

# Polling Snapshot: Australians' alcohol use and intentions to change

JANUARY 2025

## Key findings

- Three quarters of Australians surveyed (77%) currently drink alcohol.
- Of Australians who reported drinking alcohol in the past year, 44% want to use less or stop drinking altogether.
- Of people that report wanting to drink less or stop drinking alcohol altogether:
  - » Three quarters (75%) wish to do so to improve their physical health
  - » Half (50%) want to improve their mental health
  - » More than a third (37%) want to improve their sleep
  - » One in seven (15%) feel like they don't have the information and resources needed to make the change.
- A majority of the Australians surveyed (61%) report not being familiar with the content of the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) Guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol.
- Almost one in five (18%) Australians surveyed had ever had someone express concern about their drinking, with one in seven (14%) reporting this in the last year.

## Background

FARE commissioned Pureprofile to conduct polling of Australians to understand their intentions to change the amount of alcohol they drink and the motivations for doing so. The polling was conducted online in November 2024. The sample comprised 1,005 people aged 18 years and over, residing in Australia. The sample is nationally representative for age, gender and location.

## Findings

Australians were asked whether they have any plans to change how much alcohol they drink, the reasons for their intentions and whether they have access to resources to help inform their decision-making.

Three quarters of Australians (77%) currently drink alcohol.

Of Australians who reported drinking alcohol, 44% are planning to reduce the amount they drink or stop drinking altogether (Table 1).

Of people reporting they want to reduce or stop drinking, 53% were male and 47% were female.

**Table 1. Are you planning any changes to the amount of alcohol you drink over the next year? (N=775)**

	N	%
Yes, I want to drink less alcohol.	294	37.9%
Yes, I want to stop drinking alcohol.	50	6.5%
No, I don't want to change how much alcohol I drink.	431	55.6%

People who reported wanting to make changes to the amount they drink (n=344) were asked the reasons why they want to drink less alcohol.

The most common reasons Australians gave for wanting to reduce the amount they drink were to improve physical health (75%), improve mental health (51%) and improve sleep (37%) (Table 2).

**Table 2. Why are you wanting to drink less alcohol? (N=344)**

	N	%
To improve my physical health	259	75.3
To improve my mental health	175	50.9
To help with my sleep	127	36.9
I don't like the way that it makes me feel	77	22.4
To avoid hangovers	61	17.7
Other, please specify	17	4.9

Australians who currently drink alcohol (n=77%) were asked if a relative, friend, doctor, or other health professional been concerned about their drinking or suggested they drink less.

Almost one in five (18%) had ever had someone express concern about their drinking, with one in seven (14%) reporting this in the last year (Table 3). Males made up almost two thirds of this group (62%).

**Table 3. Has a relative, friend, doctor, or other health professional been concerned about your drinking or suggested you drink less? (N=775)**

	N	%
No	632	81.6
Yes, during the last year	111	14.3
Yes, but not in the last year	32	4.1

Australians who currently drink alcohol, and intend to make changes (n=344) were asked if they feel like they have the information and resources that they need to help them achieve this change.

One in seven Australians (15%) reported not having the information and resources that they need to help them achieve this change (Table 4).

**Table 4. Do you feel like you have the information and resources that you need to help you achieve this change? (N=344)**

	N	%
Yes	293	85.2
No	51	14.8

Australians who reported drinking alcohol (n=755) were asked if they are you aware of the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) Guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol.

More than one quarter (28%) of Australians who currently drink alcohol are unaware of the National Health and Medical Research Council's Guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol. Additionally, one in three Australians who currently drink alcohol (34%) are aware of the guidelines, but are not familiar with the content (Table 5).

**Table 5. Are you aware of the National Health and Medical Research Council's Guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol? (N=775)**

	N	%
Yes, I am familiar with the guidelines and what they mean.	301	38.8
I know they exist but I'm not familiar with the content	261	33.7
No	213	27.5

## About FARE

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision for an Australia free from alcohol harms – where communities are healthy and well and where laws, policies and programs are fair, equitable and just.

Working with local communities, people with lived experience of alcohol harm, values-aligned organisations, health professionals, researchers and governments across the nation, we are improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in Australia.

To learn more about us and our work visit [www.fare.org.au](http://www.fare.org.au)

