

# Drinkaware Monitor 2024

**Spotlight on: Northern Ireland**

**Research Report: September 2024**



**drinkaware**

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# Introducing the research

**Monitor research**

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# Introducing the report

## Introducing the research

The full [UK report](#) is based on the findings from the annual Drinkaware Monitor - a UK representative survey to find out who's drinking, how much and why.

## What does this 'Spotlight' report cover?

This report provides a summary of Northern Ireland specific data from the Drinkaware Monitor 2024, looking specifically at what alcohol consumption and frequency looks like for Northern Ireland in 2024.

## What does the full UK report cover?

The full UK report<sup>1</sup> looks at the state of UK drinking and topics such as concerns, conversations, health and public attitudes.

The Drinkaware Monitor 2024 survey covers more topics than are covered in this report. The full data tables and an interactive library of historical Monitor data will be published on the Drinkaware website in Winter 2024. Drinkaware welcomes secondary analysis of its data, please contact [research@drinkaware.co.uk](mailto:research@drinkaware.co.uk). The [technical report](#)<sup>2</sup>, produced by YouGov, includes a copy of the questionnaire.

## Acknowledgements

Drinkaware would like to thank YouGov for conducting the survey; PS Research for analysing the survey data and for writing this report; and Phoenix Futures for their input on the findings related to stigma.

## How to cite this report

Pearson A., & Slater, E. (2024, September). Spotlight on Northern Ireland. Drinkaware Monitor 2024. PS Research and Drinkaware.

### Viewing the charts

Many of the analysis charts in this report are interactive.



#### Hover

Hover over bars or maps to display data and hover over legend labels to highlight one set



#### Select

Click on a legend label to select or de-select data in the chart you are viewing

# Understanding the language

Throughout the report a number of technical terms are used to analyse the results of the Monitor. A [glossary](#) is included in the Appendix.

The most commonly used are:

We have used [the Cabinet Office's advice for writing about ethnicity](#)<sup>3</sup>. When analysing findings by ethnicity, we use the term 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except any white categories, including white British.

[AUDIT and AUDIT-C](#)<sup>4</sup> are methods of screening for excessive drinking developed by the World Health Organization. AUDIT is a 10-question method of screening for excessive drinking and to assist in brief assessment.

The **Index of Multiple Deprivation** is a [measure of relative deprivation](#) for small areas (neighbourhoods) across the UK<sup>5</sup>. Throughout the report, analysis by deprivation refers to the 'least deprived' and 'most deprived' areas. These are based on Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles, with the 'least deprived' being those living in areas in the lowest 30% of deprivation and 'most deprived' being those who live in areas in the highest 30% of deprivation.

**Social Grades** are reported using a classification system based on occupation (AB are managerial and professional occupations; DE are semi and unskilled manual workers)<sup>6</sup>

Where differences between sub-groups and changes over time are discussed in this report, only those differences that are statistically significant are reported (unless otherwise stated). These differences are statistically significant to a confidence level of 95%. Please also note that throughout the report we use rounded percentages. Figures may not always sum to 100% due to this rounding, but will remain within a percentage point.

# Drinkaware Monitors



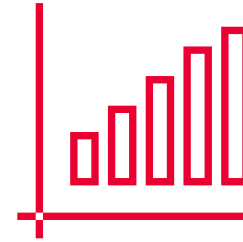
## What is the Monitor?

Drinkaware is committed to ensure our work is informed by up-to-date evidence on UK drinking attitudes and behaviours.

Every year, Drinkaware commissions a representative survey to understand the UK's drinking behaviours and motivations. A core subset of questions are included in the questionnaire every year to understand changes in key variables over time. Other questions are developed to reflect that year's theme.

Since 2017, the Monitors have been conducted by YouGov on behalf of Drinkaware, and before that by Ipsos Mori (2009-14). Where appropriate, findings from the 2024 Monitor have been reported in the context of those from previous waves.

Drinkaware welcomes secondary analysis of its data, please contact the research team on [research@drinkaware.co.uk](mailto:research@drinkaware.co.uk) to find out more.



## Monitor Methodology

- UK wide sample of 5,143 adults aged 18 to 85 were interviewed, including 2,540 in England, 1,035 in Wales, 1,049 in Scotland and 519 in Northern Ireland
- The sample was drawn from the YouGov research panel, with responses collected during June 2024
- Using data from the Office for National Statistics, the results were weighted to be representative of the UK adult population according to age, gender, social grade and region
- The sampling and weighting process is exactly consistent with that used in previous Drinkaware Monitors
- When compared to population-level sales data, self-reported surveys typically underestimate population alcohol consumption by between 30% and 60%.

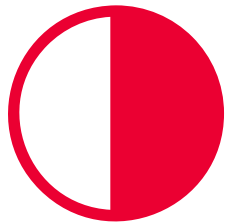
More information on the Methodology can be found in the [technical report](#)<sup>2</sup>.

# What did we find in 2023?



**Overall drinking levels have remained unchanged for the last two years, and the proportion of UK adults who do not drink has not changed**

- But UK drinkers appear to be drinking less frequently: 39% say they drink alcohol less often than weekly compared to 33% in 2019 and more UK drinkers are drinking within the UK Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines of 14 units per week
- Occasional binge drinking (less than monthly) has been on the rise for the last two years, with younger drinkers more likely to binge drink



**Over half of UK drinkers feel their nation has an unhealthy relationship with alcohol**

- But only one in ten feel themselves and their friends/family have an unhealthy relationship with alcohol
- And 9 in 10 UK drinkers feel they drink 'responsibly'



**One in four UK adults are concerned about someone else's drinking, lower than in 2022**

- One in five people who are concerned have not said anything or taken any action
- Conversations are more likely to lead to change than comments, although qualitative research revealed that comments may be a pre-cursor to more in-depth conversations, and that the impact of a conversations often depends on the willingness of the person to accept that they may be drinking in a harmful way

# UK summary

Summary of key findings from the full 2024 UK report

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# Positive drinking trends continue and moderation is on the rise



## People are drinking less often in 2024 and when they do drink they...

- Are drinking less in a day
- Are less likely to binge drink
- Are increasingly likely to never drink at home alone



## At the same time, the use of moderation techniques is on the rise

- 9 in 10 (90%) UK drinkers report that they use at least one technique to moderate their drinking, up from 87% in 2023
- Drink-free days are still the most popular form of moderation but lower strength drinks, smaller glasses and bottles and non-alcoholic substitutes are also ways that people are moderating
- Half of drinkers say they use 'drinking within the guidelines' as a moderation technique



## Although understanding of drinking guidelines is mixed at best

- People are split on whether the guidelines are daily or weekly
- Less than one in five know the exact recommended limit
- Those who drink more than recommended are more likely to know what the limit is

# But there are mixed signals around drinking concern



**The majority of drinkers have no concerns over their own drinking**

And are unlikely to feel it will lead to future health problems



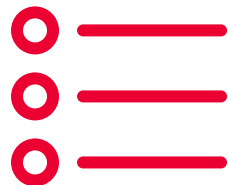
**But concern for other people's drinking has increased**

Concern for other people's drinking is higher than concern for one's own drinking and also higher than the proportion of drinkers who say they have had concerns raised about their drinking



**And rates of 'high risk' drinking remain unchanged**

Despite an increase in 'low risk' drinkers

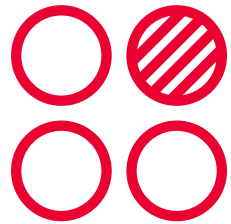


**Most, but not all, recognise the signs of problem drinking**

Although high risk drinkers are less likely to see the signs

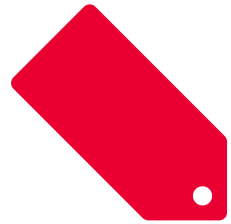
# Drinkers are worried about being labelled

(And with some justification)



**UK adults are more likely than not to feel someone with a drinking problem is different and not respected**

But the population is more divided on whether they are responsible for their struggles with alcohol



**And concerns about being labelled may deter drinkers from seeking help if they were worried about their own drinking**

Particularly for women and those living with housemates



**Having to admit they have a problem is the most common potential barrier to seeking help if someone was worried about their own drinking**

Those who drink the most are most likely to feel barriers to seeking help are being able to 'handle it themselves' and a reluctance to change their lifestyle



Based on results from the survey question: "If you were worried about your drinking, which, if any, of the following might put you off seeking help?"

# Are enough drinkers assessing their drinking or getting help?



**Just one in four UK adults say they have been asked to complete an alcohol assessment**

This rises to one in two though if someone else has expressed concern about their drinking



**Very few drinkers have ever sought help or advice for their drinking**

Although the likelihood of this does increase if others raise a concern or they recognise the concern themselves

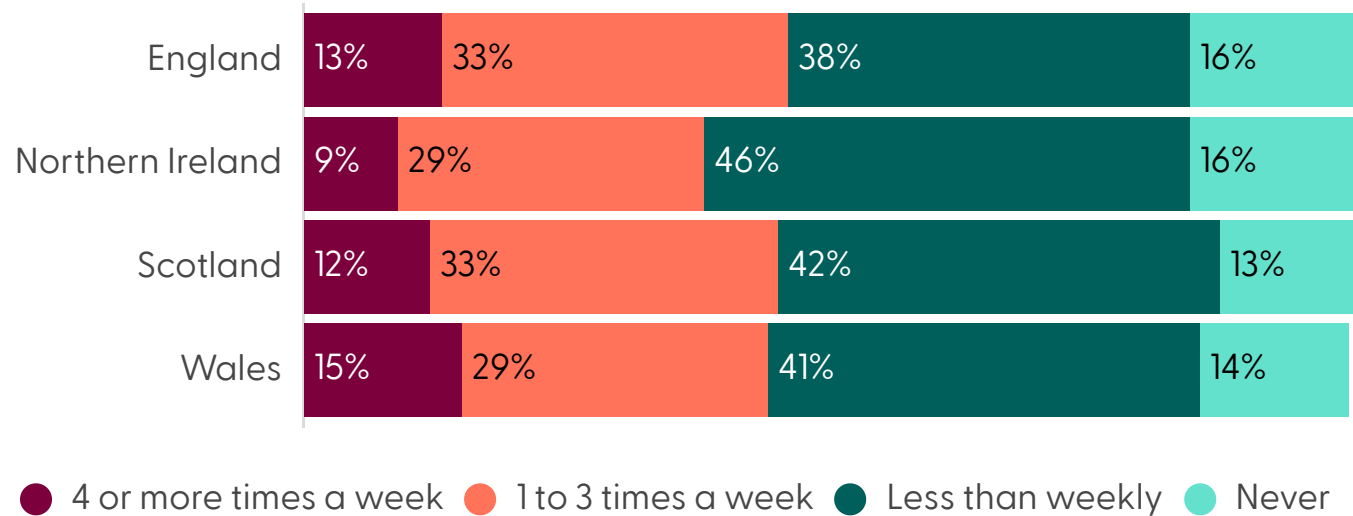


**And two in five drinkers would not consider reaching out for support or advice**

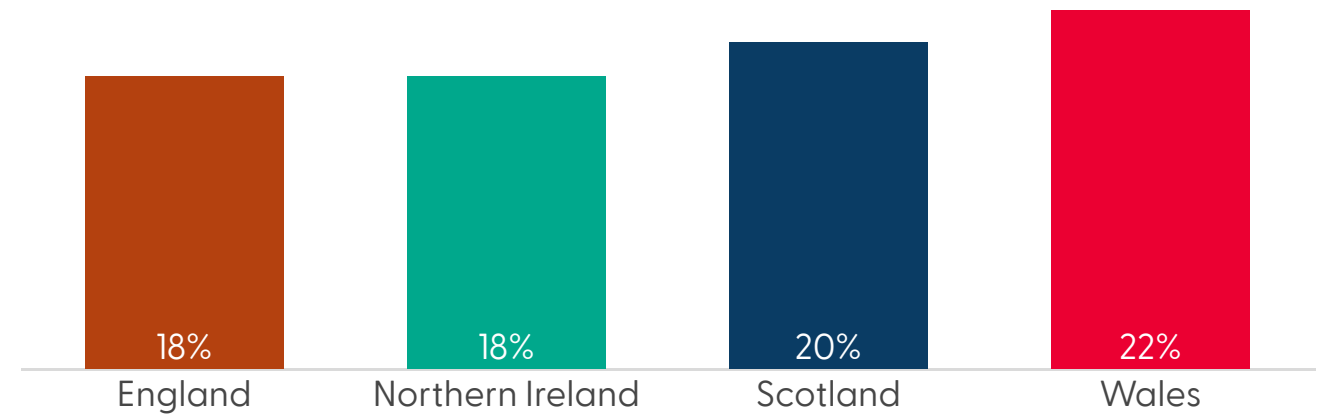
- Although this drops to 15% if they are a high risk drinker
- If they would reach out to a service or organisation, it's more likely to be a GP, an alcohol charity/organisation or an in-person support group

