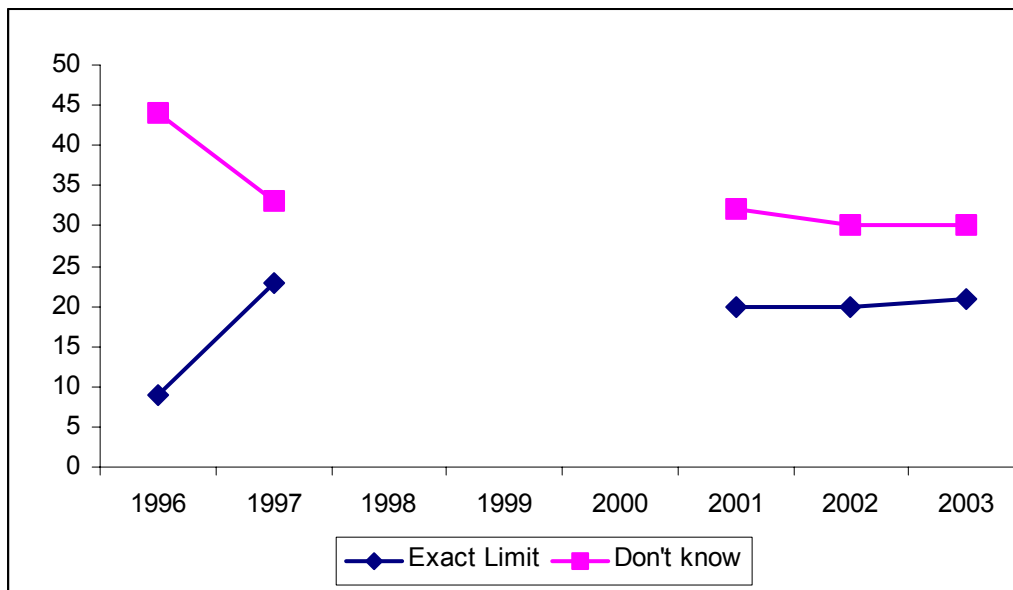
Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) 2002

**Over one in three adults in Scotland do not know what the recommended weekly drinking limits are**

However,

- Adults knowledge of weekly drinking limits has increased from 9% in 1996 to 21% in 2003
- The proportion of adults who did not know what the weekly recommended drinking limits were has decreased from 44% in 1996 to 30% in 2003

Figure 7. Knowledge of recommended weekly limits, Scotland 1996 to 2003

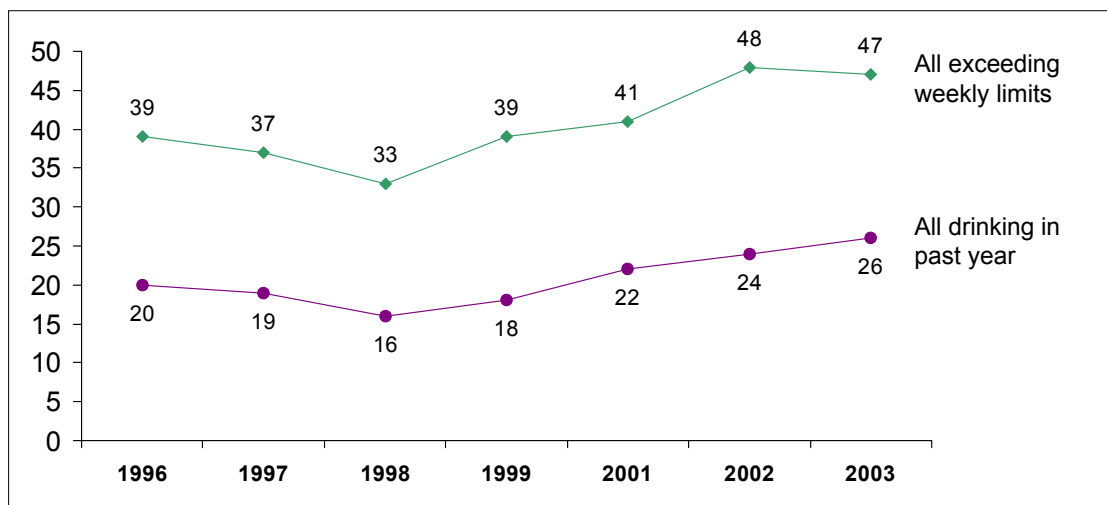


Source: Health Education Population Survey, NHS Health Scotland 2004  
NB these questions were not asked between 1998 and 2000

