

Adult Drinking Patterns in Northern Ireland 2011

Central Survey Unit



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Executive Summary

This report presents the main findings of a survey carried out to provide an up-to-date picture of adult drinking patterns in Northern Ireland in 2011. The findings are based on responses to a questionnaire from a representative sample of 2,022 respondents aged between 18 and 75 years old. The report examines the amount of alcohol respondents consumed, when, where and what they drank and who they drank with, together with binge and problem drinking. Those respondents who said that they drank alcohol were asked a series of questions about their alcohol consumption in the week prior to the survey.

Drinking Prevalence

Alcohol consumption

- More than seven out of ten (74%) adults drink alcohol.
- A larger proportion of males (78%) than females (72%) drink alcohol.
- Younger adults (18-29 years) are more likely to drink than older adults (60-75 years).
- The proportion of those who drink alcohol ranged from 68% in the Southern Health & Social Care Trust to 78% in the Western Health & Social Care Trust.
- There is a significant association between drinking and socio-economic group, educational achievement and household income.

Frequency of drinking

- Around half (52%) of drinkers reported drinking alcohol at least once a week or more frequently (6% of respondents reported drinking on an almost daily basis).
- A greater proportion of male respondents (8%) compared to females (5%) reported drinking alcohol daily or on most days.
- Respondents aged 45 years or older are more likely than those under 45 to drink alcohol daily or on most days.

Drinking Behaviour

Days on which drinking occurs

- Most drinking occurs over the weekend and peaks on Saturdays.
- A similar proportion of males and females reported drinking during the week (44% males and 41% females) and at the weekend (93% males and 92% females).
- Older respondents (60-75 years) are more likely to drink on weekdays (60%) than those under 44 years (32% of 18-29 year olds and 33% of 30-44 year olds).
- During the weekend, older respondents were more likely to drink on a Sunday, while there were no significant differences on a Friday or Saturday.

Types of drinks consumed

- The most common drinks consumed were wine (48%) and beer (47%).
- The most common alcoholic drinks for males are beer (74%), wine (35%) and spirits (18%). The most common drinks for females are wine (61%), spirits (30%) and beer (19%).
- The most common drinks for the youngest age group (18-29 years) are beer (55%), spirits (31%), coolers/alcopops (25%) and wine (24%).
- The most common drinks for the eldest age group (60-75 years) are wine (54%), beer (42%) and spirits (31%).

Where and with whom people drink

- Most of those who drank in the week prior to the survey had either consumed alcohol at home (64%), in the pub (20%) or at someone else's home (20%).
- Males are more likely than females to drink in pubs and less likely than females to drink in someone else's home.
- The respondents in the youngest age group (18-29 years) are more likely than those in the oldest age group (60-75 years) to drink in a pub, in someone else's home or in a nightclub/disco and less likely than older drinkers to drink in their own home.
- Most of those who drank in the week prior to the survey had consumed alcohol with their partner (45%), with two or more friends of both sexes (21%), with family (21%) or alone (20%).
- Males (23%) are more likely to drink alone than females (16%).

Drinking Levels

Recommended daily drinking limits

- Around eight in ten respondents (78%) reported having reached or exceeded the recommended daily limit for drinking on at least one occasion in the week prior to the survey.
- 18% of male drinkers reached or exceeded the recommended daily limits on three or more days that week, compared to 16% of female drinkers.
- The recommended daily limits are exceeded most often on a Saturday (53% of drinkers) and on a Friday (31% of drinkers).

Weekly guidelines for sensible drinking

- More females (80%) compared to males (74%) stayed within the weekly guidelines for sensible drinking limits.
- The majority of drinkers across all five Health & Social Care Trusts consumed alcohol below sensible drinking levels. This ranged from four in five (80%) in the South Eastern and Southern HSC Trusts to nearly three quarters (74%) in the Belfast HSC Trust.
- There is a significant association between age and the weekly level of alcohol consumed.

Binge drinking

- Three in ten (30%) of those who drank in the week before the survey had engaged in at least one binge drinking session.
- Males (35%) are more likely than females (25%) to binge drink.
- Half (50%) of respondents in the youngest age group (18-29) who drank in the week prior to the survey had engaged in at least one binge drinking session compared to 13% of respondents in the oldest age group (60-75).
- For those who drank in the week prior to the survey, the most likely day to have engaged in at least one binge drinking session was Saturday (21%).
- Both male and female drinkers who consume alcohol above their respective weekly guidelines for sensible drinking limits are more likely to binge.

Problem drinking

- CAGE question analysis (clinical interview questions) indicated that one in ten (9%) of those who drank in the week prior to the survey are likely to have a problem with alcohol.

- Respondents that drank more than the sensible levels are more likely to have a problem with alcohol.

Perceptions of drinking

- Six in ten (61%) of those who consumed alcohol in the week prior to the survey consider themselves to be light drinkers.
- Just over one third (36%) consider themselves to be moderate drinkers and 3% consider themselves to be heavy drinkers.
- Of the 30 respondents who considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, 23 were male and 7 were female. Of these:
 - * 21 of the 23 males had consumed above sensible levels of alcohol in the week prior to the survey.
 - * 17 of the 23 males had indulged in one or more binge drinking sessions.
 - * 14 of the 23 males are highly likely to have a problem with alcohol according to the CAGE questions.

1. The Survey

Introduction

This report presents the main findings of a survey carried out by the Central Survey Unit (CSU) of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) between May and July 2011. The survey was commissioned by the Public Health Information and Research Branch within the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI) to inform policy on alcohol drinking patterns in Northern Ireland.

Background

The main aim of the survey was to provide an up-to-date picture of adult drinking patterns in Northern Ireland. It examines not just the amount of alcohol people drink but also when, where and what they drink and who they drink with. It also looks at how drinking behaviour varies among different sections of the public, that is, whether it differs among those of different socio-economic group, gender and age.

CSU previously conducted this survey on behalf of the Drugs and Alcohol Information and Research Unit in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in 2005 and again in 2008.

Methodology and Fieldwork

The survey was based on a representative sample of adults aged between 18 and 75 years old (inclusive), living in private households in Northern Ireland. A random probability sample of 2,500 private households was selected from the Land and Property Services' list of properties. Within households, all adults aged 18 to 75 were eligible for interview. The fieldwork period was from the 3rd May until the 8th July 2011. During this time 2,028 computer assisted face to face interviews were achieved. These came from 1,294 households out of a possible 1,966 eligible addresses giving a response rate of 66%.

The questionnaire began by asking the respondents for background demographic details, such as gender, age and employment status. The majority of the questionnaire consisted of questions dealing with drinking behaviour. Those who drank in the week prior to the day of the interview were asked a series of additional questions about their drinking activities over this period identifying what, how much, where, when and with whom they drank. They were then asked four CAGE questions. These are clinical interview questions that have been used internationally as an assessment tool for identifying potential problems with alcohol. Finally, they were asked about how they perceived their own drinking habits.

The technical appendix in this report outlines in detail the rounding conventions, statistical significance testing and reporting, and definitions used in the body of this report. Briefly, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum exactly to 100% and where respondents

are permitted to give multiple response answers, percentages will not add to 100%. Where tests are statistically significant they are reported at the 5% level and, when findings are compared to those from the 2008 survey, Health & Social Care Trust is not included as respondents were categorised by four Health Boards in 2008 and not the current five Trust system. Comparisons are also made with the 2011 mid-year population estimates in order to look at the representativeness of the achieved sample.

2. Drinking Prevalence

2.1 Alcohol Consumption

The survey began by establishing the proportion of respondents who drank alcohol. Almost three quarters (74%) of all respondents reported drinking alcohol, which is similar to levels recorded in 2008 (72%).

2.1a Age and Gender

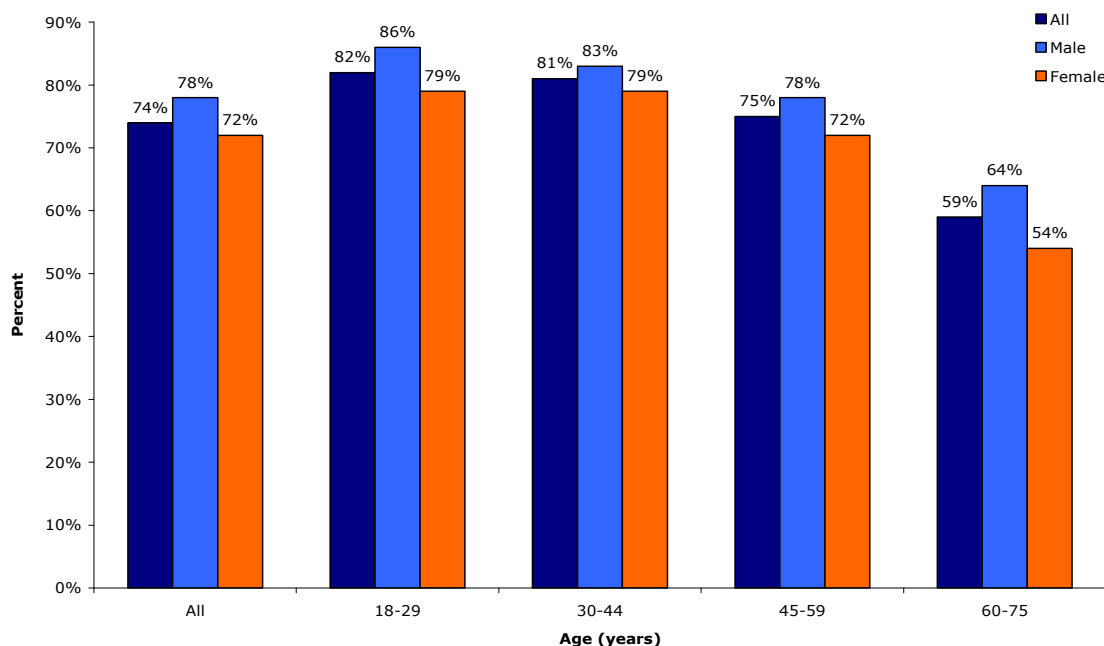
78% of males and 72% of females reported that they drink alcohol. This difference in drinking prevalence is statistically significant and is similar to the difference recorded in the 2008 study (74% of males and 70% of females).

The proportion of both males and females who drink significantly decreases with age. 86% of males and 79% of females aged 18-29 reported that they drank compared to 64% of males and 54% of females in the 60-75 age group. These variations in age and gender were similar to those reported in 2008 (80% of males and 85% of females aged 18-29, 58% of males and 50% of females in the 60-75 age group). Figure 2.1a below shows the percentage of drinkers by age group and gender.

Table 2.1a: Alcohol consumption by age and gender

	Base (N)	Those who drink		
		Male	Female	All
Overall				
All Respondents	2022	78%	72%	74%
Base (N)	2022	911	1111	2022
Age Group				
18-29	369	86%	79%	82%
30-44	651	83%	79%	81%
45-59	553	78%	72%	75%
60-75	449	64%	54%	59%
Base (N)	2022	911	1111	2022

Figure 2.1a: Bar chart illustrating alcohol consumption within age group, overall and by gender



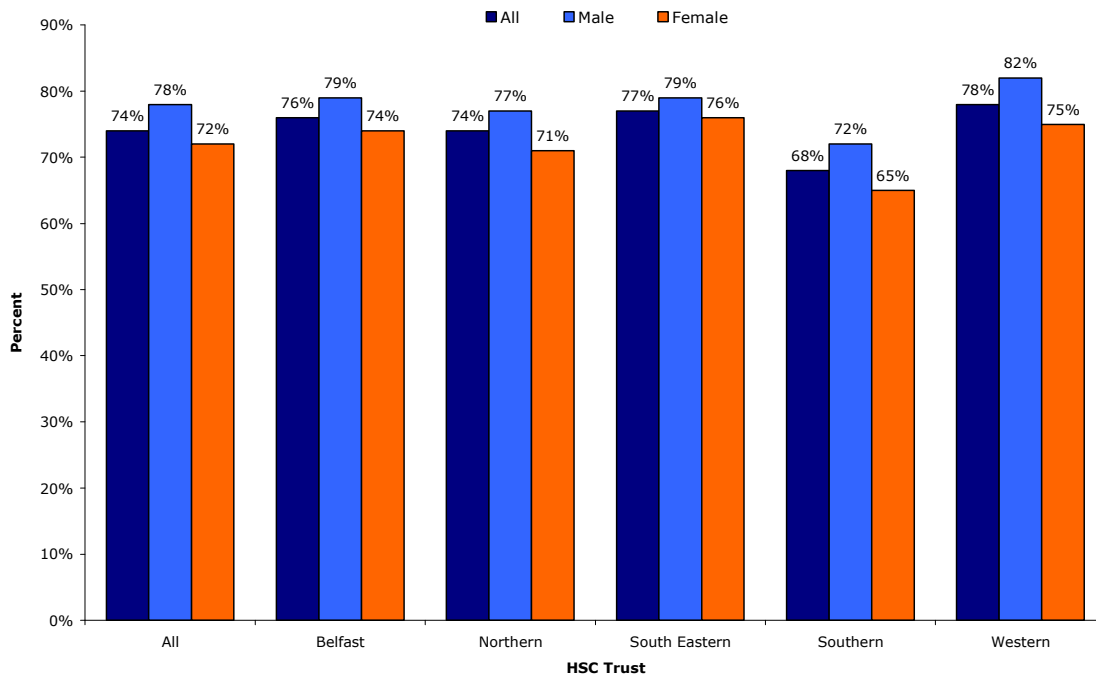
2.1b Health and Social Care Trust

About three quarters of respondents from four of the five Trusts reported that they consumed alcohol, while 68% of those from the Southern HSC Trust consumed alcohol. There is a significant association between Trust and consumption of alcohol.

Table 2.1b: Alcohol consumption by HSC Trust and gender

	Base (N)	Those who drink		
		Male	Female	All
HSC Trust				
Belfast	328	79%	74%	76%
Northern	568	77%	71%	74%
South Eastern	417	79%	76%	77%
Southern	428	72%	65%	68%
Western	281	82%	75%	78%
Base (N)	2022	911	1111	2022

Figure 2.1b: Bar chart illustrating alcohol consumption within HSC Trust, overall and by gender



2.1c Socio-economic group, household income and education status

Overall, and within gender, respondents with a managerial or professional occupation are significantly more likely to drink (83% overall, 87% of men and 80% of women). This was also true in 2008 (81% overall, 82% of males and 79% of females).

The prevalence of alcohol consumption also appears to increase as household income increases, from about two thirds (67%) of respondents earning less than £10,400 to almost nine in ten (87%) of those earning £52,000 or more. This pattern was also present in 2008 when the proportion of drinkers ranged from 63% of those earning under £10,400 to 88% of those earning in excess of £52,000.

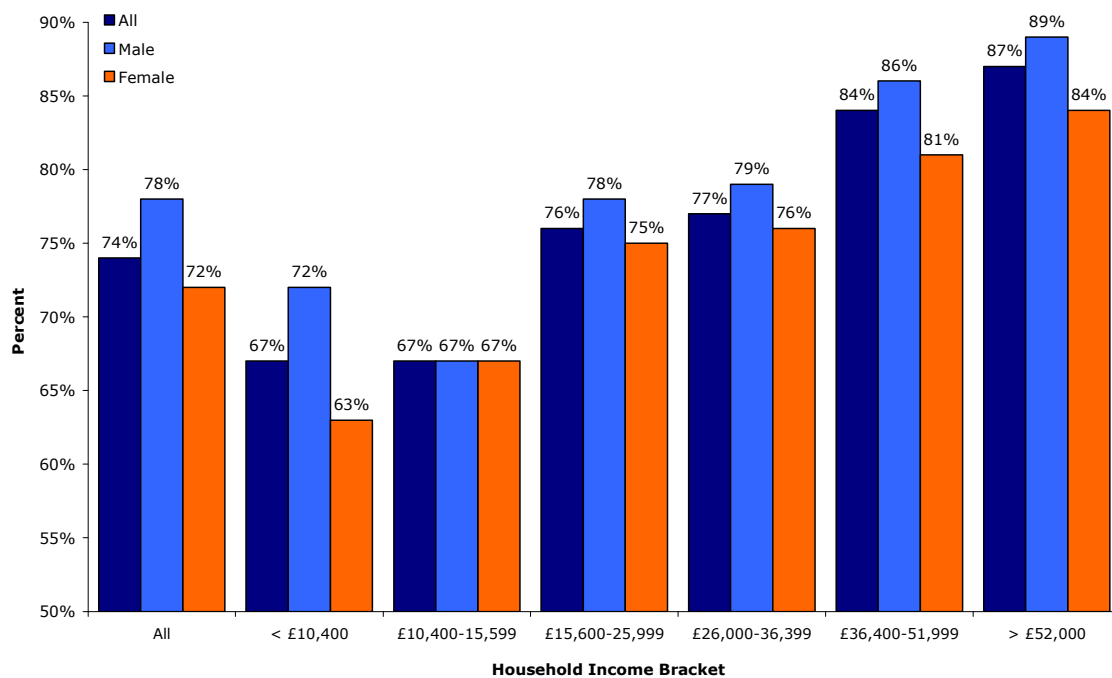
There is a significant association between educational attainment and the proportion of those who drink (82% of A Level / Higher education, 78% O Level/Commercial and 60% of those with no qualifications). This statistically significant association is present for both male and female respondents. This was also true in 2008 (overall, 81% of respondents with A-level qualifications or higher, 77% of those with O-level or commercial and 55% of those with no qualifications).

Table 2.1c: Alcohol consumption by socio-economic group, household income & education status

	Base (N)	Those who drink		
		Male	Female	All
Socio-economic Group				
Managerial & professional	552	87%	80%	83%
Intermediate occupations	509	78%	76%	77%
Routine & manual	796	74%	70%	72%
Not classified ¹	165	58%	47%	50%
Base (N)	2022	911	1111	2022
Household income				
£52,000 or over	212	89%	84%	87%
£36,400 – 51,999	278	86%	81%	84%
£26,000 – 36,399	277	79%	76%	77%
£15,600 – 25,999	365	78%	75%	76%
£10,400 – 15,599	296	67%	67%	67%
Under £10,400	273	72%	63%	67%
Base (N)	1701	771	930	1701
Education Status				
A Level/Higher education	911	85%	79%	82%
O Level/Commercial	520	83%	74%	78%
No qualifications	584	63%	57%	60%
Base (N)	2015	910	1105	2015

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

Figure 2.1c Bar chart illustrating alcohol consumption within household income, overall and by gender



2.2 Frequency of Drinking

This section reports on how often respondents who drink actually consume alcohol. Around half of respondents (52%) said they consumed alcohol at least once a week or daily or most days (6% daily or most days and 46% at least once a week). This figure is 10 percentage points lower than that reported in the 2008 survey (62% overall, 8% daily or most days and 54% at least once a week). The remaining 48% said that they consumed alcohol less than once a week, compared to 38% in 2008.

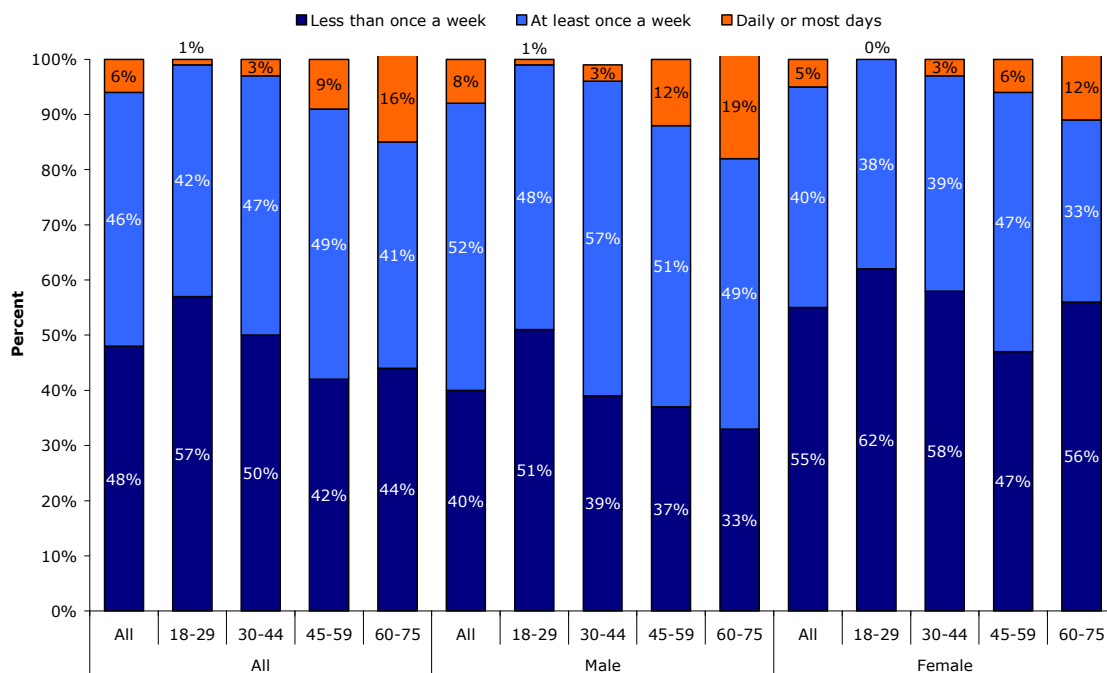
2.2a Age and Gender

Over half of male respondents reported drinking at least once a week (52%) compared to 40% of females. In 2008 the proportion that reported drinking at least once a week was 58% for males and 50% for females.