# How do drinking behaviours look across UK countries?

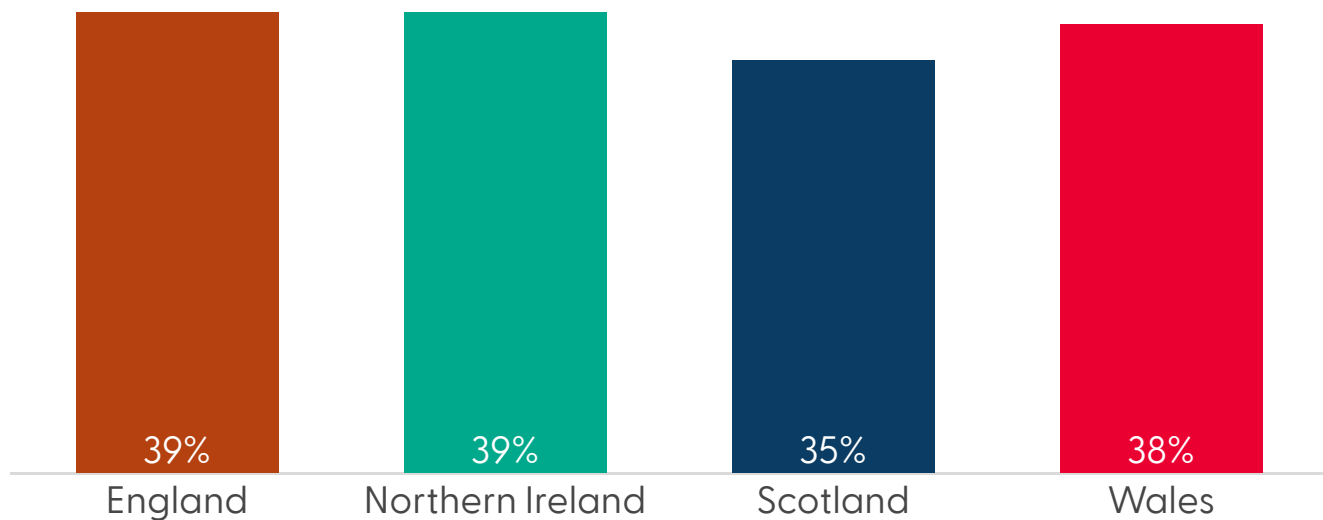
## How frequently all adults drink alcohol



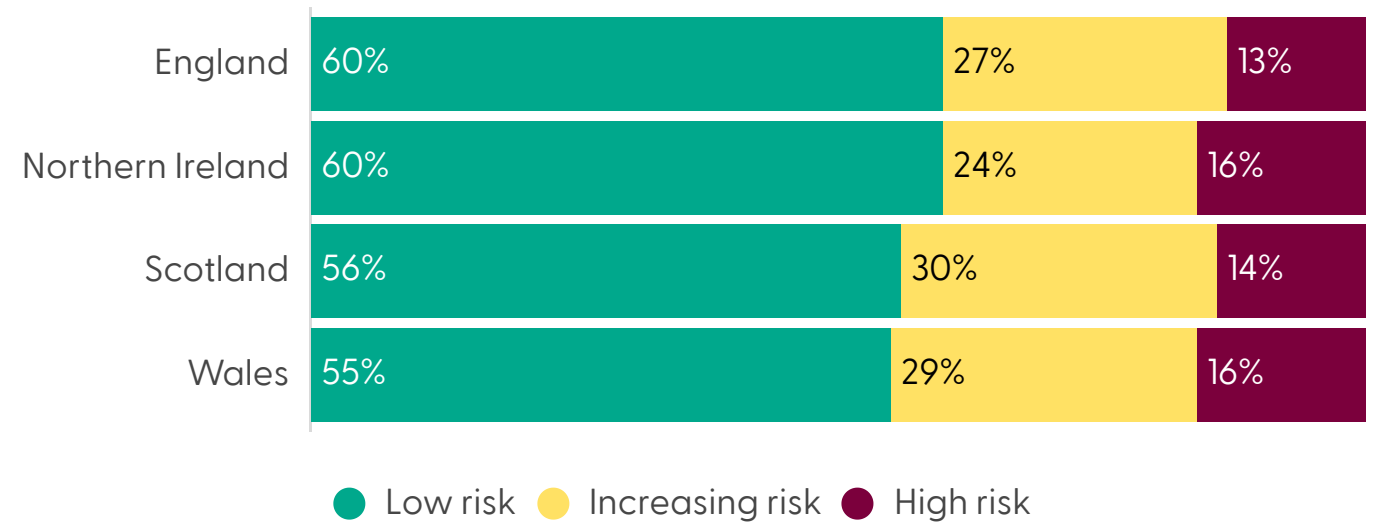
## % of drinkers who drink more than the Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines of 14 units per week<sup>8</sup>



## % drinkers who never binge drink



## AUDIT-C assessment<sup>4</sup> alcohol risk classifications (% drinkers)



# Drinking in Northern Ireland in 2024

## Alcohol consumption and comparisons

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# 2024: the Northern Ireland story in a nutshell



The frequency of drinking alcohol in Northern Ireland has remained largely consistent since 2018. Compared to all UK adults, fewer proportions of drinkers in N Ireland drink four or more times a week, however higher proportions drink ten or more units on a typical day when drinking.



The proportion of drinkers who binge drink in Northern Ireland has remained largely unchanged over time. Although younger drinkers (18-34 year olds) are more likely to binge drink, there has been a rise in 18-34 year olds who never binge drink.



The use of several moderation techniques amongst drinkers in Northern Ireland has increased over time, in particular taking drink-free days during the week, avoiding alcohol on a 'school/work night' and drinking non-alcoholic substitutes. 9 in 10 (89%) drinkers in N Ireland use at least one technique to moderate their drinking, similar to 90% in 2023 and up from 84% in 2018.



Similar to across all UK, people are more likely to feel that those with a drinking problem are different to everyone else and are not respected in the same way, but less likely to feel they are responsible for their struggles.



The most common potential barriers to accessing help amongst drinkers in Northern Ireland (if they were worried about their drinking) are having to admit they have a problem and being labelled/stigmatised.

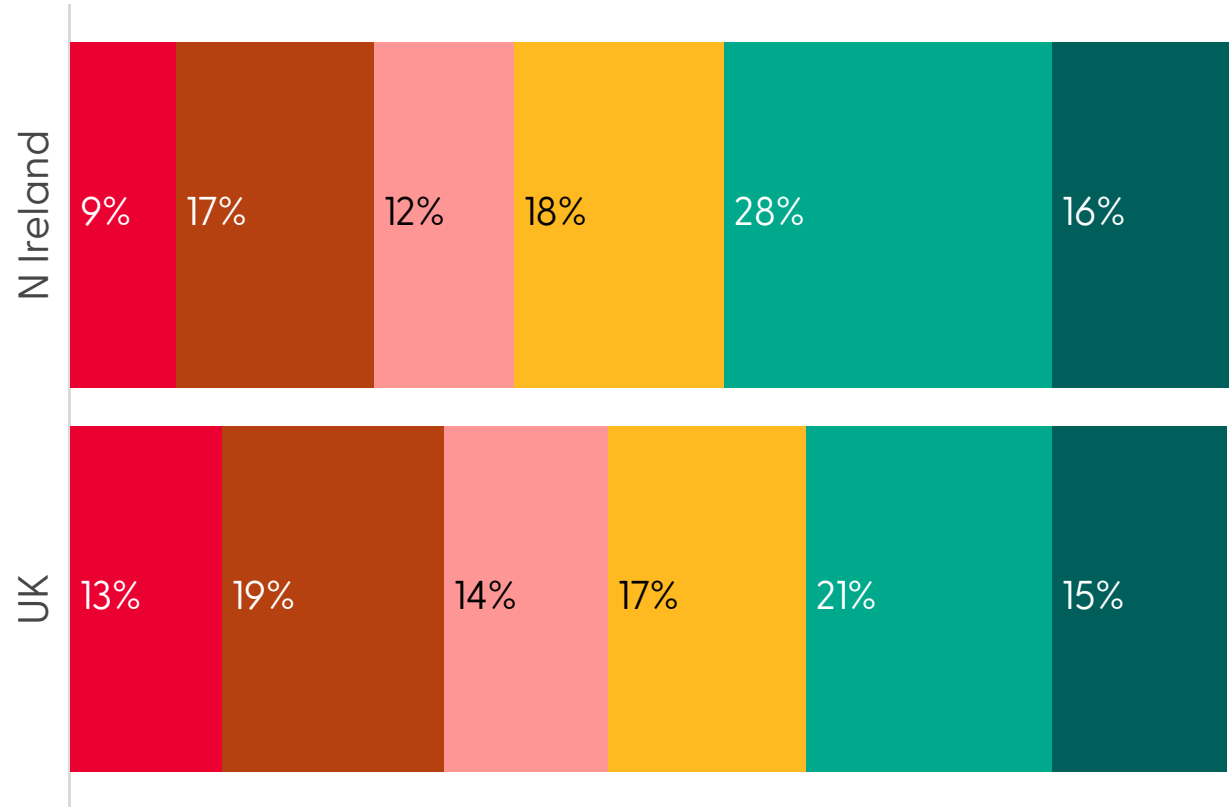


A fifth of adults in Northern Ireland (19%) report having been asked to complete an alcohol assessment (lower than across all UK).

# Drinking frequency has not significantly changed

## Fewer adults in N Ireland are drinking 4+ times a week than across all UK

Frequency of drinking amongst adults in N Ireland in 2024 compared to adults in the UK



- 4 or more times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- 1 to 3 times a month
- Less often than monthly
- Never

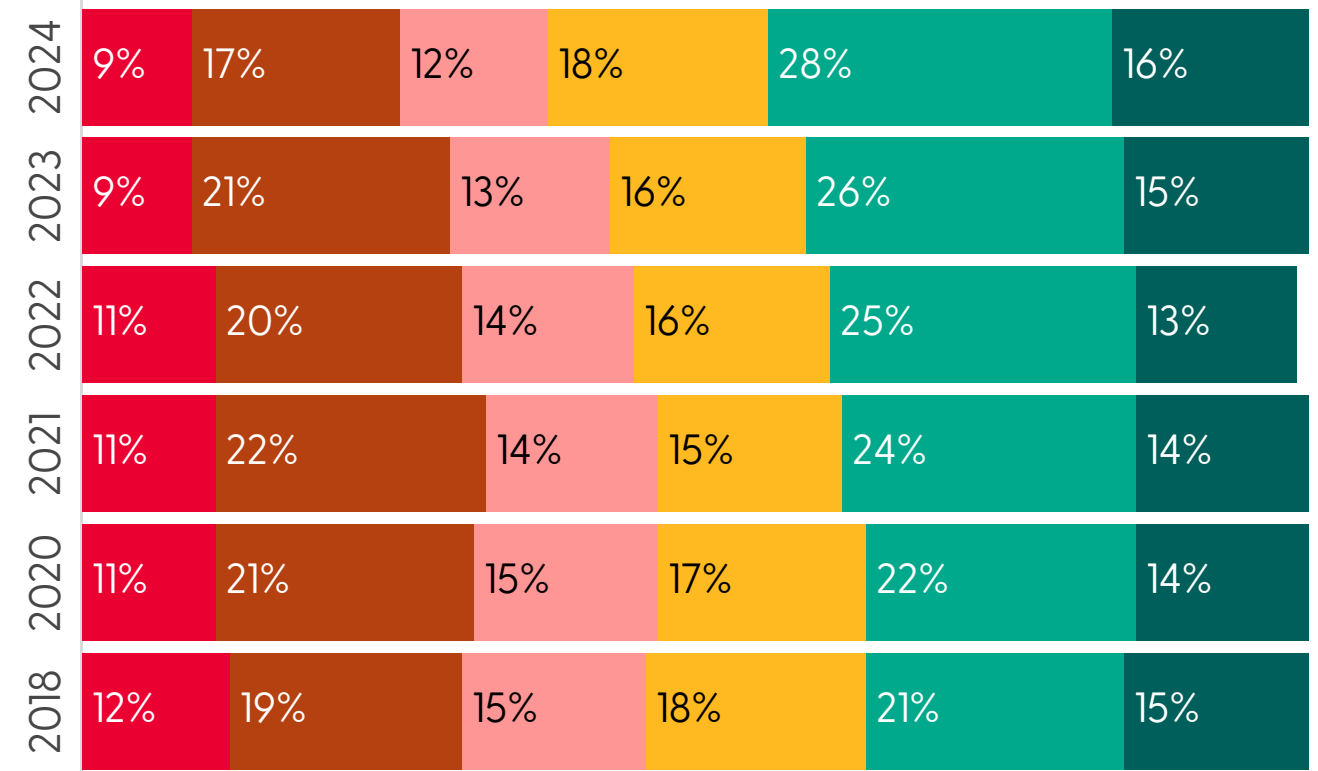
[Previous Monitor reports](#)



Drinking frequency. Base: all N Ireland adults (n=519); all UK adults (n=5,143)

## Drinking levels in N Ireland have been largely consistent since 2018

Change in frequency of drinking amongst adults in N Ireland over time



- 4 or more times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- 1 to 3 times a month
- Less often than monthly
- Never

