

PROGRESS PROSPERITY

PROTECT SUSTAINABILITY

PROMOTE SCOTCH

The Scotch Whisky industry's Manifesto for
the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary Elections



The Scotch Whisky industry has weathered testing times before and remains focused on delivering growth. With backing from government not only can we come through, we can come out stronger.



Scotch Whisky is an integral part of our Scottish culture, heritage and global identity, and a key contributor to our economy. The industry's continued commitment to invest, to ensure long-term sustainability, and to protect and grow our global markets will ensure it succeeds for generations to come. However, during a challenging trading environment at home and abroad, it is critical that Scotland offers a competitive business environment in which Scotch Whisky can thrive and develop commercial opportunities. Global success starts at home, and it is crucial that government supports our industry to progress Scotland's prosperity.

As the industry looks ahead to the 2026 elections, we ask all parties and candidates to champion our home-grown success. Having the support we need will help our industry to deliver growth and investment, to deliver on our sustainability and responsibility objectives, and will enable Scotch Whisky to continue to play a leading role in promoting Scotland on the world stage.

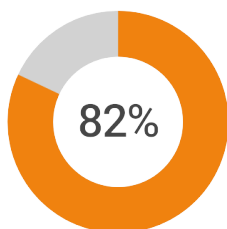
The next Scottish Government has an opportunity to ensure partnership and shared ambition with a focus on delivery: an opportunity to drive benefits for people and businesses across Scotland's communities; an opportunity to boost decarbonising efforts and working with our supply chains towards net-zero; an opportunity to fuel Scotland's prosperity. **We ask all parties, all candidates and the next government to work with industry and deliver on our asks to Progress Prosperity, Protect Sustainability, and Promote Scotch.**

We are clear in our commitment to Scotland and the communities we serve as an industry that is:

Ambitious & Accountable – focused on growth alongside sustainability, offering rewarding jobs in communities the length and breadth of Scotland and continuing to promote responsible consumption.

Bold & Balanced – driving innovation and productivity, investing in the communities in which we operate, reaching global markets and contributing to our world-renowned Scottish brand that attracts millions of visitors from around the world.

Committed & Collaborative – to Scotland, to our communities, and our supply chain partners - collaborative in our approach knowing there is more to be gained from working in partnership with government, communities and our wider stakeholders.



of Scots recognise that
**"Scotch Whisky is important
to the economy"**

Survation polling of 1003 Scots, 9-12th June 2025

For further information, please contact:

