STATISTICS DENMARK

Analysis
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Geographic variation in sales of plant-based drinks

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Statistics Denmark has access to barcode data from most grocery retail groups in Denmark. The data are used, among other things, as a source for measuring the consumer price index. However, Statistics Denmark has also received approval to use a subset of the data for research purposes to examine the climate footprint of Danes' food purchases.

This analysis examines geographical differences in sales of plant-based drinks relative to dairy milk in 2024-2025. Plant-based drinks are non-animal alternatives to milk. The analysis also examines seasonal variation in the sales of plant-based drinks and dairy milk in 2025. The analysis solely describes sales of plant-based drinks and dairy milk without accounting for price developments or supply and demand.

Main conclusions:

- 5.6 per cent of the total sales volume of milk and plant-based drinks in 2024 and 2025 was plant-based.
- *There are clear geographical differences in sales of plant-based drinks across municipalities.* Plant-based drinks account for a larger share of milk sales in urban areas like the municipalities Copenhagen (13.4 per cent in 2024-2025) and Frederiksberg (12.1 per cent) than in a number of municipalities outside the major urban areas.
- *There are also geographical differences within the largest cities.* Measured by postal districts, the prevalence of plant-based drinks in Copenhagen is highest in Copenhagen N and Copenhagen W, while the share in Aarhus is highest in Aarhus C.
- *The share of plant-based drinks varies throughout 2025.* Plant-based drinks account for the largest share at the beginning of the year and the smallest share at the end of the year. These fluctuations are driven by higher sales volumes of dairy milk in December, while sales volumes of plant-based drinks are highest in January.

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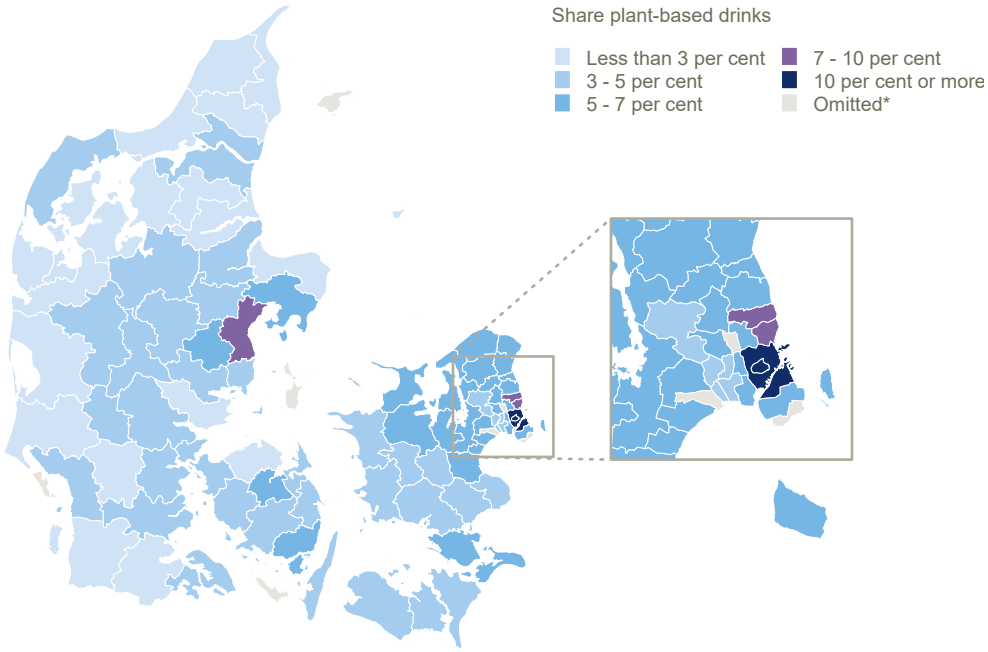
Municipal differences in sales of plant-based drinks

In 2024-2025, plant-based drinks accounted for 5.6 per cent of all milk and plant-based drinks sold in Denmark. The sales data covers the vast majority of supermarkets in Denmark, see Box 1.

The share of plant-based drinks varies across the country. The share is highest in and around the major cities, while it is lower in municipalities located far from the largest urban areas, see Figure 1. Thus, the share of plant-based drinks was highest in the municipalities of Copenhagen (13.4 per cent), Frederiksberg (12.1 per cent) and Gentofte (8.3 per cent) and lowest in Tønder (1.9 per cent), Skive (2.0 per cent) and Morsø (2.1 per cent).

The statistics presented here show where the milk was sold, but not who purchased it. Therefore, the purchaser of the milk is not necessarily resident in the same municipality in which the store is located.

Figure 1. Plant-based drinks in municipalities, 2024-2025



Note: The share of plant-based drinks is calculated on the basis of the total sales volume of plant-based drinks and dairy milk in 2024 and 2025.
*Omitted for confidentiality reasons.

