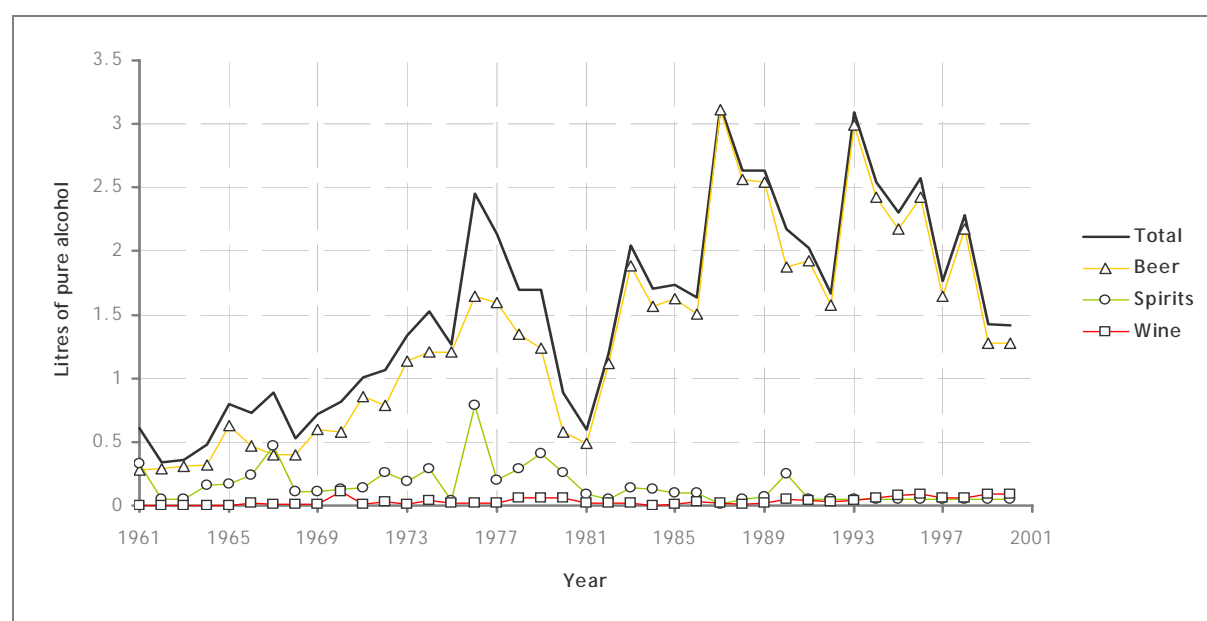


SAMOA

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)



Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

No survey data are available for Western Samoa on self-reported use of alcohol, nor on illicit manufacture of the beverage nor of the distribution of consumption. It is significant, however, that both locally produced beer and relatively inexpensive imported spirits are widely available throughout the nation.¹

Traditional alcoholic beverages

Fa'amafu or *pulu* is a Samoan home-brewed liquor. The term *pulu* comes from the English word "brew" and *fa'amafu* means "to ferment". It has a relatively high alcohol content – between 10% and 25%.²

For Samoan people, *fa'amafu* continues to be a cheaper alternative to Palagi (European) alcohol. Although in the 1950s the Liquor Commission recommended that alcohol should be available to the public, the *matai* were against ordinary Samoan people being given the right to drink. By prohibiting alcohol, the making of *fa'amafu* became a flourishing industry. Furthermore, the homemade alcohol contained a higher percentage of alcohol than the liquor from the liquor stores.²

Fa'amafu is distinguished from *sini ai-vao* (bush gin) and *sipili ai-vao* (bush spirits). The latter two, are much stronger than *fa'amafu* and are made from fermented fruits (by distillation).²

Country background information

| | | | | |
|---|---------|---|--------|------|
| Total population 2003 | 178 000 | Life expectancy at birth (2002) | Male | 66.8 |
| Adult (15+) | 106 800 | | Female | 69.7 |
| % under 15 | 40 | Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002) | Male | 27 |
| Population distribution 2001 (%) | | | Female | 21 |
| Urban | 22 | Gross National Income per capita 2002 | US\$ | 1420 |
| Rural | 78 | | | |

Sources: Population and Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat, World Bank World Development Indicators database, The World Health Report 2004

References

1. McDonald D, Elvy G, Mielke J. Alcohol in the South Pacific: the mid-1990s. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 1997, 16(4):383–390.
2. *O le a'ano o feiloaiga: The place of alcohol in the lives of Samoan people living in Aotearoa New Zealand*. ALAC Research Monograph Series: No. 8. Wellington, Sector Analysis, Ministry of Health for the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand, 1997.