**There has been an increase since 1996 in adults' motivation to reduce alcohol consumption**

- In 2003, one in five (21%) of all drinkers have tried to reduce their alcohol consumption, compared to 16% in 1996
- In 2003, one in three (33%) of all those adults exceeding weekly limits have tried to reduce their alcohol consumption, compared to 24% in 1996

Figure 8. Time trends in motivation reduce alcohol consumption (have tried to or would like to) 1996-2003

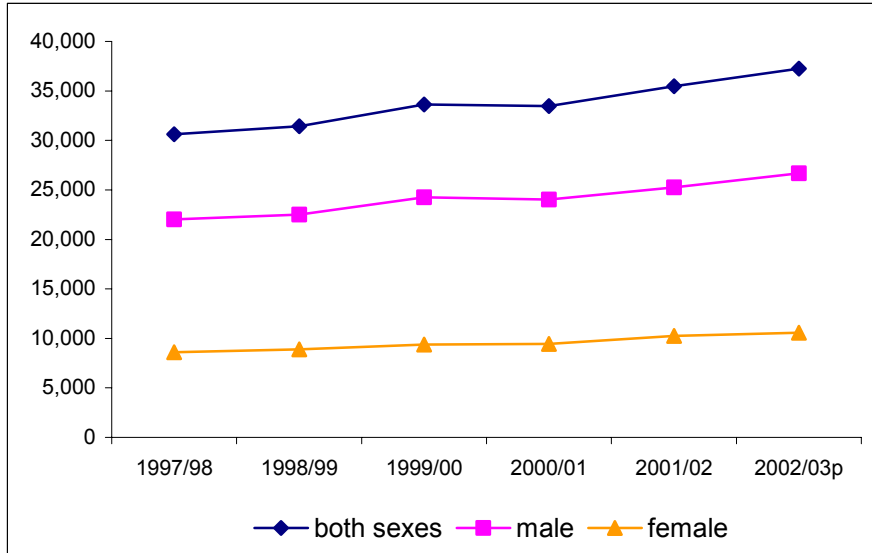


Base: All having drink in past year and all exceeding weekly limits  
Source: Health Education Population Survey, NHS Health Scotland 2004

**In Scotland, there has been a 22% increase in patients leaving general hospitals with a recorded problem relating to alcohol over the last 5 years**

- There were 37,250 alcohol related acute hospital discharges in 2002/03, compared with 30,617 in 1997/98, an increase of 22%.

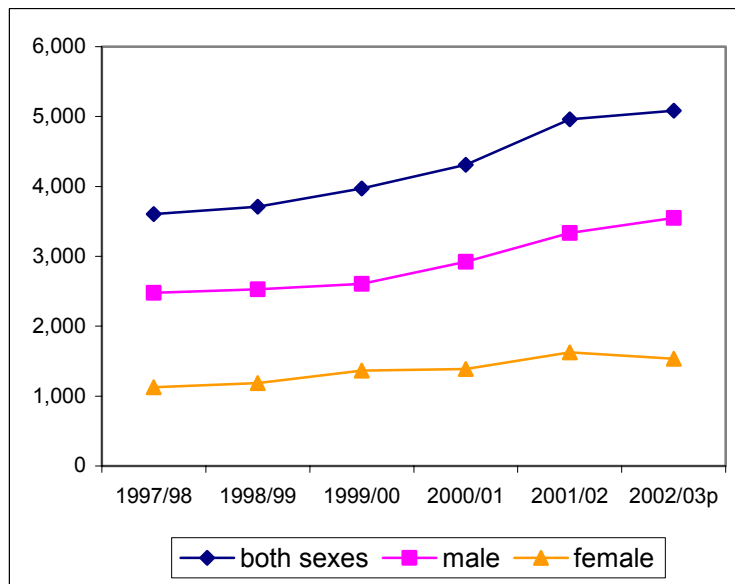
Figure 9. Alcohol related hospital discharges, Scotland, by gender 1997/98 to 2002/03p (Source: SMR1)



**In Scotland, there has been a 41% increase in patients leaving general hospitals with recorded alcohol liver disease over the last 5 years**

- 41% increase in male alcohol liver disease hospital discharges since 1997/98
- 36% increase in female alcohol liver disease hospital discharges since 1997/98