A greater proportion of males than females reported that they drink daily or on most days (8% of males and 5% of females) and these differences were found to be statistically significant. This was also the case in 2008 (11% male and 6% female). These results are further illustrated in figure 2.2a below.

There is a significant association between age group and frequency of drinking. This is true for both male and female respondents. The proportion of those who drank almost daily ranged from 1% of 18-29 year olds to 16% of 60-75 year olds, while those who drank monthly or less ranged from 44% of 60-75 year olds to 57% of 18-29 year olds. There was a significant association between age group and frequency of drinking in 2008.

Figure 2.2a: Column graph illustrating frequency of drinking by age and gender



2.2b HSC Trust

Across all Trusts, less than 10% of respondents reported that they would drink daily or most days. Among the remaining respondents, similar proportions reported drinking at least once a week or monthly or less.

There is no significant association between HSC Trust and frequency of drinking. These figures are illustrated in Figure 2.2b and all results for the frequency of drinking by gender, age and Health & Social Care Trust are displayed in Table 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2b How often respondents drink by Health & Social Care Trust

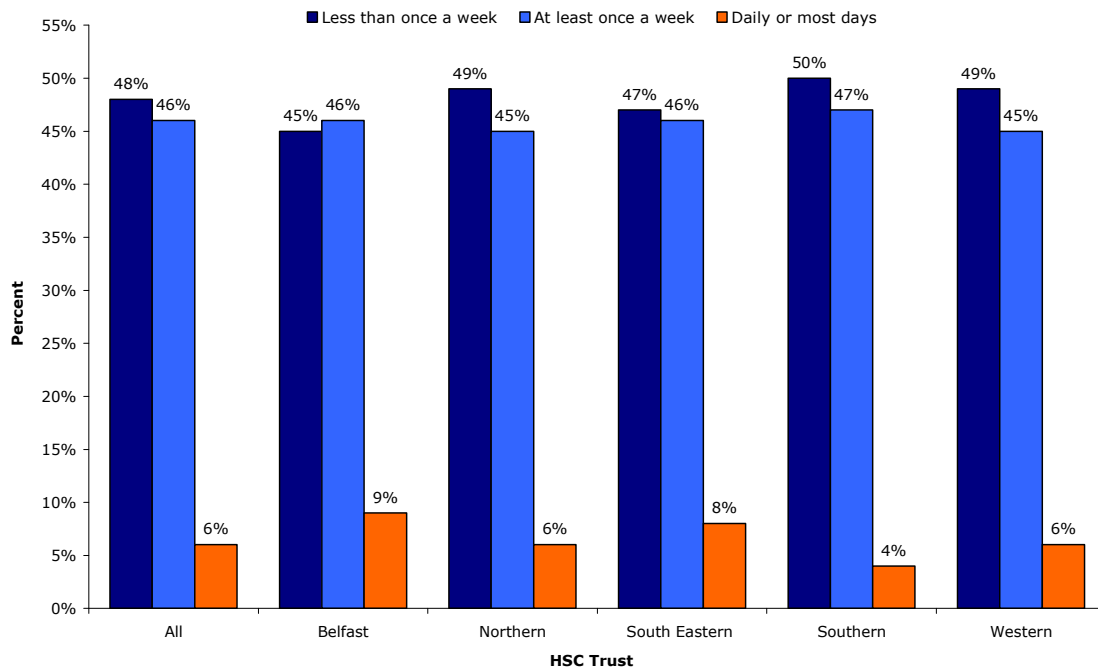


Table 2.2: Frequency of drinking by age, gender and HSC Trust

	Base (N)	Frequency of drinking		
		Daily or most days	At least once a week	Less than once a week
Overall				
All Respondents	1502	6%	46%	48%
Gender				
Male	706	8%	52%	40%
Female	796	5%	40%	55%
Age Group				
18-29	302	1%	42%	57%
30-44	524	3%	47%	50%
45-59	412	9%	49%	42%
60-75	264	16%	41%	44%
HSC Trust				
Belfast	249	9%	46%	45%
Northern	420	6%	45%	49%
South Eastern	322	8%	46%	47%
Southern	292	4%	47%	50%
Western	219	6%	45%	49%
Base (N)	1502	97	685	720

3. Drinking Behaviour

Those who reported that they had an alcoholic drink in the week preceding the survey were asked more detailed questions about when and where they drank, the type of drink consumed and who they were with when they drank it. The results are outlined below. It is important to note that these results are presented as a proportion of those who drank in the week before the survey and not as a proportion of all those who responded to the survey or who stated that they ever drank.

3.1 Days on which drinking occurs

Most drinking occurs over the weekend and this is true for gender and age group (see Table 3.1). In the week preceding the survey, 42% of respondents consumed alcohol on a weekday (Monday to Thursday) compared to 93% who did so over the weekend (Friday to Sunday). These figures are similar to 2008 when 45% of respondents consumed alcohol on a weekday and 93% had done so at the weekend.

On weekdays, 15% reported consuming alcohol on Monday, 19% on Tuesday, 21% on Wednesday and 19% on Thursday. During the weekend, this increased to over four in ten on both Friday (43%) and Sunday (41%) and to almost seven in ten (68%) on Saturday.

3.1a Gender

There is no significant difference between males and females in drinking during the week – 44% of males reported drinking during the week compared to 41% of females. There is no significant difference in weekend drinking between males (93%) and females (92%). On individual days of the week the only significant results were for Monday, with males being more likely to drink than females (18% of males and 11% of females) and Thursday, with males being more likely to drink than females (21% of males and 16% of females).

In 2008, males were significantly more likely to drink during the week than females (48% of males and 41% of females) while there was no significant difference in weekend drinking (94% of males and 93% of females).

3.1b Age

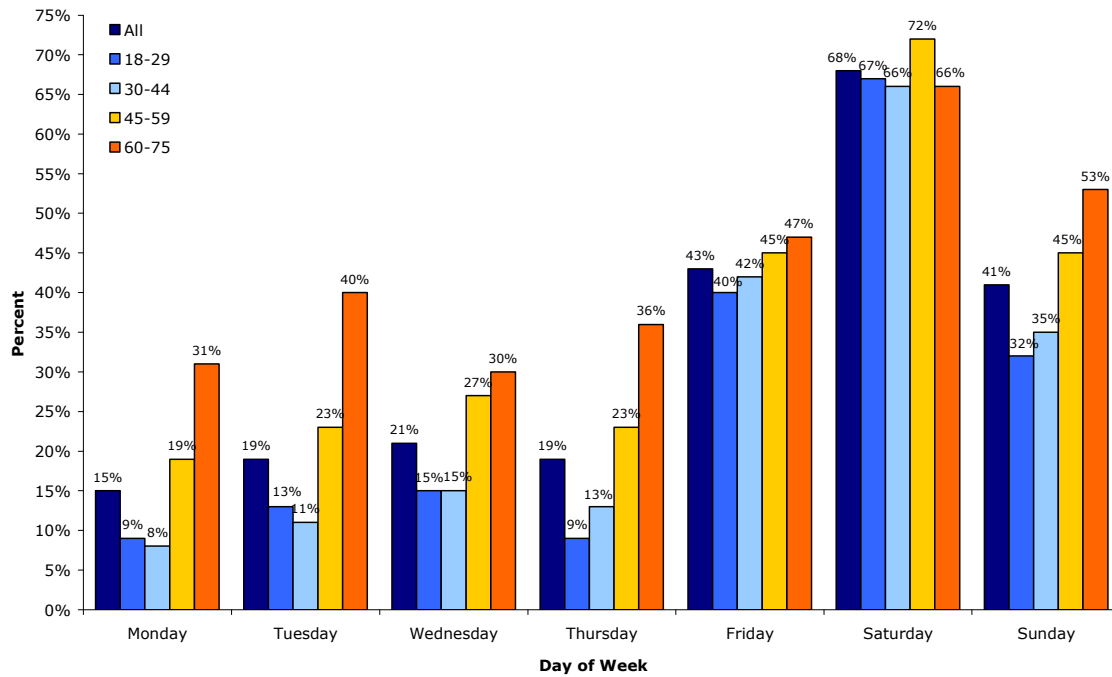
The likelihood of drinking on a weekday significantly increases with age. Older respondents (60-75 years) were more likely to drink on weekdays (60%) than those in the younger age groups (32% of 18-29 year olds and 33% of 30-44 year olds). These differences were significant for all weekdays. During the weekend, older respondents were more likely to drink on a Sunday, while there were no significant differences on a Friday or Saturday (these patterns are illustrated in figure 3.1).

In 2008, there was an increased likelihood of weekday drinking among older respondents (35% of 18-29 year olds compared to 54% of those aged 60-75). In contrast to 2011, in 2008 there was a significant association between age and weekend drinking (96% of 18-29 year olds and 95% of 30-44 year olds, compared to 91% of 45-59 year olds and 88% of 60-75 year olds).

Table 3.1 Days on which drinking occurred in the week prior to the survey by gender & age group

	All	Gender		Age Group			
		Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
Weekdays	42%	44%	41%	32%	33%	50%	60%
Monday	15%	18%	11%	9%	8%	19%	31%
Tuesday	19%	21%	17%	13%	11%	23%	40%
Wednesday	21%	22%	20%	15%	15%	27%	30%
Thursday	19%	21%	16%	9%	13%	23%	36%
Weekend	93%	93%	92%	92%	92%	94%	92%
Friday	43%	45%	41%	40%	42%	45%	47%
Saturday	68%	69%	67%	67%	66%	72%	66%
Sunday	41%	44%	38%	32%	35%	45%	53%
Base (N)	972	498	474	182	343	280	167

Figure 3.1: Bar chart displaying days on which drinking occurred overall and by age group



3.2 Type of drink consumed

The most commonly consumed drinks in the week prior to the survey were wine, beer and spirits or liqueurs. Almost half of all respondents reported that they had consumed wine or beer (48% for wine and 47% for beer) and about a quarter (24%) said they had consumed spirits or liqueurs.

These were also the three most commonly consumed drinks in 2008, with 50% reporting drinking wine, 48% beer and 27% spirits or liqueurs.

3.2a Gender

Females were significantly more likely to consume wine than males (61% females and 35% males) while males were significantly more likely to consume beer than females (74% males and 19% females). This pattern was similar to the 2008 survey where 64% of females had consumed wine compared to 37% of males, and 73% of males had consumed beer compared to 22% of females.

Spirits/liqueurs, coolers/spirit based mixers/alcopops and sherry/martini/vermouth/port were also more commonly consumed among females (18% of males compared to 30% of females for spirits or liqueurs; 2% of males compared to 14% of females for coolers/spirit based mixers/alcopops and less than 1% of males compared to 2% of females for sherry/martini/vermouth/port, etc).

Strong or extra-strength beers, on the other hand, were significantly more likely to be consumed by males than females (3% of males compared to less than 1% of females). The bar chart below illustrates some of the differences in drink choices made by males and females (see figure 3.2).

3.2b Age

There is a significant difference between age group and the likelihood of drinking wine. Those in the youngest age group were less likely to drink wine than those aged 30 years and older (24% of 18-29 year olds, 50% of 30-44 year olds, 56% of 45-59 year olds and 54% of 60-75 year olds). This was also true in 2008 (55% of 30-44 year olds, 56% of 45-59 year olds and 54% of 60-75 year olds compared to 31% of 18-29 year olds).

There is a significant difference in age group and the likelihood of drinking beer, lager or stout with those aged 18-29 years old being more likely to have consumed beer, lager or stout (55% of 18-29 year olds, 50% of 30-44 years olds, 41% of 45-59 year olds and 42% of 60-75 year olds). In 2008 there was also a significant difference (58% of 18-29 year olds compared to 39% of 60-75 year olds).

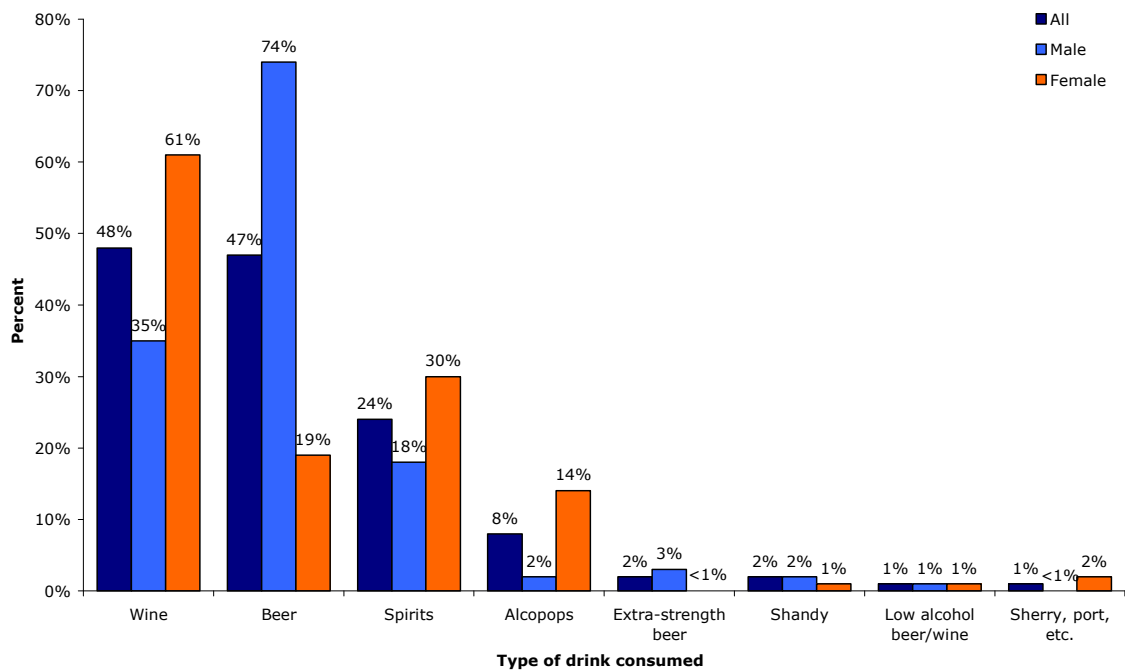
A further significance was found between age and the consumption of coolers/spirit-based mixers/alcopops. A quarter of respondents aged between 18 and 29 years (25%) reported drinking coolers/spirit based mixers/alcopops, while only 1% of those aged 60-75 years had done so. Again, this resembled the 2008 findings where 26% of 18-29 year olds drank coolers/spirit based

mixers/alcopops in the week prior to the survey, while 2% of those aged 60-75 years reported doing so.

Table 3.2 Type of drink consumed in the week prior to the survey by gender and age group

	All	Gender		Age Group			
		Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
Wine	48%	35%	61%	24%	50%	56%	54%
Beer/lager/cider/stout	47%	74%	19%	55%	50%	41%	42%
Spirits/liqueurs	24%	18%	30%	31%	14%	27%	31%
Coolers/spirit based mixers/alcopops	8%	2%	14%	25%	7%	2%	1%
Strong/extra-strength beer/lager/cider/stout	2%	3%	<1%	3%	<1%	3%	3%
Shandy	2%	2%	1%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Low alcohol beer/lager/cider/wine	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Sherry/martini/vermouth/port	1%	<1%	2%	2%	<1%	1%	2%
Other drink	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%
Base (N)	972	498	474	182	343	280	167

Figure 3.2 Bar chart displaying the types of drink consumed overall and by gender



3.3 Where people drink

Overall, the most common drinking location in the week prior to the survey was in the respondent's own home (64%). This was followed by at a pub (20%), in someone else's home (20%) and at a restaurant (16%).

These were also the four most popular locations in 2008 and the figures were similar to 2011 (64% in own home, 24% at a pub, 20% in someone else's home and 17% at a restaurant).

3.3a Gender

Within gender, females are significantly more likely to consume alcohol in their own home than males (68% of females compared to 61% of males). They are also more likely to drink in someone else's home (23% of females compared to 16% of males).

Males are more likely than females to consume alcohol at the pub (26% of males compared to 14% of females), in a sports club (10% of males compared to 4% of females), or at a social club (3% of males compared to 1% of females).

The difference between males and females consuming alcohol in their own home was not significant in 2008 (65% of males compared to 63% of females). The association between drinking in a pub and gender was consistent with 2008 (30% of males compared to 17% of females).

Table 3.3a Most popular drinking locations for males and females for each day of the week

Gender	Rank	Day of Week						
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Male	1	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home
	2	Pub	Pub	Pub	Pub	Pub	Pub	Pub
	3	Someone else's home	Restaurant	Someone else's home/ Restaurant	Restaurant	Restaurant	Someone else's home	Someone else's home
Base (N)		92	107	111	106	226	345	217
Female	1	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home	Own home
	2	Someone else's home/ Restaurant	Someone else's home	Someone else's home	Restaurant	Someone else's home	Someone else's home	Someone else's home/ Restaurant
	3	Hotel	Restaurant	Restaurant	Someone else's home	Restaurant	Restaurant	Pub
Base (N)		54	82	93	77	194	316	179

3.3b Age

There is a significant difference between age groups and some locations where alcohol was consumed (see Table 3.3). Those in the youngest age group (aged 18-29) were more likely to drink in a pub (31% of 18-29 year olds compared to 20% of 30-44 year olds, 15% of 45-59 year olds and 17% of 60-75 year olds), in someone else's home (32% of 18-29 year olds compared to 19% of 30-

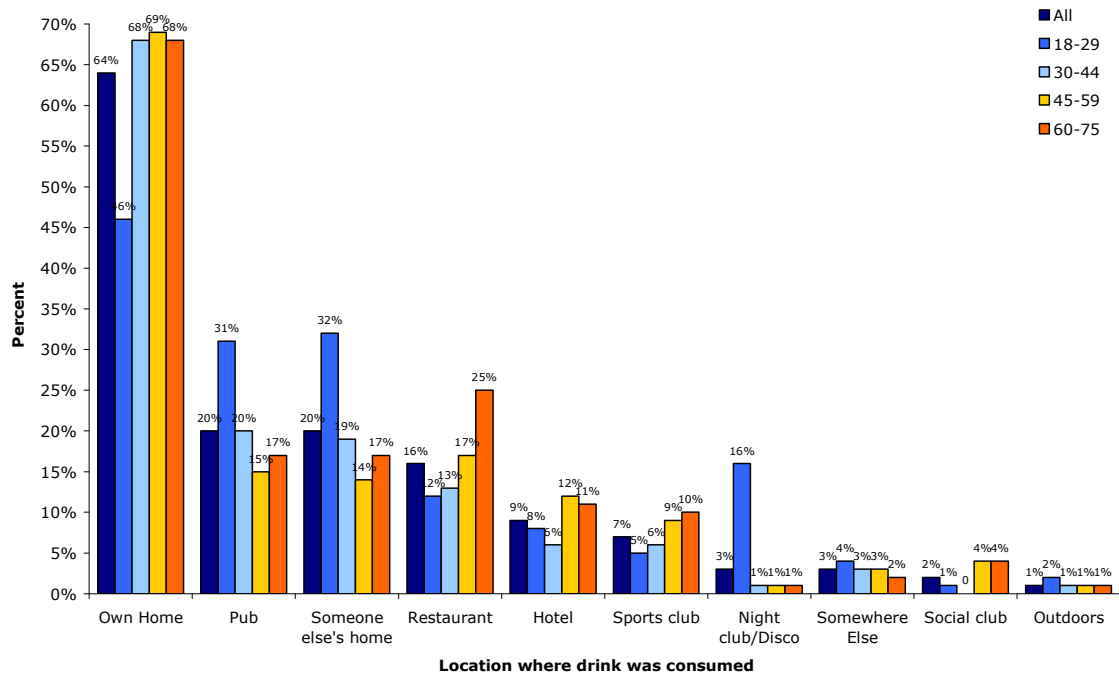
44 year olds, 14% of 45-59 year olds and 17% of 60-75 year olds) and in a night club or disco (16% of 18-29 year olds compared to 1% for all other age groups). They were also the least likely to consume alcohol in their own home (46% of 18-29 year olds compared to 68% of 30-44 year olds, 69% of 45-59 year olds and 68% of 60-75 year olds).

