



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 3 March 2022 4.30pm

Confiscate their Cars! Over 80% of Kiwis want drink driver cars seized

New research shows that just over four in five New Zealanders (83%) want to see the cars of repeat drink drivers confiscated.ⁱ

“Further to this, our research shows two-thirds (66%) of New Zealanders support using alcohol interlock devices in cars to reduce drink driving,” says NZ Alcohol Beverages Council Executive Director, Bridget MacDonald.ⁱⁱ

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency just released its [Road to Zero](#) road safety strategy that acknowledges drink driving is trending downward, but there is more to be done to continue this trend. Alcohol interlocks are recognised as one tool to do this.

“We’re drinking 25% less per capita than we did in the ’70s and ’80s, and our drinking culture continues to change for the better.ⁱⁱⁱ At the same time, drinking driving convictions have nearly halved in the past ten years.^{iv}

Our research shows that Kiwis want more to be done to reduce drink driving through both preventative measures and consequences. They support targeted education and support programmes^v as well as targeted actions, such as the use of interlocks and confiscating cars.

Waka Kotahi is taking a multifaceted approach to its road safety strategy, from infrastructure to vehicle safety. It also places emphasis on targeted education, public awareness campaigns and empowering local communities to develop local solutions. The use of interlock devices are another tool in its toolkit to help keep our roads safer, particularly from high-risk or recidivist offenders,” says Bridget.

“We each have a responsibility to make better drinking decisions to keep ourselves and others safe on our roads. If we choose to have a drink, we need to leave the car at home and plan ahead for a safe way home, whether it’s a taxi, bus or a designated driver. If we choose to drive, then we don’t drink – it really is as simple as that,” says Bridget.

ENDS

Need more information?

- Check out cheers.org.nz and alcoholandme.org.nz for more information on what a standard drink is and how to make better drinking decisions.
- A good rule of thumb is ‘Go no, low or slow’. It’s okay to choose no or low alcohol drinks. If you choose to drink, pace yourself and enjoy your drink slowly.
- Ministry of Health/HPA Guidelines: [Low-risk alcohol drinking advice](#) to reduce your long-term health risks by drinking no more than:
 - **Two** standard drinks **a day for women** and no more than **10** standard drinks **a week**,
 - **Three** standard drinks **a day for men** and no more than **15** standard drinks **a week**,
 - **AND** have at least **two alcohol-free days** every week.

Need help?

Call the Alcohol Drug Helpline on 0800 787 797, free txt 8681, or visit alcoholdrughelp.org.nz.



CONTACT

For more information, please contact:

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About NZABC

Formed in early 2018, the [NZ Alcohol Beverages Council](#) (NZABC) is a pan-industry group that speaks for those Kiwis who want to see a fair and balanced approach to alcohol attitudes, laws and regulation in New Zealand. At NZABC, we believe partnerships between local and central government, communities, and the alcohol sector, along with great education, are the best ways to reduce harm and maximise enjoyment from alcohol for everyone.

NZABC is an associate member of the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (iard.org), a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to reducing harmful drinking and promoting understanding of responsible drinking. It is supported by leading global beer, wine, and spirits producers, who have come together for a common purpose: to be part of the solution in combating harmful drinking.

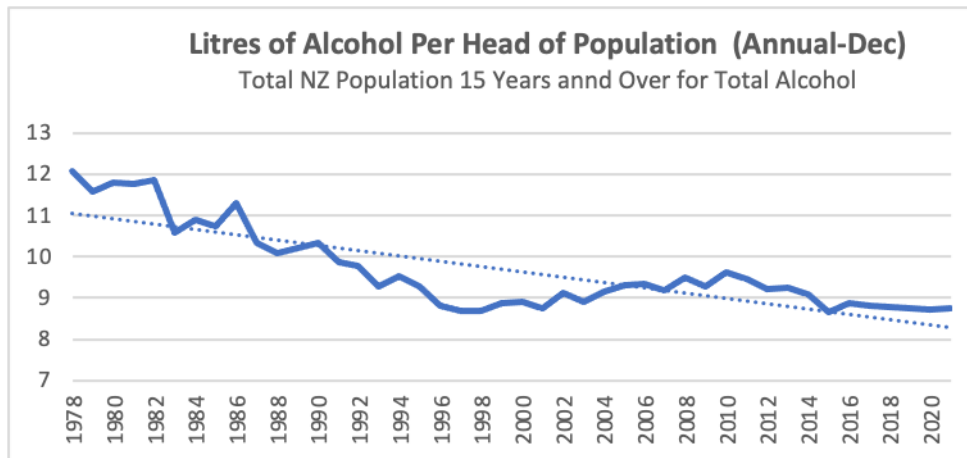
ⁱ NZ Alcohol Beverages Council consumer research, *New Zealander's attitudes to alcohol research*, December 2021, poll of 1,250 New Zealanders undertaken by Curia Market Research. Participants were asked whether they strongly opposed, somewhat opposed, somewhat supported or strongly supported measures that people have advocated would reduce alcohol-related harm. The response to the measure "Confiscating cars from repeat drink drivers" was: 83% support (64% strongly support, 19% somewhat support) 10% neutral, 6% oppose (5% somewhat oppose and 1% strongly oppose), for a net support of 77%.

