

Alcohol and drugs data factsheet: HSE health regions



July 2025



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Glossary of terms

Confidence interval (CI) – A way of expressing how certain we are about the findings from a study, using statistics. It gives a range of results that is likely to include the 'true' value for the population. A wide confidence interval (CI) indicates a lack of certainty about the true effect of the test or treatment - often because a small group of patients has been studied. A narrow CI indicates a more precise estimate (for example, if a large number of patients have been studied). The CI is usually stated as '95% CI', which means that the range of values has a 95 in a 100 chance of including the 'true' value. For example, a study may state that 'based on our sample findings, we are 95% certain that the 'true' population blood pressure is not higher than 150 and not lower than 110'. In such a case the 95% CI would be 110 to 150. (From the [NICE glossary](#))

HSE health regions - The Health Service Executive (HSE) remains a single organisation with six health regions. Services will integrate across hospitals and community organisations in these health regions. The six operational regions have responsibility for the planning and coordinated delivery of health and social care services within their respective defined geographies. Note that health regions are not separate statutory bodies. They will use the HSE logo and operate under the governance of the HSE Board. The regions management structure will replace existing Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) and Hospital Group management structures. HSE national will oversee standards, and guidelines for implementation at regional level.

Prevalence – refers to the proportion of a population that has used a drug over a particular time period.

Last month prevalence – refers to the proportion of the sample that reported using a named drug in the 30-day period prior to the survey. Last month prevalence is often referred to as current use. A proportion of those reporting current use may be occasional (or first-time) users who happen to have used in the period leading up to the survey. It should therefore be noted that current use is not synonymous with regular use.

Last year prevalence – refers to the proportion of the sample that reported using a named drug in the year prior to the survey. Last year prevalence is often referred to as recent use.

Lifetime prevalence – refers to the proportion of the sample that reported ever having used the named drug at the time they were surveyed. A person who records lifetime prevalence may or may not be currently using the drug. Lifetime prevalence should not be interpreted as meaning that people have necessarily used a drug over a long period of time or that they will use the drug again in future.

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Introduction

This factsheet presents the most recently available drug and alcohol data on treatment demand, general population prevalence, and opioid prevalence analysed by regional health area in Ireland.

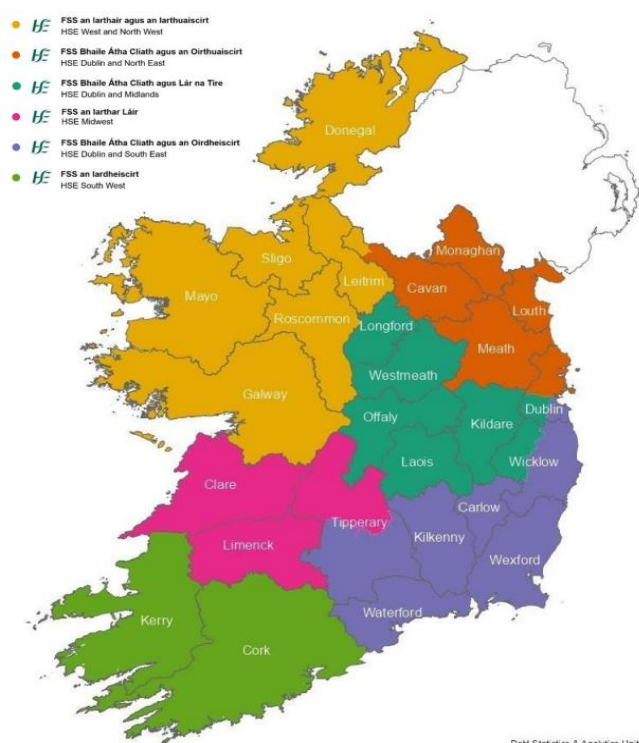
We include some alcohol data in this publication. Please also see the 2024 factsheet [Alcohol-related harm: HSE Regional Health Areas](#), which contains additional information.