There was a significant association with age and drinking in a restaurant. Among the oldest group (60-75 year olds), 25% consumed alcohol in a restaurant compared to 17% of 45-59 year olds, 13% of 30-44 year olds and 12% of 18-29 year olds.

Table 3.3b Location people drank in the week prior to the survey by gender and age group

	All	Gender		Age Group			
		Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
Own Home	64%	61%	68%	46%	68%	69%	68%
Pub	20%	26%	14%	31%	20%	15%	17%
Someone else's home	20%	16%	23%	32%	19%	14%	17%
Restaurant	16%	14%	18%	12%	13%	17%	25%
Hotel	9%	9%	8%	8%	6%	12%	11%
Sports club	7%	10%	4%	5%	6%	9%	10%
Night club/Disco	3%	3%	4%	16%	1%	1%	1%
Somewhere Else	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%
Social club	2%	3%	1%	1%	<1%	4%	4%
Outdoors	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Base (N)	972	498	474	182	343	280	167

Figure 3.3 Bar chart displaying where alcohol was consumed overall and by age group



3.4 With whom people drink

Overall, the most common drinking companions in the week prior to the survey were a partner (45%), two or more friends of both sexes (21%), family (21%) and alone (20%). These were also the most common companions in 2008 (44% with a partner, 25% with two or more friends of sexes, 24% with family and 20% alone).

3.4a Gender

Males are significantly more likely than females to report consuming alcohol alone (23% compared to 16% of females) while females are significantly more likely to report drinking with a friend of the opposite sex compared to males (6% of females and 3% of males).

The 2008 report was consistent with the finding that males are more likely than females to drink alone (27% of males compared to 14% of females). It was also reported in 2008 that females were significantly more likely to drink with family (28% of females compared to 20% of males) but this difference was not significant in 2011 (22% of females compared to 20% of males).

3.4b Age

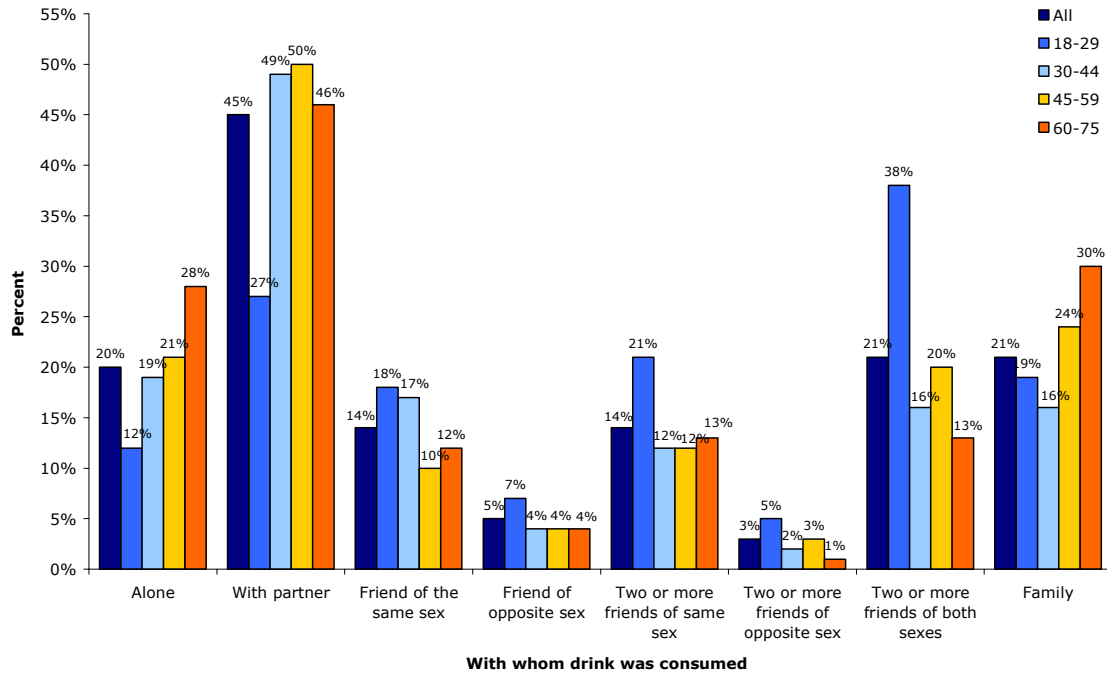
There is a significant difference between age and the likelihood of reporting consuming alcohol alone or with family. Those aged 18-29 years were least likely to report drinking alone (12% of 18-29 year olds; 19% of 30-44 year olds; 21% of 45-59 year olds and 28% of 60-75 year olds). Those aged 60-75 years old were significantly more likely to report drinking with family than the youngest age groups (30% of 60-75 year olds compared to 19% of 18-29 year olds and 16% of 30-44 year olds).

Those aged 18-29 years are significantly less likely to report drinking with a partner (27% compared to 49% of 30-44 year olds, 50% of 45-59 year olds and 46% of 60-75 year olds), but significantly more likely to report drinking with two or more friends of the same sex (21% of 18-29 year olds compared to 12% of 30-44 year olds, 12% of 45-59 year olds and 13% of 60-75 year olds) or two or more friends of both sexes (38% of 18-29 year olds compared to 16% of 30-44 year olds, 20% of 45-59 year olds and 13% of 60-75 year olds). The line graph below further displays these results (see figure 3.4).

Table 3.4 With whom people drank in the week prior to the survey by gender and age group

	All	Gender		Age Group			
		Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
Alone	20%	23%	16%	12%	19%	21%	28%
With partner	45%	44%	46%	27%	49%	50%	46%
With a friend of the same sex	14%	15%	14%	18%	17%	10%	12%
With a friend of the opposite sex	5%	3%	6%	7%	4%	4%	4%
With two or more friends of the same sex	14%	15%	12%	21%	12%	12%	13%
With two or more friends of the opposite sex	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	3%	1%
With two or more friends of both sexes	21%	20%	22%	38%	16%	20%	13%
With family	21%	20%	22%	19%	16%	24%	30%
Base (N)	972	498	474	182	343	280	167

Figure 3.4 Bar chart displaying with whom alcohol was consumed overall and by age group



4. Drinking Levels

Respondents who said that they drunk alcohol were asked a series of questions about their alcohol consumption in the week prior to the survey. This approach gathered information on what types of drinks they had and the quantity they had consumed during each of five possible sessions for each of the days on which they had consumed alcohol.

4.1 Recommended daily drinking limits

The current recommended daily drinking limits state that drinking four or more units of alcohol a day for males and three or more units a day for females, increases alcohol related health risks.

4.1.1 Exceeding daily limit on at least one occasion

Overall, about eight in ten respondents (78%) reported having reached or exceeded the recommended daily limit for drinking on at least one occasion in the week prior to the survey. This is similar to the 2008 survey (81%).

Age and Gender

Differences for gender are significant with females being more likely than males to have exceeded the limit at least once (81% of females compared to 76% of males). In 2008, 83% of females and 79% of males exceeded the daily limit at least once.

The youngest respondents (18-29 year olds, 85%) are more likely than the oldest respondents (60-75 year olds, 69%) to have exceeded the limit at least once. This was also true in 2008 (90% of 18-29 year olds and 73% of 60-75 year olds).

Table 4.1.1a Proportion of respondents who reached or exceeded recommended daily drinking limits at least once in the week prior to the survey for gender and age

	All	Gender		Age Group			
		Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
Proportion of respondents exceeding limit	78%	76%	81%	85%	78%	80%	69%
Base (N)	972	498	474	182	343	280	167

Health & Social Care Trust

The proportion of respondents who had reached or exceeded the daily limit at least once was around three quarters for four of the five HSC Trusts (78% in Belfast, 77% in the Northern, 75% in the Southern Eastern and 78% in the Southern Trust). In the Western Trust, 86% of respondents reached or exceeded the daily limit at least once. There is no significant difference between HSC Trust and reaching or exceeding daily drinking limits.

Table 4.1.1b Proportion of respondents who reached or exceeded recommended daily drinking limits at least once in the week prior to the survey for HSC Trust

	All	HSC Trust				
		Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
Proportion of respondents exceeding limit	78%	78%	77%	75%	78%	86%
Base (N)	972	168	264	214	186	140

Socio-economic Group, Household Income & Education Status

There was a significant difference between socio-economic group and exceeding daily limits at least once in the week prior to the survey. While 70% of those in a managerial & professional occupation reached or exceeded the daily limit, 81% of those in intermediate occupations and 84% of those in routine and manual occupations and those who were not classified reached or exceeded the daily limit. These differences were significant and the same pattern was also apparent in 2008 (86% for both unclassified and routine or manual occupations, 78% for intermediate and 75% for managerial or professional).

There was a significant association between household income and reaching or exceeding daily drinking limits. For example, those who earned under £10,400 (82%), £10,400 - 15,599 (80%), £15,600 - 25,999 (83%), £26,000 - 36,399 (84%) were all significantly more likely to exceed the daily limit at least once than those who earned £52,000 or over (68%).

About seven in ten respondents with an A-level standard of education or higher (73%) had exceeded the daily limit at least once. This was significantly lower than those with O-level or commercial qualifications (85%) and those with no qualifications (82%). This was not the case in 2008 where no significant differences were found. In 2008, eight in ten respondents reached the daily limit on at least one occasion for all education levels (81% A-level or higher, 81% O-level or commercial and 82% no qualifications).

Table 4.1.1c Proportion of respondents who reached or exceeded recommended daily drinking limits at least once in the week prior to the survey for socio-economic group, income and education

	Base (N)	Proportion of respondents exceeding limit
Socio-economic Group		
Managerial & professional	325	70%
Intermediate occupations	256	81%
Routine & manual	347	84%
Not classified ¹	44	84%
Base (N)	972	
Household Income		
£52,000 or over	137	68%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	71%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	84%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	83%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	80%
Under £10,400	96	82%
Base (N)	828	
Education Status		
A Level / Higher education	498	73%
O Level / Commercial	275	85%
No qualifications	197	82%
Base (N)	970	

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

4.1.2 Day of week limit exceeded

Overall, the most likely day for a respondent to have exceeded the daily limit was Saturday (53%), followed by Friday (31%) and Sunday (25%). These were also the three most likely days to exceed the limit in 2008 (Saturday 55%, Friday 34% and Sunday 28%).

Age and Gender

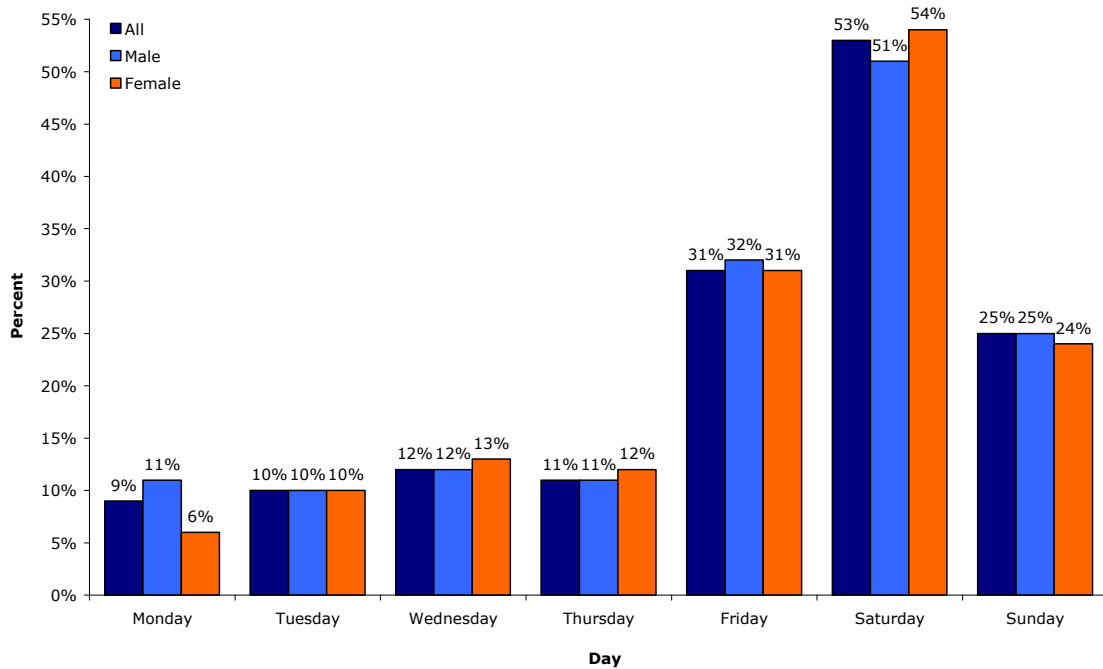
The only significant difference between male and female respondents regarding the day of week that limits were exceeded was Monday (11% of males compared to 6% of females). There were no significant differences between male and female respondents in the 2008 survey for any day of the week.

Differences within age group for having exceeded the daily limit were significant on all days except Friday and Sunday. For all weekdays (Monday to Thursday) a greater proportion of those in the oldest age group (60-75 years) than any other age group reached or exceeded the limit.

Table 4.1.2a Proportion of respondents reaching or exceeding the recommended daily drinking limit on each day of the week by age and gender

	Base (N)	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Overall								
All	972	9%	10%	12%	11%	31%	53%	25%
Gender								
Male	498	11%	10%	12%	11%	32%	51%	25%
Female	474	6%	10%	13%	12%	31%	54%	24%
Age Group								
18-29	182	6%	8%	12%	8%	30%	56%	23%
30-44	343	4%	5%	8%	7%	29%	52%	22%
45-59	280	11%	11%	15%	13%	35%	57%	27%
60-75	167	17%	19%	16%	23%	28%	43%	29%
Base (N)	972							

Figure 4.1.2 Proportion of respondents reaching or exceeding the recommended daily drinking limit on each day of the week by gender



HSC Trust

For all Health and Social Care Trusts, Saturday was the most likely day when the recommended daily drinking limit was exceeded.

There is a significant association between Trust and reaching or exceeding the daily limit on a Wednesday and Saturday. On Wednesday, the proportion of respondents who reached or exceeded the daily limit ranged from 6% in the South Eastern Trust to 17% in the Belfast and Western HSC Trusts.

On Saturday, the likelihood of reaching or exceeding the recommended daily limit was significantly higher for the Western Trust (66%) when compared to any of the other four areas (47% in Belfast, 48% in the Northern Trust, 54% in the South Eastern and 53% in the Southern).

Table 4.1.2b Proportion of respondents reaching or exceeding the recommended daily drinking limit on each day of the week by HSC Trust

	Base (N)	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
HSC Trust								
Belfast	168	10%	13%	17%	15%	35%	47%	24%
Northern	264	9%	11%	14%	8%	31%	48%	24%
South Eastern	214	9%	8%	6%	13%	32%	54%	25%
Southern	186	6%	9%	9%	9%	23%	53%	22%
Western	140	9%	9%	17%	13%	34%	66%	29%
Base (N)	972							

Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

Comparisons between socio-economic group and day of the week limits were reached or exceeded revealed significant results for Saturday only. On Saturday, those in routine or manual occupations were significantly more likely to have exceeded the recommended limit than those in managerial or professional roles (58% in routine or manual compared to 46% professional or managerial).

For differences in household income it was also the case that only Saturday bore significant results. Those who earned £15,600 – 25,999 (63%) were more likely to exceed the limit on Saturday than those with lower incomes (48% of those earning less than £10,400 and 50% of those earning £10,400 – 15,599). Both those who earned £15,600 – 25,999 (63%) and £26,000 – 36,399 (59%) were more likely to exceed the limit on Saturday than those with higher incomes (44% of those earning £36,400 – 51,999 and 45% of those earning in excess of £52,000).

Comparisons for education status and exceeding the daily limit were significant on Monday and Saturday. On Monday, those with no qualifications were significantly more likely to have exceeded the daily limit (13%) compared to those with an A-level standard of education or higher (7%). Those with O-level or commercial qualifications (62%) were significantly more likely to exceed the limit on Saturday than those with A-level or Higher education (47%).

Table 4.1.2c Proportion of respondents reaching or exceeding the recommended daily drinking limit on each day of the week by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base (N)	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Socio-economic Group								
Managerial & professional	325	7%	11%	12%	15%	31%	46%	22%
Intermediate occupations	256	9%	10%	14%	9%	32%	54%	29%
Routine & manual	347	10%	8%	10%	9%	30%	58%	23%
Not classified ¹	44	14%	16%	23%	16%	36%	55%	36%
Base (N)	972							
Household Income								
£52,000 or over	137	5%	9%	10%	11%	33%	45%	23%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	8%	6%	9%	9%	32%	44%	23%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	9%	12%	15%	11%	39%	59%	27%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	10%	12%	14%	15%	27%	63%	30%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	8%	10%	14%	14%	35%	50%	27%
Under £10,400	96	11%	13%	13%	15%	28%	48%	24%
Base (N)	828							
Education Status								
A Level / Higher education	498	7%	8%	12%	12%	32%	47%	23%
O Level / Commercial	275	8%	12%	12%	11%	31%	62%	25%
No qualifications	197	13%	10%	14%	12%	29%	54%	28%
Base (N)	970							

4.1.3 Number of times limit reached or exceeded

Overall, around one in five (22%) of drinkers did not exceed the recommended daily limit at all during the week prior to the survey. The greatest proportion of respondents had exceeded limits on one occasion (40%), just over one in five (21%) on two occasions and just under one in five (17%) on three or more occasions. These results were similar to those in the 2008 survey (19% exceeded the limit on no occasions, 38% once, 22% twice and 20% three times or more).

Age and Gender

There is no significant difference between the proportion of males and females who reported that they had not exceeded the recommended daily limit at all during the week prior to the survey (24% of males compared to 19% of females). Furthermore, there is no significant difference between the proportion of males and females who reported that they had exceeded the limit most frequently (18% of males on three or more occasions compared to 16% of females). All results were comparable to 2008 findings when the proportion of male and female respondents was about one in five for not exceeding the limit at all (21% male and 17% female) and those exceeding limits on three or more occasions (22% male and 18% female).

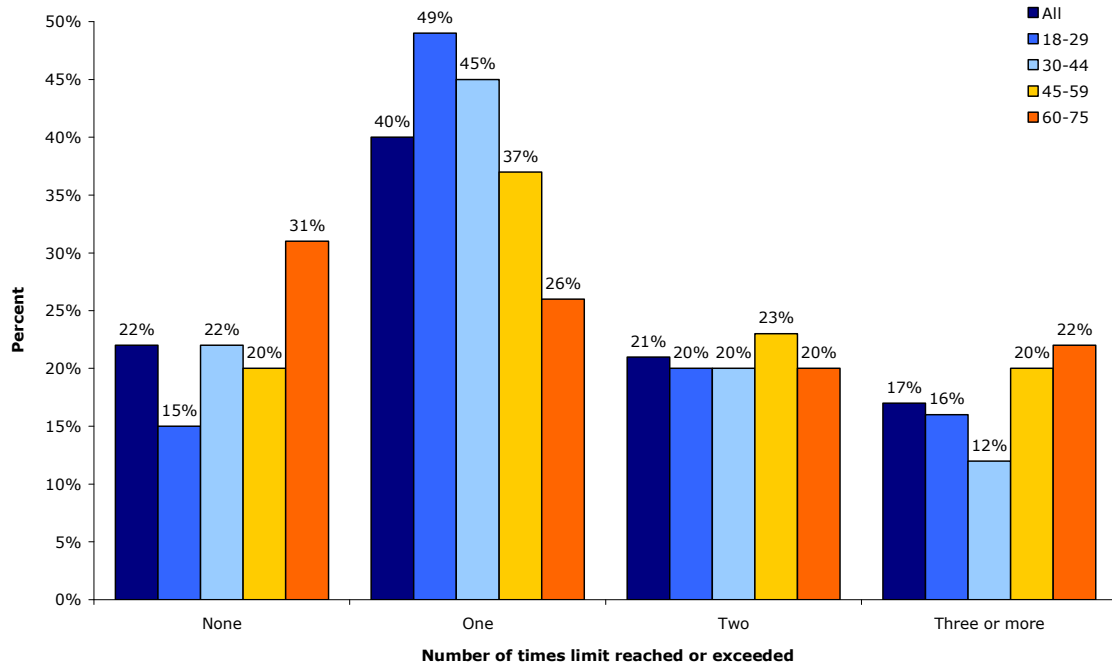
There is a significant difference between the youngest and oldest respondents who had not exceeded the limit at all in the week prior to the survey. Of those aged 60-75 years 31% had not exceeded the limit at all, compared to 15% of those aged 18-29 years. This was also the case in 2008 (27% of 60-75 year olds compared to 10% of 18-29 year olds).