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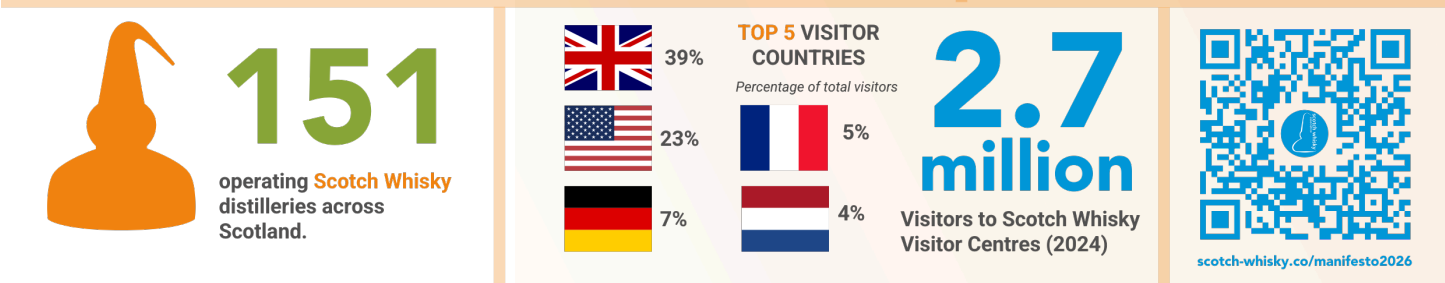
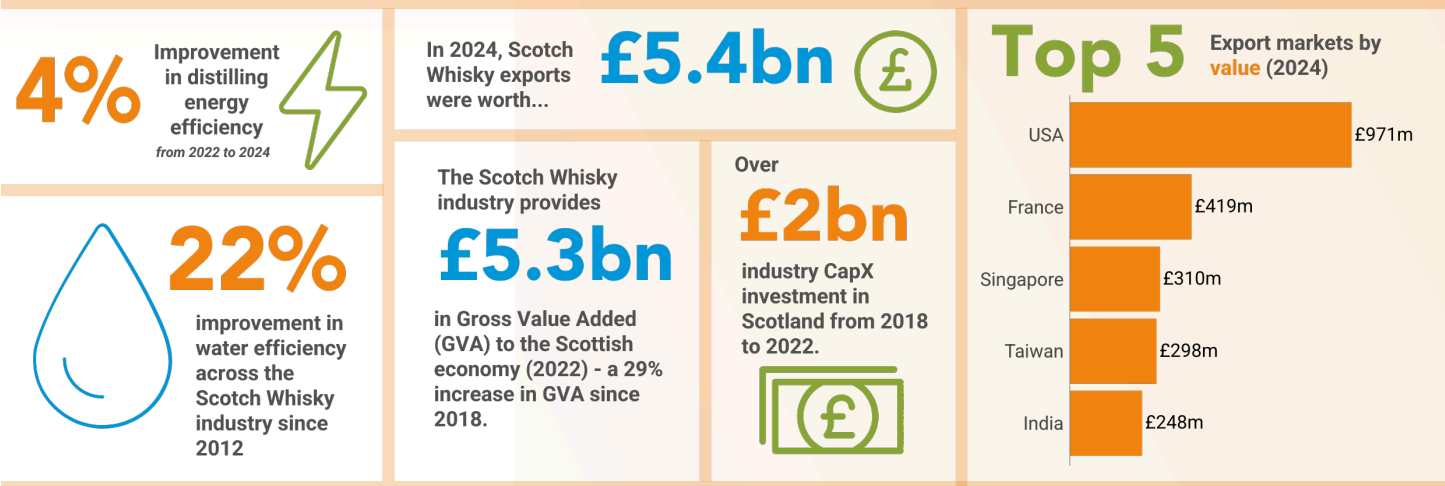
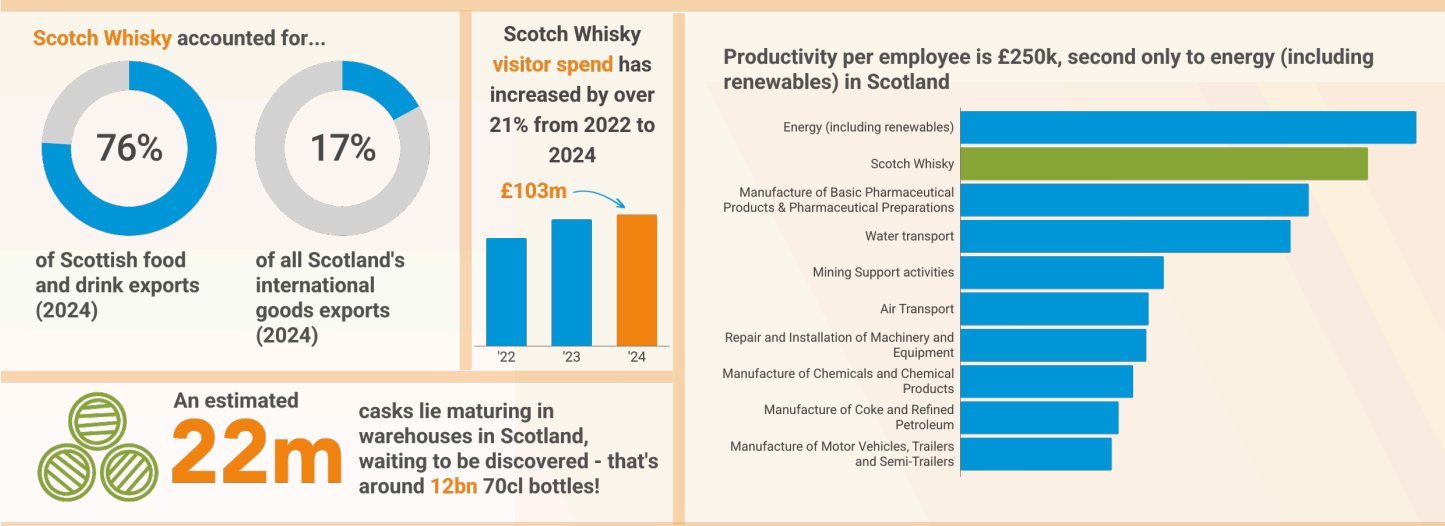
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Whisky isn't just made in Scotland: It Makes Scotland

#WhiskyMakesScotland



PROGRESS PROSPERITY

The Scotch Whisky industry is highly productive and a key contributor to Scotland's economy. However, the cost and complexity of doing business are continuing to impact the industry. We look to the government to take action to ensure businesses can keep driving prosperity for everyone in Scotland. Backing our exporters' success at home so that they can flourish overseas is an obvious first step. We need the government to deliver a competitive business environment with streamlined and improved regulation to ensure delivery of outcomes while avoiding the slowing of growth; an efficient and well-resourced planning process to reduce cost and complexity and free up investment; and a better-balanced tax regime.