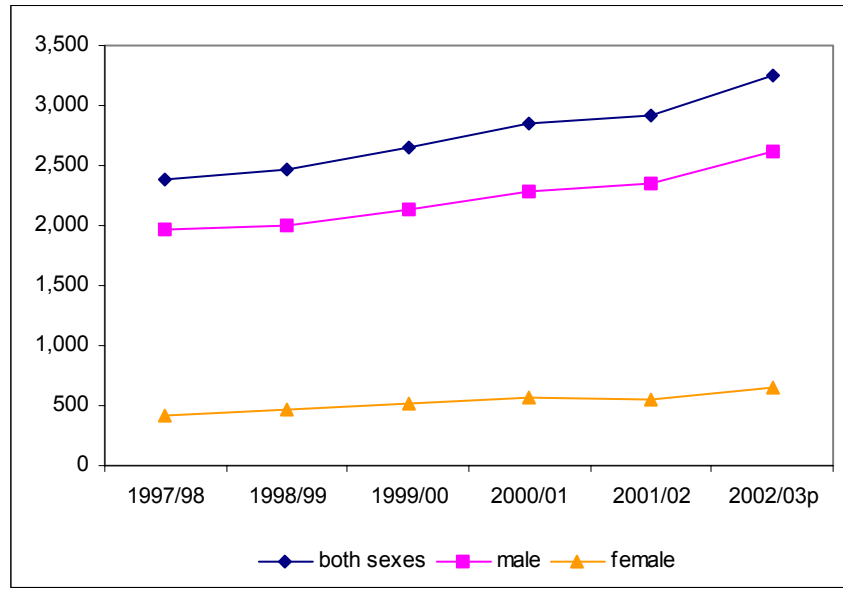
Figure 10. Alcoholic Liver Disease hospital discharges in Scotland, by gender: 1997/98-2002/03 (source: SMR1)



**In Scotland, there has been a 36% increase in patients leaving general hospitals with recorded alcohol psychoses over last 5 years**

- 32% increase in male alcohol psychoses hospital discharges since 1997/98
- 56% increase in female alcohol psychoses hospital discharges since 1997/98

Figure 11. Alcohol psychoses hospital discharges, Scotland, by gender 1997/98 to 2002/03p  
(Source: SMR1)



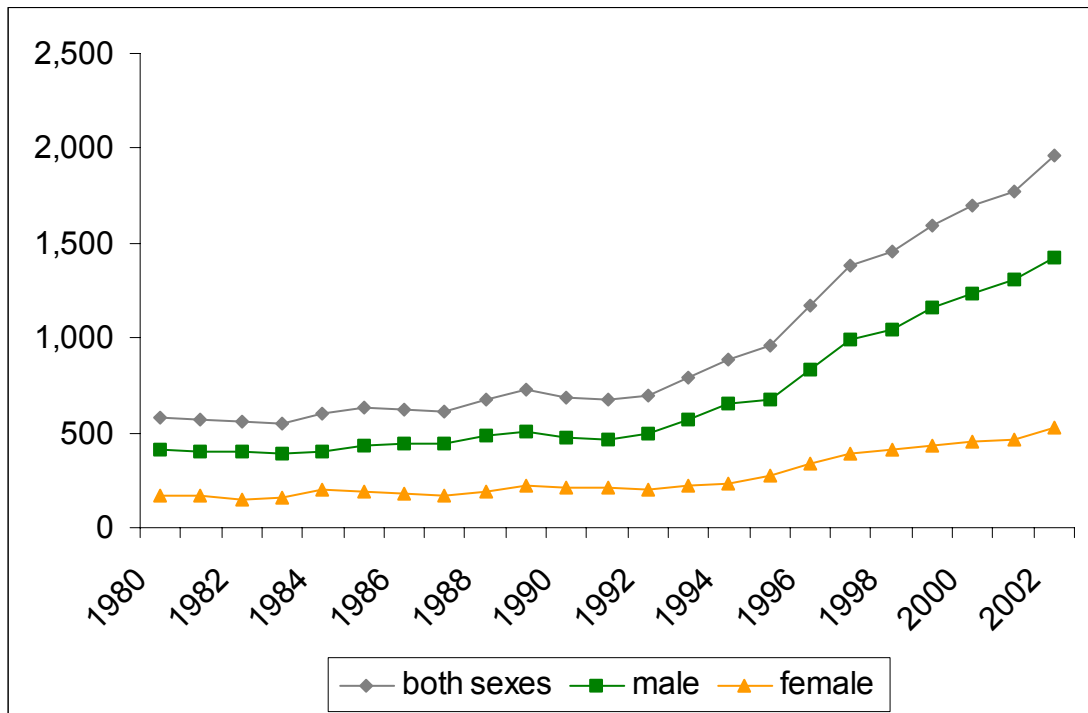
## More people are dying an alcohol related death in Scotland

- 1957 alcohol related deaths in 2002 compared with 583 in 1980.