Those aged 30-44 years are significantly less likely than those aged 45-59 and 60-75 years to have exceeded the limits on three or more days (12% of 30-44 year olds compared to 20% of those aged 45-59 years and 22% of those aged 60-75 years).

Table 4.1.3a Number of occasions respondents reached or exceeded the recommended daily limit in the week prior to the survey by age and gender

	Base (N)	None	One	Two	Three or more
Overall					
All Respondents	972	22%	40%	21%	17%
Base (N)	972	211	393	203	165
Gender					
Male	498	24%	38%	20%	18%
Female	474	19%	43%	22%	16%
Base (N)	972	211	393	203	165
Age Group					
18-29	182	15%	49%	20%	16%
30-44	343	22%	45%	20%	12%
45-59	280	20%	37%	23%	20%
60-75	167	31%	26%	20%	22%
Base (N)	972	211	393	203	165

Figure 4.1.3a Number of occasions respondents reached or exceeded the recommended daily limit in the week prior to the survey overall and by age group



HSC Trust

There is no significant difference between HSC Trust and the number of days on which respondents exceeded the daily drinking limits. The proportion of those exceeding the limit on one day ranged from 36% in the South Eastern Trust to 45% in the Southern Trust. The proportion of those exceeding the limit on two days ranged from 16% in the Belfast Trust to 26% in the Western Trust, while the proportion of those who exceeded the daily limit on three or more days ranged from 12% in the Southern Trust to 21% in the Belfast Trust.

Table 4.1.3b Number of occasions respondents reached or exceeded the recommended daily limit in the week prior to the survey by HSC Trust

	Base (N)	None	One	Two	Three or more
HSC Trust					
Belfast	168	22%	40%	16%	21%
Northern	264	23%	41%	19%	17%
South Eastern	214	25%	36%	23%	17%
Southern	186	22%	45%	22%	12%
Western	140	14%	41%	26%	19%
Base (N)	972	211	393	203	165

Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

Differences between socio-economic group and the number of times limits were reached or exceeded were found to be significant. Those in managerial and professional occupations (30%) were significantly more likely than those in intermediate occupations (19%) and those in routine & manual occupations (16%) to not have exceeded the limits on any day. Those in routine & manual jobs (47%) and those in intermediate occupations (43%) were significantly more likely to exceed the limit on one day compared to those in managerial & professional occupations (33%)

Differences within household income were also significant. Those in the highest income brackets were the most likely not to have exceeded the limit on any occasion in the week prior to the survey (29% of those earning £36,400-51,999 and 32% of those earning over £52,000 reached or exceeded the limit on no occasions). In 2008, the comparison within household income was not found to be significant.

There was a significant association between education status and the number of occasions respondents reached or exceeded limits. Respondents with an A-level standard of education or higher were significantly more likely not to have exceeded limits at all and significantly less likely than the other groups to have reached or exceeded the limit once. In 2008, no significant differences were found within education status.

Table 4.1.3c Number of occasions respondents reached or exceeded the recommended daily limit in the week prior to the survey by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base (N)	None	One	Two	Three or more
Socio-economic Group					
Managerial & professional	325	30%	33%	19%	18%
Intermediate occupations	256	19%	43%	21%	18%
Routine & manual	347	16%	47%	22%	15%
Not classified ¹	44	16%	36%	25%	23%
Base (N)	972	211	393	203	165
Household Income					
£52,000 or over	137	32%	29%	23%	16%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	29%	36%	21%	13%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	16%	39%	23%	23%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	17%	42%	20%	22%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	20%	37%	25%	18%
Under £10,400	96	18%	49%	20%	14%
Base (N)	828	184	316	180	148
Education Status					
A Level / Higher education	498	27%	35%	21%	17%
O Level / Commercial	275	15%	47%	20%	17%
No qualifications	197	18%	44%	21%	17%
Base (N)	970	210	393	202	165

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

4.2 Weekly guidelines for sensible drinking

Levels of alcohol consumption can be banded into weekly guidelines for sensible drinking. On a weekly basis, males drinking 21 units or less are considered to be within sensible limits, those drinking between 22 and 50 units are considered to be above sensible but below dangerous levels and those drinking 51 units and above are drinking at dangerous levels. The sensible limit for females is 14 units per week, the above sensible and below dangerous level is between 15 and 35 units and dangerous levels are 36 units and above.

Over three quarters (77%) of respondents reported drinking levels which would be considered sensible. Around two in ten (18%) consumed alcohol at levels which were above sensible but below dangerous, and one in twenty (5%) reported dangerous levels of drinking. These results were similar to 2008 (76% sensible, 19% above sensible but below dangerous and 5% dangerous levels).

4.2a Age and Gender

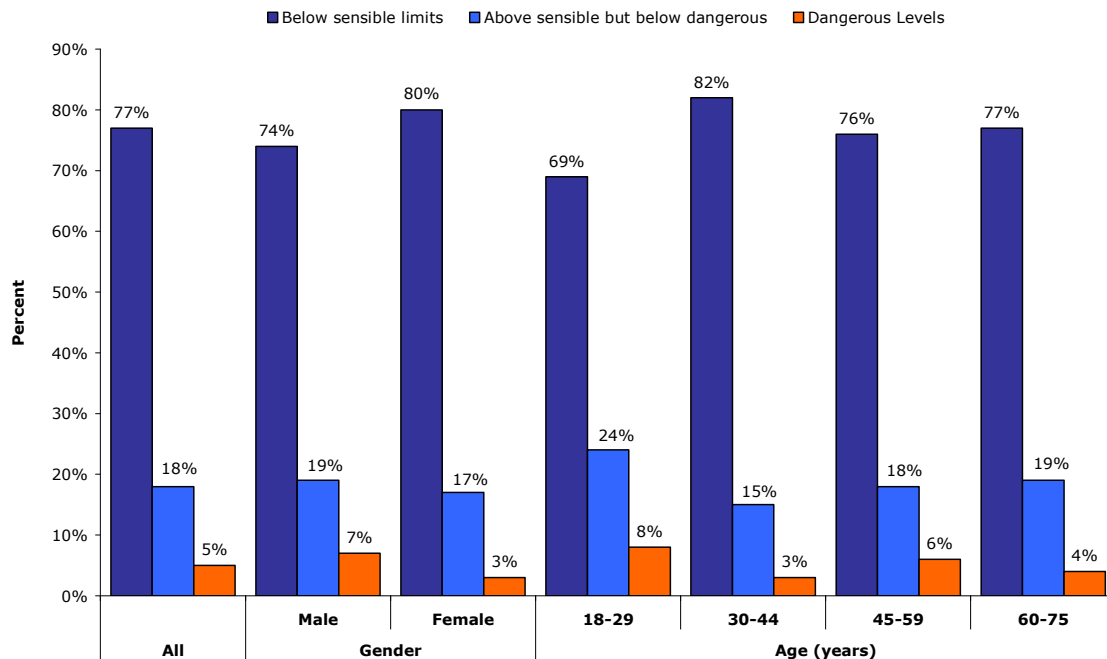
There is a significant difference between gender and weekly levels of consumption. Males were significantly more likely to consume dangerous levels of alcohol than females (7% of males compared to 3% of females). There is no significant difference between the proportion of males and females consuming above sensible, below dangerous levels (19% of males compared to 17% of females), while females are more likely to consume below sensible limits (80% of females compared to 74% of males). In 2008 there were no significant differences between weekly consumption levels and gender.

There is a significant association between age and the weekly level of alcohol consumed. Those aged 18-29 years are significantly more likely than those aged 30-44 years to have consumed dangerous levels (8% of 18-29 year olds compared to 3% of 30-44 year olds) and above sensible but below dangerous levels of alcohol (24% of 18-29 year olds compared to 15% of 30-44 year olds). In 2008 those aged 18-29 years were significantly more likely than any other age group to consume dangerous levels of alcohol (11%, compared to 4% of 30-44 year olds, 4% of 45-59 year olds and 2% of 60-75 year olds) and significantly less likely to consume below sensible limits of alcohol (65%, compared to 76% of 30-44 year olds, 81% of 45-59 year olds and 84% of 60-75 year olds).

Table 4.2a Drinking level based on weekly guidelines for sensible drinking overall and by gender and age

	Base (N)	Below sensible limits	Above sensible but below dangerous	Dangerous Levels
Overall				
All Respondents	972	77%	18%	5%
Base (N)	972			
Gender				
Male	498	74%	19%	7%
Female	474	80%	17%	3%
Base (N)	972			
Age Group				
18-29	182	69%	24%	8%
30-44	343	82%	15%	3%
45-59	280	76%	18%	6%
60-75	167	77%	19%	4%
Base (N)	972			

Figure 4.2a Responses for weekly guidelines for sensible drinking overall and by age and gender



4.2b Health & Social Care Trust

Overall, there was no significant association between HSC Trust and the level of weekly drinking. Those drinking below sensible limits ranged from 74% in the Belfast Trust to 80% in the South Eastern and Southern Trusts. Those drinking dangerous levels ranged from 2% in the Southern Trust to 9% in the Belfast Trust. There was little difference between Trusts for those drinking at above sensible but below dangerous levels, ranging from 17% to 19% across the five HSC Trusts.

Table 4.2b Drinking level based on weekly guidelines for sensible drinking by HSC Trust

	Base (N)	Below sensible limits	Above sensible but below dangerous	Dangerous Levels
HSC Trust				
Belfast	168	74%	17%	9%
Northern	264	76%	19%	5%
South Eastern	214	80%	17%	3%
Southern	186	80%	18%	2%
Western	140	75%	19%	6%
Base (N)	972			

5. Binge Drinking

There are various definitions of binge drinking. For the purpose of this study a binge is defined as consuming ten or more units of alcohol in one session for males and consuming seven or more units for females. These are the same levels as used in previous surveys.

5.1 Prevalence of binge drinking

Overall, three in ten respondents (30%) were classified as having binged on at least one occasion in the week prior to the survey. This was a similar proportion to the 2008 survey (32%).

5.1a Age and Gender

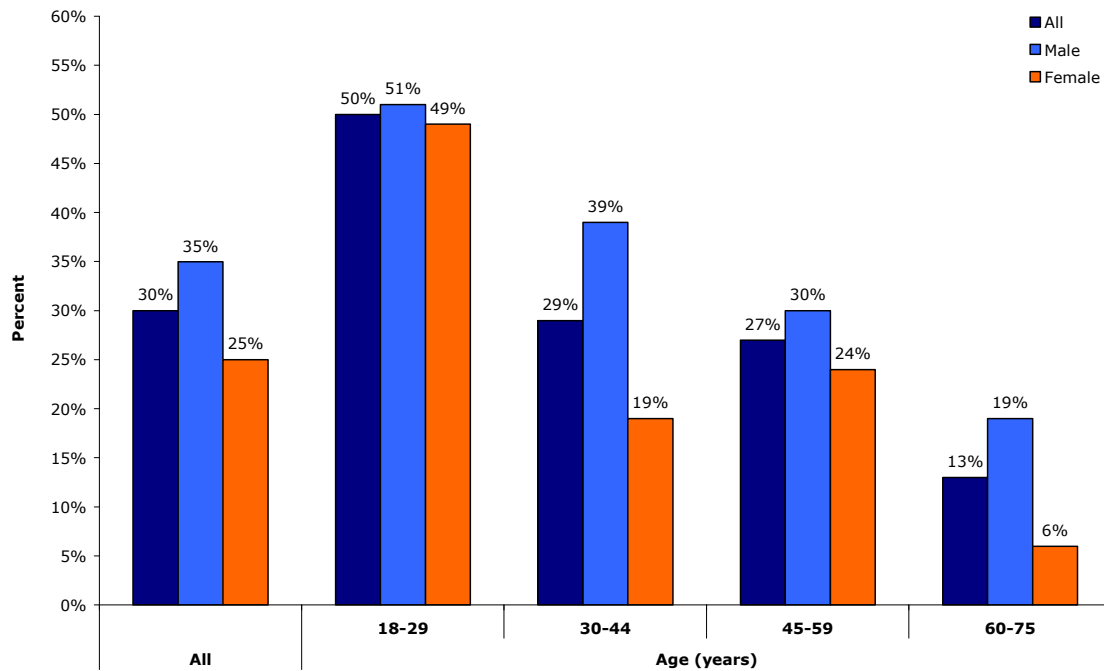
There was a significant difference in the prevalence of binge drinking between males (35%) and females (25%). This was also the case in 2008 (in 2008, 35% male and 29% female).

A significant difference was also observed for age and the prevalence of binge drinking. Those aged 18-29 years were significantly more likely than any other age group to binge on at least one occasion (50%). Half of all respondents within the youngest age group (50% of 18-29 year olds) were classified as being a binge drinker, while only 13% of those in the eldest group (60-75 year olds) were classified as such (see figure 5.1a). Those aged 30-44 years (29%) and 45-59 years (27%) were more likely to have binged on at least one occasion than those aged 60-75 years (13%). These results are similar to those in the 2008 survey (in 2008, 54% of those aged 18-29 years and 16% of those aged 60-75 years).

Table 5.1a Proportion of respondents who binged on at least one occasion in the week prior to the survey overall and by gender and age

	Base (N)	Proportion of respondents who binged on at least one occasion
Overall		
All Respondents	972	30%
Base (N)	972	
Gender		
Male	498	35%
Female	474	25%
Base (N)	972	
Age Group		
18-29	182	50%
30-44	343	29%
45-59	280	27%
60-75	167	13%
Base (N)	972	

Figure 5.1a Prevalence of binge drinking overall and by age and gender



5.1b HSC Trust

About one third of respondents in four of the five Health & Social Care Trusts were classified as binge drinkers (31% in Belfast and 33% in the Northern, Southern and Western Trusts). In contrast, the South Eastern Trust had a significantly lower proportion of respondents classified as binge drinkers at just over two in ten (21%).

Table 5.1b Proportion of respondents who binged on at least one occasion in the week prior to the survey by HSC Trust

	Base (N)	Proportion of respondents who binged on at least one occasion
HSC Trust		
Belfast	168	31%
Northern	264	33%
South Eastern	214	21%
Southern	186	33%
Western	140	33%
Base (N)	972	

5.1c Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

Those in routine or manual occupations and those not classified were significantly more likely to binge drink when compared to those in managerial and professional or intermediate occupations. Almost half (48%) of those not classified (including those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students) and 36% of those in routine or manual jobs had at least one binge drinking session in the week prior to

the survey, compared to 27% of those in intermediate occupations and 23% of those in managerial or professional occupations. This was similar to 2008 findings (43% of routine or manual; 31% of unclassified; 29% of intermediate and 21% of managerial and professional).

There was a significant association between household income and binge drinking. Those earning £36,400 – 51,999 (21%) and those earning £52,000 or over (21%) were significantly less likely than any other income to have binged on at least one occasion.

Within education status, those with an A-level standard of education or higher were significantly less likely to have binged at least once (26%) compared to those with O-level or commercial qualifications (33%) or those with none (35%). This was also the pattern in 2008 (28% of those with A-level or higher, 34% of those with O-level or commercial and 40% of those with no qualifications).

Table 5.1c Proportion of respondents classified as binge drinking at least once in the week prior to the survey by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base (N)	Proportion of respondents who binged on at least one occasion
Socio-economic Group		
Managerial & professional	325	23%
Intermediate occupations	256	27%
Routine & manual	347	36%
Not classified ¹	44	48%
Base (N)	972	
Household Income		
£52,000 or over	137	21%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	21%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	33%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	33%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	36%
Under £10,400	96	34%
Base (N)	972	
Education Status		
A Level/ Higher education	498	26%
O Level / Commercial	275	33%
No qualifications	197	35%
Base (N)	970	

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

5.2 Binge drinking by day of week

A similar pattern was seen for days on which binge drinking occurred and that for days on which drinking occurred overall. The weekend is the most common time for consuming alcohol and also for exceeding binge drinking levels. One in five respondents engaged in a binge drinking session on the Saturday prior to the survey (21%) which was similar to 2008 (20%). The next most common day for binge drinking was Friday (9%) followed by Sunday (6%). Again this was similar to 2008 (10% on Friday and 6% on Sunday).

5.2a Gender

The only significant difference in gender for binge drinking on a weekday was for Monday when males are more likely to binge than females (5% of males compared to 1% of females). There were no significant weekday differences in the 2008 report.

On all three weekend days males were significantly more likely to binge than females (12% male and 7% female on Friday, 25% male and 17% female on Saturday, 9% male and 4% female on Sunday). Gender differences were not apparent in 2008 for Friday or Saturday, however, on Sunday significantly more males than females engaged in binge drinking (on Sunday in 2008, 9% male and 3% female).

5.2b Age

Significant differences in age group and binge drinking on a weekday were observed on a Monday and Wednesday. On Monday, those aged 45-59 years (5%) were more likely than those aged 30-44 years (1%) to binge. On Wednesday those aged 18-29 years (5%) and 45-59 years (5%) were more likely to binge drink than those aged 30-44 years (1%).

During the weekend, on all three days there were significant differences between age groups. On a Friday, those aged 18-29 years were more likely to report a binge drinking session than those aged 30-44 years and 60-75 years. On Saturday those aged 18-29 years were more likely to binge than any other age group (32% reported having a binge drinking session compared to 22% of 30-44 year olds, 18% of 45-59 year olds and 10% of 65-75 year olds). On Sunday, those aged 18-29 years and 45-59 years were most likely to binge drink. All three weekend days were also significant in 2008, again with the youngest group being most likely to have recorded a binge drinking session compared to any of the other age groups (on Saturday in 2008, 34% of 18-29 year olds reported at least one binge drinking session compared to 22% of 30-44 year olds, 11% of 45-59 year olds and 12% of 65-70 year olds).

Table 5.2 Prevalence of binge drinking by day of week overall and for gender and age group

	Base	Day of week						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Overall								
All	972	3%	2%	3%	4%	9%	21%	6%
Base (N)	972							
Gender								
Male	498	5%	3%	4%	5%	12%	25%	9%
Female	474	1%	2%	3%	3%	7%	17%	4%
Base (N)	972							
Age Group								
18-29	182	3%	4%	5%	4%	15%	32%	12%
30-44	343	1%	2%	1%	3%	7%	22%	4%
45-59	280	5%	2%	5%	5%	10%	18%	9%
60-75	167	2%	2%	2%	2%	6%	10%	3%
Base (N)	972							

5.3 Level and frequency of binge drinking

5.3.1 Number of binge drinking sessions

Overall, seven in ten respondents (70%) did not have a binge drinking session at all during the week prior to the survey. Almost two in ten (19%) had done so once, over one in twenty (6%) had done so twice and less than one in twenty (4%) had done so on three or more occasions. The figures were similar to 2008 findings (68% on no occasion, 23% once, 6% twice and 3% on three or more occasions).

Differences in the number of binges recorded were significant for gender, with female respondents being significantly more likely not to have binged at all in the week prior to the survey (75%) compared to males (65%). In 2008, 71% of females compared to 65% of males did not binge on any day.

Age differences were also significant, with the eldest respondents (60-75 years) being significantly more likely not to have binged at all in the week prior to the survey (87%) compared to the youngest (50% of 18-29 year olds). This was also the case in 2008 (84% of 60-75 year olds compared to 45% of 18-29 year olds).

The 18-29 year old group was most likely to have had one binge drinking session (32%) or to have had two binge drinking sessions (12%). This was also the case in 2008 (36% one session and 13% two sessions). This group was equally likely to have three or more sessions as those aged 45-59 years (6% for each).

Table 5.3.1 Number of binge drinking sessions recorded overall and by gender and age group

	Base (N)	Overall	Gender		Age Group			
			Male	Female	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
No. of binge sessions								
None	682	70%	65%	75%	50%	71%	73%	87%
One	187	19%	20%	18%	32%	21%	16%	7%
Two	63	6%	8%	5%	12%	6%	6%	4%
Three or more	40	4%	6%	2%	6%	3%	6%	2%
Base (N)	972	972	498	474	182	343	280	167

5.3.2 Drinking Classifications for Male Respondents

Males who drink above sensible weekly limits (more than 21 units) are categorised as risk drinkers. Males who drink more than 50 units per week are categorised as heavy drinkers.