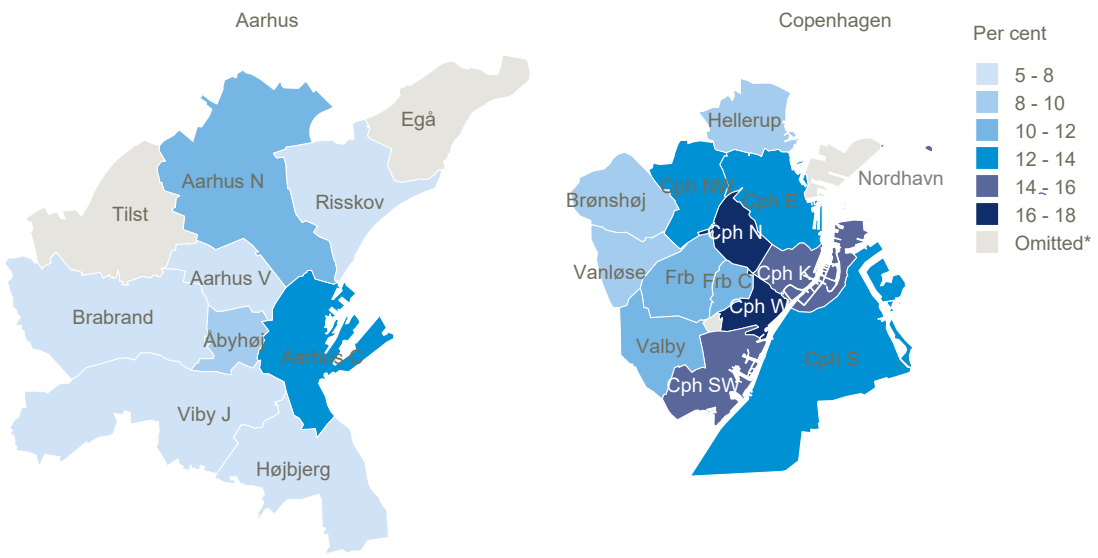
Source: Statistics Denmark, barcode data.

Geographical differences within Copenhagen and Aarhus

Plant-based drinks are sold relatively frequently in the major cities. In this section, we examine differences in sales of plant-based drinks across different parts of Copenhagen and Aarhus.

Measured at the postal district level, the share of plant-based drinks is highest in the city centres of the major cities, see Figure 2. In Aarhus, the share is highest in Aarhus C (13.6 per cent). In Copenhagen, the share is highest in Copenhagen N (17.9 per cent), Copenhagen W (16.1 per cent) and Copenhagen K (15.8 per cent), but compared with the national average, the share of plant-based drinks is high in all postal districts of Copenhagen shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Plant-based drinks in Aarhus and Copenhagen, 2024-2025



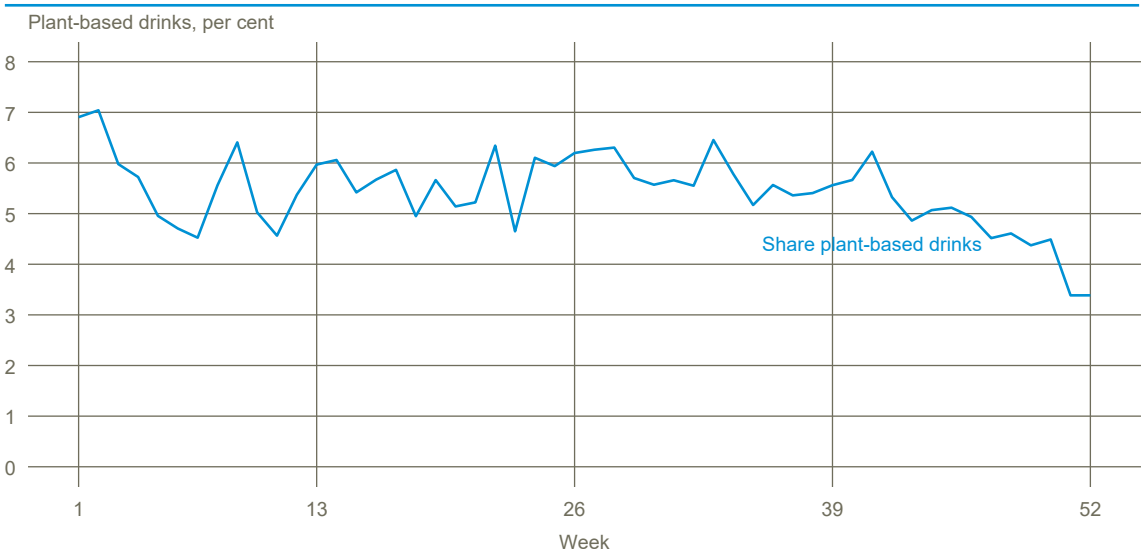
Note: Some postal districts in Copenhagen contain several postal codes: Copenhagen K (1000-1499), Copenhagen W (1500-1778) and Frederiksberg C (1800-1999). Not all postal codes in either Aarhus or Copenhagen Municipality are shown on the map.
*Omitted for confidentiality reasons.