Sláintecare is the Irish Government's 10-year programme for transforming how healthcare is delivered in Ireland.¹ It aims to give equal access to services, with a vision of a universal health service, under the banner of Right Care, Right Place, Right Time. Part of this process is the creation of new healthcare areas that are based on population data, including on how people currently access services, in addition to being informed by a public consultation. There are six HSE health regions (see Box 1). This is a change from previous reporting of data by nine community healthcare organisations (CHOs).¹

As the six regions each serve large populations in their own right, it is recognised that a sub-structure within each region will be required and must be designed from the ground up. It is currently proposed that these sub-structures will be called Integrated Health Areas (IHAs). They will serve a population of up to 300,000, will take account of varying geographies, population size, local needs, and services. The existing 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) and the Community Specialist Teams (CSTs) will act as the building blocks of integrated service delivery.

Box 1: HSE Health regions and county boundaries

| HSE health region | | Counties/Local health offices covered |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| HSE Dublin and North East | A | North Dublin, Meath, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | B | Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Laois, Kildare, parts of Dublin and Wicklow |
| HSE Dublin and South East | C | Tipperary South, Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford, parts of South Dublin and Wicklow |
| HSE South West | D | Kerry and Cork |
| HSE Mid West | E | Limerick, Tipperary North, Clare |
| HSE West and North West | F | Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway |



Source: Department of Health (2023) [Organisational reform: HSE health regions. Implementation plan](#). Dublin: Government of Ireland.

¹ For further information on Sláintecare, visit: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/slaintecare-implementation-strategy/>

Note: West county Wicklow continues to be aligned with Kildare for health services, and a small portion of west county Cavan continues to be aligned with Sligo/Leitrim for health services, in recognition of existing patient flow patterns. In early iterations, the regions were known as areas A – F.

Treatment data for HSE health region areas

Data from the National Drug Treatment Reporting System

The data are drawn from the [National Drug Treatment Reporting System \(NDTRS\)](#)² which is the national epidemiological surveillance database that records and reports on treated problem alcohol and drug use in Ireland. Treatment for problem alcohol and drug use in Ireland is provided by statutory and non-statutory services, including residential centres, community-based addiction services, general practices, and prison services. The dataset contains information only on those who started treatment in a particular year (for the first time or returning to treatment). It does not include service users in continuous care. As there is currently no national system-wide unique identifier in the Irish health system, the NDTRS records cases of treatment. In any given year, individuals may appear more than once if treated in different centres or if they return to treatment in the same centre. NDTRS data were analysed using HSE health regions to describe the national treatment data based on where the client resided in the 30 days prior to treatment, see Tables 1-6. Data are published in [annual bulletins](#) and can be viewed in interactive tables on the [HRB National Drugs Library website](#).

Note: As participation in the NDTRS is not uniform across the country, conclusions based on geographic analyses are limited. Also, treatment figures in 2020 were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 1: Number of cases treated for drugs (excluding alcohol) as a main problem, by HSE health region and year, NDTRS 2017–2024

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| All cases | 8,922 | 10,274 | 10,664 | 9702 | 10,769 | 12,009 | 13,104 | 13,295 |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 2,462 | 3,006 | 2,980 | 2,825 | 3,517 | 4,026 | 4,693 | 4,649 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 1,976 | 2,571 | 2,746 | 2,365 | 2,797 | 2,959 | 3,063 | 3,108 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 1,570 | 1,725 | 1,728 | 1,553 | 1,642 | 1,833 | 2,011 | 2,248 |
| HSE South West | 1,055 | 1,169 | 1,216 | 1,007 | 939 | 944 | 1,045 | 1,029 |
| HSE Mid West | 749 | 843 | 851 | 839 | 859 | 832 | 907 | 874 |
| HSE West and North West | 653 | 588 | 698 | 716 | 670 | 770 | 778 | 822 |
| Other/unknown | 457 | 372 | 445 | 345 | 345 | 595 | 607 | 565 |

Source for tables 1-3 ²: Lynch, T et al (2025) [National Drug Treatment Reporting System: 2024 drug treatment demand](#). Dublin: HRB.