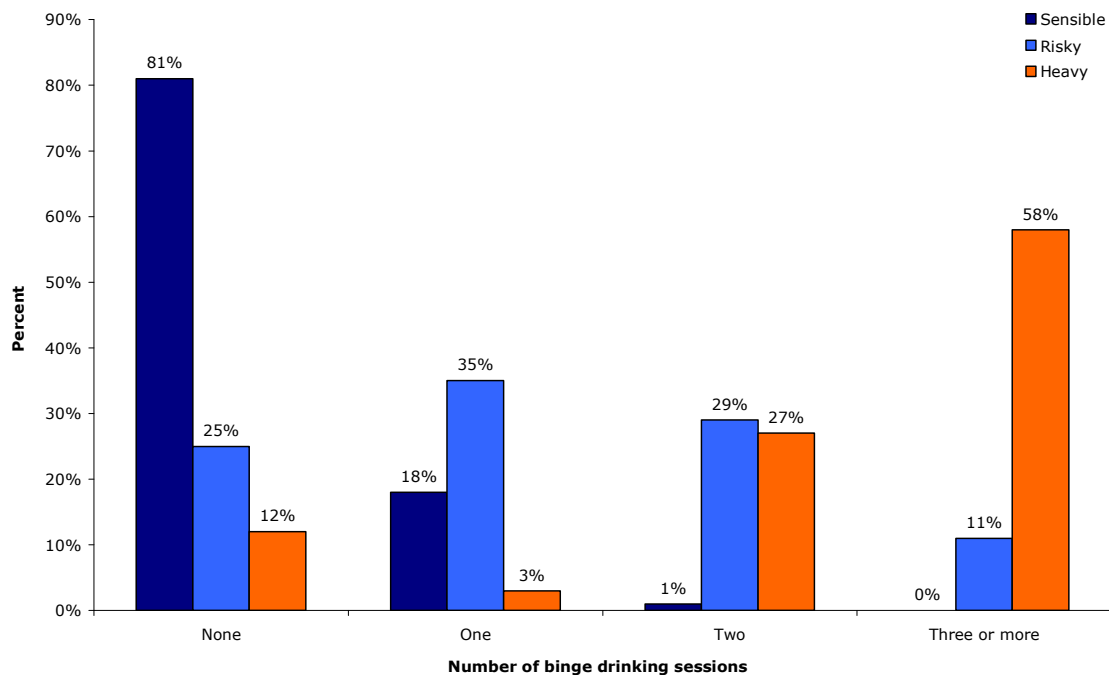
Overall, almost three quarters (74%) of male respondents who drank were classified as sensible drinkers, consuming 21 units or less of alcohol in the week prior to the survey. Around two in ten (19%) were considered risky drinkers, consuming between 21.5 and 50 units of alcohol and less than one in ten (7%) were heavy drinkers, consuming in excess of 50 units.

When the number of binge drinking sessions reported by the respondent was compared to their drinking classification, the results were significant - 81% of those who fell within the sensible category had no binge sessions while 18% had one. In contrast, 85% of respondents in the heavy drinking classification had at least two binge sessions in the week prior to the survey (27% reported two sessions and 58% had three or more). The majority of risky drinkers reported either one (35%) or two (29%) binge drinking sessions.

Table 5.3.2 Number of binge drinking sessions recorded within each drinking classification for males

Drinking Classification	Base (N)	Overall	Number of binge sessions			
			None	One	Two	Three or more
Sensible (<=21 units)	370	74%	81%	18%	1%	0%
Risky (21.5-50 units)	95	19%	25%	35%	29%	11%
Heavy (>50 units)	33	7%	12%	3%	27%	58%
Base (N)	498	498	326	102	41	29

Figure 5.3.2 Line graph showing the number of binge drinking sessions recorded within each drinking classification for male respondents



5.3.3 Drinking Classifications for Female Respondents

Females who drink above sensible weekly limits (more than 14 units for females) are categorised as risk drinkers. Females who drink more than 35 units are categorised as heavy drinkers, however, as so few females were classified as heavy drinkers, the heavy and risky drinkers have been analysed together.

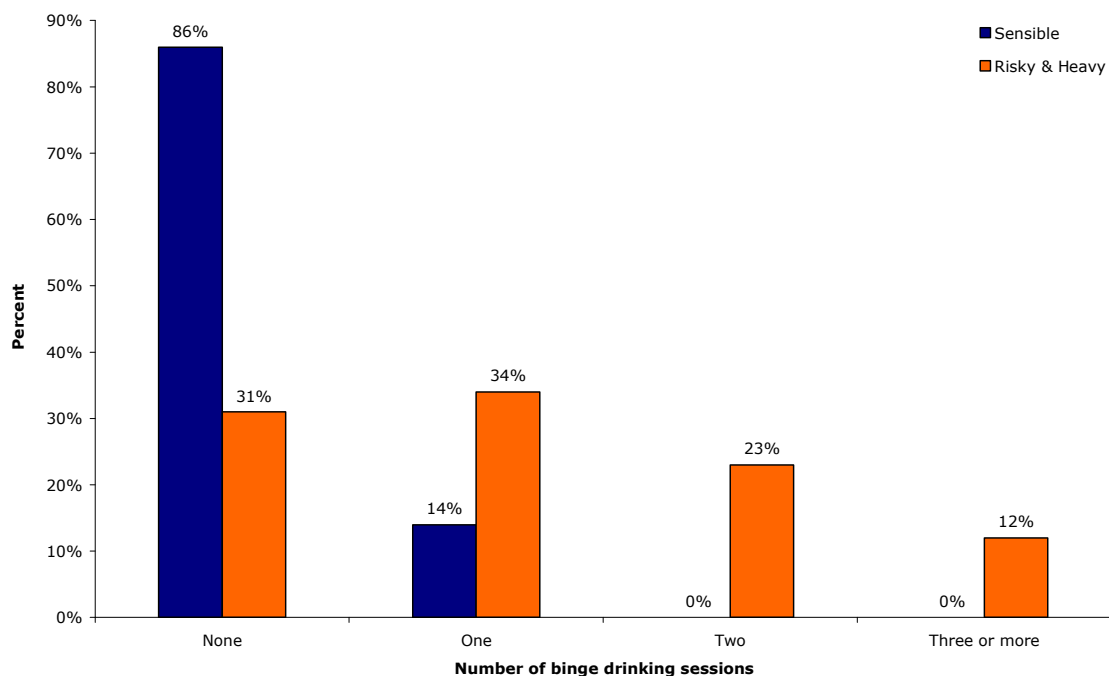
Overall, eight in ten female respondents (80%) who drank were classified as sensible drinkers, consuming 14 units or less of alcohol in the week prior to the survey. Two in ten (20%) were considered risky or heavy drinkers, consuming in excess of the recommended 14 units.

All respondents (100%) who fell within the sensible drinking classification had no more than one binge session in the week prior to the survey and 86% of these had none at all. Over half (57%) of female respondents who were classified as risky or heavy drinkers reported one or two binge sessions (34% had one binge and 23% had two binges), and over one in ten (12%) reported three or more binge sessions. Figure 5.3.3 below helps to illustrate these results.

Table 5.3.3 Number of binge drinking sessions recorded within each drinking classification for females

Drinking Classification	Base (N)	Overall	Number of binge sessions			
			None	One	Two	Three or more
Sensible (<=14 units)	380	80%	86%	14%	0%	0%
Risky & Heavy (>14 units)	94	20%	31%	34%	23%	12%
Base (N)	474	474	356	85	22	11

Figure 5.3.3 Line graph showing the number of binge drinking sessions recorded within each drinking classification for female respondents



6. Problem Drinking

6.1 CAGE Questions

It is widely acknowledged that drinking consumption is underreported and, therefore, a test of alcohol dependence that was developed in order to identify people who have a problem with alcohol was incorporated into the questionnaire. This simple tool called the CAGE questions asks respondents whether or not they agree with each of the four statements listed below. Agreeing to two or more of these questions suggests that it is highly likely a problem with alcohol exists.

- I have felt that I ought to **C**ut down on my drinking.
- People have **A**nnoyed me by criticising my drinking.
- I have felt ashamed or **G**uilty about my drinking.
- I have had a drink first thing in the morning (**E**ye opener) to steady my nerves or get rid of a hangover.

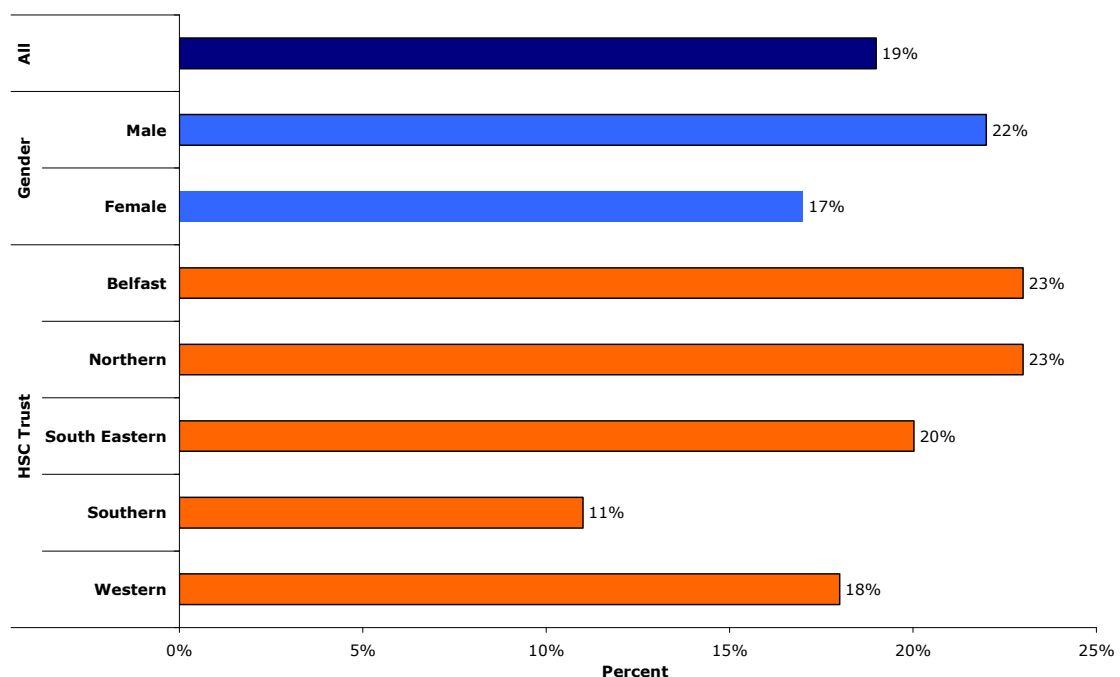
6.1.1 I have felt I ought to cut down on my drinking

Overall, almost one fifth of respondents (19%) felt that they ought to cut down on their drinking. This was similar to 2008 (22%). Positive responses to this statement were significant for gender and HSC Trust but not for age, socio-economic group, household income or education status.

The proportion of males who felt that they ought to cut down on their drinking was significantly higher than females (22% of males compared to 17% of females). In 2008, 24% of males compared to 20% of females felt that they ought to cut down on their drinking.

The Southern Trust had a significantly lower proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement (11%) compared to the Belfast (23%) Northern (23%) and South Eastern (20%) Trusts.

Figure 6.1.1 Bar chart displaying respondents who gave positive responses to the statement 'I have felt I ought to cut down on my drinking' overall and by gender and HSC Trust



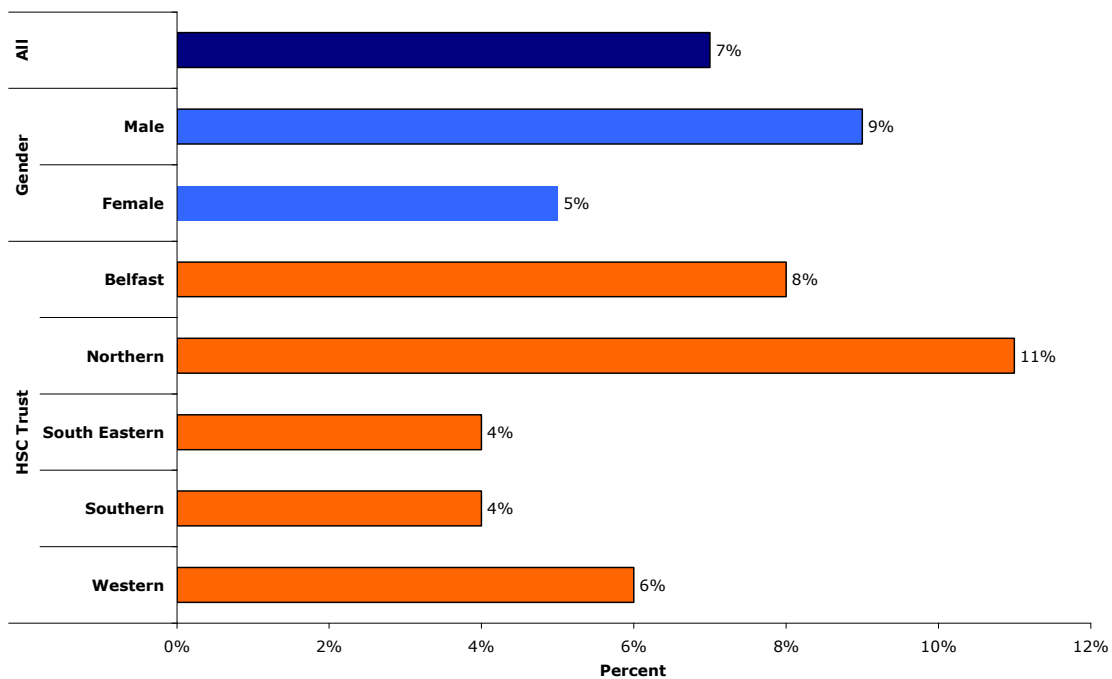
6.1.2 People have annoyed me by criticising my drinking

Overall, just under one in twelve respondents (7%) agreed that they have been annoyed by other people criticising their drinking, compared to 10% in 2008. Positive responses to this statement were significant for gender and HSC Trust, but not for age, socio-economic group, household income or education status.

The proportion of respondents who agreed that people have annoyed them by criticising their drinking was significantly higher for males (9%) compared to females (5%).

There was a significant association between HSC Trust and whether respondents felt annoyed by people who criticised their drinking. Those in the Northern HSC Trust (11%) were significantly more likely to agree with this statement than those in the South Eastern and Southern HSC Trust (each 4%). These figures are illustrated in figure 6.1.3 below.

Figure 6.1.2 Bar chart displaying respondents who gave positive responses to the statement 'People have annoyed me by criticising my drinking' overall and by gender and HSC Trust



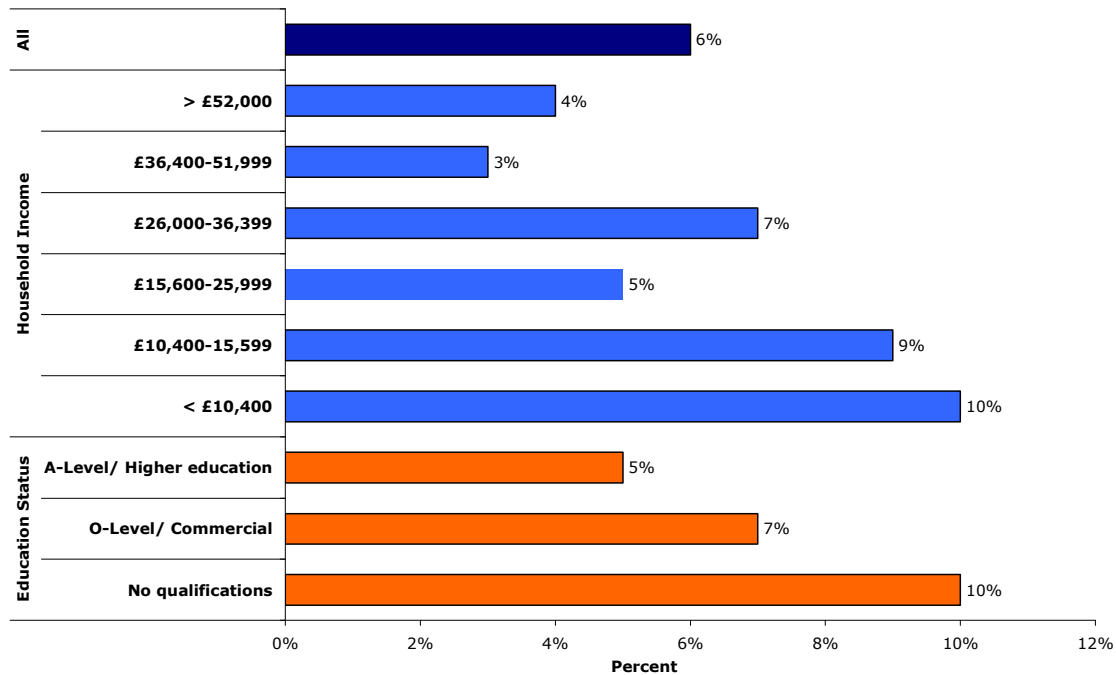
6.1.3 I have felt ashamed or guilty about my drinking

Overall, just under one in ten respondents (6%) agreed that they have felt ashamed or guilty about their drinking, equal to that in 2008. Positive responses to this statement were significant for age and education status, but not for gender, HSC Trust, household income or socio-economic group.

Those aged 30-44 years (4%) were significantly less likely to have felt ashamed or guilty about their drinking than those aged 18-29 years (10%) and 45-59 years (8%). There were no significant age differences in 2008.

Within education status, those with no qualifications (10%) were significantly more likely to feel ashamed or guilty about their drinking compared to those with A Level or Higher education (5%). Differences in education status in 2008 were not significant.

Figure 6.1.3 Bar chart displaying respondents who gave positive responses to the statement 'I have felt ashamed or guilty about my drinking' overall and by income and education status



6.1.4 I have had a drink first thing in the morning to steady my nerves or get rid of a hangover

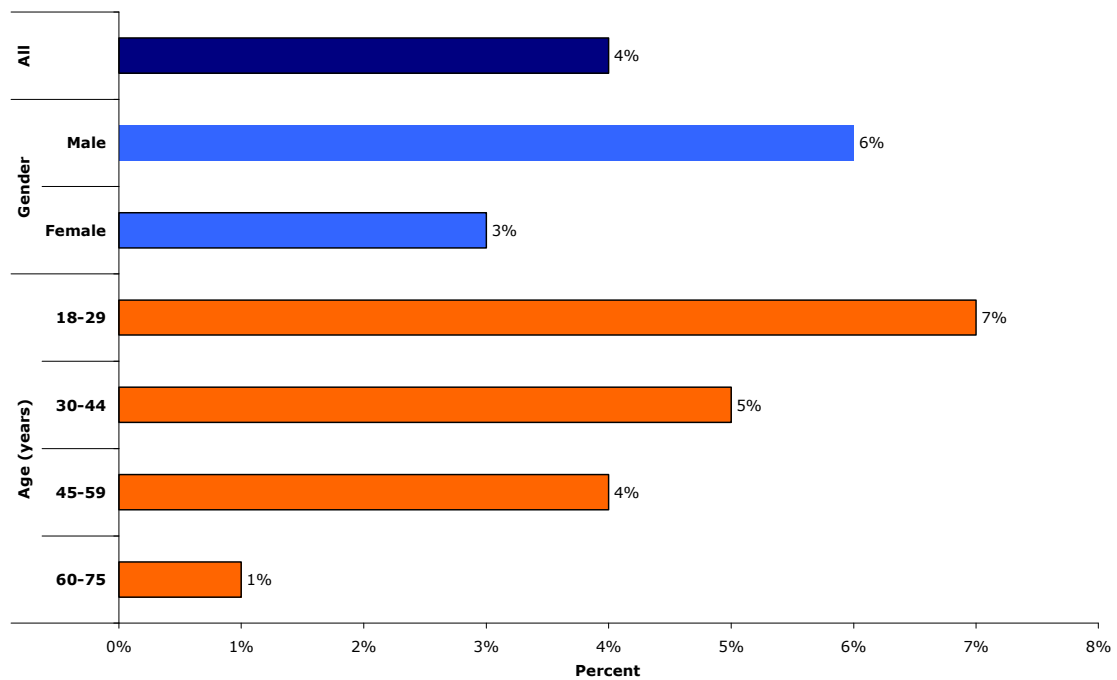
Overall, about one in twenty respondents (4%) agreed that they have had a drink first thing in the morning to steady their nerves or get rid of a hangover. This was also the case in 2008 (4%). Positive responses to this statement were significant for gender, age and socio-economic group, but not for HSC Trust, household income or education status.

Male respondents were significantly more likely than female respondents to have had a drink first thing in the morning to steady their nerves or get rid of a hangover (6% of males, 3% of females). In 2008, 5% of males and 3% of females agreed to the statement.

There was an association with this statement and age. Those aged 18-29 years and 30-44 years were significantly more likely than those aged 60-75 years to have had a drink first thing in the morning to steady their nerves or get rid of a hangover (7% of those aged 18-29 years, 5% of those aged 30-44 years compared to 1% of those aged 60-75 years). The Results in 2008 were also significant with 6% of those aged 18-29 years compared to 1% of those aged 45-59 years agreeing with the statement.

There was a significant association between socio-economic status and whether respondents had a drink first thing in the morning to steady nerves or get rid of a hangover (7% of job not classified, 6% of routine/manual, 4% of intermediate and 2% of managerial/professional agreed with the statement) These results were similar to 2008 (6% not classified, 5% routine/manual, 4% intermediate and 2% managerial/professional).

