Summary

During the more than 20 years that the Monitor survey has tracked the drinking habits of the population, men's and women's alcohol consumption has never been as close as in 2025. In 2004, men drank more than twice as much as women. Today the difference is 70 percent. Men thus still drink considerably more than women.

The convergence is mainly due to men having changed their habits. Men's self-reported consumption has decreased by 35 percent since 2004, and women's by 11 percent. Women's share has consequently increased from 30 to 37 percent. The pattern recurs in several of the survey's measures: the proportion of men who drink, how often they drink and the proportion who are high consumers have all declined, while women's levels have been more stable.

Drinking to intoxication has also become more similar. In 2025, 35 percent of men and 23 percent of women had engaged in heavy episodic drinking during the past month. The gap has narrowed because fewer men and slightly more women drink in this way.

In total, annual consumption was reported at an average of 4.1 litres of pure alcohol per person in 2025. This is the lowest level during the measurement period, and just over a quarter lower than in 2004 (taking the 2019 change of method into account). Consumption remains unevenly distributed: one tenth of the adult population accounts for roughly half of all alcohol consumed.

Behind the declines in total alcohol consumption lie clear generational shifts. Today, for example, people in the youngest age group (17–29 years) drink considerably less than they did 20 years ago. It is primarily young men who have contributed to this decline. Overall, there has been an increase in the older group (65–84 years), but in relative terms the increase there has been greater among women than among men.

As new generations, with more extensive drinking habits than previous generations, have reached retirement age, the difference between age groups has narrowed. On average, young adults (17–26-year-olds) today consume roughly the same volumes of alcohol as the 65–74 age group. Twenty years ago, the younger group drank twice as much as the older group.

Changing gender patterns are also visible in the analysis of combined alcohol and nicotine use. The proportion of respondents being high consumers of alcohol and who also use nicotine daily has remained relatively unchanged for several years,

but in 2007 this was five times as common among men as among women. Today the difference is just under threefold.

Drinking habits have also become more similar across the country, both between counties and between different types of municipalities. The convergence is mainly because consumption has fallen where it was previously highest. Counties that previously ranked high, above all Stockholm, Halland and Skåne, have moved closer to the national average. In 2004/06, for example, annual consumption in Halland County was 18 percent above the national average. Today the difference is 7 percent. The geographical patterns nevertheless largely persist. Uppsala and the metropolitan counties are still above or close to the national average, while the northern counties (Norrland) are below it. Annual consumption in 2024/25 ranged from 3.3 litres of pure alcohol per person in Västerbotten to 4.9 litres in Uppsala.

Drinking habits have thus become increasingly similar between men and women, age groups and regions of the country, even though the differences have not disappeared entirely. Men still drink clearly more than women, and residents of metropolitan areas more than those living in small towns and rural areas.