Table 2: Number of new cases treated for drugs (excluding alcohol) as a main problem, by HSE health region and year, NDTRS 2017–2024

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| All new cases | 3,257 | 3,962 | 3,979 | 3,796 | 4,206 | 4,456 | 4,792 | 4,471 |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 711 | 1,006 | 971 | 1,002 | 1,259 | 1,229 | 1,481 | 1,391 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 667 | 907 | 932 | 860 | 1,038 | 1,082 | 1,164 | 1,138 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 676 | 767 | 767 | 679 | 715 | 832 | 894 | 965 |
| HSE South West | 467 | 530 | 515 | 465 | 431 | 487 | 505 | 425 |
| HSE Mid West | 310 | 417 | 420 | 419 | 403 | 382 | 331 | 369 |
| HSE West and North West | 314 | 255 | 300 | 256 | 296 | 358 | 324 | 389 |
| Other/unknown | 112 | 80 | 71 | 115 | 64 | 86 | 93 | 94 |

² The NDTRS data contains information only on those who started treatment in a particular year (for the first time or returning to treatment). It does not include the number in continuous care. Note: Cases are episodes of treatment not individuals, which means there is a possibility that individuals appear more than once in the data; for example, where a person receives treatment at more than one centre, or at the same centre more than once in a calendar year.

Table 3: Number of previously treated cases treated for drugs (excluding alcohol) as a main problem, by HSE health region and year, NDTRS 2017–2024

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| All previously treated cases | 5,242 | 5,872 | 5,927 | 5,441 | 6,090 | 6,860 | 7,588 | 7,717 |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 1,627 | 1,826 | 1,708 | 1,659 | 2,074 | 2,519 | 2,853 | 2,850 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 1,157 | 1,579 | 1,630 | 1,414 | 1,637 | 1,706 | 1,781 | 1,819 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 846 | 898 | 864 | 843 | 895 | 970 | 1,086 | 1,244 |
| HSE South West | 567 | 627 | 681 | 534 | 496 | 494 | 532 | 585 |
| HSE Mid West | 409 | 396 | 382 | 372 | 437 | 432 | 558 | 468 |
| HSE West and North West | 312 | 284 | 338 | 362 | 315 | 359 | 382 | 400 |
| Other/unknown | 324 | 262 | 324 | 257 | 236 | 380 | 396 | 351 |

Table 4: Number of cases treated for alcohol as a main problem by Regional Health Area of residence, NDTRS 2017 to 2024

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| All cases | 7,350 | 7,464 | 7,546 | 5,824 | 6,859 | 7,421 | 8,163 | 8,745 |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 1,360 | 1,350 | 1,417 | 1,181 | 1,548 | 1,671 | 2,193 | 2,011 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 1,284 | 1,273 | 1,257 | 957 | 1,278 | 1,372 | 1,302 | 1,346 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 1,619 | 1,697 | 1,609 | 1,296 | 1,474 | 1,604 | 1,747 | 2,055 |
| HSE South West | 1,240 | 1,293 | 1,290 | 943 | 971 | 953 | 920 | 1,076 |
| HSE Mid West | 487 | 536 | 570 | 424 | 483 | 582 | 570 | 582 |
| HSE West and North West | 1,154 | 1,151 | 1,306 | 928 | 1,027 | 1,122 | 1,286 | 1,428 |
| Other/unknown | 209 | 164 | 97 | 95 | 78 | 117 | 145 | 229 |

Source for tables 4-6 ³: Ní Luasa, S et al (2025) [National Drug Treatment Reporting System: 2024 alcohol treatment demand](#). Dublin: HRB.

Table 5: Number of new cases treated for alcohol as a main problem by Regional Health Area of residence, NDTRS 2017 to 2024

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| All new cases | 3,500 | 3,230 | 3,296 | 2,490 | 3,026 | 3,278 | 3,625 | 3,800 |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 632 | 570 | 510 | 507 | 661 | 645 | 928 | 845 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 585 | 556 | 583 | 438 | 657 | 663 | 643 | 660 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 786 | 806 | 711 | 544 | 594 | 702 | 782 | 851 |
| HSE South West | 639 | 579 | 569 | 424 | 459 | 468 | 447 | 477 |
| HSE Mid West | 234 | 253 | 294 | 181 | 223 | 258 | 261 | 261 |
| HSE West and North West | 550 | 398 | 597 | 344 | 391 | 500 | 515 | 596 |
| Other/unknown | 74 | 68 | 32 | 52 | 41 | 42 | 49 | 110 |

