# Annual alcohol poll 2014: Attitudes and behaviours

## Researchers

Galaxy Research

## Summary

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education’s (FARE) Annual Alcohol Poll (the Poll) assesses Australians’ attitudes towards alcohol, alcohol consumption trends, awareness of the risks associated with alcohol use and perspectives on various alcohol policies. In 2014, the Poll was carried out by Galaxy Research for the fifth consecutive year.

## Outcomes

Consistent with previous years, the Poll found that the majority of Australians (78%) believe that Australia has a problem with excess drinking or alcohol abuse, and 76% believe that alcohol-related problems in Australia will get worse or remain the same over the next five to 10 years. The majority (79%) of Australians also believe that more needs to be done to address alcohol-related harms, with people believing that governments (64%), alcohol companies (69%), and clubs and pubs (69%) are not doing enough to address alcohol-related harms.

Over three quarters (79%) of Australians consume alcohol. The majority of Australian drinkers (55%) will consume one to two standard drinks on a typical occasion, compared to 43% who consume three or more drinks.

In the previous 12 months, 24% of Australian drinkers had not been able to stop drinking once they started, 22% could not remember what had happened the night before, and 31% had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking.

Consistent with previous years, Australians prefer to drink alcohol at home, with 59% of drinkers saying this is where they are most likely to consume alcohol. Australian drinkers mainly consume bottled wine (33%), followed by regular strength beer (21%) and spirits (19%).

For the first time in 2014, drinkers were asked about the behaviours they engage in after consuming alcohol. Almost two-thirds of drinkers (63%) have ever engaged in a negative behaviour after drinking alcohol (including vomiting, having an argument or driving a car), with 30% of drinkers having done so in the previous 12 months.

For the first time, the 2014 Poll also asked whether drinkers have consumed alcohol on a social occasion because it was expected, even though they had not planned to drink, with over one-third (35%) of drinkers reporting this.

Awareness of the Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol (the Guidelines) continues to be low. Only 39% of Australians know that no more than two standard drinks is recommended to avoid long-term risks of alcohol-related harm, and only 7% know that no more than four standard drinks is recommended on one occasion to avoid short-term harms. Fewer than half of Australians are aware of the link between alcohol misuse and stroke (47%), mouth and throat cancer (29%) and breast cancer (17%).

More than one-third (37%) of Australians have been affected by alcohol-related violence, and 70% have been negatively affected by someone else’s drinking in some way (including property damage and physical abuse).

There is majority support for most areas of alcohol policy reform such as placing health information labels on alcohol products (66%), placing a ban on alcohol advertising on weekends and weekdays before 8.30pm (67%) and not allowing alcohol sponsorship at sporting events (55%). There is also majority support for various strategies to reduce alcohol-related violence, including increasing penalties for people involved in alcohol-related violence (88%), increasing police numbers at times and places where alcohol-related violence is greater (87%) and a closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am (81%).

[view the report](/wp-content/uploads/FARE-Alcohol-Poll-2014_LR.pdf)