[Previous Monitor reports](#)<sup>2</sup>



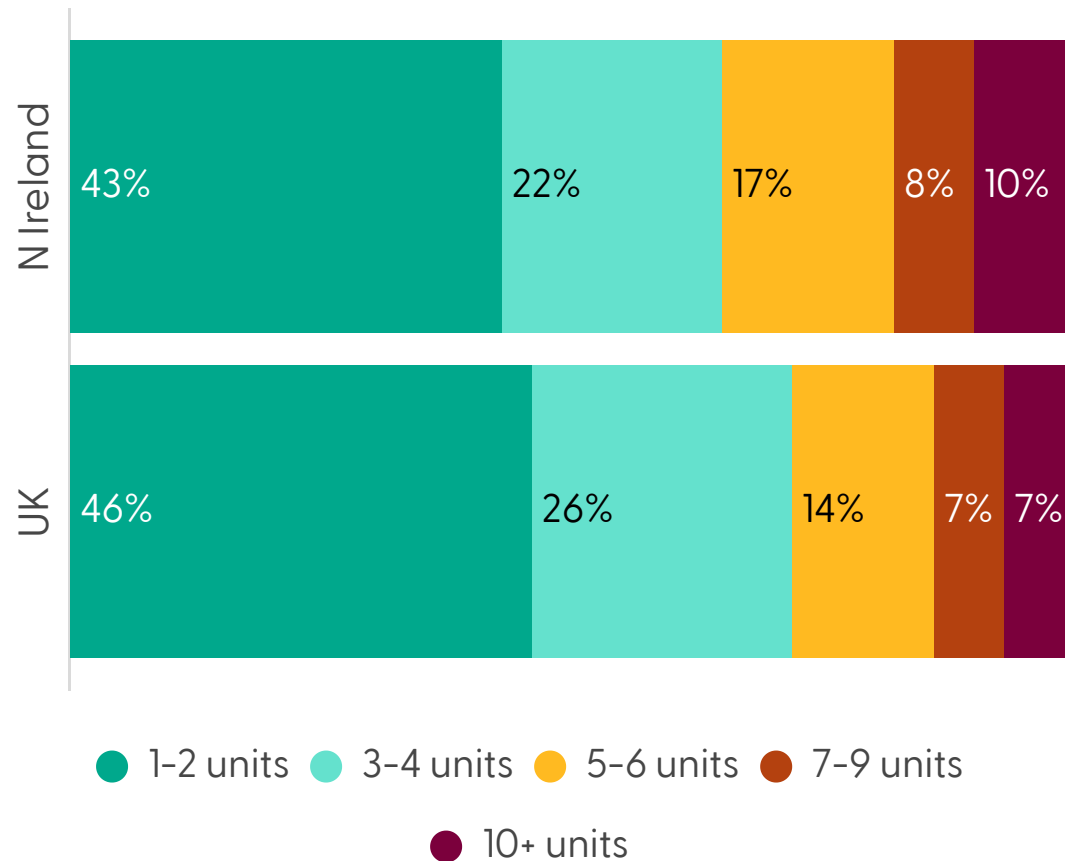
Drinking frequency. Base: all N Ireland adults, 2024 (n=519), 2023 (n=658); 2022 (n=612), 2021 (n=609); 2020 (n=608), 2018 (n= 593)



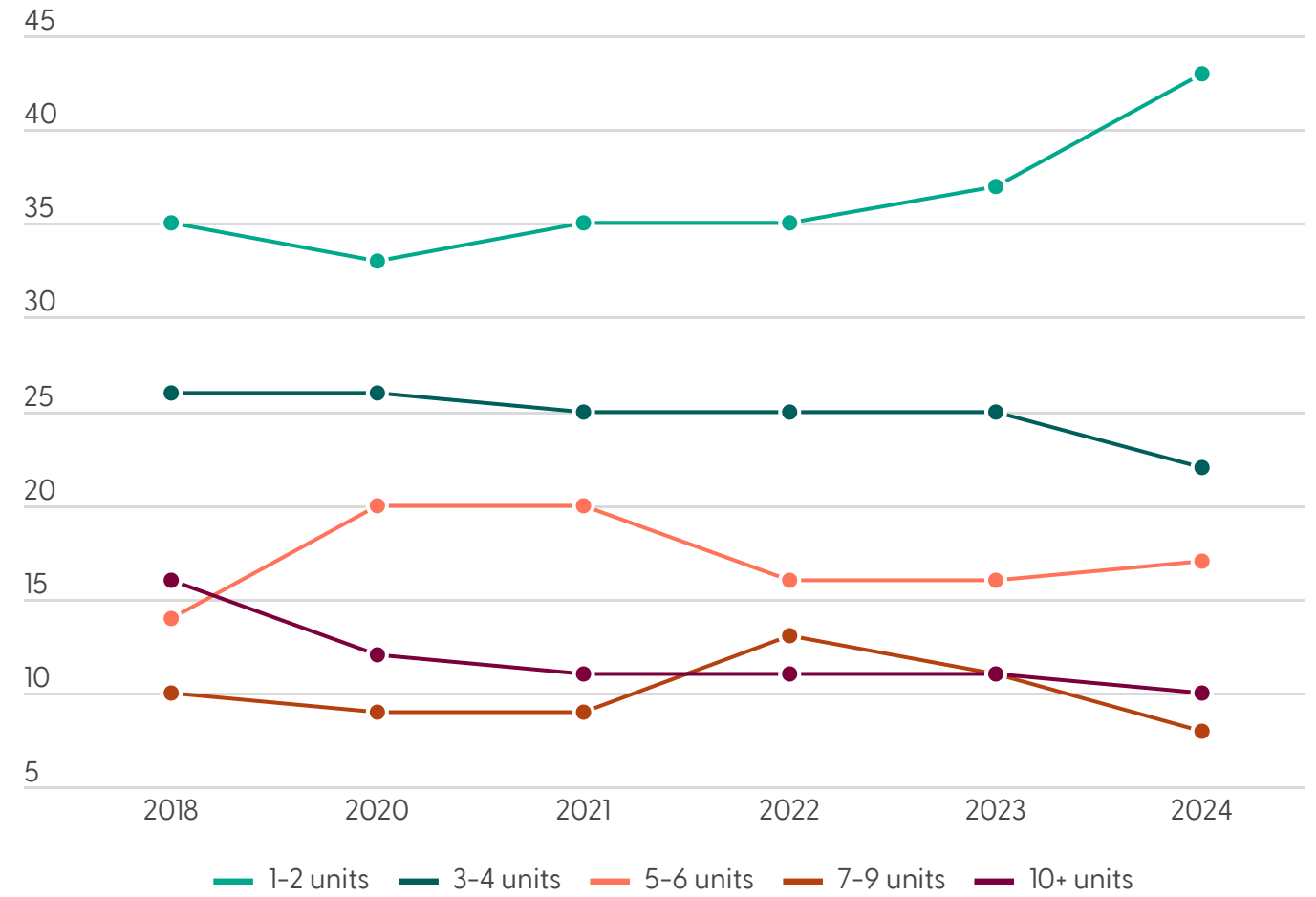
# More drinkers in Northern Ireland drink ten or more units on a typical day compared to all UK drinkers

## Higher proportions of drinkers in N Ireland report drinking 10+ units on a typical day compared to UK drinkers

Breakdown of units in a typical day in 2024 (amongst adults who drink alcohol)



## Proportions of drinkers in N Ireland consuming 1-2 units a day have increased over time



Units in a typical day. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol, 2024 (n=433); 2023 (n=563); 2022 (n=531), 2021 (n=529); 2020 (n=518), 2018 (n=504)

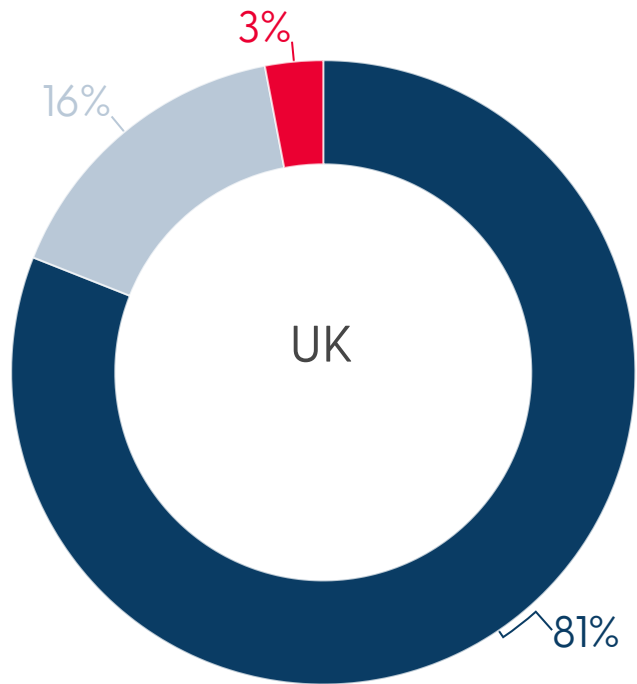
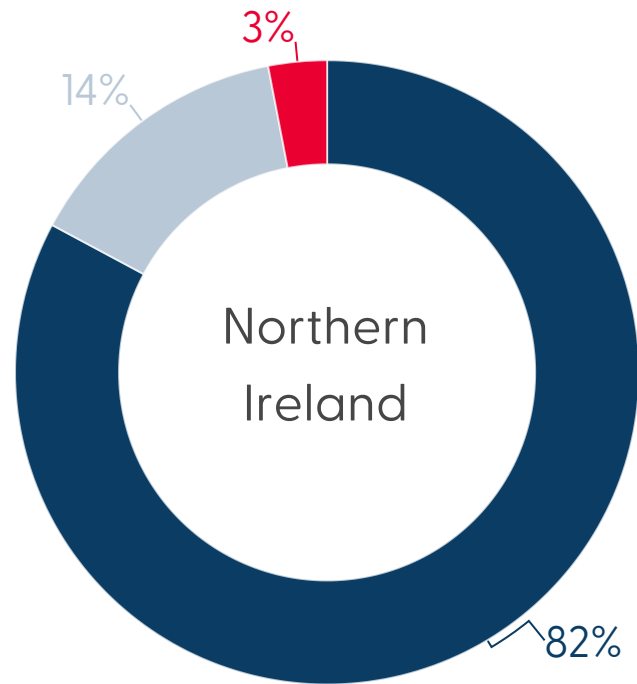
Units in a typical day. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433); all UK adults who drink alcohol (n=4,376)

# How many units do drinkers in N Ireland consume in a week?

In 2024, just over four-fifths (82%) of drinkers in Northern Ireland report that they drink within the UK Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines of 14 units per week<sup>8</sup>; similar to all UK adults



The proportion of drinkers in Northern Ireland drinking within the UK Chief Medical Officer's low risk guidelines of 14 units of alcohol a week has increased since 2018 (75%)



● Low risk (0-14) ● Increasing risk (15-34 / 15-49)  
● High risk (35+ / 50+)

● Low risk (0-14) ● Increasing risk (15-34 / 15-49)  
● High risk (35+ / 50+)

Weekly units score. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433); all UK adults who drink alcohol (n=4,376)



## Useful to know

Weekly units of alcohol are grouped into three risk categories: low, increasing and high. Low risk is 0 to 14 units while increasing and high risk differs by gender:

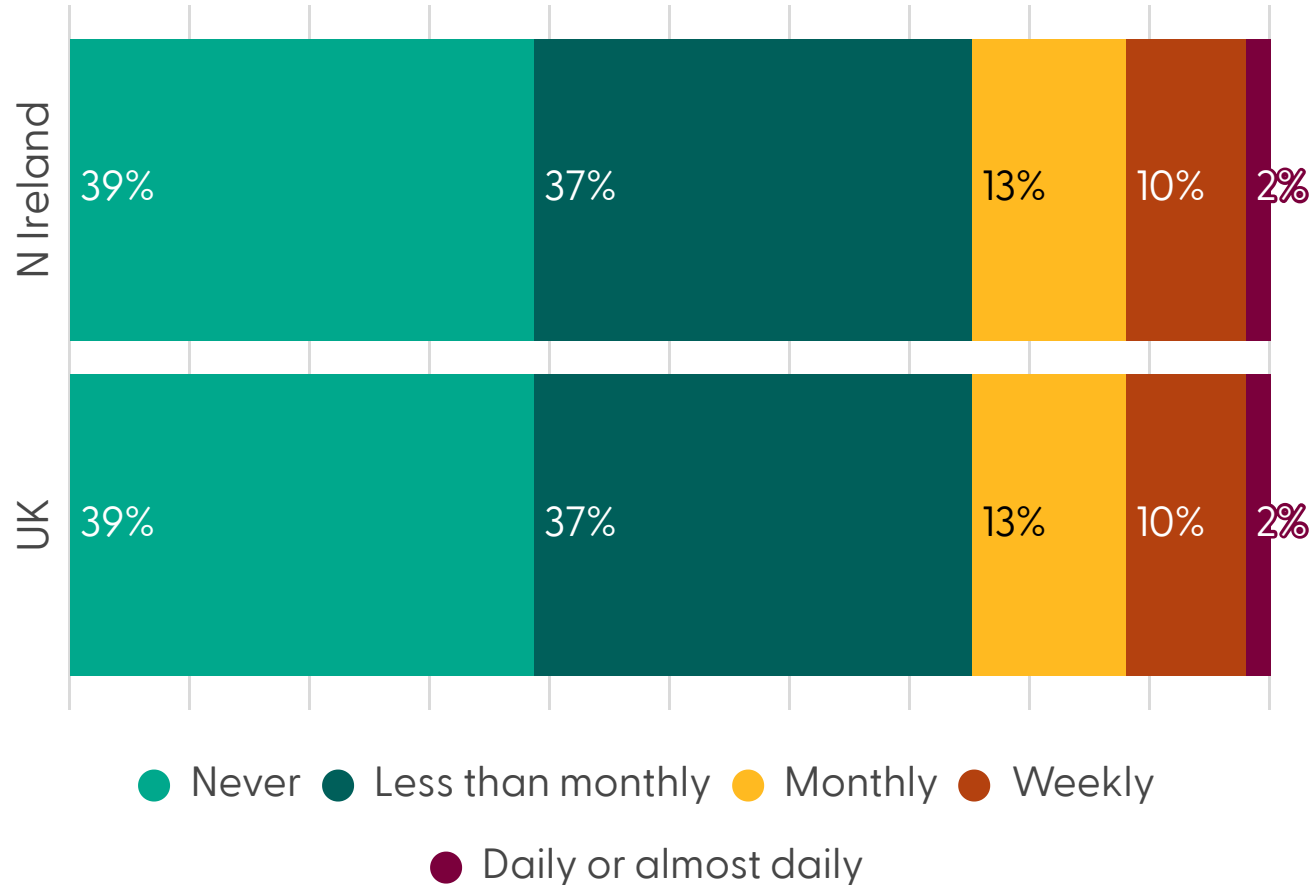
- **Females** who drink between 15 and 34 units are increasing risk, 35+ are high risk
- **Males** who drink between 15 and 49 units are increasing risk, 50+ are high risk