Source: Statistics Denmark, barcode data.

Variation throughout the year in sales of milk and plant-based drinks

The share of plant-based drinks fluctuates around 4.5-6.5 per cent during most weeks of the year. However, the share is lower in late December than during the rest of the year and higher in beginning of January, see Figure 3.

Figure 3. Weekly share of plant-based drinks, 2025



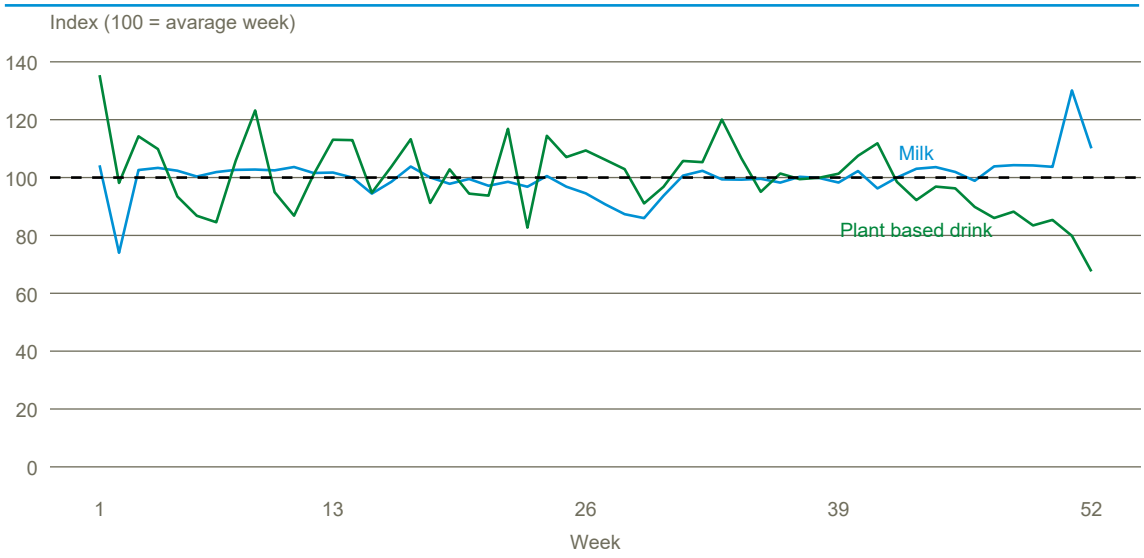
Note: The figure shows plant-based drinks as a share of the total sales of plant-based drinks and dairy milk per week in 2025.

Source: Statistics Denmark, barcode data.

The share of plant-based drinks depends on both sales of plant-based drinks and sales of dairy milk, see Figure 4. The lower share of plant-based drinks in December can therefore be attributed both to higher sales of dairy milk and to a decline in sales of plant-based drinks. The increase in

dairy milk sales coincides with Christmas. In January, the pattern is reversed, with sales of plant-based drinks being high while sales of dairy milk are low. Figure 4 shows the relative sales of milk and plant-based drinks per week compared with the average weekly sale in 2025. Sales of plant-based drinks are substantially lower than sales of dairy milk in every week of the year, see Figure 3.

Figure 4. Sale of dairy milk and plant-based drink per week, 2025



Note: Sales volumes for plant-based drinks and milk, respectively, are indexed relative to the average week in 2025. An index value of 100 therefore corresponds to the average weekly sales volume for plant-based drinks and milk, respectively.

Source: Statistics Denmark, barcode data.

Box 1. Barcade data

Barcode data are reported by most major grocery retail groups in Denmark. Reporting is voluntary and contains information on products sold, prices, time of sale (week), and place of sale (store), and has been collected since 2015. Statistics Denmark is authorised to use these reports as input to official statistics, i.e. the consumer price index.

However, Statistics Denmark has also received special permission from grocery retail groups to specifically examine sales of milk and plant-based drinks using barcode data.

This analysis focuses solely on the period 2024-2025, as plant-based milk is difficult to identify precisely from barcode data. This is because barcodes are linked to individual products, and the range of milk and plant-based drinks has changed over time. Consequently, the barcodes identifying plant-based drinks have also changed over time. To ensure that we identify a comparable and sufficiently comprehensive set of products as plant-based drinks, we have chosen to focus on the period 2024-2025.

Barcode data are aggregated to weeks, postal districts, and municipalities. Data is suppressed if consumption covers fewer than three grocery retail groups, or if a single retail group accounts for more than 80 per cent of consumption in an area or time period.

About the analysis

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