Table 6: Number of previously treated cases treated for alcohol as a main problem by Regional Health Area of residence, NDTRS 2017 to 2024

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| All previously treated cases | 3,652 | 3,705 | 3,400 | 3,170 | 3,596 | 3,868 | 4,257 | 4,619 |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 279 | 688 | 532 | 624 | 818 | 926 | 1,163 | 1,065 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 647 | 633 | 522 | 470 | 575 | 647 | 592 | 640 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 793 | 795 | 764 | 729 | 832 | 859 | 932 | 1,170 |
| HSE South West | 594 | 654 | 668 | 512 | 488 | 465 | 462 | 576 |
| HSE Mid West | 248 | 246 | 257 | 235 | 250 | 318 | 297 | 311 |
| HSE West and North West | 566 | 611 | 613 | 563 | 600 | 596 | 737 | 757 |
| Other/unknown | 125 | 78 | 44 | 37 | 33 | 57 | 74 | 100 |

The National Psychiatric Inpatient Reporting System (NPIRS) gathers data on patient admissions to, and discharges from, psychiatric hospitals and units throughout Ireland. The most recent [annual report on the activities of Irish psychiatric units and hospitals, 2024](#) has a breakdown by HSE health regions (Excel data table 2.21).

Table 7: Admissions to psychiatric hospitals and units, 2024 by HSE health regions

| | Alcohol-related disorders | | Other drug disorders | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| | Numbers | Rates | Numbers | Rates |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 157 | 13.2 | 195 | 16.4 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 142 | 13.6 | 180 | 17.3 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 137 | 13.6 | 206 | 20.5 |

| | Alcohol-related disorders | | Other drug disorders | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| | Numbers | Rates | Numbers | Rates |
| HSE South West | 85 | 11.5 | 56 | 7.6 |
| HSE Mid West | 41 | 9.9 | 90 | 21.8 |
| HSE West and North West | 133 | 17.5 | 130 | 17.1 |
| Non-resident | <5 | - | <5 | - |
| Total | 696 | 13.5 | 860 | 16.7 |

Source: NPIRS annual report on the activities of Irish psychiatric units and hospitals, 2024.

Use of drugs in HSE health region areas

Analysis of 2019–20 National Drug and Alcohol Survey by regional health area

Introduction

The [National Drug and Alcohol Survey \(NDAS\)](#) collects information on alcohol and tobacco consumption and drug use among the general population in Ireland. It also surveys people's attitudes and perceptions relating to tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use and records the impact of drug use on people's communities. The 2019–20 NDAS collected information from 5,762 people aged 15 years and older across Ireland.

In 2018, the HRB commissioned IPSOS MRBI to conduct the [fifth Irish National Drug and Alcohol Survey \(NDAS\)](#)⁴. A regional analysis was conducted on the data for Drugnet Ireland⁵ and is presented here³. The 2019–20 NDAS followed best practice guidelines recommended by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. The questionnaire, based on the European Model Questionnaire, was administered in face-to-face interviews with respondents aged 15 years and older. A sample comprising all households throughout Ireland was randomly selected to participate. To facilitate comparisons between the 10 regional drug and alcohol task force (RDATF) areas, sampling was undertaken by RDATF area to enable the estimation of drug use prevalence in each area and to allow for monitoring of drug prevalence trends over time. Fieldwork began in February 2019 and was completed in March 2020. Of the household members contacted, 5,762 agreed to take part. The sample was weighted by sex, age, and region to ensure that it was representative of the general population. A more comprehensive description of the NDAS methodology is provided in the survey's technical report.⁶

Alcohol use

Almost three-quarters (74.2%) of respondents were current drinkers (defined as those who had used alcohol in the last year). This ranged from 68.1% in Area E (HSE Mid West) to 77.3% in Area B (HSE Dublin and Midlands) (see Table 7). Hazardous drinking was measured using the World Health Organization's Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test–Concise (AUDIT-C) screening tool. Among the whole sample, 37.9% met the criteria for hazardous drinking, which ranged from 32.3% in Area E (HSE Mid West) to 41.1% in Area C (HSE Dublin and South East). Alcohol use disorder (AUD) was measured using the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). There was considerable variation in the prevalence of AUD, from 8.2% in Area D (HSE South West) to 17.5% in Area A (HSE Dublin and North East). The overall prevalence of AUD in Ireland was 14.8%.

