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German beer exports lifted August sales 0.4%.

Taxable domestic sales fell 1.2%, reinforcing brewers’ growing reliance on foreign demand.

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German beer sales edged up in August as stronger exports offset another decline in the home market, underlining how much foreign demand is now helping support one of Europe’s largest brewing industries.

The German Brewers Association said Monday that total beer sales rose 0.4% from a year earlier to 6.64 million hectoliters in August 2026, an increase of about 27,000 hectoliters. The figures, based on data from Germany’s Federal Statistical Office, showed that the modest gain came entirely from trade abroad. Taxable domestic sales fell 1.2% to 5.39 million hectoliters, while beer exports climbed 8.3% to 1.24 million hectoliters.

Shipments to other European Union countries rose 9.3% to about 758,000 hectoliters. Exports to countries outside the EU increased 6.7% to about 484,000 hectoliters. That split matters for the broader drinks business because it points to weak demand from German consumers even as brewers find more support overseas, a pattern that could shape production, pricing, and investment decisions across beer and related beverage categories.

Despite the better August result, the industry remains below last year’s level over the first eight months of the year. From January through August, total beer sales fell 1.8% to 52.96 million hectoliters, or roughly 953,000 hectoliters less than in the same period a year earlier. Taxable domestic sales dropped 2.7% to 42.94 million hectoliters, while exports rose 2.5% to 9.96 million hectoliters.

The brewers association said the beer and hospitality business continues to face pressure from a weak consumer climate, cautious household spending, and a sluggish economy. It also pointed to consumer restraint linked to domestic and international political crises. The group argued that weather was not the problem in August. According to the association, the number of sunshine hours was almost unchanged from August 2025, while average temperatures were higher, meaning conditions for beer consumption were at least as favorable as a year earlier.

The figures suggest that stronger summer weather alone is no longer enough to lift domestic sales if consumers remain under financial pressure or cut back on restaurant and bar spending. For brewers, wholesalers, and hospitality operators, that is a notable signal because beer demand in Germany has long been closely tied to seasonal outdoor drinking, festivals, and on-premise traffic.

Beer-based mixed drinks performed better in August, though they also remain weaker over the year to date. Sales in that segment increased 3.2% from a year earlier to about 401,000 hectoliters in the month. From January through August, however, sales of mixed beer drinks were still down 3.6% at 3.02 million hectoliters.

Performance varied sharply by state. Breweries in Saxony posted the strongest increase in August, with sales up 12.5%. Breweries in Berlin and Brandenburg followed with a 9.7% gain, while Bavaria rose 9.2%, Thuringia increased 5.2%, and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania was up 0.2%.

At the other end of the market, breweries in Hesse recorded the steepest decline, with sales down 25.3%. Breweries in Lower Saxony and Bremen posted a combined drop of 14.0%, and Saxony-Anhalt fell 10.3%. Sales also remained below last year’s level in Baden-Württemberg, down 6.9%, as well as in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland and in Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg, each down 6.1%. North Rhine-Westphalia recorded a decline of 3.8%.

Those regional swings point to uneven conditions inside the German beer market at a time when producers are already dealing with softer household demand and a difficult environment for bars and restaurants. In that setting, export momentum can offer relief, but it may not fully shield brewers from weakness at home if domestic consumption continues to slide through the rest of the year.

The Federal Statistical Office figures used by the brewers association include beer produced in Germany and beer imported from other EU countries. They do not include nonalcoholic beer, malt beverages, or beer imported from countries outside the EU.