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Germany’s beer sales fell 4.6% in September despite stronger exports

Domestic demand weakened further, pushing taxable sales down 7.3% and extending a yearlong slump in the home market

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Germany’s brewing industry sold less beer in September as weaker demand at home outweighed a rise in exports, extending a decline that has persisted through most of 2026.

Data from the Federal Statistical Office, released by the German Brewers Association on Friday, Oct. 30, showed beer sales fell 4.6% from a year earlier to 6.38 million hectoliters in September. That was about 309,000 hectoliters less than in September 2025.

The drop was driven by the domestic market. Taxable beer sales in Germany declined 7.3% to 5.19 million hectoliters, a decrease of about 411,000 hectoliters from a year earlier. Exports moved in the opposite direction, rising 9.4% to 1.19 million hectoliters, or roughly 103,000 hectoliters more than in the same month of 2025.

The figures point to a continued split in the market: consumer demand inside Germany remains under pressure, while foreign sales are playing a larger role in supporting brewery volumes. For drinks companies, that trend matters because it suggests that international trade is becoming more important as a buffer against a soft home market.

Shipments to other European Union countries rose 6.3% in September to about 701,000 hectoliters. Exports to countries outside the EU increased more sharply, up 14.4% to about 487,000 hectoliters.

The broader picture for the year remained negative. From January through September, total beer sales fell 2.1% from the same period a year earlier to 59.35 million hectoliters, down about 1.26 million hectoliters. Domestic taxable sales for the first nine months dropped 3.2% to 48.12 million hectoliters, while exports increased 3.2% to 11.15 million hectoliters.

The German Brewers Association said consumers remained cautious even during a warm and relatively dry September, conditions that would normally support beer consumption. The group also said export growth had prevented the year-to-date picture from worsening further.

Beer-based mixed drinks also declined. Their sales fell 2.2% in September to about 284,000 hectoliters. Over the first nine months of 2026, sales of those products were down 3.5% at 3.30 million hectoliters.

The September data also showed wide differences among Germany’s regional brewing sectors. Breweries in Bavaria posted the strongest gain in total sales, up 5.3% from a year earlier. Breweries in Berlin and Brandenburg increased sales 3.8%, followed by Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania at 3.3% and Thuringia at 1.8%.

Other regions recorded steep declines. Breweries in Hesse saw the largest drop, with sales down 28.0%. Sales also fell by double digits in Lower Saxony and Bremen, down 18.1%, in Saxony-Anhalt, down 17.1%, in Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg, down 13.6%, and in North Rhine-Westphalia, down 10.5%. Breweries in Baden-Württemberg posted an 8.4% decline, while sales fell 3.8% in Saxony and 1.0% in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland.

The statistics cover beer produced in Germany as well as beer imported from other EU countries. They do not include nonalcoholic beer, malt beverages or beer imported from countries outside the EU.