Between 1980 and 2002

- 236% increase in alcohol related deaths
- 244% increase among males, 214% increase among females

Figure 12. Alcohol related deaths in Scotland, by gender 1980 to 2002

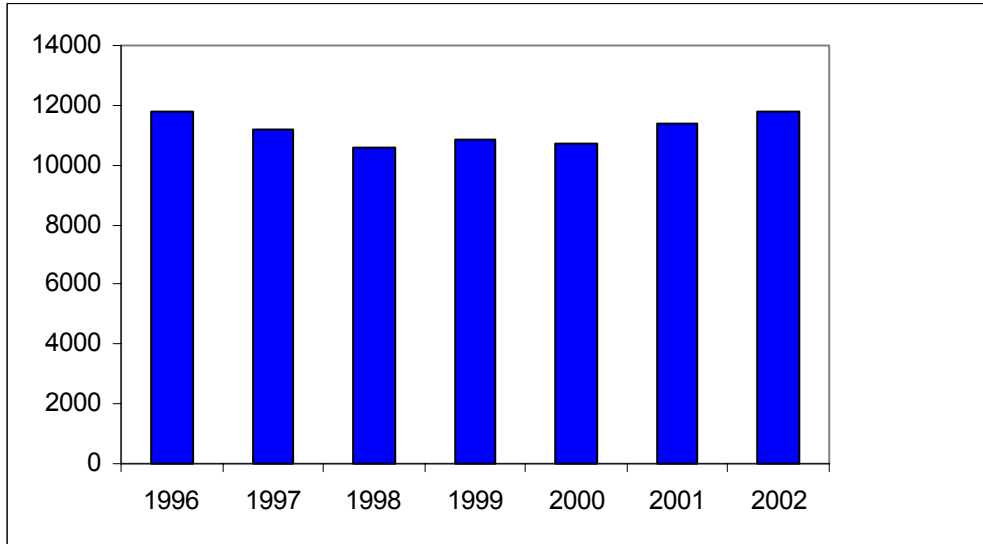


Source: NAIR based on GRO figures

### After a dip, drunk driving offences are on the rise again

- 10% increase in recorded offences of drunk driving between 2000 and 2002

Figure 13. Drunk Driving, recorded offences in Scotland, 1996 to 2002

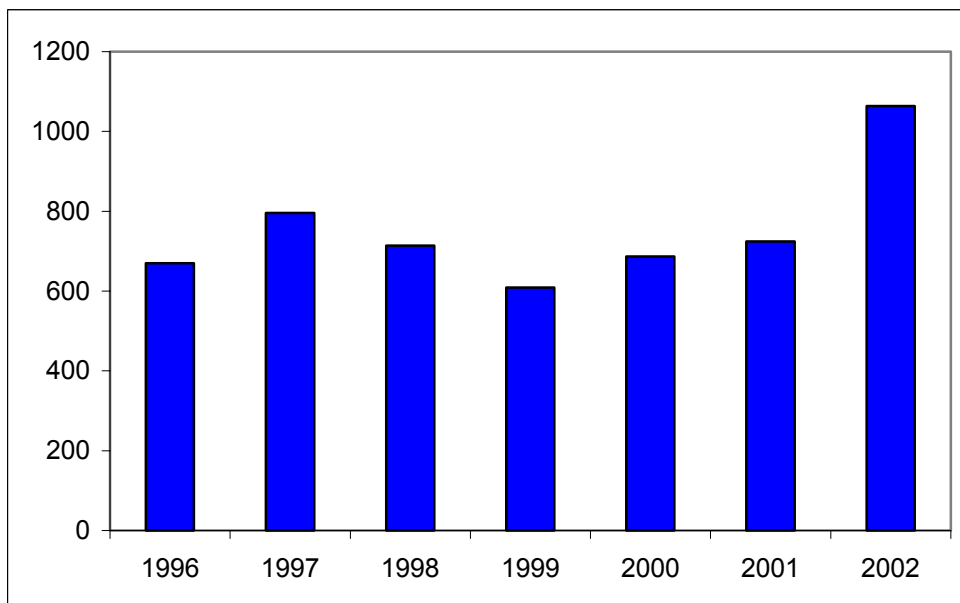


Source: Recorded Offences in Scotland, Scottish Executive Statistical Series

### Rise in female drunk driving convictions

- 59% increase in female drunk driving convictions between 1996 and 2002

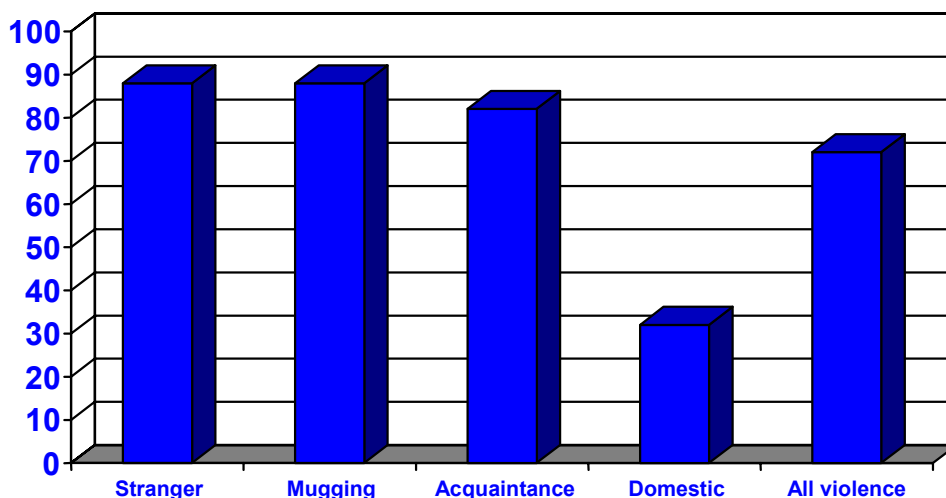
Figure 14. Female convictions for drunk driving, Scotland, 1996 to 2002



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scottish Courts, Scottish Executive Statistical Series

**High proportion of assaults (72%) perceived to be alcohol related.**

Figure 15. Percentage reporting attacker under the influence of alcohol by type of attack



