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Less alcohol and cigarettes available for consumption

The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption declined 3.1 percent, to 471 million litres during the 2009 year, the first fall following eight years of annual increases, Statistics New Zealand said today. "Beer is still the most popular alcoholic beverage in New Zealand, although it drove the overall decline in volumes of alcoholic beverage," business statistics manager Kathy Connolly said.

Spirits and spirit-based drinks now represent 15 percent of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption, while wine represents 20 percent, up from 19 percent in 2008.

The volume of pure alcohol available per person aged 15 years and over decreased 2.4 percent from 2008, to 9.3 litres in 2009.

The number of cigarettes available for consumption in 2009 also dropped, down 4.5 percent, to 2.4 billion. The drop in cigarette numbers coincided with a decline in the amount of tobacco available for consumption, which was down 1.6 percent to 856 tonnes in 2009, following a decline of 3.7 percent in 2008. "This is the first time since 2003 that a fall in tobacco has coincided with a fall in available cigarettes," Kathy Connolly added.

Alcohol and tobacco statistics measure how much alcohol and tobacco is available for consumption, not how much is consumed.

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