'Risk' refers to risk of harm from alcohol

# Levels of binge drinking remain unchanged

**Levels of binge drinking (drinking more than 6/8 units\* in a single occasion) in Northern Ireland are similar to all UK drinkers**

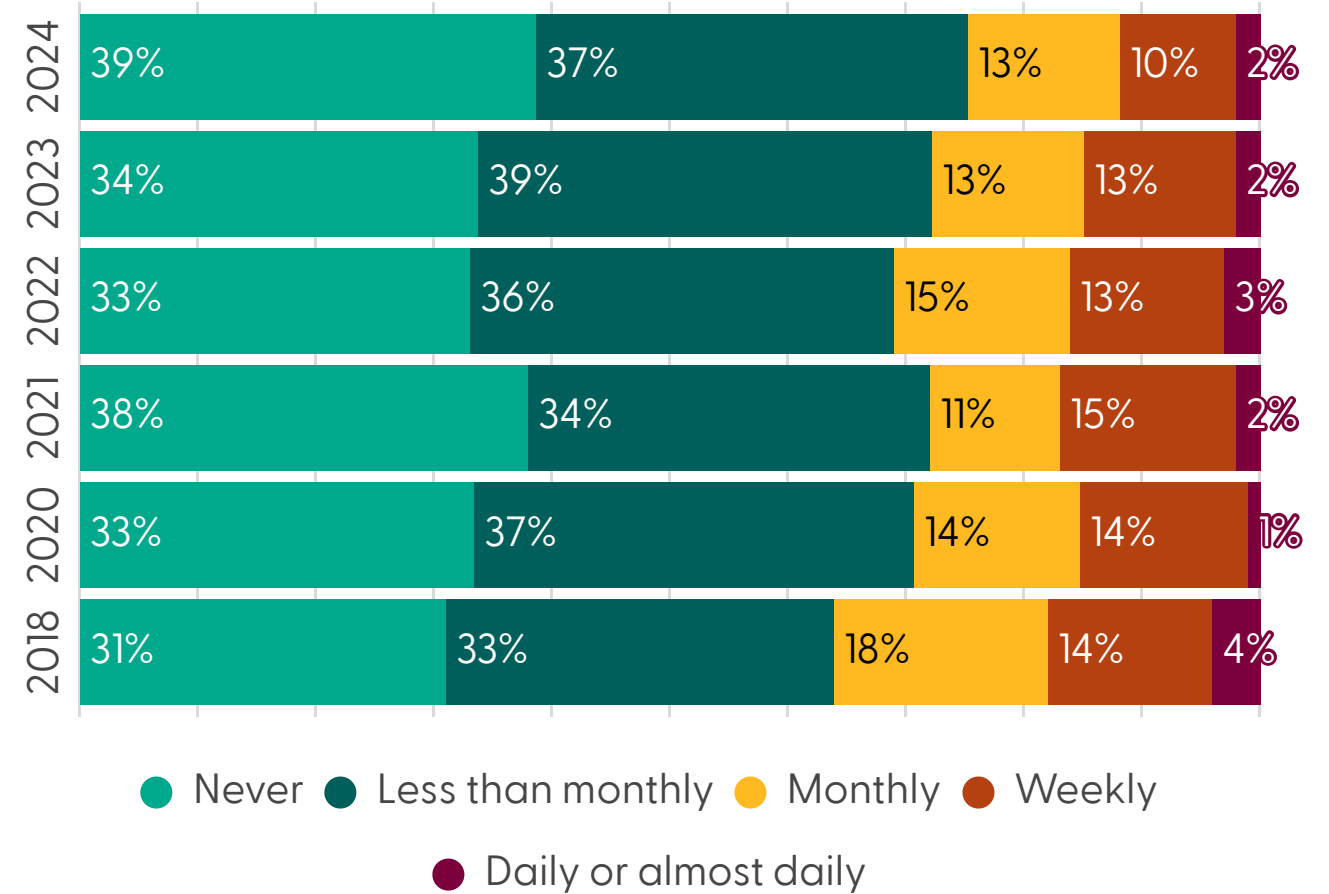
Frequency of binge drinking (6 units for females, 8 for males) in the last year in N Ireland compared to all UK in 2024



\*6 units for females; 8 units for males. Frequency binge drinking in the last year. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433); all UK adults who drink alcohol (n=4,376)

**The proportion of drinkers in Northern Ireland who binge drink\* has remained largely unchanged year-on-year for the last three years**

Change in binge drinking amongst adults in N Ireland over time:

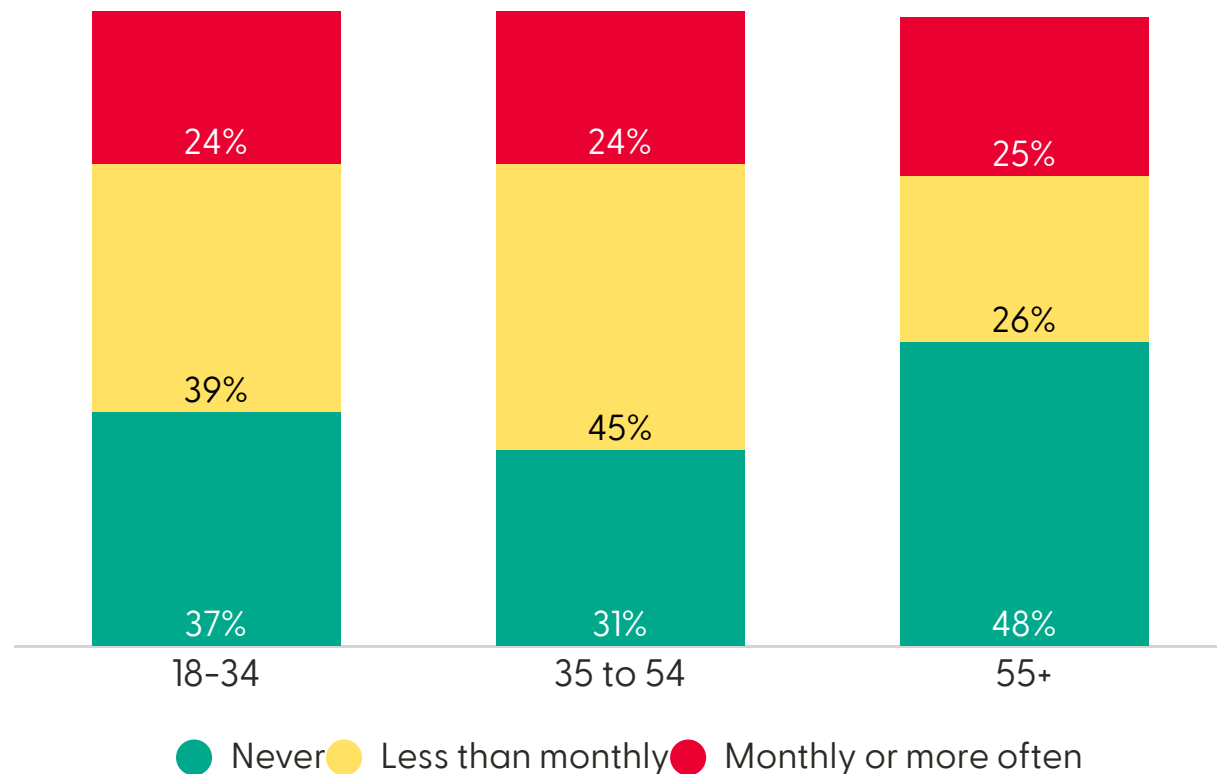


\*6 units for females; 8 units for males. Frequency binge drinking in the last year. Base: all N. Ireland adults who drink alcohol, 2024 (n=433), 2023 (n=563); 2022 (n=531), 2021 (n=529); 2020 (n=518), 2018 (n= 503)

# Younger people also appear to be reducing binge drinking

## The proportion of drinkers in Northern Ireland who binge drink at least monthly is similar across the different age groups

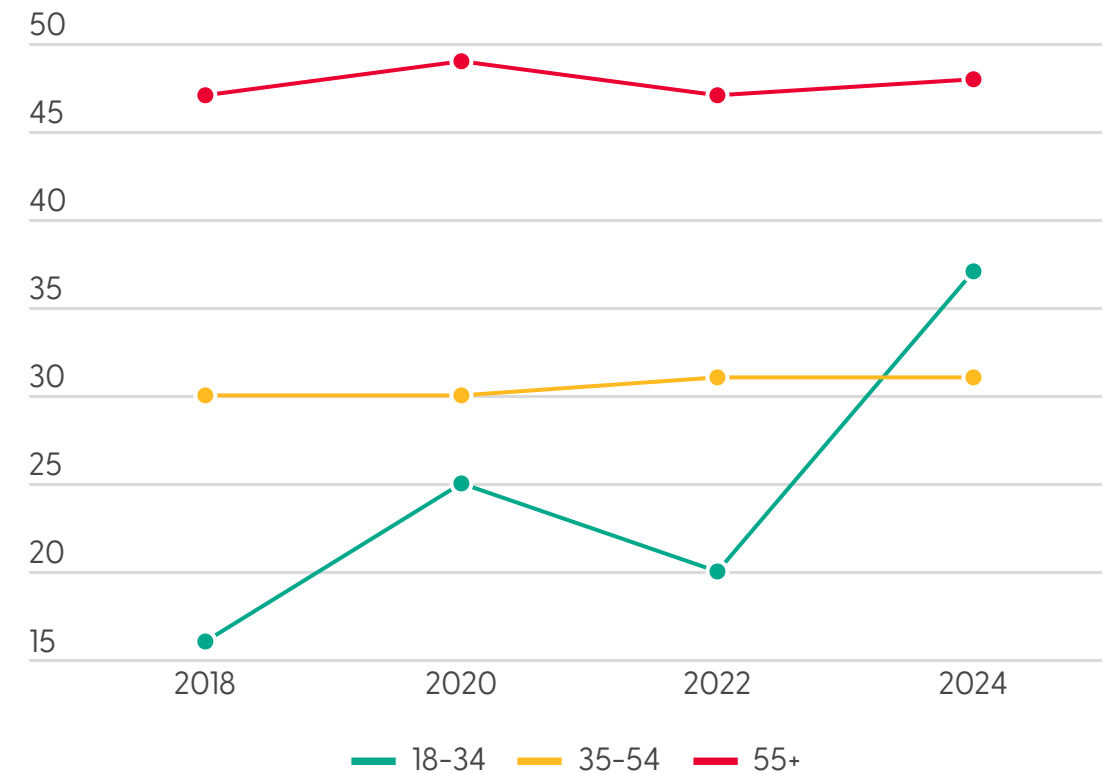
Frequency of binge drinking (6 units for females, 8 for males) in the last year in N Ireland in 2024 by age group



Frequency binge drinking in the last year. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol, 18-34 (n=115); 35-54 (n=162), 55+ (n=156)