Reliable, safe and resilient infrastructure is essential to the Scottish economy. Completing the dualling of the A9 and A96, improving the A95, and progressing with the landslip mitigation measures on the A83 are key to support the long-term sustainability and growth of our industry, the supply chains we work with and local communities. Delivering the new vessels and supporting port infrastructure is urgently needed to increase capacity, resilience and reliability for the Islay ferry service and the wider network. A delivery plan for enabling freight by rail is crucial to support the industry's decarbonisation and help ease traffic on our roads.

Continued success can never be taken for granted, it is achieved through partnership and a concerted programme of delivery. Our ask of the next government is to:

Work in partnership with our industry to co-design and co-deliver a shared Scotch Whisky Growth Strategy.

£3 
2022
IN EVERY £100
of Scotland's GVA
is generated by
Scotch Whisky

Harmful alcohol
consumption
continues
to **decrease**
34% 2003
↓
20% 2023


4%
Improvement
in distilling
energy efficiency
from 2022 to 2024

1,179
people are directly
employed at a
Scotch Whisky
Visitor Centre
2024



PROTECT SUSTAINABILITY

We want to ensure Scotch Whisky is enjoyed responsibly and sustainably for generations to come. Consumers around the world should have confidence that when they pick up a bottle of Scotch Whisky, it has been produced sustainably. Our industry has an ambitious sustainability strategy covering emissions reduction, water, responsible land use and the circular economy. To drive further progress and stay on track for a sustainable and resilient future, we need a supportive, enabling and equitable policy and regulatory framework.

An enabling consenting and planning regime that supports the range of technologies required to drive decarbonisation remains key. One size doesn't fit all, and it's crucial that government and regulators work in partnership with companies to unlock and support industry investment and innovation. Financial incentives have been critical to getting some decarbonisation projects over the line with past funding enabling implementation of new technologies, reducing site greenhouse gas emissions by over 50% and enabling delivery at scale. Our ask of the next government is to:

Provide expanded funding programmes to de-risk investment in decarbonisation - adopting flexible models, including going beyond match-funding, to enable smaller businesses to access support.

Our industry is looking to the next government to deliver a sustainable and collaborative approach, recognising that the majority of those who choose to consume our national drink do so responsibly. Our commitment to promote responsible consumption of alcohol is an integral focus of our industry, as set out in our strict [Responsible Marketing Code](#) and [Made to be Measured](#) campaign.

Although harmful alcohol consumption continues to decrease in Scotland, a balanced approach is needed to make further progress. While population-based measures have been introduced, there has been less delivery of targeted interventions to tackle harmful drinking. Our industry is committed to playing its part. In 2024, the Scotch Whisky Association announced its support for [Community Alcohol Partnerships](#), a targeted and evidence-based initiative aimed at tackling underage drinking in key areas across Scotland. Our ask is for the next government to:

Support the establishment of local Community Alcohol Partnerships to tackle drinking in under 18s, improve their health and wellbeing and enhance their communities.

PROMOTE SCOTCH

As a global cultural and economic phenomenon, Scotland's number one food and drink export, and top visitor attraction, Scotch Whisky is synonymous with Scotland around the world. Over the last parliamentary term, the Scotch Whisky industry has invested £300 million in Scotch Whisky visitor centres and experiences, cementing the industry's track record of attracting high-value visitors to Scotland.

The importance of being able to promote and market Scotland's national drink and Scotch Whisky tourism should never be underestimated. Marketing remains a central pillar of selling Scotch Whisky and Scotland to the world. Visitors to Scotch Whisky sites every year spend significant sums in our local economies, supporting job creation and retention throughout Scotland. While Scotch Whisky plays a vital role in driving the growth and profile of Scotland's tourism industry, measures such as business rates relief for hospitality and tourism remain crucial to both survive and thrive sustainably. With new market opportunities to pursue, our ask of the next government is to:

Bolster Scotch Whisky's potential in key markets by co-developing a Scotch Whisky Tourism Promotion Plan, underpinned by government support.

