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Germany Keeps Drinking Too Much Alcohol

DHS says per-capita consumption stayed high in 2024 despite a long-term decline from earlier levels

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Germany’s alcohol consumption remained high in 2024, with people age 15 and older drinking an average of 11 liters of pure alcohol per person over the year, according to the German Center for Addiction Issues, known by its German acronym DHS, in its new Yearbook on Addiction 2026.

Beer accounted for most of that intake. Germans drank an average of 88 liters of beer per person in 2024, compared with 19 liters of wine, 5 liters of spirits and 3.1 liters of sparkling wine, the DHS said. That added up to a total of 115.1 liters of alcoholic beverages per person for the year, even though overall consumption has declined from earlier levels. In 2005, the figure stood at 144.7 liters per person.

The DHS said the drop in total consumption does not change its view that alcohol use in Germany remains too high. The group said about 44,000 deaths a year in Germany are linked to alcohol consumption and argued that the social costs are substantial. It called for stricter alcohol policy, including higher excise taxes on alcoholic drinks and steps to reduce availability.

The figures show a long-term decline from 2010, when per-capita consumption reached 12.2 liters of pure alcohol a year, and from 2018, when it was 11.5 liters. But the DHS said the level is still troubling because alcohol can damage organs and cells even at moderate intake.

Germany remains above the European Union average but sits in the middle of the regional ranking. Latvia and Spain were tied for the highest per-capita consumption at 11.8 liters of pure alcohol, followed by Romania and the Czech Republic at 11.6 liters each. Austria also recorded a higher level than Germany at 11.6 liters. At the lower end were Turkey at 1.69 liters, North Macedonia at 3.8 liters and Albania at 3.8 liters.

The German Society for Nutrition recommends avoiding alcoholic drinks altogether.