Source: Scottish Crime Survey 2000

**Over last two years, alcohol was a factor in two thirds of murders, where the intoxication status was known**

- Where the intoxication status was known (305 accused), 200 (66%) were intoxicated.

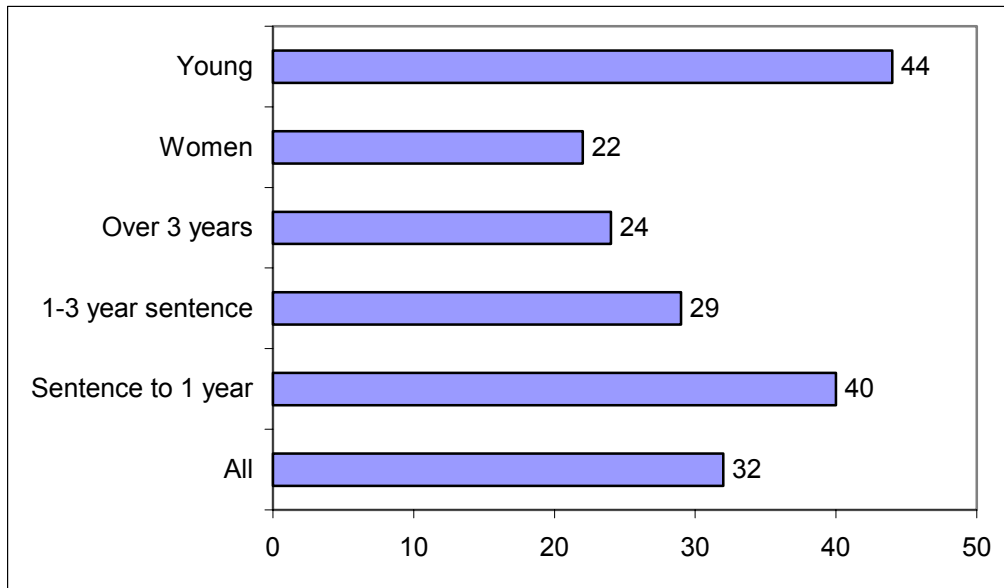
Table 1: Proportion of accused drunk where intoxication status known

	2000	2001	2002	2000-2002
Accused	125	140	186	451
Not known	39	48	59	146
Status known	86	92	127	305
Drunk	46	59	57	162
Drunk and under drugs	8	11	19	38
Total Drunk (including drunk and drugs)	54	70	76	200
% drunk where status known	63%	76%	60%	66%

Source: NAIR based on Homicide in Scotland publications, Scottish Executive

**One third of prisoners say they wouldn't be there if they hadn't been drinking**

Figure 16. I wouldn't be in prison if I hadn't been drinking by length of sentence and type of prisoner



Source : 4<sup>th</sup> Scottish Prison Survey, 2002.

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