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Poland’s lower house approves a nationwide overnight ban on alcohol sales in shops

The measure now goes to the Senate after lawmakers approved wider curbs on alcohol advertising and retail licenses.

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Poland’s lower house of parliament has approved a bill that would ban the sale of alcohol in shops overnight across the country and impose a wider set of restrictions on the market, including a full advertising ban and higher licensing fees for retailers.

The Sejm passed the measure late Thursday by 400 votes to 33, with 433 lawmakers present, according to Notes from Poland. The proposal now goes to the Senate, which can propose amendments but cannot permanently block it, and would then require the signature of President Karol Nawrocki.

If the bill becomes law, shops would be barred from selling alcohol for off-premises consumption between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. Local authorities would be allowed to tighten those limits further, extending the restricted period to as much as 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. Bars, clubs and restaurants would still be allowed to serve alcohol for on-premises consumption under the current rules.

The legislation combines separate initiatives that were originally submitted by two junior parties in the governing coalition, The Left and Poland 2050. It would also ban all advertising and promotion of alcoholic drinks. Violations of that ban could bring fines of as much as 1 million zloty, or about €228,400.

The bill would require health warnings on alcohol packaging about the risks to pregnant women and minors. It would also tighten expectations for store employees to check a buyer’s age when they suspect the customer may be underage.

Another provision would sharply increase the cost of licenses to sell alcohol. Fees would rise from 525 zloty to 1,050 zloty for drinks with up to 18% alcohol content and from 2,100 zloty to 4,200 zloty for stronger drinks. That could raise operating costs for retailers and, if enacted, may affect sales conditions for spirits, beer, wine and other alcoholic beverages across the supply chain, including producers, importers and distributors.

Support in the Sejm was broad. Notes from Poland reported that only two far-right groups, Confederation and Confederation of the Polish Crown, did not back the bill. The measure also received support from major opposition forces, including Law and Justice and Development Plus.

That level of backing increases the likelihood that the bill will clear the remaining stages, though President Nawrocki still has several options. He can sign the legislation, veto it or send it to the constitutional court for review. Nawrocki, who is aligned with

the right-wing opposition, has used his veto power frequently. Even so, the breadth of support in parliament has led many observers to expect the bill to move forward.

The nationwide measure would expand restrictions that already exist in many parts of the country. Nearly 200 Polish municipalities, including Warsaw and Kraków, have introduced local bans on nighttime alcohol sales in shops. In Kraków, the first six months after the city imposed its restrictions in 2023 brought a nearly 50% drop in nighttime police interventions, according to the report. Other cities have reported similar results.

The parliamentary vote comes as public support for limiting late-night access to alcohol appears to be significant. An IBRiS poll for the newspaper Rzeczpospolita in June found that 55% of respondents supported some form of ban on nighttime alcohol sales, while 43% were opposed. A separate survey by IBP for Super Express, published Friday, showed 67% in favor and 26% against.

The debate is also taking place against a backdrop of falling alcohol consumption in Poland. Recent figures from Statistics Poland showed that the average person drank 81.7 liters of beer in 2025, down 4.9% from the previous year and 18.7% from the 2018 peak of 100.5 liters per person. Consumption of spirits and liqueurs fell 5.9% year over year to 3.2 liters per person in 2025, down 13.5% from its 2019 peak of 3.7 liters.

Even with that decline, consumption remains above the levels recorded two decades ago. Statistics Poland’s data show that in 2025 the average Pole still drank 28% more spirits and 1.2% more beer than in 2005, a point that continues to shape the political argument for stricter controls.

For the drinks industry, the proposed rules would not only limit late-night retail access to alcohol but also remove a major marketing channel and increase compliance costs. The impact would likely be felt most directly by stores and spirits sellers, though brewers, winemakers, wholesalers and brand owners could also face changes in promotion strategy, distribution patterns and pricing if the bill is enacted.