## However, there has been a rise in 18-34 year olds who never binge drink from 2018

% never binge drinking by age group

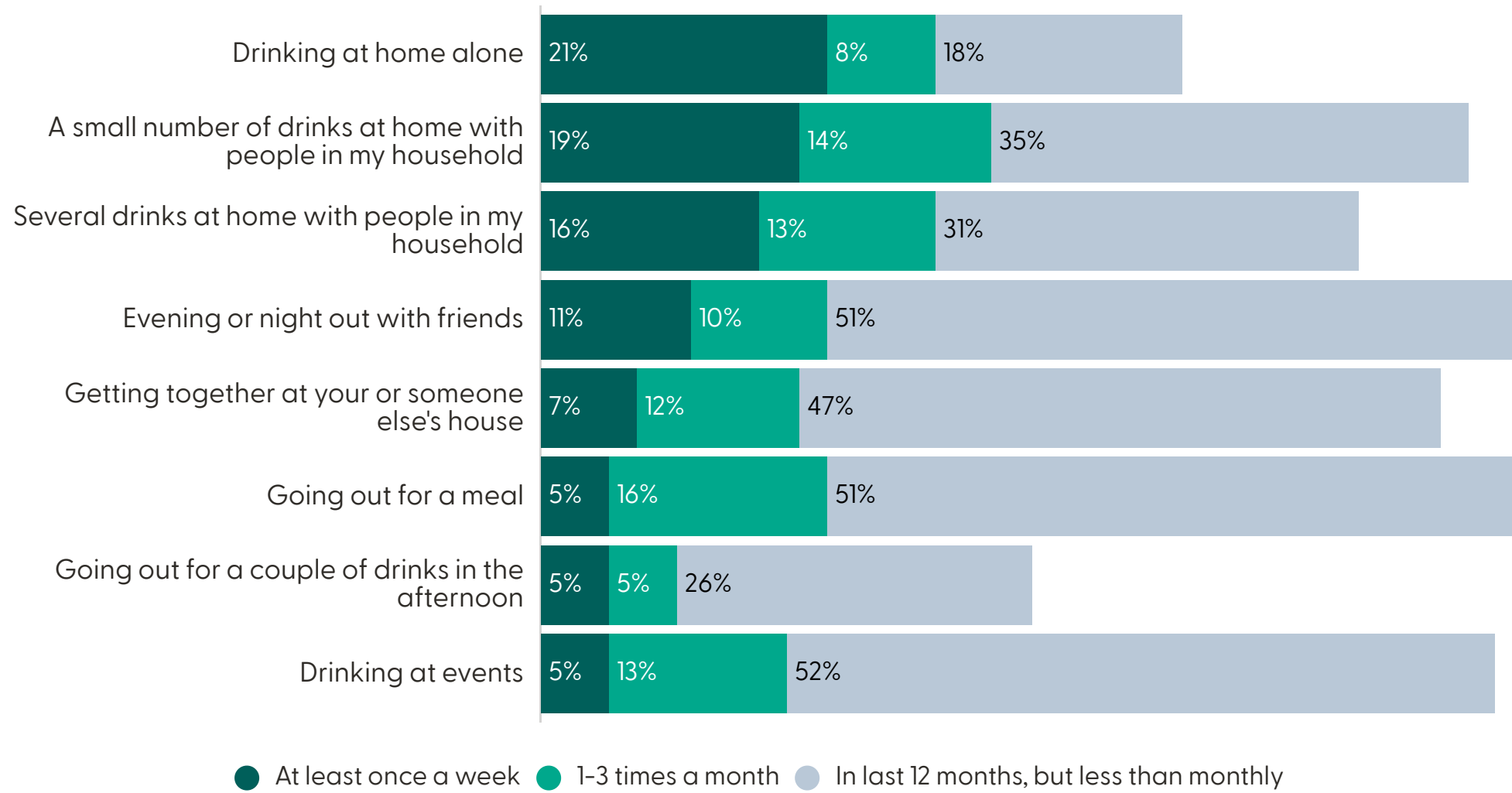


Frequency binge drinking in the last year. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol. 2024: 18-34 (n=115), 35-54 (n=162), 55+ (n=156); 2022: 18-34 (n=143), 35-54 (n=198), 55+ (n=190); 2020: 18-34 (n=148), 35-54 (n=186), 55+ (n=184); 2018: 18-34 (n=124), 35-54 (n=210), 55+ (n=170)

# Adults in Northern Ireland drink most often when they are at home

Drinkers in Northern Ireland are most like to drink most frequently when at home, either alone or with others

Chart displays % who have had alcohol on different occasions at some point in last 12 months: less often than monthly, monthly and weekly



**Drinking at home alone has not changed since 2020 and is at the same level to all UK**

21% of N Ireland drinkers drink at home alone at least once a week, the same as in 2020 (21%) and 2022 (21%)

23% of UK drinkers drink at home at least once a week (2024)



Drinking at home alone is associated with greater alcohol consumption<sup>2</sup> and experiencing alcohol problems<sup>10</sup>



Drinking occasions. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433)

# How are people in N Ireland reducing their drinking?

## Moderation and guidelines

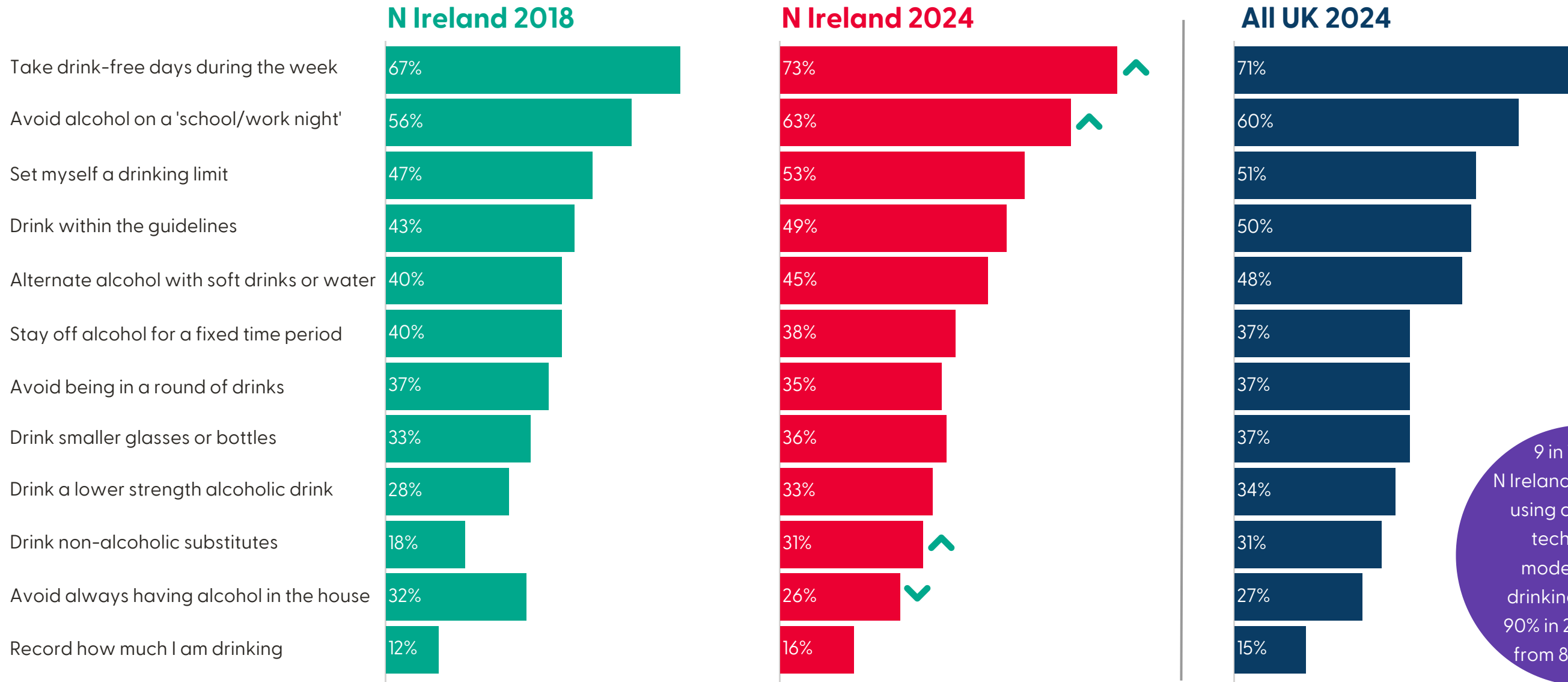
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# Use of some moderation techniques is up on previous years

% of drinkers currently doing the following to moderate their drinking



9 in 10 (89%)  
N Ireland drinkers are using at least one technique to moderate their drinking (similar to 90% in 2023 and up from 84% in 2018)

▲ Statistically significant difference compared to N Ireland 2018  
 No statistically significant differences between N Ireland 2024 and All UK 2024

Moderation. Base: all N Ireland adults that drink alcohol. 2018 (n=504); 2024 n=433; all UK adults who drink alcohol. 2024 (n=4,376)

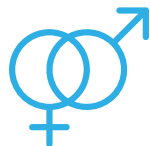
# Do people know what the weekly guidelines are?

The UK Chief Medical Officers (CMO) updated guidelines on low risk drinking in 2016 to reflect updated evidence on the health risks associated with alcohol. The weekly alcohol guideline for men was reduced to 14 units, bringing it in line with the existing recommendation for women, making the guideline the same for both men and women. People who drink as much as 14 units per week should spread their consumption evenly over three or more days to reduce health risks. The safest option for pregnant women or those trying to conceive is to avoid alcohol entirely to minimise any risks to baby.



**Adults in Northern Ireland appear split on whether drinking guidelines are daily or weekly**

50% selected daily limit and 51% selected weekly limit (similar to all UK; 51% for both)



**But they are much more likely to think that there are different limits for men and women**

60% selected this option (same as all UK; 60%), compared to just 9% selecting 'the same limit for everyone' (similar to all UK; 10%)



**86% recognise that it is safest for women who are pregnant to not drink alcohol at all**

Higher than across all UK (80%)



**Just 16% of N Ireland adults correctly estimated that the Chief Medical Officer recommends drinking no more than 14 units of alcohol in a week**

36% estimated below 14 units; 9% estimated above 14 units and 38% did not know



**14% of adults in N Ireland who drink above the weekly guidelines indicate that they moderate their drinking by drinking within the guidelines**



Drinking frequency. Base: all N Ireland adults (n=519); all UK adults (n=5,143)



# Why might people in N Ireland reduce their drinking?

**Health, concern and high risk drinking**

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# Most drinkers in N Ireland are not concerned about their own drinking, but a third are concerned about someone else's drinking



**15% of N Ireland drinkers feel it is very or fairly likely that their drinking will lead to future health problems**

Similar to across all UK (17%)



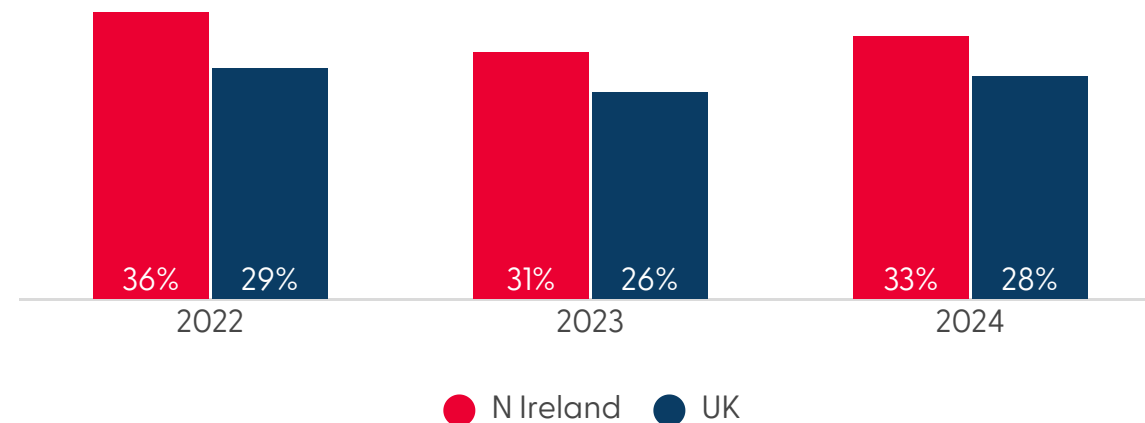
**85% of drinkers have no concerns over their own drinking**

Same as across all UK



**The proportion of adults in N Ireland concerned about someone else's drinking has not changed significantly, however levels of concern are higher than across all UK**

% of adults concerned about someone else's drinking over time



**Almost half (47%) of those concerned have spoken to the person about it**

44% made a comment and 21% encouraged them to seek help



Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433); UK adults who drink alcohol. (n=4,376)



Concern for someone else's drinking. Base: all N Ireland adults, 2024 (n=519); 2023 (n= 658); 2022 (n=612); all UK adults. 2024 (n=5,143); 2023 (n=10,473); 2022 (n=6,318)

# Drinking behaviours can be used to assess risk of harm from alcohol

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT)<sup>4</sup> is a series of questions used to understand someone's alcohol use.

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a simple, 10-question method of screening for excessive drinking and to assist in brief assessment. It provides a framework for intervention to help hazardous and harmful drinkers to reduce their drinking, or to stop drinking. AUDIT is designed to help health practitioners in particular identify hazardous drinking, harmful drinking and possible dependence. Drinkaware's Alcohol Self-Assessment is based on the AUDIT screening questionnaire.

## What does it assess?

The AUDIT assesses three domains: alcohol intake, symptoms of dependence, and adverse consequences of drinking. Each item receives a score of 0–4, with a total possible score of 40. A score of 0–7 indicates low risk, 8–15 indicates increasing risk, 16–19 indicates higher risk and a score of 20 or more indicates possible dependence.

## There are two versions of the AUDIT

The AUDIT-C is a shortened version of the 10-item AUDIT and asks the three consumption-related questions only that relate to drinking frequency, units consumed on a typical occasion and frequency of drinking six units or more (for women) or eight units or more (for men) at a single session. A score of 0 to 4 indicates low risk; 5 to 7 indicates increasing risk; 8 to 10 indicates higher risk; and 11 to 12 indicates possible dependence.