Figure 6.1.4 Bar chart displaying respondents who gave positive responses to the statement 'I have had a drink first thing in the morning to steady my nerves or get rid of a hangover' overall and by gender and age



All figures for those agreeing with each of the four CAGE questions are summarised in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Proportion of respondents agreeing with CAGE statements

	Base (N)	C ¹	A ²	G ³	E□
Overall					
All Respondents	972	19%	7%	6%	4%
Base (N)	972				
Gender					
Male	498	22%	9%	7%	6%
Female	474	17%	5%	6%	3%
Base (N)	972				
Age Group					
18-29	182	21%	9%	10%	7%
30-44	343	17%	6%	4%	5%
45-59	280	23%	8%	8%	4%
60-75	167	16%	5%	6%	1%
Base (N)	972				
HSC Trust					
Belfast	168	23%	8%	7%	7%
Northern	264	23%	11%	9%	6%
South Eastern	214	20%	4%	5%	2%
Southern	186	11%	4%	5%	2%
Western	140	18%	6%	4%	4%
Base (N)	972				
Socio-economic Group					
Managerial & professional	325	19%	6%	5%	2%
Intermediate occupations	256	19%	5%	6%	4%
Routine & manual	347	20%	9%	8%	6%
Not classified□	44	14%	9%	11%	7%
Base (N)	972				
Household Income					
£52,000 or over	137	20%	7%	4%	1%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	18%	4%	3%	4%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	17%	7%	7%	3%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	16%	8%	5%	4%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	22%	6%	9%	5%
Under £10,400	96	21%	13%	10%	6%
Base (N)	828				
Education Status					
A-Level/ Higher education	498	22%	6%	5%	4%
O-Level/ Commercial	275	16%	7%	7%	3%
No qualifications	197	17%	10%	10%	7%
Base (N)	970				

¹ I have felt I ought to **C**ut down on my drinking.

² People have **A**nnoyed me by criticising my drinking.

³ I have felt ashamed or **G**uilty about my drinking.

□ I have had a drink first thing in the morning (**E**ye-opener) to steady my nerves or get rid of a hangover.

□ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

6.2 Problem drinkers

Overall, around one in ten respondents (9%) gave answers to the CAGE questions that indicated they might have a problem with alcohol. This was comparable to the 2008 survey (10%).

6.2a Age and Gender

There was no significant difference between the proportion of males (11%) and females (8%) whose responses to the CAGE questions indicated that they might have a problem with alcohol. These results were similar to those in 2008 (11% male compared to 9% female).

There was no significant difference between age and those who were indicated as having a problem with alcohol. Fourteen per cent of 18-29 year olds (14%) compared to 10% of 45-59 year olds and 7% of both 30-44 year olds and 60-75 year olds were indicated as having a problem with alcohol.

Table 6.2a Proportion of respondents for whom CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol overall and by gender and age

	Base (N)	CAGE Questions indicate a problem with alcohol
Overall		
All Respondents	972	9%
Base (N)	972	
Gender		
Male	498	11%
Female	474	8%
Base (N)	972	
Age Group		
18-29	182	14%
30-44	343	7%
45-59	280	10%
60-75	167	7%
Base (N)	972	

6.2b HSC Trust

There was a significant association between HSC Trust and those for whom the CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol. A significantly greater proportion of respondents from the Northern Trust (14%) than the South Eastern (8%), Western (6%) and Southern (5%) HSC Trusts, were indicated as having a problem.

Table 6.2b Proportion of respondents for whom CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol by HSC Trust

	Base (N)	CAGE Questions indicate a problem with alcohol
HSC Trust		
Belfast	168	11%
Northern	264	14%
South Eastern	214	8%
Southern	186	5%
Western	140	6%
Base (N)	972	

6.2c Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

There was no significant association between socio-economic group, household income or education status and the proportion of respondents that the CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol.

Within socio-economic group, 12% of those in routine or manual occupations were indicated as having a problem with alcohol, compared to 11% of not classified, 8% of intermediate occupations and 7% of managerial and professional.

Within household income, the proportion of those indicated as having a problem with alcohol ranged from 4% of those earning £36,400-51,999 to 16% of those earning under £10,400.

Within education status, the proportion of those indicated as having a problem with alcohol ranged from 8% of those with A Level or Higher education to 12% of those with no qualifications.

Table 6.2c Proportion of respondents for whom CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base (N)	CAGE Questions indicate a problem with alcohol
Socio-economic Group		
Managerial & professional	325	7%
Intermediate occupations	256	8%
Routine & manual	347	12%
Not classified ¹	44	11%
Base (N)	972	
Household Income		
£52,000 or over	137	7%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	4%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	11%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	9%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	10%
Under £10,400	96	16%
Base (N)	828	
Education Status		
A Level/ Higher education	498	8%
O Level / Commercial	275	10%
No qualifications	197	12%
Base (N)	970	

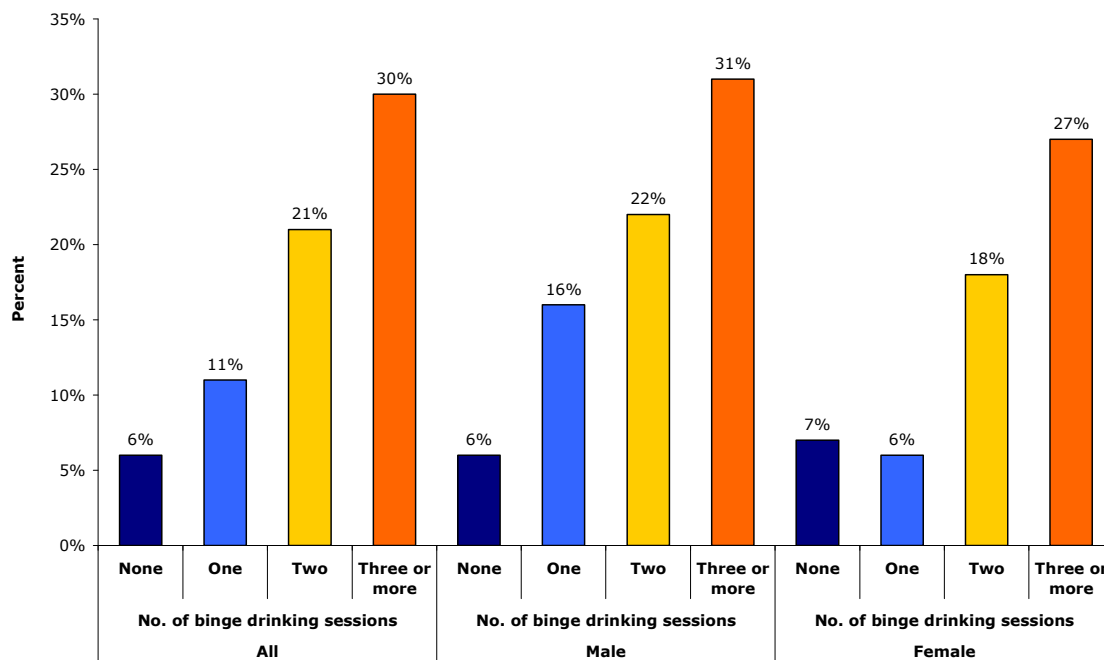
6.2d CAGE results and number of binge drinking sessions

The likelihood of a respondent having a problem with alcohol was significantly related to the number of binge drinking sessions recorded by the respondent. Those respondents who had two and three or more binge drinking sessions were significantly more likely than those who had one or no binge drinking sessions to be indicated as having a problem with alcohol (6% none, 11% one, 21% two and 30% three or more)(see figure 6.2d below).

Table 6.2d Proportion of respondents for whom CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol by number of binge drinking sessions

	Base (N)	CAGE Questions indicate a problem with alcohol		
		Male	Female	All
Overall				
All	972	11	8	9%
	972	498	474	972
No. of binge drinking sessions				
None	682	6%	7%	6%
One	187	16%	6%	11%
Two	63	22%	18%	21%
Three or more	40	31%	27%	30%
	972	498	474	972

Figure 6.2d Likelihood of alcohol related problems by number of binge drinking sessions, overall and for gender



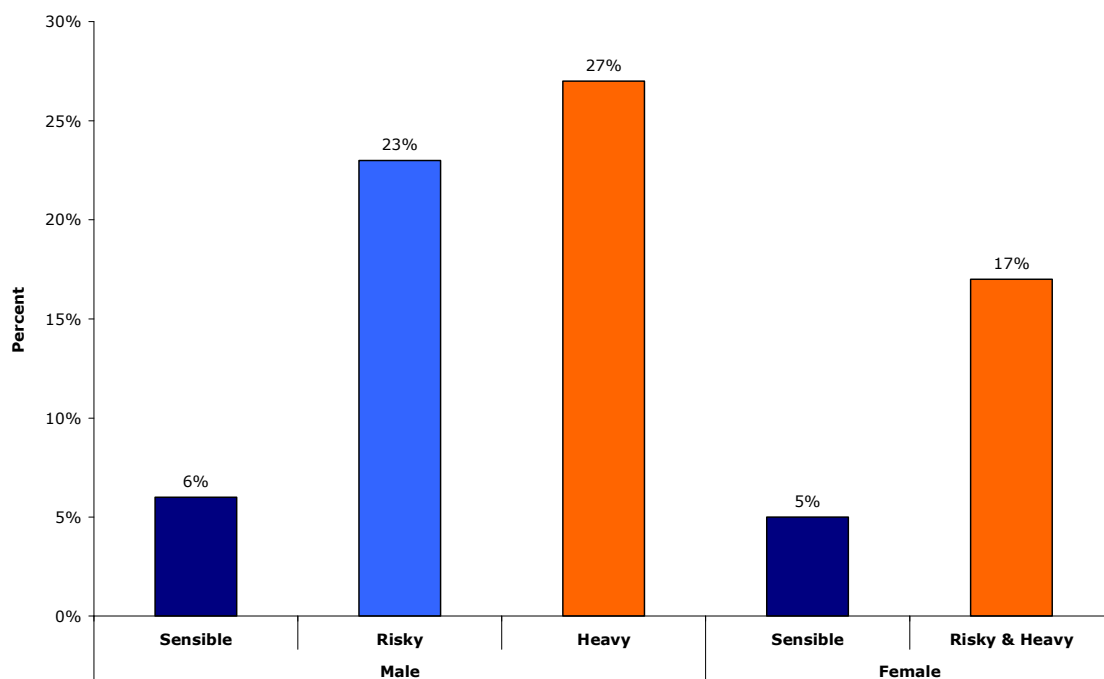
6.2e CAGE results and drinking classification

The likelihood of a respondent having a problem with alcohol was significantly related to their drinking classification. As expected, the heavier the respondent's level of drinking, the more likely they were to have a problem with alcohol. For males, just over one in twenty (6%) of those who stayed within sensible limits of drinking had responses to the CAGE questions that indicated a problem but this increased to almost three in ten (27%) of those classified as heavy drinkers. For females, one in twenty (5%) of those who were classified as sensible drinkers had responses to the CAGE questions that indicated a problem but this increased to almost one in five (17%) of those within the risky or heavy category (see figure 6.2b below).

Table 6.2e Proportion of respondents for whom CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol by number of binge drinking sessions

	Base (N)	CAGE Questions indicate a problem with alcohol
Drinking Level (males only)		
Sensible	370	6%
Risky	95	23%
Heavy	33	27%
Base (N)	498	
Drinking Level (females only)		
Sensible	380	5%
Risky or Heavy	94	17%
Base (N)	474	

Figure 6.2e Proportion of respondents indicating a problem with alcohol by drinking classification



7. Perceptions of drinking

All respondents who had a drink in the week prior to the survey were asked if they considered themselves to be heavy, moderate or light drinkers. They were also asked if they had ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking or if they themselves had ever done something while drinking that they later regretted. The results of these are outlined below and are again presented as a proportion of those who drank in the week before the survey and not as a proportion of all those who responded to the survey or who stated that they ever drank.

7.1 Self-perception of drinking

Overall, the majority of respondents (61%) considered themselves to be light drinkers. About a third (36%) felt they were moderate drinkers and less than one in twenty (3%) felt that they were heavy drinkers. These figures are similar to 2008 (in 2008, 56% said they were light drinkers, 40% that they were moderate and 4% that they were heavy).

7.1a Age and Gender

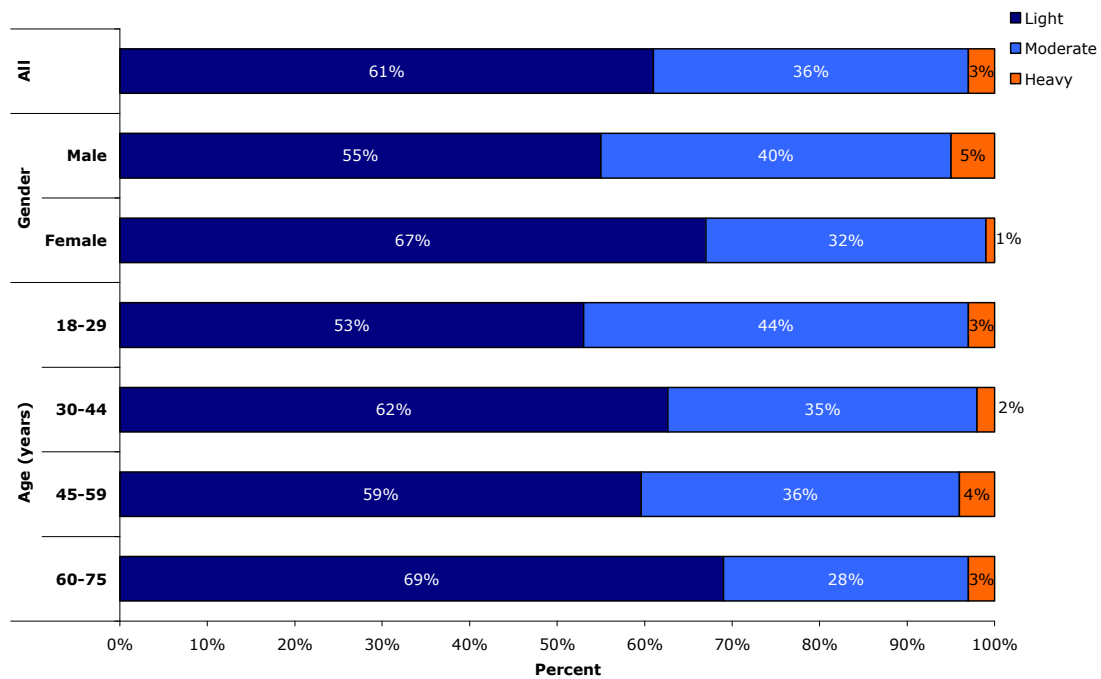
The difference between self-perception of one's drinking and gender was significant. While the majority of respondents of both sexes perceived themselves as light drinkers, the proportion was just over half for males (55%) compared to two thirds of females (67%). Four in ten males (40%) felt they were moderate drinkers, while about three in ten females classified themselves as such (32%). Five per cent of male respondents considered themselves to be heavy drinkers compared to 1% of females. Significant gender differences were also observed in 2008 (61% female compared to 51% male considered themselves to be light drinkers).

There was no significant association between age group and the proportion of respondents' drinking perceptions. Similar proportions of all age groups considered themselves to be heavy drinkers (3% of 18-29 year olds, 2% of 30-44 year olds, 4% of 45-59 year olds and 3% of 60-75 year olds). Respondents who perceived themselves to be moderate drinkers ranged from 28% of those aged 60-75 years to 44% of those aged 18-29 years. Age differences were significant in 2008.

Table 7.1a Self-perception of drinking level overall and by age and gender

	Base (N)	Self-Perception of drinking level		
		Heavy	Moderate	Light
Overall				
All	971	3%	36%	61%
Base (N)	971	30	349	592
Gender				
Male	497	5%	40%	55%
Female	474	1%	32%	67%
Base (N)	971	30	349	592
Age Group				
18-29	182	3%	44%	53%
30-44	342	2%	35%	62%
45-59	280	4%	36%	59%
60-75	167	3%	28%	69%
Base (N)	971	30	349	592

Figure 7.1a Bar chart illustrating self-perceptions of drinking by gender and age



7.1b Health & Social Care Trust

There were significant differences in how respondents classified their drinking and which Health & Social Care Trust they belonged to. About half of respondents in the Belfast, Northern and Western HSC Trusts considered themselves to be light drinkers (55% in the Belfast Trust, 54% in the Northern Trust and 53% in the Western Trust). These proportions were significantly lower than the Southern Trust (70%) and the South Eastern Trust (71%).

The Belfast HSC Trust had a significantly higher proportion of respondents who classified themselves as Heavy drinkers (6%) compared to the South Eastern and Southern HSC Trusts (each 1%). In the Northern HSC Trust, 4% of respondents classified themselves as heavy drinkers while 3% did so in the Western HSC Trust.

Table 7.1b Self-perception of drinking level by HSC Trust

	Base (N)	Self-Perception of drinking level		
		Heavy	Moderate	Light
HSC Trust				
Belfast	168	6%	39%	55%
Northern	263	4%	41%	54%
South Eastern	214	1%	28%	71%
Southern	186	1%	28%	70%
Western	140	3%	44%	53%
Base (N)	971	30	349	592

7.1c Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

There was no significant association between socio-economic group and respondents' drinking perceptions. Of those in occupations not classified, 9% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, compared to 4% of those in intermediate occupations, 3% in routine or manual and 2% in managerial or professional occupations.

There was no significant difference between education status and respondents' perception of their drinking. Of those with no qualifications, 5% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, while 4% of those with O-Level or commercial and 2% with A-Level or higher education considered themselves to be heavy drinkers.

There were no significant results in the 2008 findings for socio-economic group, household income or education status.

Table 7.1c Self-perception of drinking level by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base (N)	Self-Perception of drinking level		
		Heavy	Moderate	Light
Socio-economic Group				
Managerial & professional	325	2%	35%	63%
Intermediate occupations	256	4%	36%	59%
Routine & manual	346	3%	38%	60%
Not classified ¹	44	9%	27%	64%
Base (N)	971	30	349	592
Household Income				
£52,000 or over	137	1%	39%	60%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	2%	32%	66%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	2%	39%	59%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	4%	40%	55%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	4%	36%	60%
Under £10,400	96	8%	27%	65%
Base (N)	828	26	300	502
Education Status				
A-Level/ Higher education	498	2%	39%	59%
O-Level/ Commercial	274	4%	33%	63%
No qualifications	197	5%	34%	61%
Base (N)	969	30	349	590

7.1d Self-perception of drinking and number of binge drinking sessions recorded

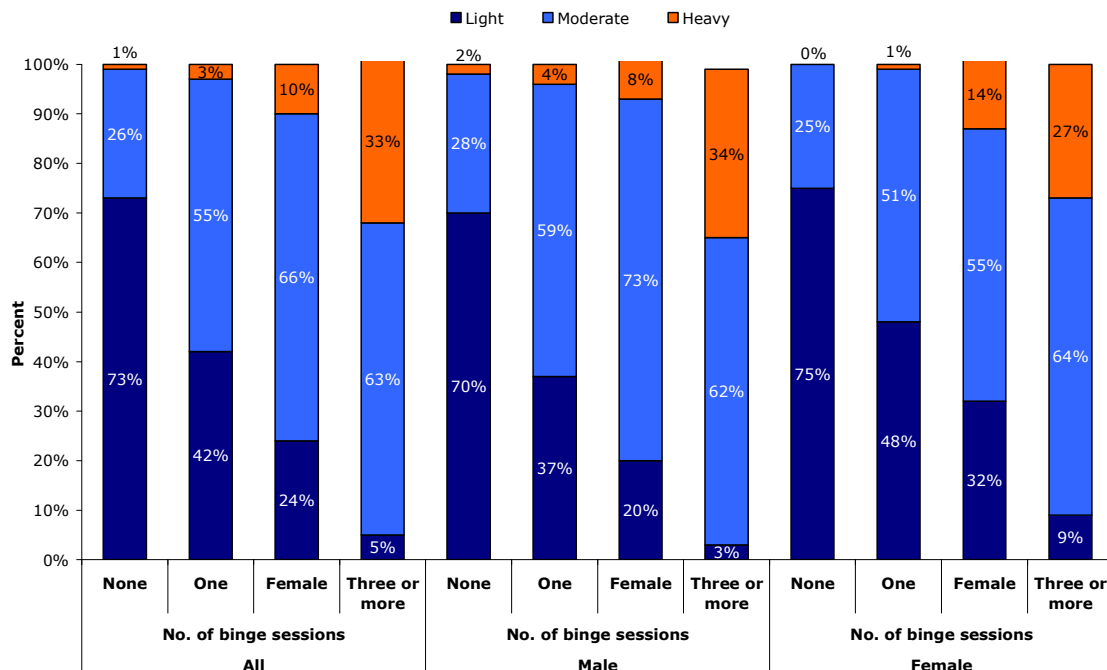
There was a significant relationship between the number of binge drinking sessions recorded for a respondent and how they perceived their own level of drinking. Of those who had no binge drinking sessions, 1% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, 26% considered themselves to be moderate drinkers while 73% considered themselves to be light drinkers. Of those who had 3 or more binge drinking sessions, 33% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, 63% considered themselves to be moderate drinkers, while 5% considered themselves to be light drinkers. For males, 2% of those who recorded no binge drinking sessions in the week prior to the survey described themselves as heavy drinkers compared to a third (34%) of those who had three or more

binges. For females, no respondents who had no binge sessions described themselves as heavy drinkers, while over a quarter (27%) of those who had three or more binges described themselves as being heavy drinkers (see figure 7.1d below).