ⁱⁱ NZ Alcohol Beverages Council consumer research, *New Zealander's attitudes to alcohol research*, December 2021, poll of 1,250 New Zealanders undertaken by Curia Market Research. Participants were asked whether they strongly opposed, somewhat opposed, somewhat supported or strongly supported measures that people have advocated would reduce alcohol-related harm. The response to the measure "Use alcohol interlocks in cars to reduce drink driving" was:

- 66% support (42% strongly support, 24% somewhat support), 15% neutral, 12% oppose (8% somewhat oppose and 4% strongly oppose), for a net support of 54%.
- Participants aged between 18-40 years were more likely to support this measure (82%) compared with 41-60 years (67%) and those over 61+ years (76%).
- Participants in metropolitan areas were more likely to support this measure (80%) compared with those living in provincial areas (70%) and rural areas (69%).

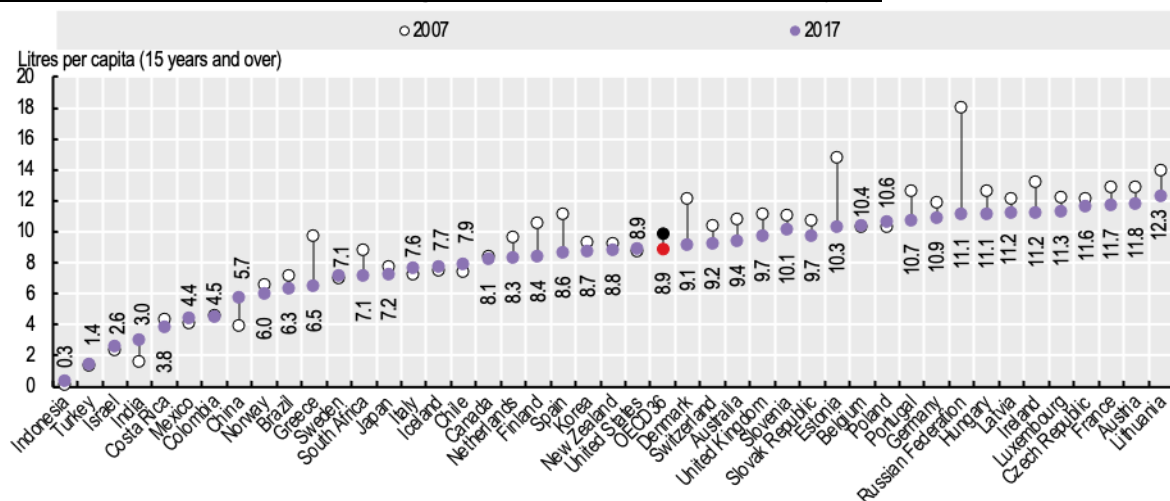
ⁱⁱⁱ **Decreasing alcohol consumption:** StatsNZ Infoshare, Alcohol available for consumption to December 2021 (published 24 February 2022), <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/alcohol-available-for-consumption-year-ended-december-2021> and <http://archive.stats.govt.nz/infoshare/> and <https://teara.govt.nz/en/graph/40691/consumption-of-pure-alcohol-1960-2011>. Alcohol available for consumption has been trending downward for a number of years. Data shows alcohol available for consumption was 8.734 litres per head of population (15 years and older) in December 2021. There has been a 27% decrease since 1978 when was 12.07 litres per head of population (15 years and older) and a 22.6% decrease since 1986 when there was 11.282 litres per head of population (15 years and older), (see *graph 1 below*). Note: The per head of population (15 years and older) is the measure used by the OECD.

Graph 1. Litres of Alcohol Per Head of Population in New Zealand (Annual-December, 2010-2021, 15 years and over) Source: Stats NZ Infoshare (February 2022)



NZ consumption below OECD average: OECD Alcohol Consumption, <https://data.oecd.org/healthrisk/alcohol-consumption.htm>. Alcohol consumption is defined as annual sales of pure alcohol in litres per person aged 15 years and older. The OECD average consumption is 8.9 litres/capita (aged 15 and over). New Zealand is at 8.8 litres/capita vs UK 9.7 litres/capita. See graph 2 below. Source: OECD Health Statistics, 2019. New Zealand figures as at 2018.

**Graph 2. Litres of Alcohol Per Head of Population in New Zealand
Recorded alcohol consumption among adults, 2007 and 2017 (or nearest year)**



^{iv} The number of people convicted of driving under the influence offences has nearly halved over the last 10 years (from 27,528 people in 2010/2011 to 14,523 in 2019/2020). Source: Ministry of Justice, <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/Justice-Statistics-data-tables-notes-and-trends-jun20-20200928.pdf>

Between 2017- 2019, contributing factors in fatal crashes were: 60% neither alcohol nor drugs involved; 18% drugs only; 13% alcohol only; 9% alcohol and drugs. In 1990, there were 321 deaths in crashes where alcohol and/or drugs were a contributing factor and 160 in 2019.

Source: Ministry of Transport, <https://www.transport.govt.nz/statistics-and-insights/safety-annual-statistics/alcohol-and-drugs/>

^v NZ Alcohol Beverages Council consumer research, *New Zealander's attitudes to alcohol research*, December 2021, poll of 1,250 New Zealanders undertaken by Curia Market Research. Participants were asked whether they strongly disagreed, somewhat disagreed, neither disagreed or agreed, somewhat agreed, strongly agreed or unsure about the statement "Targeted education and support programmes are the best way to reduce harmful drinking." 78% agreed (39% strongly agreed and 39% somewhat agreed), 7% neither disagreed nor agreed, 13% disagreed (10% somewhat disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed), and 2% were unsure.