## AUDIT Risk Classifications

### Low risk

Low risk of causing future harm to themselves

### Increasing risk

Drinking at a level that increases the risk of damaging their health and could lead to serious medical conditions

### High risk (or possible dependence)

This level of drinking has the greatest risk of health problems

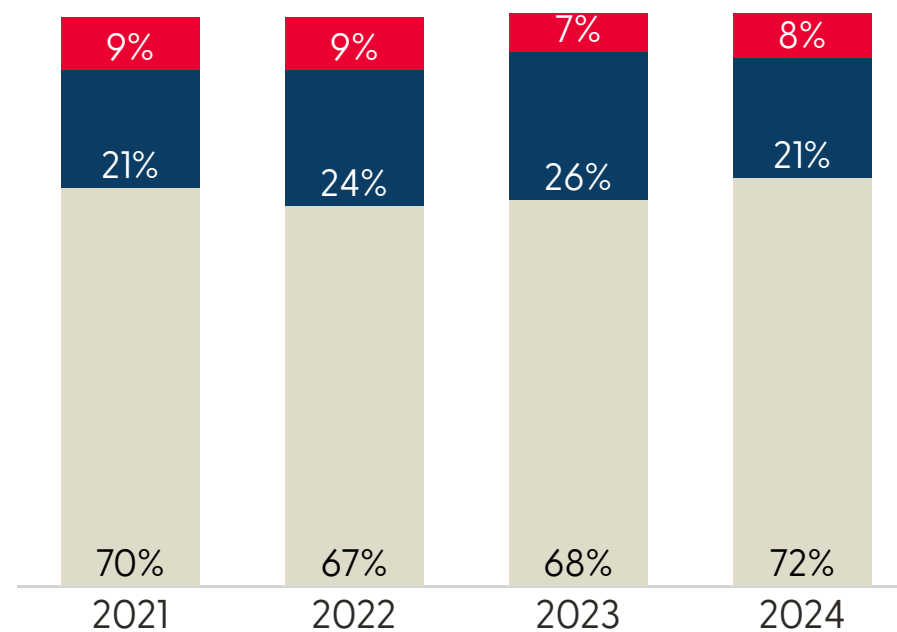
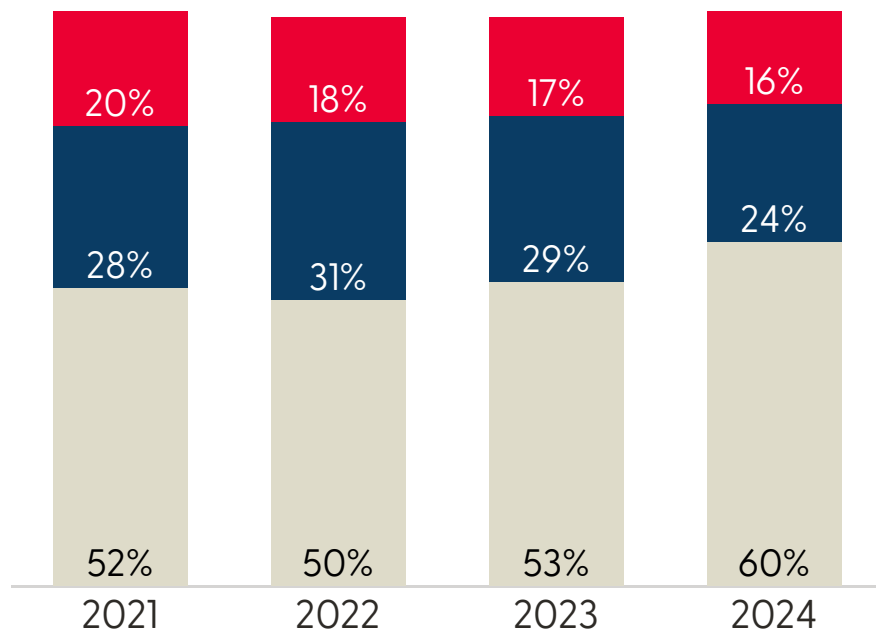
# Although the proportion of high risk drinkers (on AUDIT-C) is lower than in 2021, there has been no significant change since 2022

On the AUDIT-C classification (based on three consumption-related questions only), the proportion of low risk drinkers is significantly higher and high risk drinkers is significantly lower compared to 2021

When using the full AUDIT, where a range of additional risk factors are accounted for, the proportion of high risk drinkers in Northern Ireland also remains unchanged over time



Across all UK...



There has been a fall in high risk drinkers based on AUDIT-C (13%, down from 17% in 2021 and 16% in 2022 and 2023)

Using the full AUDIT, high risk drinking based is unchanged (7% in 2024; 6% in 2023) BUT low risk drinking has increased back to 2021 levels (72% in 2024 and 2021; 69% in 2022 and 2023)

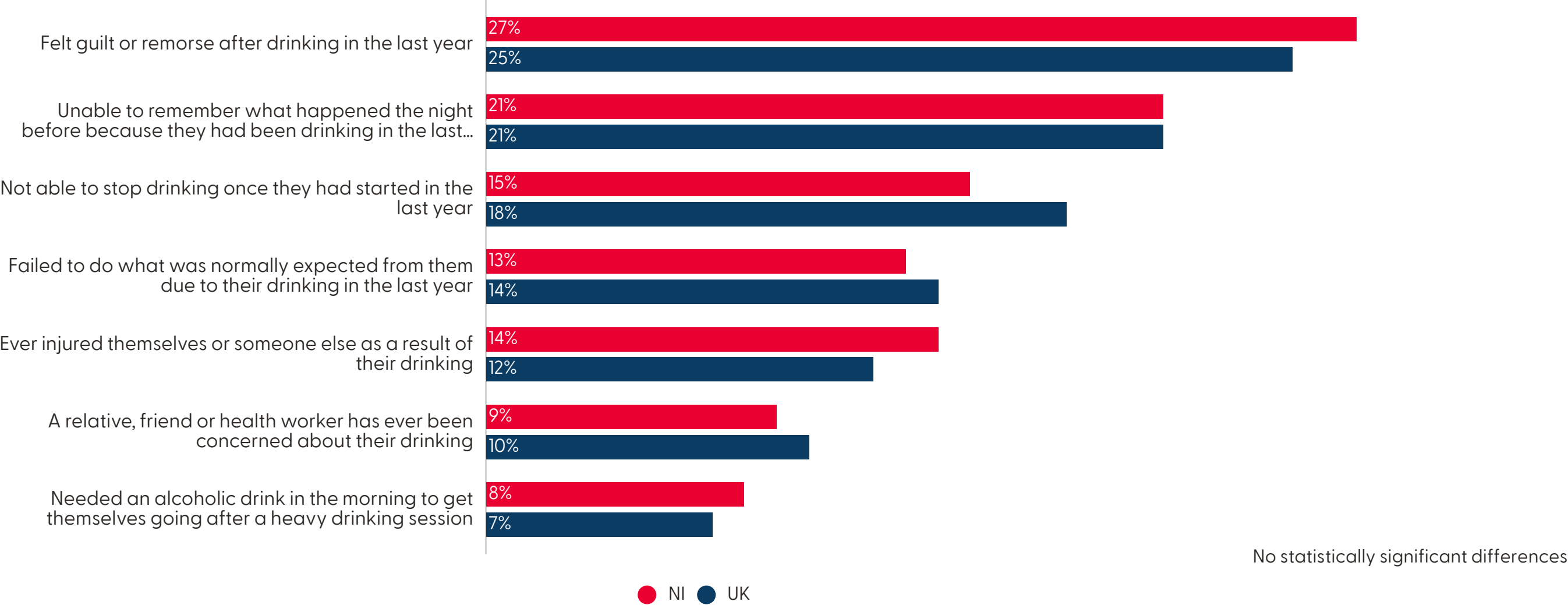
● Low risk ● Increasing risk ● High risk or possible dependence

● Low risk ● Increasing risk ● High risk or possible dependence

AUDIT-C and AUDIT. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol. 2024 (n=433); 2023 (n=563); 2022 (n=531); 2021 (n=529). All UK adults who drink alcohol. 2024 (n=4,376); 2023 (n=9,035); 2022 (n=5,428); 2021 (n=7,911)

# Over a quarter of drinkers in N Ireland have felt guilt or remorse after drinking in the last year

% of drinkers who report doing any of the following risky behaviours

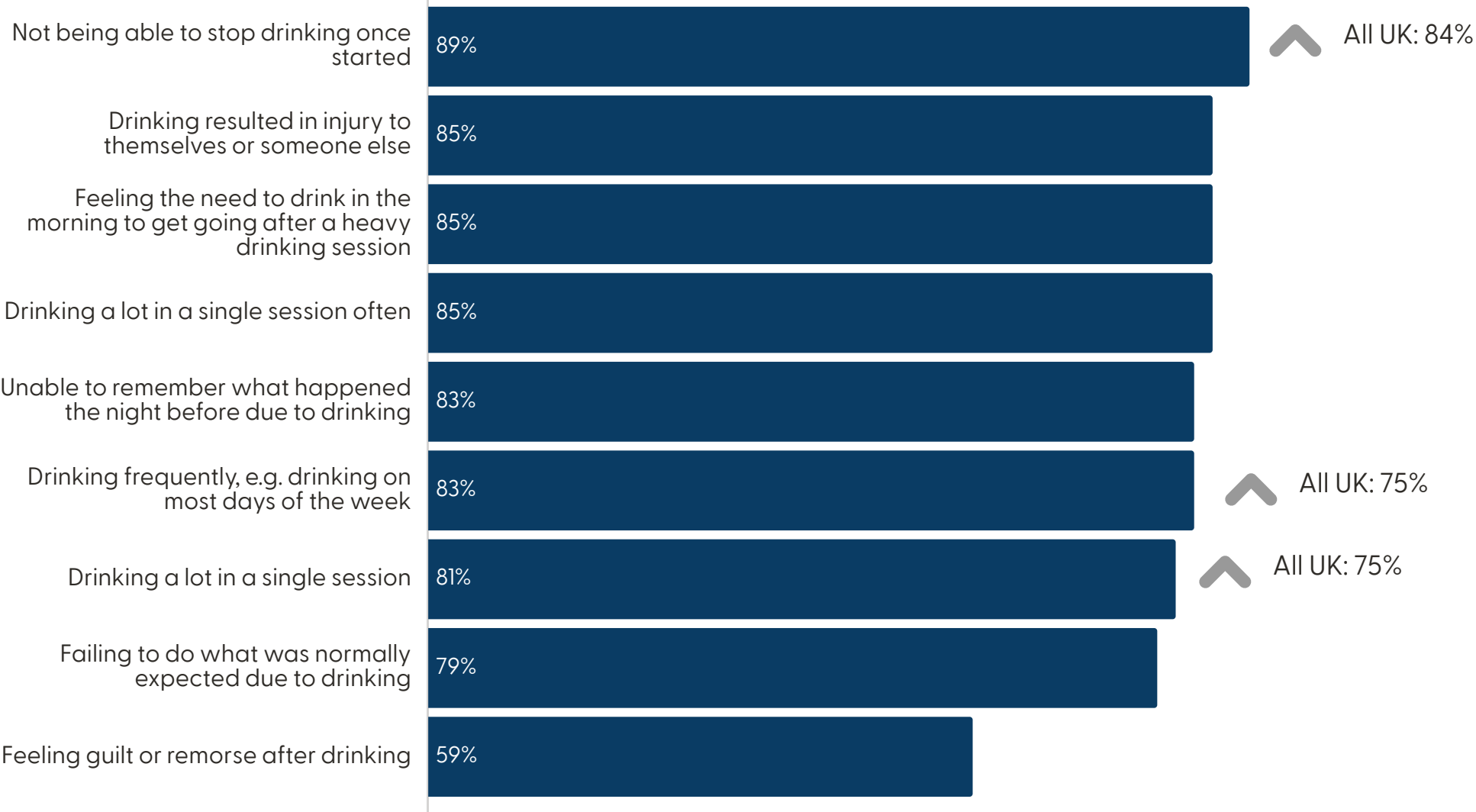


AUDIT questions. Base: all UK adults who drink alcohol. 2024 (n=4,376); All N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433)

# Most but not all drinkers recognise risky drinking behaviour

**They are least likely to recognise a feeling of guilt/remorse as a sign of alcohol harm**

% of Northern Ireland drinkers who feel the following drinking behaviours are risky (selecting 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5)



**Context: Options based on AUDIT questions that assess consumption, symptoms of alcohol dependence and adverse consequences of drinking alcohol**



Significantly higher than all UK drinkers



Base: all UK adults who drink alcohol (n=4,376); all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433)

# Attitudes towards problem drinking

Attitudes, stigma, getting help and  
recognising signs of problem drinking

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**Take me to...**

[Introducing the research](#) | [UK summary](#) | [Drinking in N Ireland in 2024](#) | [Moderation and guidelines](#) | [Health, concern and high risk drinking](#) | [Attitudes towards drinking](#) | [Appendix](#)

# Putting stigma and attitudes into context



**It is important to consider the following when reviewing the findings from the latest Monitor**

While the data in this section reflects the views of all UK drinkers on what might prevent them from seeking help for alcohol-related issues, it is crucial to acknowledge the complexity behind these responses to avoid oversimplification. Although they might be similar in one respect (e.g. their drinking behaviour), they can be very different in other aspects of their lives. It's important to recognise that people have broader life experiences that affect their behaviour and/or attitudes.

So although our focus is on drinking behaviour and attitudes, broader social and cultural factors, along with personal life experiences and past encounters with help-seeking, also play a significant role in shaping these responses.