Table 7.1d Self-perception of drinking level by number of binge drinking sessions recorded

	Base (N)	Number of binge drinking sessions			
		None	One	Two	Three or more
All Respondents					
Heavy	30	1%	3%	10%	33%
Moderate	349	26%	55%	66%	63%
Light	592	73%	42%	24%	5%
Base (N)	971	682	187	62	40
Male Respondents					
Heavy	23	2%	4%	8%	34%
Moderate	199	28%	59%	73%	62%
Light	275	70%	37%	20%	3%
Base (N)	497	326	102	40	29
Female Respondents					
Heavy	7	0%	1%	14%	27%
Moderate	150	25%	51%	55%	64%
Light	317	75%	48%	32%	9%
Base (N)	474	356	85	22	11

Figure 7.1d Self-perception of drinking by number of binge sessions recorded



7.1e Self-perception of drinking and drinking classification

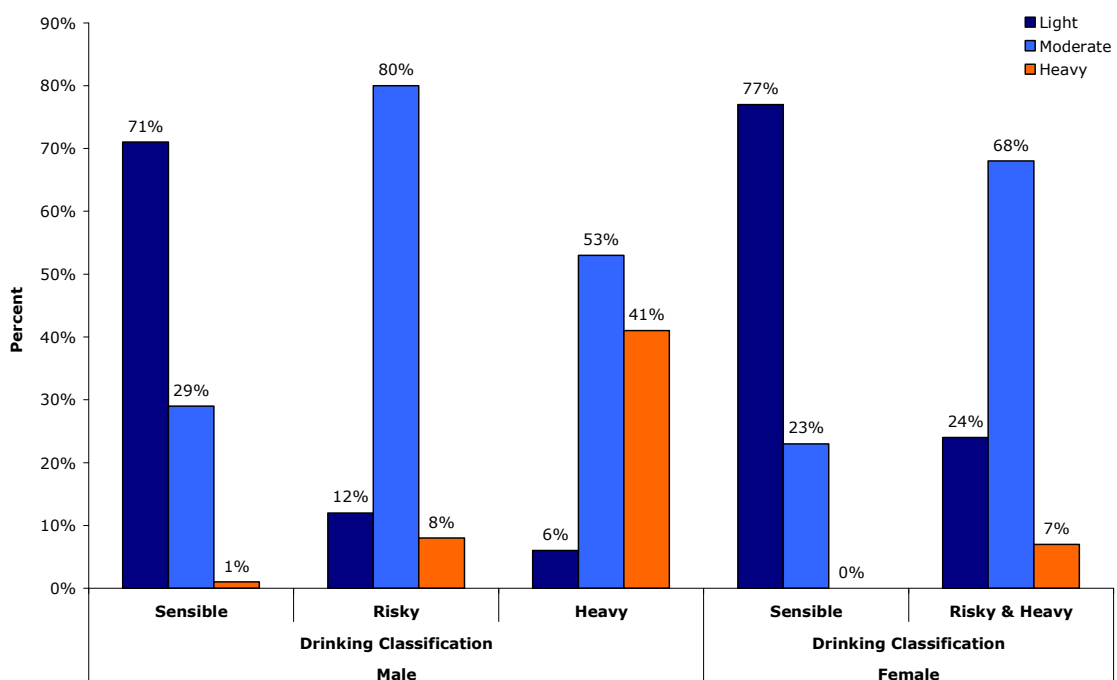
Of those males who were classified as sensible drinkers, 71% perceived themselves to be light drinkers and 29% considered themselves to be moderate drinkers, while of those females classified as sensible drinkers, 77% perceived themselves as light drinkers and 23% considered themselves to be moderate drinkers. Of those males who were classified as being risky drinkers, 80% considered themselves to be moderate drinkers, 12% considered themselves to be light drinkers, while 8% considered themselves as being heavy drinkers. Of those males who were classified as being heavy drinkers, 41% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, 53% considered themselves as moderate drinkers, while 6% considered themselves as being light drinkers.

Of those males who were classified as being heavy drinkers, 41% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, 53% considered themselves as moderate drinkers, while 6% considered themselves as being light drinkers. Of those females who were classified as risky and heavy drinkers, 7% considered themselves as being heavy drinkers, 68% considered themselves as moderate drinkers, while 24% considered themselves as light drinkers.

Table 7.1e Self-perception of drinking by drinking classification

	Base (N)	Self-Perception of drinking level		
		Heavy	Moderate	Light
Drinking Classification (males only)				
Sensible (<=21 units)	370	1%	29%	71%
Risky (21.5-50 units)	95	8%	80%	12%
Heavy (>50 units)	32	41%	53%	6%
Base (N)	497	23	199	275
Drinking Classification (females only)				
Sensible (<=14 units)	380	0%	23%	77%
Risky & Heavy (>14 units)	94	7%	68%	24%
Base (N)	474	7	150	317

Figure 7.1e Self-perception of drinking by drinking classification



7.1f Self-perception of drinking and outcome of CAGE questions

Respondents' self-perception of drinking was also compared to the outcome of the CAGE questions. There was a significant association between self perception of drinking level and the result of the CAGE questions. Of the respondents for whom the CAGE responses indicated a problem with alcohol, 19% considered themselves to be heavy drinkers, 57% considered themselves as moderate drinkers and 24% considered themselves as light drinkers.

Of the respondents for whom the CAGE questions indicated no problem with alcohol, 1% considered themselves as heavy drinkers, 34% considered themselves as moderate drinkers, while 65% considered themselves as light drinkers.

Table 7.1f Self-perception of drinking by result of CAGE questions

	Base (N)	Self-Perception of drinking level		
		Heavy	Moderate	Light
Result of CAGE Questions				
Problem with alcohol indicated	89	19%	57%	24%
No problem with alcohol indicated	882	1%	34%	65%
Base (N)	971	30	349	592

7.2 Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else’s drinking?

Overall, almost half of all respondents (47%) said that they have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else’s drinking, which was similar to 2008 (50%).

7.2a Age and Gender

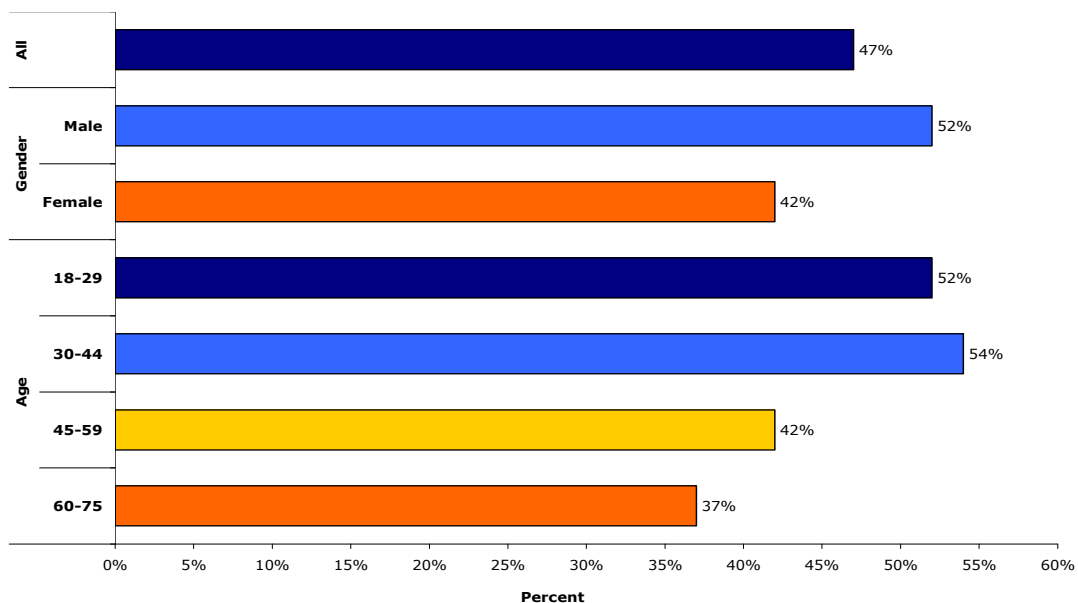
Males were significantly more likely than females to have said yes to this question (52% males compared to 42% females). In contrast, there was no significant gender difference in 2008 (50% female compared to 49% male).

There was a significant association between age and the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else’s drinking. Those aged 18-29 years (52%) and 30-44 years (54%) were significantly more likely than those aged 45-59 years (42%) and 60-75 years (37%) to have answered yes to this statement. There was also a significant association in 2008, with 55% of those aged 18 -29 years compared to 34% of those aged 60-75 years answering yes to this question.

Table 7.2a Respondents who have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else’s drinking by age and gender

	Base(N)	Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else’s drinking?
Overall		
All Respondents	972	47%
Base(N)	972	
Gender		
Male	498	52%
Female	474	42%
Base(N)	972	
Age Group		
18-29	182	52%
30-44	343	54%
45-59	280	42%
60-75	167	37%
Base(N)	972	

Figure 7.2a Bar chart illustrating unpleasant experiences by gender and age



7.2b Health & Social Care Trust

There was a significant association between HSC Trust and the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking. The proportion of those in the Southern HSC Trust (37%) answering yes to this question was significantly smaller than the Belfast (54%), Northern (49%) and South Eastern (49%) HSC Trusts.

Table 7.2b Respondents who have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking by HSC Trust

	Base(N)	Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking?
HSC Trust		
Belfast	168	54%
Northern	264	49%
South Eastern	214	49%
Southern	186	37%
Western	140	46%
Base (N)	972	

7.2c Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

There was no significant association between socio-economic group and the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking. Of those in managerial or professional occupations, 50% answered yes to this statement, compared to 46% of those in intermediate occupations, 45% in routine or manual occupations and 43% in jobs not classified. In 2008 a significant association was observed (57% of managerial or professional, 50% of intermediate and 42% of routing or manual occupations).

There was no significant association between household income and the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking. The proportion of those answering yes to this statement ranged from 41% of those earning £10,400 – 15,599 to 51% of those earning £26,000 – 36,399. In 2008, there was a significant association.

There was a significant association between education status and positive responses to this statement. A greater proportion of those with A Level or higher education (51%) than those with no qualifications (41%) were likely to have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking. This was also the pattern in 2008.

Table 7.2c Respondents who have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base(N)	Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking?
Socio-economic Group		
Managerial & professional	325	50%
Intermediate occupations	256	46%
Routine & manual	347	45%
Not classified ¹	44	43%
	972	
Household Income		
£52,000 or over	137	50%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	46%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	51%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	45%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	41%
Under £10,400	96	49%
	828	
Education Status		
A-Level/ Higher education	498	51%
O-Level/ Commercial	275	44%
No qualifications	197	41%
	970	

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

7.2d Unpleasant experience initiated by others drinking and number of binge drinking sessions recorded

There was no significant association between the number of binge drinking sessions in the week prior to the survey and the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking (44% of those who had no binge drinking sessions, 52% of those who had 1 binge drinking sessions, 51% of those who had 2 binge drinking sessions and 60% of those who had 3 or more).

For both males and females, there was no significant association between the number of binge drinking sessions in the week prior to the survey and the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking. Within males, 50% of those who had no binge drinking sessions and 59% who had three or more answered yes to the statement. Within females, 39% of those who had no binge drinking sessions and 64% of those who had three or more had answered yes to the statement.

In contrast, results were significant in 2008 with 45% of those respondents who had no binge drinking sessions in the week prior to the survey reporting that they had an unpleasant experience

as a result of someone else's drinking compared to 81% of those who reported three binge drinking sessions or more.

Table 7.2d Respondents who have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking by number of binge drinking sessions recorded

	Base(N)	Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking?
All Respondents		
None	682	44%
One	187	52%
Two	63	51%
Three or more	40	60%
Base (N)	972	
Male Respondents		
None	326	50%
One	102	56%
Two	41	54%
Three or more	29	59%
Base (N)	498	
Female Respondents		
None	356	39%
One	85	48%
Two	22	45%
Three or more	11	64%
Base (N)	474	

7.2e Unpleasant experience initiated by others drinking and drinking classification

The likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking was not significantly related to the respondent's drinking classification. For males, 51% of those classified as sensible drinkers, 59% of those classified as risky drinkers and 45% of those classified as heavy drinkers reported having had an unpleasant experience. For female drinkers, 40% of those classified as sensible drinkers and 49% classified as risky or heavy drinkers reported having had an unpleasant experience.

In contrast results in 2008 were significant for both male and female respondents. 78% of males within the heavy category reported having had an unpleasant experience, while 43% of those within the sensible category had. For females, 62% of those within the risky and heavy category and 47% of those within the sensible classification had reported having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking.

Table 7.2e Respondents who have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking by drinking classification

	Base(N)	Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking?
Drinking Classification (males only)		
Sensible (<=21 units)	370	51%
Risky (21.5-50 units)	95	59%
Heavy (>50 units)	33	45%
Base (N)	498	
Drinking Classification (females only)		
Sensible (<=14 units)	380	40%
Risky & Heavy (>14 units)	94	49%
Base (N)	474	

7.2f Unpleasant experience initiated by others drinking and outcome of CAGE questions

There was a significant relationship between the likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking and the results of the CAGE questions.

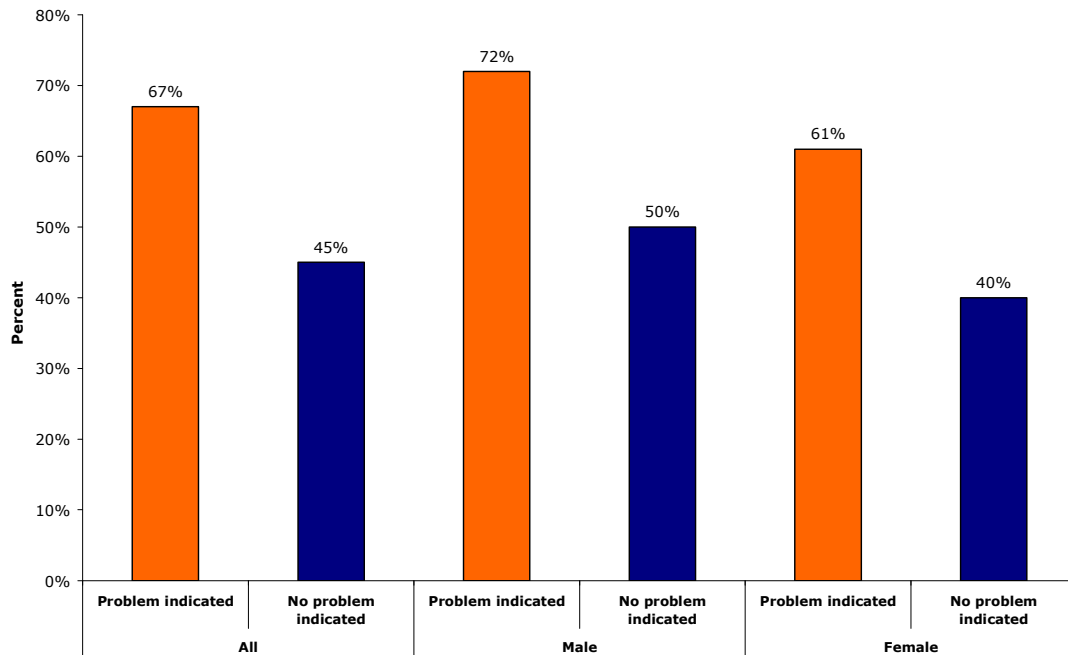
A greater proportion of those whose responses to the CAGE questions indicated a problem with alcohol (67%) than those where no problem with alcohol was indicated (45%) had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking. The results for 2008 were 72% where a problem with alcohol was indicated and 47% where no problem was indicated.

This was also the pattern within gender. For males, half (50%) of those for whom the CAGE responses did not indicate a problem gave positive responses to this question and this increased to seven in ten (72%) if they were indicated as having a problem. For females, the proportion of positive responses was two in five (40%) for those who were not indicated as having a problem and three in five (61%) for those who were indicated as having a problem with alcohol.

Table 7.2f Respondents who have had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking by result of CAGE questions

	Base(N)	Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking?
Overall		
Problem with alcohol indicated	89	67%
No problem with alcohol indicated	883	45%
Base (N)	972	
Male Respondents		
Problem with alcohol indicated	53	72%
No problem with alcohol indicated	445	50%
Base (N)	498	
Female Respondents		
Problem with alcohol indicated	36	61%
No problem with alcohol indicated	438	40%
Base (N)	474	

Figure 7.2f Bar chart illustrating the rise and fall in likelihood of having had an unpleasant experience as a result of someone else's drinking if a problem with alcohol was indicated or not



7.3 Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?

Overall, just over a third (36%) of respondents reported they had done something after drinking alcohol that they later regretted, similar to 2008 (38%).

7.3a Age and Gender

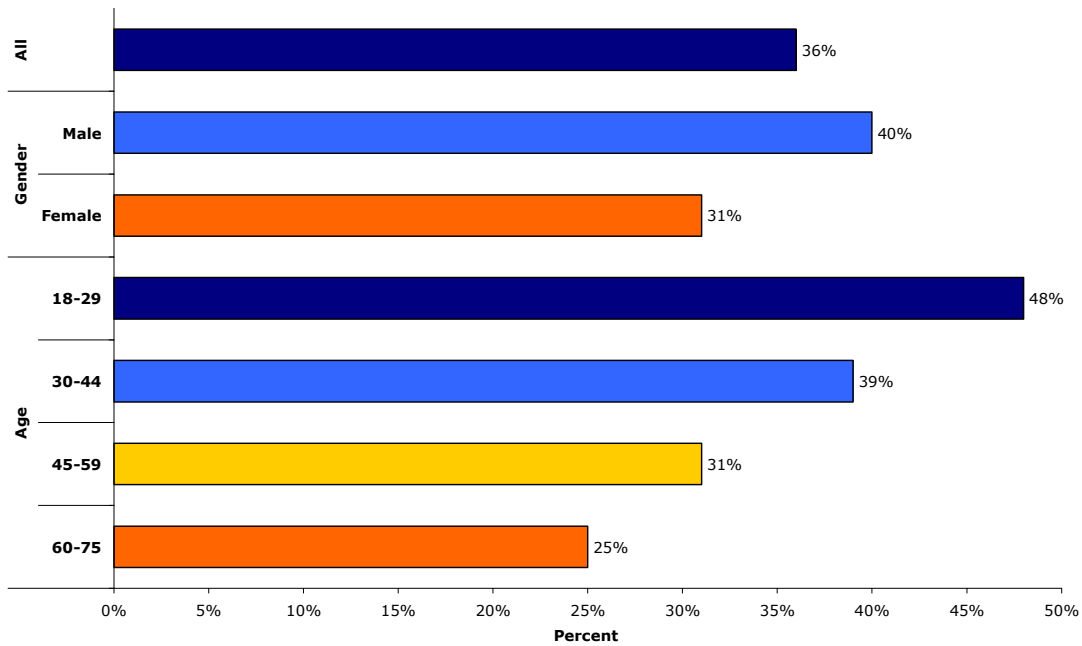
Males were significantly more likely than females to answer yes to the question "Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?" (40% of males, 31% of females answered yes to this question). Gender differences were also significant in 2008 (43% of males compared to 34% of females).

There was a significant association between age of respondents and the likelihood of having done something after drinking that they later regretted. Those aged 18-29 years and 30-44 years were significantly more likely to answer yes to this question than those aged 45-59 years and 60-75 years. (48% of 18-29 year olds, 39% of 30-44 year olds, 31% of 45-59 year olds and 25% of 60-75 year olds). A similar pattern was observed in 2008 (53% of 18-29 year olds, 43% of 30-44 year olds, 33% of 45-59 year olds and 17% of 60-75 year olds).