Table 8: Prevalence of current drinking, hazardous drinking, and alcohol use disorder, by HSE health region

| Alcohol use | Ireland (%) | Dublin and North East (%) | Dublin and Midlands (%) | Dublin and South East (%) | South West (%) | Mid West (%) | West and North West (%) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Respondents (unweighted) (n)</i> | 5762 | 991 | 1332 | 1093 | 574 | 467 | 1305 |
| Current drinker | 74.2 | 76.1 | 77.3 | 73.8 | 73.6 | 68.1 | 71.6 |
| AUDIT-C | 37.9 | 39.4 | 38.4 | 41.1 | 35.1 | 32.3 | 36.6 |

³ For NDAS data by CHO (Community Healthcare Organisations) area, see https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/regional_data/

| Alcohol use | Ireland (%) | Dublin and North East (%) | Dublin and Midlands (%) | Dublin and South East (%) | South West (%) | Mid West (%) | West and North West (%) |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Alcohol use disorder | 14.8 | 17.5 | 15.3 | 16.7 | 8.2 | 12.1 | 15.4 |

Source: NDAS 2019–20

Illegal drug use

In Ireland, 7.4% of adults reported use of any illegal drug in the previous year (see Table 8). Last-year prevalence of any illegal drug was lowest in Area E (HSE Mid West) (6.1%) and highest in Area B (HSE Dublin and Midlands) (8.7%). There were differences in the types of drug use across HSE health region. In Area F (HSE West and North West), last-year prevalence of cannabis was relatively low (4.7% vs 5.9% nationally) and it also had the lowest prevalence of cocaine use (0.9% vs 1.9% nationally). However, it had the highest prevalence of ecstasy use (4.0% vs 2.2% nationally) and LSD use (2.8% vs 0.9% nationally).

Last-year prevalence of cannabis use was 5.9% in Ireland, ranging from 2.1% in Area E (HSE Mid West) to 7.4% in Area B (HSE Dublin and Midlands). The prevalence of ecstasy use ranged from 1.0% in Area A (HSE Dublin and North East) to 4.0% in Area F (HSE West and North West). There was less variation in the prevalence of cocaine use; last-year prevalence was low in Area D (HSE South West) and Area F (HSE West and North West) (1.0% and 0.9%, respectively) and ranged from 1.9% to 2.2% in the four other HSE health region areas.

Table 9: Prevalence of last-year drug use, by drug type and HSE health region

| Drug type | Ireland (%) | Dublin and North East (%) | Dublin and Midlands (%) | Dublin and South East (%) | South West (%) | Mid West (%) | West and North West (%) |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Any illegal drug | 7.4 | 6.5 | 8.7 | 7.8 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 7.3 |
| Cannabis | 5.9 | 6.1 | 7.4 | 6.5 | 5.8 | 2.1 | 4.7 |
| Ecstasy | 2.2 | 1.0 | 3.2 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 2.5 | 4.0 |
| Cocaine | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 1.0 | 1.9 | 0.9 |
| LSD | 0.9 | 0.2 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 2.8 |
| Magic mushrooms | 0.4 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 0.3 |
| Amphetamines | 0.8 | 0.3 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.6 | 0.0 | 2.5 |
| Poppers | 1.4 | 0.7 | 2.2 | 0.1 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 3.7 |
| New psychoactive substances | 0.6 | 0.1 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 0.0 | 1.8 |
| Solvents | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Crack | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| Heroin | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Source: NDAS 2019–20

Cannabis use disorder (CUD) was defined as any cannabis abuse or dependence in the 12 months prior to the survey and was measured using an instrument called the Munich-Composite International Diagnostic Interview (M-CIDI). The last-year prevalence of CUD was 1.2% in Ireland and ranged from 0.7% in Area E (HSE Mid West) to 1.8% in Area A (HSE Dublin and North East) (see Table 9).