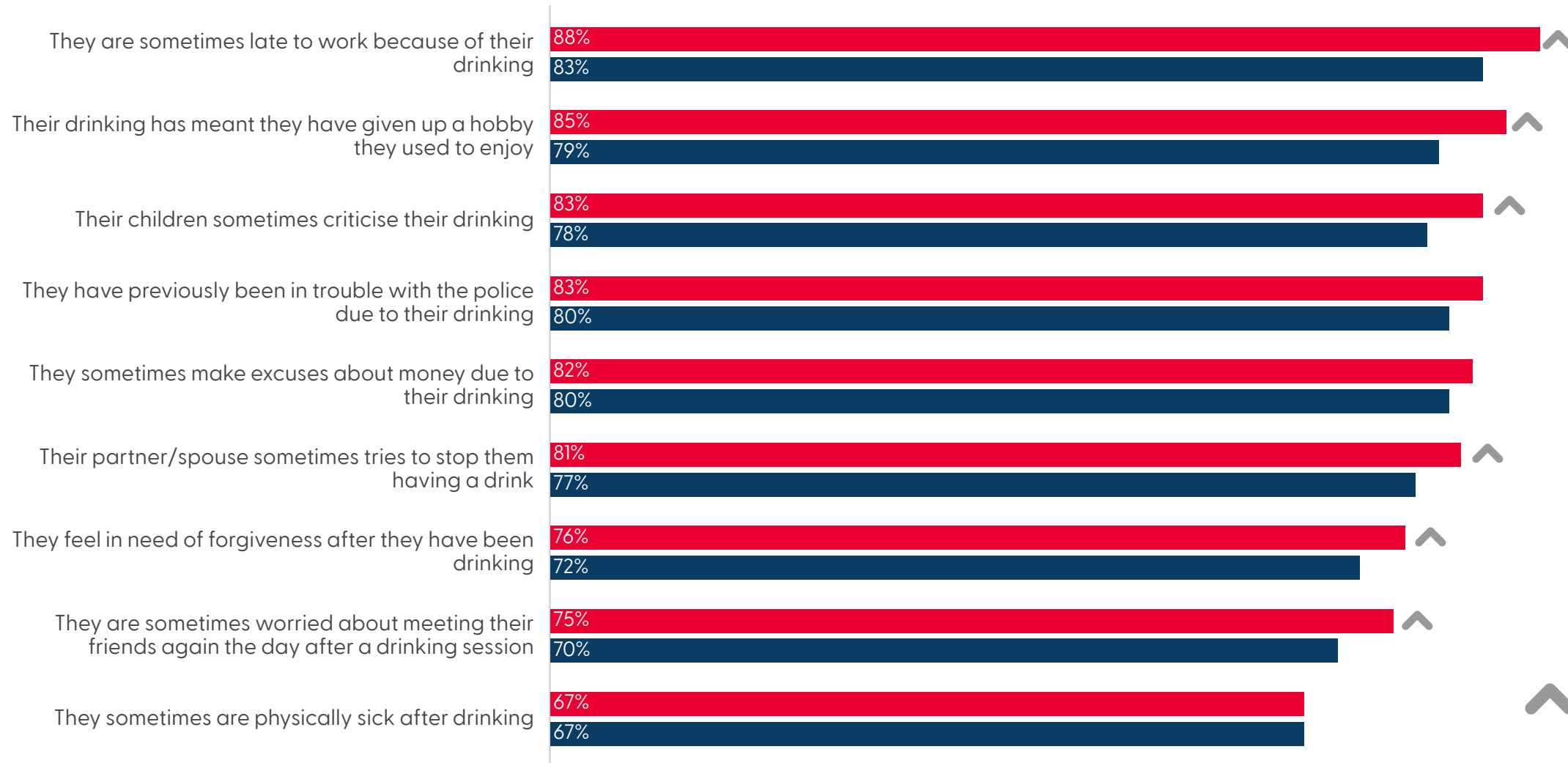
Moreover, within this group, there is likely a subset of individuals who are alcohol-dependent or have other health conditions that influence in their responses. Belief in self-management, reluctance to change, and difficulty in admitting having a problem may not simply stem from choice, but can be compounded by the nature of other health conditions, making it much more difficult for them to seek the help they need.



# Are we able to recognise the signs of an alcohol problem?

Adults in N Ireland are more likely to recognise several concerning behaviours compared to all UK adults

% who feel it is likely someone has a problem with alcohol if...



Context: all these options are drinking behaviours associated with someone who may have a problem with alcohol

Based on the [Alcohol Problems Questionnaire \(APQ\)](#)<sup>11</sup>

^ Difference is statistically significant

● N Ireland ● UK

Likelihood that someone has a problem with alcohol. Base: all UK adults. 2024 (n=5,143); all N Ireland adults (n=519)

# People are more likely to think that those with a drinking problem are different and not respected, but less likely to feel they are responsible for their struggles

## Of Northern Ireland adults...

**66%** Feel someone with an alcohol problem is not respected in the same way as everyone else is  
Similar to across all UK (64%)




**53%** Feel someone with an alcohol problem is different to everyone else  
Same as across all UK (53%)



## BUT ONLY...

**39%** Feel someone with an alcohol problem is responsible for their struggles  
Similar to across all UK (38%)

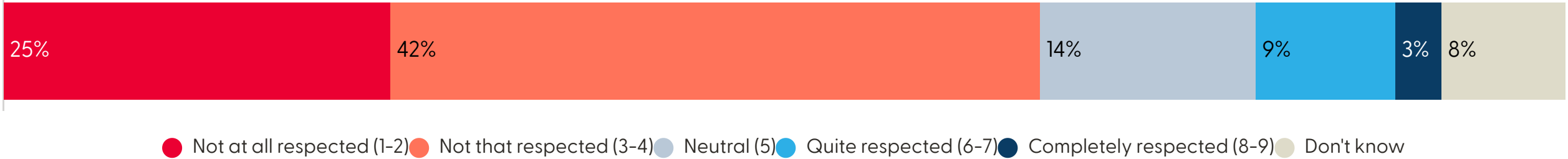


 Stigma. Base: all UK adults. 2024 (n=5,143); all N Ireland adults (n=519)

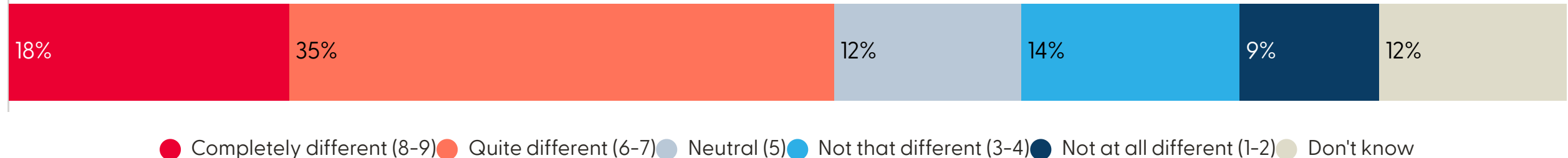
# How do adults in Northern Ireland perceive people with alcohol problems?



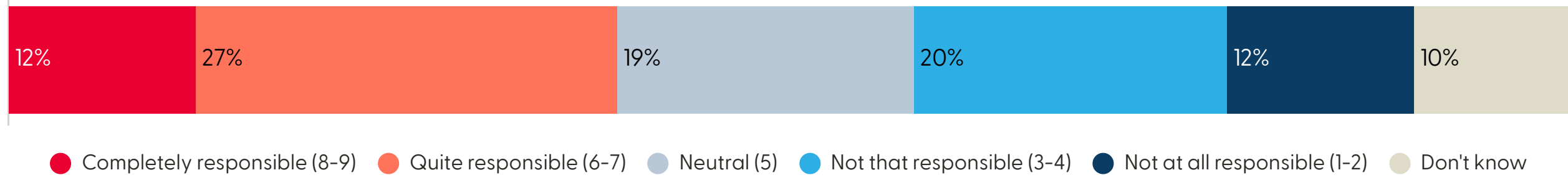
How respected or not do adults in N Ireland feel a person with an alcohol problem is, compared to the general population?



How different or not do adults in N Ireland feel a person with an alcohol problem is, compared to the general population?



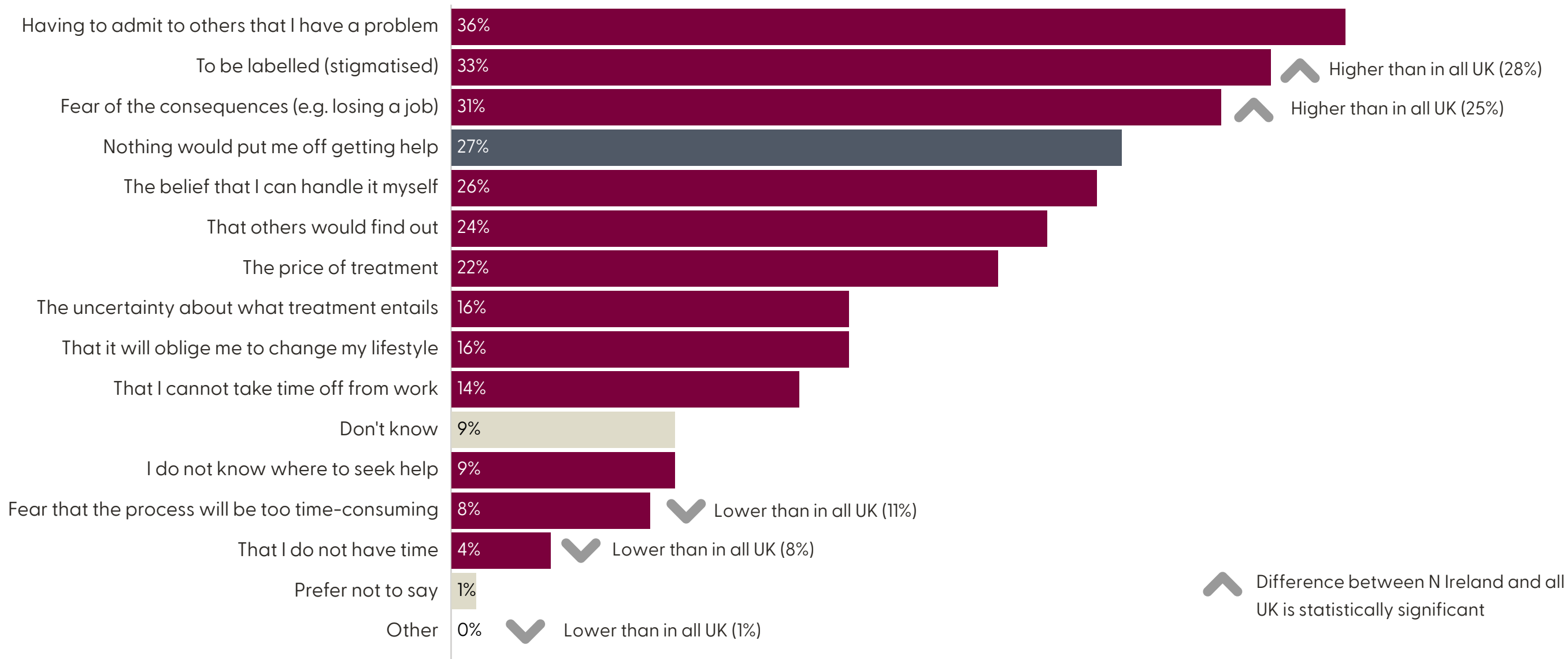
How responsible or not do adults in N Ireland feel people with an alcohol problem are for their illness?