Table 7.3a Respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted overall and by age and gender

	Base(N)	Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?
Overall		
All Respondents	972	36%
Base(N)	972	
Gender		
Male	498	40%
Female	474	31%
Base(N)	972	
Age Group		
18-29	182	48%
30-44	343	39%
45-59	280	31%
60-75	167	25%
Base(N)	972	

Figure 7.3a Bar chart illustrating those who had done something later regretted by gender and age



7.3b Health & Social Care Trust

There was a significant association between HSC Trust and respondents reporting having done something after drinking alcohol which they later regretted. Those in the Belfast HSC Trust were significantly more likely to answer yes than respondents from other HSC Trusts (31% in the South Eastern, 31% in the Southern and 33% in the Western Trust, 38% in the Northern Trust and 48% in the Belfast Trust).

Table 7.3b Respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by HSC Trust

	Base(N)	Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?
HSC Trust		
Belfast	168	48%
Northern	264	38%
South Eastern	214	31%
Southern	186	31%
Western	140	33%
Base (N)	972	

7.3c Socio-economic Group, Household Income and Education Status

There was no significant association between socio-economic group and the proportion of respondents who had done something after drinking which they later regretted.

There was no significant association between household income and the proportion of respondents who had done something after drinking which they later regretted. There were no significant differences in 2008

There was a significant association between education status and the proportion of respondents who had done something after drinking which they later regretted. Respondents with an A-Level or Higher education status were more likely than those with an O-Level or commercial education status to have reported doing something after drinking alcohol which they have later regretted (41% of those with A Level / Higher and 29% of those with O-Level / commercial. Results in 2008 were also significant (A-level or higher standard (43%); O-level or commercial qualifications (36%); no qualifications (31%).

Table 7.3c Respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by socio-economic group, income and education

	Base(N)	Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?
Socio-economic Group		
Managerial & professional	325	37%
Intermediate occupations	256	35%
Routine & manual	347	36%
Not classified ¹	44	34%
	972	
Household Income		
£52,000 or over	137	34%
£36,400 – 51,999	164	34%
£26,000 – 36,399	150	37%
£15,600 – 25,999	173	38%
£10,400 – 15,599	108	34%
Under £10,400	96	32%
	828	
Education Status		
A-Level/ Higher education	498	41%
O-Level/ Commercial	275	29%
No qualifications	197	33%
	970	

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

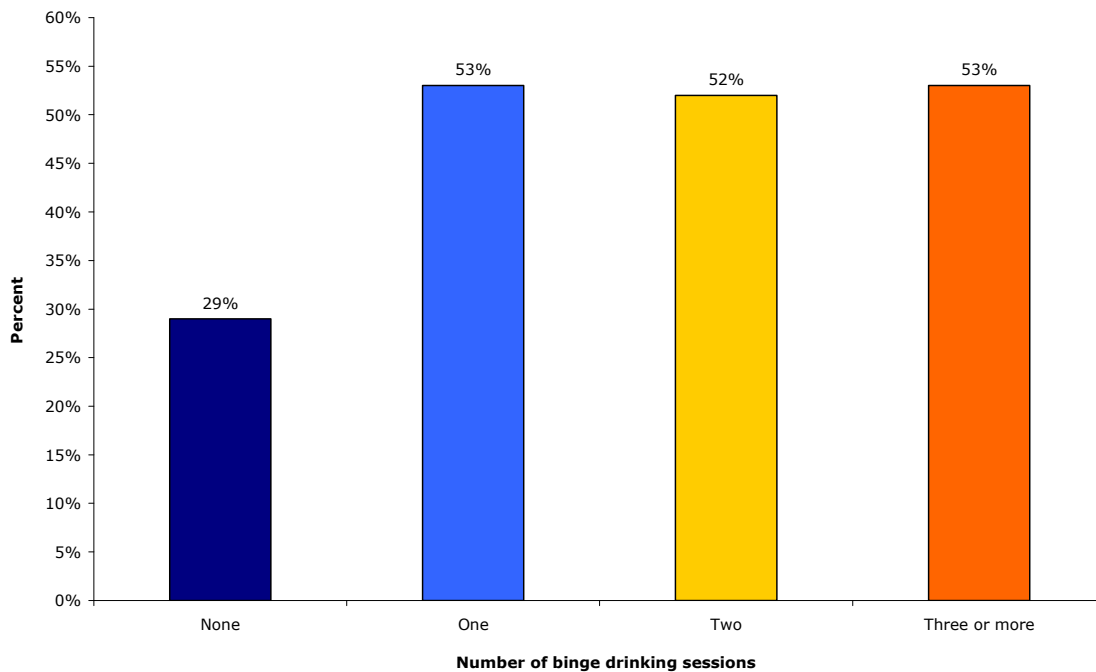
7.3d Done something later regretted and number of binge drinking sessions recorded

The relationship between having done something after drinking that was later regretted and the number of binge drinking sessions recorded was found to be significant. Of those who had no binge drinking sessions, 29% answered yes to this question, compared to 53% of those who had one binge session, 52% who had two binge sessions and 53% who had three or more binge sessions. Differences were also significant in 2008.

Table 7.3d Respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by number of binge drinking sessions recorded

	Base(N)	Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?
All Respondents		
None	682	29%
One	187	53%
Two	63	52%
Three or more	40	53%
Base (N)	972	
Male Respondents		
None	326	31%
One	102	62%
Two	41	51%
Three or more	29	52%
Base (N)	498	
Female Respondents		
None	356	26%
One	85	44%
Two	22	55%
Three or more	11	55%
Base (N)	474	

Figure 7.3d Proportion of respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by number of binge drinking sessions



7.3e Done something later regretted and drinking classification

For both males and females, there was a significant association between drinking classification and the likelihood of a respondent having done something after drinking alcohol that they later regretted.

For males, about two in five respondents (38%) classified as sensible drinkers agreed they had done something after drinking which they later regretted compared to three in five (61%) of those classified as heavy drinkers.

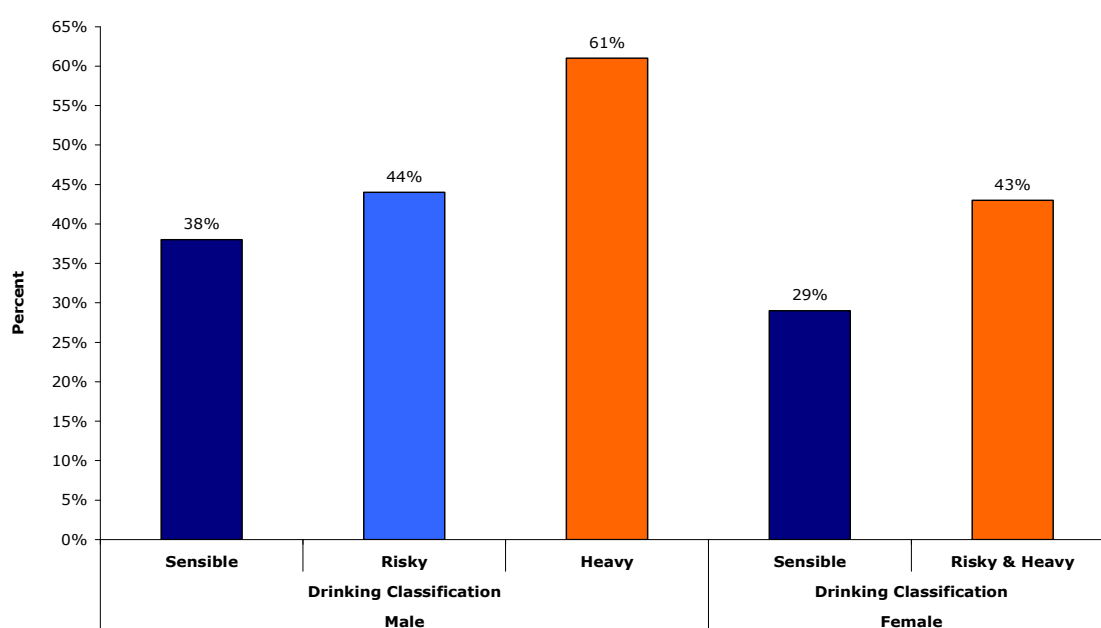
For females, about three in ten respondents (29%) classified as sensible drinkers agreed they had done something after drinking which they later regretted compared to more than four in ten (43%) of respondents classified as risky or heavy drinkers.

All figures were comparable to 2008 results (for males, 35% of sensible drinkers and 67% of heavy; for females, 31% of sensible drinkers and 46% of risky and heavy).

Table 7.3e Respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by drinking classification

	Base(N)	Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?
Drinking Classification (males only)		
Sensible (<=21 units)	370	38%
Risky (21.5-50 units)	95	44%
Heavy (>50 units)	33	61%
Base (N)	498	
Drinking Classification (females only)		
Sensible (<=14 units)	380	29%
Risky & Heavy (>14 units)	94	43%
Base (N)	474	

Figure 7.3e Proportion of respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by drinking classification



7.3f Done something later regretted and outcome of CAGE Questions

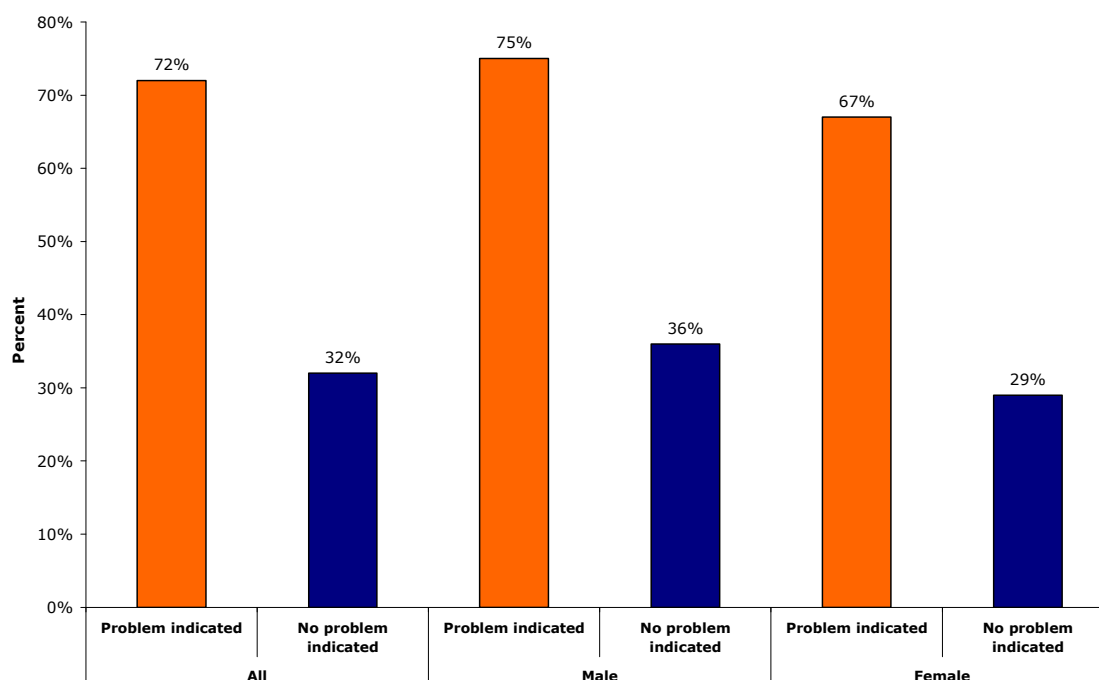
There was a significant association between the outcome of CAGE questions and the likelihood of respondents having done something after drinking alcohol that they later regretted. Overall, the proportion of respondents who gave positive responses to this question was three in ten (32%) for those who were not indicated as having a problem with alcohol and seven in ten (72%) for those who were. In 2008 similar results were observed (34% if no problem was indicated and 73% if it was).

For both males and females, there was a significant association between the outcome of CAGE questions and the likelihood of a respondent having done something after drinking alcohol that they later regretted. Those respondents who were indicated as having a problem with alcohol were more likely to have done something after drinking alcohol which they later regretted. Similar results were observed in 2008.

Table 7.3f Respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by result of CAGE questions

	Base(N)	Have you ever done something after drinking alcohol which you have later regretted?
Overall		
Problem with alcohol indicated	89	72%
No problem with alcohol indicated	883	32%
Base (N)	972	
Male Respondents		
Problem with alcohol indicated	53	75%
No problem with alcohol indicated	445	36%
Base (N)	498	
Female Respondents		
Problem with alcohol indicated	36	67%
No problem with alcohol indicated	438	29%
Base (N)	474	

Figure 7.3f Proportion of respondents who had done something after drinking they later regretted by outcome of CAGE questions



Appendix I

Introduction

The Central Survey Unit (CSU) of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) was commissioned by the Public Health Information and Research Branch within the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI) to carry out a study on the Drinking Patterns of Adults in Northern Ireland.

The Adult Drinking Pattern Survey is a household based survey carried out on all those aged 18-75 in households across Northern Ireland to inform policy on alcohol drinking patterns in Northern Ireland. Its main aim is to provide an up-to-date picture of, an insight into and understanding of adult drinking patterns in Northern Ireland.

The survey was first carried out in 1999 on behalf of the Health Promotion Agency (HPA), in 2005 for the Drugs and Alcohol Information and Research Unit in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and again in 2008 for the Public Health Information and Research Branch within the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI).

Methodology and Fieldwork

Sample and Response

The survey was based on a representative sample of adults aged between 18 and 75 years old (inclusive), living in private households in Northern Ireland. A random probability sample of 2,500 private households was selected from the Land and Property Services' list of properties. Within households, all adults aged 18 to 75 were eligible for interview. The fieldwork period was from the 3rd May until the 8th July 2011. During this time 2,028 computer assisted face to face interviews were achieved. These came from 1,294 households out of a possible 1,966 eligible addresses giving a response rate of 66% (see Table A1).

Table A1: Adult Drinking Patterns Survey Response Rate

	Count	Percent	Valid Percent (from eligible sample)
Issued addresses			
All Addresses	2500	100%	N/A
Eligibility			
Ineligible addresses	534	21%	N/A
Eligible addresses	1966	79%	100%
Outcomes			
Refusal	468	N/A	24%
Non Contact	204	N/A	10%
Achieved (addresses) ^{1 2}	1294	N/A	66%

¹ Achieved (addresses) includes partial interviews.

² 2028 individual interviews were achieved.

Sample Profile

Table A2 below gives the frequency and percentage of all respondents by the core demographic variables used for much of the analysis in this report. These include gender, age group, Health & Social Care Trust, socio-economic group, household income and education status

Table A2: Demographics of all respondents

	Count	Percent
Gender	(N=2028)	
Male	913	45%
Female	1115	55%
Age Group	(N=2028)	
18-29	369	18%
30-44	655	32%
45-59	554	27%
60-75	450	22%
HSC Trust	(N=2028)	
Belfast	328	16%
Northern	570	28%
South Eastern	418	21%
Southern	429	21%
Western	283	14%
Socio-economic group	(N=2028)	
Managerial/Professional	553	27%
Intermediate	510	25%
Routine/Manual	799	39%
Not Classified ¹	166	8%
Household Income	(N=2028)	
Less than £10,400	274	14%
£10,400 - £15,599	299	15%
£15,600 - £25,999	366	18%
£26,000 - £36,399	277	14%
£36,400 - £51,999	279	14%
Over £52,000	212	10%
Refusal	127	6%
Don't know	194	10%
Education Status	(N=2028)²	
A-Level/Higher education	914	45%
O-Level/Commercial	520	26%
No qualifications	586	29%

¹ Includes those in retirement, the long term sick or disabled, those looking after the family home, people that have never worked and students.

² Education Status was not known for 8 respondents.

Despite efforts used to maximise response, there is a possibility of non-response bias in any survey. Non-response bias arises if the characteristics of non respondents differ significantly from those of respondents in such a way that they are reflected in the responses given in the survey. The extent of non-response bias can only be examined by comparing characteristics of the achieved sample with the distribution of the same characteristics in the population.

To assess how accurately the achieved sample reflects the population aged 18-75 in Northern Ireland, the sample has been compared with characteristics of this age group in the 2010 mid year estimates of the population in Northern Ireland.

Table A3: Comparison of gender with mid-year estimates for those aged 18-75

	2010 Mid-Year Population Estimates	Sampled Respondents
Male	49%	45%
Female	51%	55%

When compared to the 2010 mid-year population estimates, males appeared to be slightly underrepresented by the sample compared to females (45% male and 55% female). While there does appear to be a female majority within the population as a whole (49% male and 51% female) the discrepancy is less than within the sampled respondents.

Table A4: Comparison of age groups with mid-year estimates

	2010 Mid-Year Population Estimates	Sampled Respondents
18-29	24%	18%
30-44	29%	32%
45-59	27%	27%
60-75	20%	22%

The profile of age groups in the sample broadly mirrored those in the 2010 mid year estimates of the population. Those aged 18-29 years were somewhat underrepresented by the sample, and this was also the case in the 2008 survey.

Questionnaire

The content and structure of the questionnaire was largely similar to that used in 2008. It began by asking respondents for background demographic details (for example, gender, age and employment status). Questions were also asked to ascertain whether or not respondents drank alcohol and, of those who did, they were asked whether or not they had anything alcoholic to drink in the week prior to the survey. Only those who did were then asked the rest of the questions regarding alcohol consumption. The main body of questions was concerned with drinking behaviour and required the respondent to recall any drinking sessions in the week prior to the day of interview. Respondents were asked to recount their drinking activities over this period identifying what, how much, where, when and with whom they drank. They were then asked four CAGE questions, which are clinical interview questions that have been used internationally as an assessment tool for identifying potential problems with alcohol. Finally they were asked about their perceptions of their own drinking habits, and their expenditure on alcohol and smoking.

Rounding

All percentages quoted in the main body of the report are rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not sum exactly to 100%.

Some of the questions allowed respondents to choose multiple answers such as 'what did you have to drink?' The sum of the percentages for these questions will not add up to 100%.

Statistical Significance Tests

Statistical significance tests (Chi-Square Tests) have been carried out on a range of variables. These tests are used to establish the level of confidence with which we can infer that the observed findings from the sample are an accurate reflection of the behaviour of the general population. Where tests have emerged as Statistically Significant, these have been reported at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$) which means that we can be confident that 95 times out of 100, the findings we have observed in the sample occur in the population i.e. the findings are not due to sampling error.

Definitions

Definitions used throughout this report include:

- **Daily Limits:**
 - * The current recommended daily drinking limits state that drinking four or more units of alcohol a day for males and three or more units of alcohol a day for females increases drink related health risks.
- **Weekly Limits:**
 - * Levels of alcohol consumption can be banded into weekly guidelines for sensible drinking.
 - * On a weekly basis, males drinking 21 units or less are considered to be within sensible limits, those drinking between 22 and 50 are considered to be above sensible but below dangerous levels and those drinking 51 units and above are drinking at dangerous levels.
 - * The sensible limit for females is 14 units per week, the above sensible and below dangerous level is between 15 and 35 units and dangerous levels are 36 units and above.
- **Binge Drinking Levels:**
 - * For the purposes of this study a binge is defined as consuming 10 or more units of alcohol in one session for males and seven or more units of alcohol for females.
- **'Beer' includes:**
 - * Beer, Cider, Lager, Stout
- **'Strong Beer' includes:**
 - * Strong or Extra Strength Beer, Cider, Lager, Stout
- **'Alcopops' include:**
 - * Alcopops, Coolers, Spirit-Based Mixers

CAGE Analysis

A CAGE analysis (a test of alcohol dependence developed to identify people who may have a problem with alcohol) was incorporated into the questionnaire. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or not with each of the four statements listed below. The first letter of each key word spells out the word CAGE. Agreeing to two or more of these questions suggests that it is highly likely that a problem with alcohol exists.

- I have felt that I ought to **C**ut down on my drinking.
- People have **A**nnoyed me by criticising my drinking.
- I have felt ashamed or **G**uilty about my drinking.
- I have had a drink first thing in the morning (**E**ye opener) to steady my nerves or get rid of a hangover.

Alcohol Units in each type of Drink

It was possible to calculate how many units of alcohol had been consumed per drinking session using the following table.

Table A5: Calculation of alcohol units

Drink	Volume	Number of Units
Shandy	Bottle	0.5
	Can	0.5
	Pint	0.5
Beer/Lager/Cider/Stout	Bottle	1.5
	Can	2
	Pint	2
Strong or extra strength Beer/Lager/Cider/Stout	Bottle	2
	Can	2.5
	Pint	3.5
Low alcohol Beer/Lager/Cider/Wine	Bottle	0.5
	Can	0.5
	Pint	0.5
	Glass	0.3
Glass of Wine	125ml	1.5
Small glass of Sherry/Martini/Vermouth/Port	50ml	1
Measure of Spirits/Liqueurs	35ml	1.5
Bottle/Can of Coolers/Spirit based mixers/Alcopops	Bottle	1.5

Source: DHSSPS

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