

# Half of Russia's Alcohol Sold Illegally, Regulators Say

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**Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Almost half of the alcohol products sold in Russia last year were on the market illegally, the state Federal Alcohol Market Regulation Service (Rosalkogolregulirovanie) said this week.

Sales of alcoholic beverages in Russia rose by 4.6 percent in 2018, according to Nielsen [estimates](#), while official statistics [show](#) a 1.5-percent decline in vodka sales to 786 million liters. Illegal online sales of alcohol [rose](#) by 23 percent in Russia, topping \$30 million in 2018, according to Moscow-based cybersecurity firm Group-IB.

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Some 5.2 million out of more than 11 million liters of inspected alcohol were found to be sold in Russia illegally in 2018, Rosalkogolregulirovanie [said](#).

That constitutes 47.5 percent of all inspected alcohol, the agency said in a report ahead of its

year-end meeting next week.

Almost 31 percent of vodka, or 363,000 out of 1.18 million liters, was found to be sold illegally in 2018.

Standards watchdog Roskachestvo had [named](#) vodka one of Russia's highest-quality products, though it warned that 250 million liters of low-quality vodka are sold in the country annually.

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