Stigma questions. Base: all N Ireland adults. 2024 (n=519)

# What might put people off seeking help if they were worried about their drinking?

Admitting it to others appears to be the biggest barrier overall, followed by being labelled or stigmatised

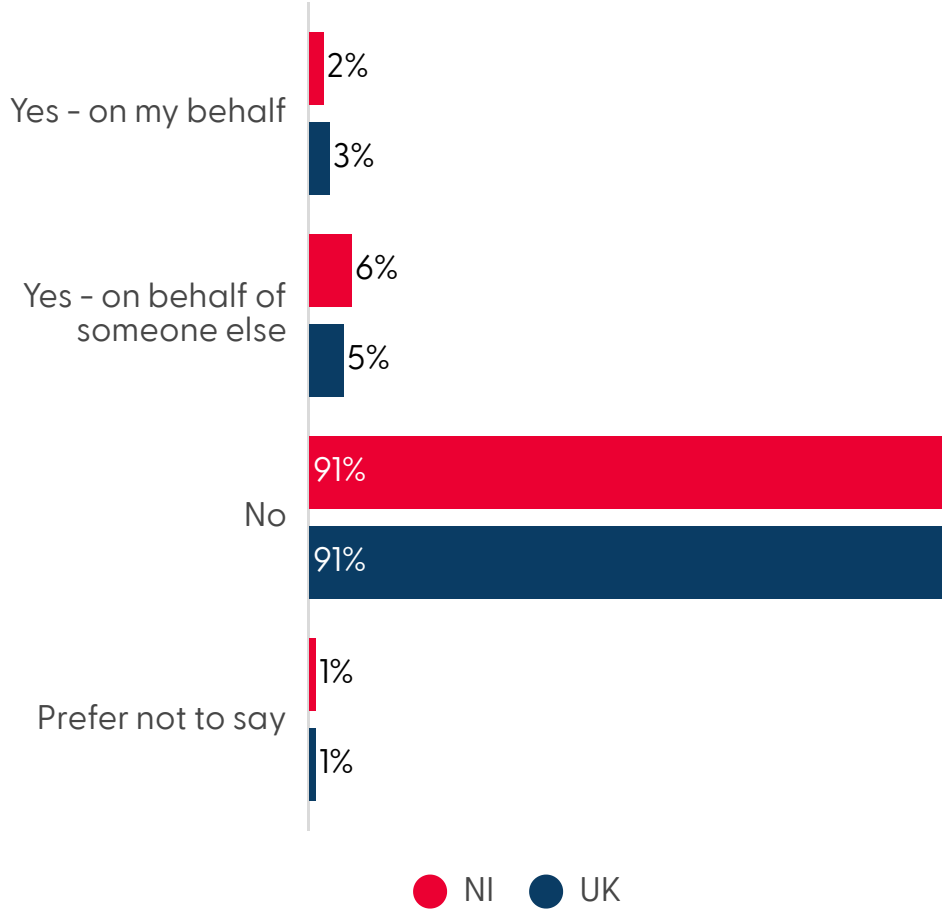


Barriers to seeking help. Base: all N Ireland adults who drink (n=519); All UK adults who drink alcohol (n=4,376)

# Few drinkers have ever sought help or advice about their drinking

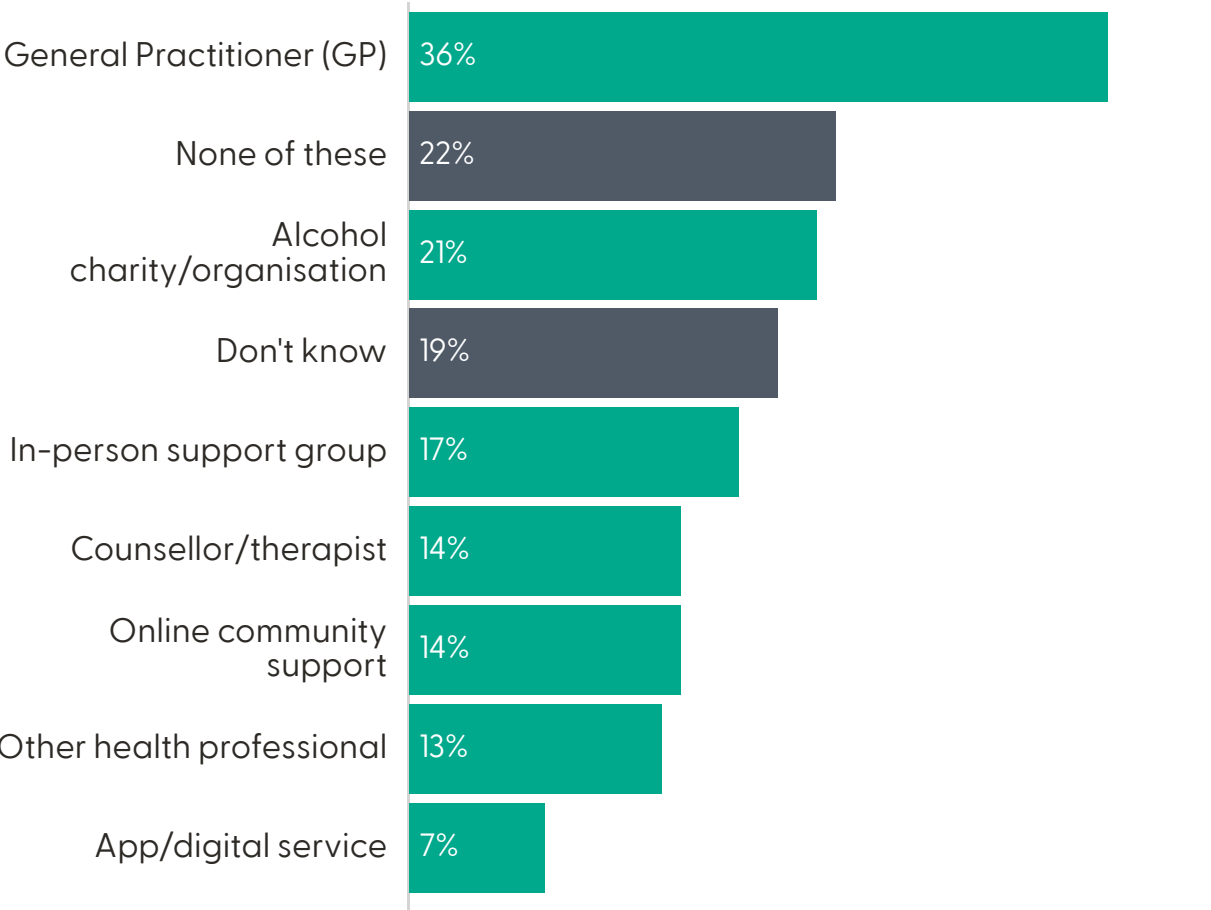
## Just 8% of N Ireland adults have contacted a service or organisation for help/advice about drinking

% who have ever contacted a service or organisation for help or advice about alcohol



## 22% of N Ireland drinkers would not reach out to any of these organisations or services and 19% don't know

% of N Ireland drinkers who would reach out to the following if they need support or advice about alcohol



Base: All N Ireland adults (n=519); All UK adults (n=5,143)

Base: all N Ireland adults who drink alcohol (n=433)

# Fewer adults in N Ireland have completed an alcohol assessment than across all UK

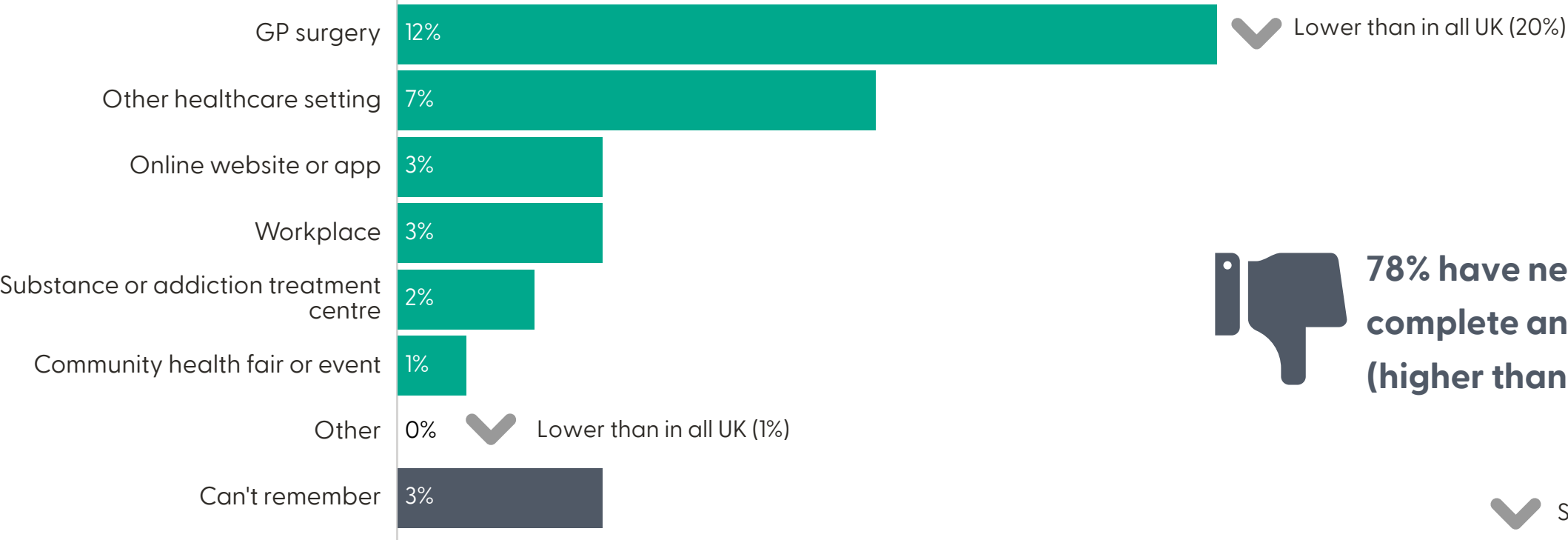


A fifth (19%) % of N Ireland adults have been asked to complete an alcohol assessment, lower than across all UK (27%)



If they have been asked to complete an alcohol assessment, it is most likely to have been at a GP surgery

Setting in which N Ireland adults have been asked to complete an alcohol assessment (based on all N Ireland adults)



78% have never been asked to complete an alcohol assessment (higher than across all UK; 69%)

Statistically significant difference

Base: All N Ireland adults (n=519), all UK adults (n=5,143)

# Find more data on drinking habits by nation

Access a wide range of data across nations and over time in the Drinkaware Monitor data libraries



## [Go to the Drinking Behaviours data library.](#)

This includes data on drinking frequency, binge drinking and daily and weekly units



## [Go to the Drinking Motivations data library.](#)

This includes data on the top reasons people give for drinking alcohol



## [Go to the Future Health and Moderation data library.](#)

This includes data on future health perceptions and how people moderate their drinking



## [Go to the Drinking Risk data library.](#)

This includes data on the AUDIT-C and AUDIT methods of screening alcohol risk



## [Go to the Non-Drinkers data library.](#)

This includes data on people who do not drink alcohol and why people stop drinking alcohol

# Appendix

And how to find out more

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[Introducing the research](#) | [UK summary](#) | [Drinking in N Ireland in 2024](#) | [Moderation and guidelines](#) | [Health, concern and high risk drinking](#) | [Attitudes towards drinking](#) | [Appendix](#)



# References

1: <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/research/drinkaware-monitors/drinkaware-monitor-2024/>

2: <https://media.drinkaware.co.uk/media/u5dov3zb/drinkaware-monitor-2024-technical-report.pdf?>

3: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/writing-about-ethnicity/>

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7: <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/research/drinkaware-monitors>

8: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80b7ed40f0b623026951db/UK\\_CMOs\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80b7ed40f0b623026951db/UK_CMOs_report.pdf)

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11: <https://alcoholtreatmentguidelines.com.au/pdf/guidelines-for-the-treatment-of-alcohol-problems.pdf#page=349>

# Glossary

**Alcohol dependence:** This is a medical definition. Alcohol dependence is defined as behavioural, cognitive and physiological factors that typically include a strong desire to drink alcohol and difficulties in controlling its use. Someone who is alcohol-dependent may persist in drinking, despite harmful physical and mental health consequences.

**AUDIT:** The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a simple, 10-question method of screening for excessive drinking and to assist in brief assessment. It provides a framework for intervention to help hazardous and harmful drinkers to reduce their drinking, or to stop drinking. AUDIT is designed to help health practitioners in particular identify hazardous drinking, harmful drinking and possible dependence. Drinkaware's Alcohol Self-Assessment is based on the AUDIT screening questionnaire.

**AUDIT-C:** This refers to the three consumption-related questions on the AUDIT questionnaire that relate to drinking frequency, units consumed on a typical occasion and frequency of drinking six units or more (for women) or eight units or more (for men) at a single session. A score of 0 to 4 indicates low risk; 5 to 7 indicates increasing risk; 8 to 10 indicates higher risk; and 11 to 12 indicates possible dependence.

**Binge drinking:** This term has a medical definition. Binge drinking is defined by the NHS for men as drinking more than eight units of alcohol in a single session, and more than six units for women.

**Harmful drinking:** 'Harmful drinking' means drinking in a way that is likely to cause or has already caused harm, i.e. a strong likelihood that damage to health – physical or mental – has already been caused.

**Hazardous drinking:** 'Hazardous drinking' means drinking in a way that may put your mental and/or physical health at serious risk; depending on patterns of drinking and other factors, this can include social consequences.

**Increasing and high risk:** These terms have specific meanings in relation to an AUDIT-C score. A score of 0 to 4 indicates low risk; 5 to 7 indicates increasing risk; 8 to 10 indicates higher risk; and 11 to 12 indicates possible dependence. Note these scores are indicative as a screening tool and not diagnostic.

# Interested to find out more?



## More on Drinkaware



### About Drinkaware

Drinkaware is an independent charity which aims to reduce alcohol-related harm.

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/about-us>



## More Drinkaware research



### Research and Impact | Drinkaware

Drinkaware ensures our work is founded in research and evidence to further promote how to reduce alcohol misuse and harm in the UK.

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/research>



## Advice and support



### Advice and support

We can help you learn about the impact of alcohol on you, your family or friends. Here we'll support you with advice, information and strategies to help reduce alcohol consumption and improve your health.

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/advice>

# About PS Research

## Introducing PS Research

We're Adam and Emma: two experienced research specialists based in the North of England.

Adam specialises in quantitative research. He spent almost a decade working in local authorities and delivering research projects across the public sector. Adam is a Certified Member of the MRS (Market Research Society) and was named the UK's New Freelancer of the Year in 2019 by IPSE (the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed).

Emma specialises in qualitative research. She spent several years working agency-side for a couple of large, international market research agencies. Emma is a member of the AQR (Association of Qualitative Research).



PS Research is an accredited Market Research Society Company Partner, demonstrating our commitment to quality research and compliance, working to the MRS Code of Conduct.

In 2023, we were Highly Commended at the MRS Awards.

