

Background

- Alcohol is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide.
- Adolescence is when alcohol use typically begins.
- Harmful patterns of alcohol consumption, such as binge drinking, may emerge during adolescence and become established.

Aim

- To examine the prevalence of, and potential risk and protective factors for, binge drinking among 15–16-year-old adolescents in the West of Ireland, using data from the 2020 Planet Youth Survey.

Methods

Study Type & Population

- Cross-sectional secondary analysis
- 4473 participants from the 2020 Planet Youth West Survey.

Study Variables

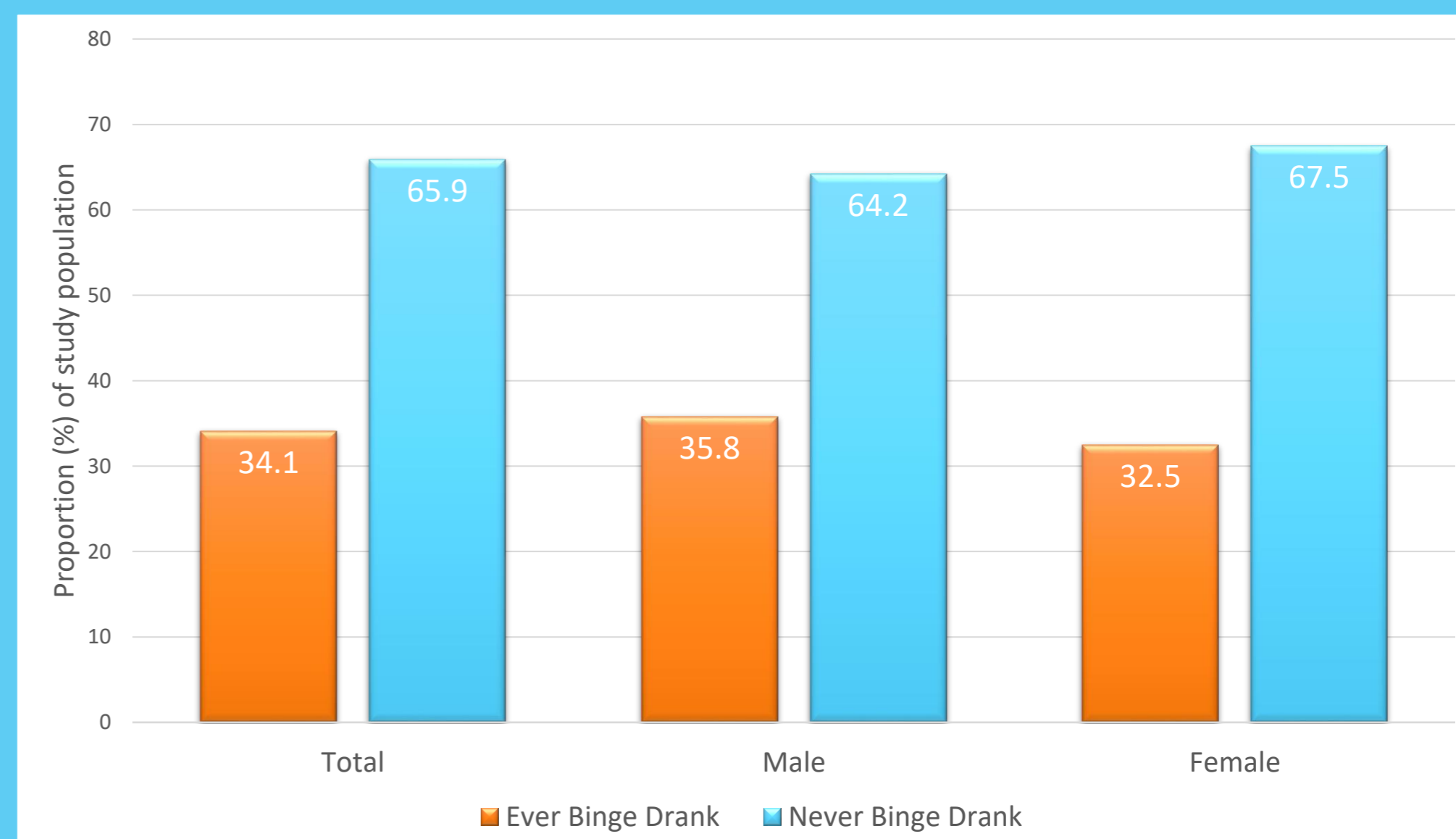
- Dependent: Ever binge drinking, defined as ever consuming five or more drinks in a two-hour period or less.
- Independent: Individual, parental, peer group, school, leisure time and local community factors.

Statistical analysis

- Using SPSS version 27. Descriptive and multivariable logistic regression analyses used to examine the prevalence of ever binge drinking, and independent associations between potential risk and protective factors and ever binge drinking. A p-value of <0.05 was deemed statistically significant.

Results

Prevalence of Ever Binge Drinking



Risk & Protective Factors for Ever Binge Drinking

Variables*	Binge Drinking (Ever vs. Never)		
	aOR	95% CI	p-value
Risk Factors			
Mental Health			
Very good/good	Ref		
Okay	0.90	0.73-1.11	0.313
Bad/very bad	1.61	1.26-2.06	<0.001
Current cigarette use			
No	Ref		
Yes	4.06	3.01-5.47	<0.001
Current cannabis use			
No	Ref		
Yes	2.79	1.80-4.31	<0.001
Gets alcohol from parents			
Never/rarely	Ref		
Sometimes/often/almost always	1.79	1.42-2.25	<0.001
Having friends that drink alcohol			
No	Ref		
Yes	4.59	2.65-7.94	<0.001
School engagement			
1 SD increase corresponds to	1.26	1.15-1.38	<0.001
Team/club sports participation			
Never	Ref		
1-4 times/week	1.30	1.07-1.57	0.008
5 or more times/week	1.52	1.07-2.16	0.020
Gets alcohol from friends			
Never/rarely	Ref		
Sometimes/often/almost always	5.98	4.95-7.21	<0.001
Gets alcohol from another adult			
Never/rarely	Ref		
Sometimes/often/almost always	4.18	3.35-5.21	<0.001
Protective Factors			
Gender			
Male	Ref		
Female	0.55	0.46-0.67	<0.001
Ethnicity			
White	Ref		
Non-White	0.49	0.31-0.77	0.002
Parental supervision			
1 SD increase corresponds to	0.80	0.73-0.88	<0.001
Parental reaction to drunkenness			
A bit against/wouldn't care	Ref		
Totally against/against it	0.51	0.42-0.61	<0.001

*Other variables included in the final model not significantly associated with outcome: maternal education, parental drunkenness. SD = Standard deviation.

Key Findings

34.1% of adolescents reported binge drinking in the past

9 risk factors & 4 protective factors associated with past binge drinking

Key influence of parents, peers & source of alcohol highlighted, among others

Public Health Implications

INFORM

Adolescents and parents/carers about the risks to health associated with alcohol, especially for parents supplying alcohol to adolescents.

PROTECT

Adolescents from alcohol-related harm through more intersectoral action. Prioritise delaying and denormalising underage use of alcohol.

IMPLEMENT

All provisions of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018, to achieve its objectives of reducing harms caused by misuse of alcohol and delaying alcohol consumption by children and young people.

Study Reference for further reading:

Kelly, C., Major, E., Durcan, M. *et al.* Adolescent binge drinking in the West of Ireland: associated risk and protective factors. *BMC Public Health* 23, 1064 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-15577-z>