Table 10: Prevalence of last-year cannabis use disorder, by HSE health region

| Cannabis use | Ireland (%) | Dublin and North East (%) | Dublin and Midlands (%) | Dublin and South East (%) | South West (%) | Mid West (%) | West and North West (%) |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Cannabis use disorder | 1.2 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 1.2 |

Source: NDAS 2019–20

Use of prescribable drugs

Last-year prevalence of opioid pain relievers was 32.2% in Ireland, ranging from 17.3% in Area D (HSE South West) to 37.6% in Area A (HSE Dublin and North East). There was less variation in the prevalence of sedatives or tranquilisers; last-year prevalence nationally was 5.5%, ranging from 4.2% in Area D (HSE South West) to 6.8% in Area C (HSE Dublin and South East) (see Table 10).

Table 11: Prevalence of last-year use of prescribable drugs, by drug type and HSE health region

| Drug type | Ireland (%) | Dublin and North East (%) | Dublin and Midlands (%) | Dublin and South East (%) | South West (%) | Mid West (%) | West and North West (%) |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Opioid pain relievers | 32.2 | 37.6 | 36.3 | 30.7 | 17.3 | 28.6 | 35.4 |
| Sedatives or tranquillisers | 5.5 | 5.5 | 5.2 | 6.8 | 4.2 | 5.3 | 4.9 |
| Anabolic steroids | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.1 |
| Methadone | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 |

Source: NDAS 2019–20

Impact of drug use on local communities

Questions about the impact of drug use on local communities and drug-related intimidation were included in the 2019–20 NDAS for the first time. Three in 10 (30.5%) of respondents reported that there was a very big or fairly big problem with people using or dealing drugs in their local area (see Figure 1). People living in Area B (HSE Dublin and Midlands) were most likely to state that this was a big or fairly big problem (40.7%).

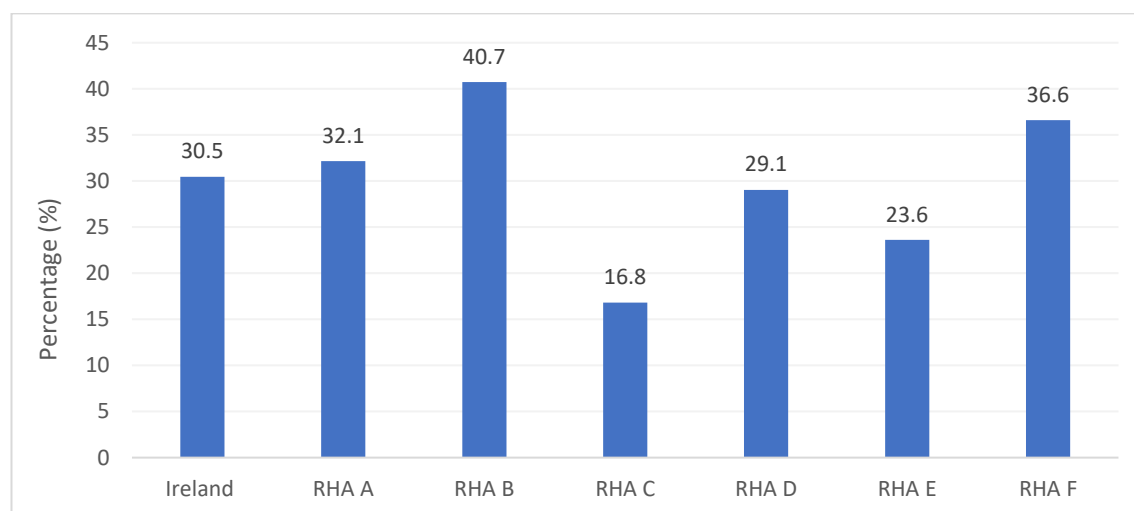


Figure 1: Proportion of respondents reporting that people using or dealing drugs was a very big or fairly big problem in their local area, by HSE health region.

Source: NDAS 2019–20

One in 10 respondents (9.9%) had either personal experience of drug-related intimidation or knew somebody who had been intimidated. People living in Area A (HSE Dublin and North East) (13.0%) and Area B (HSE Dublin and Midlands) (13.8%) were most likely to report an experience of drug-related intimidation (see Figure 2).

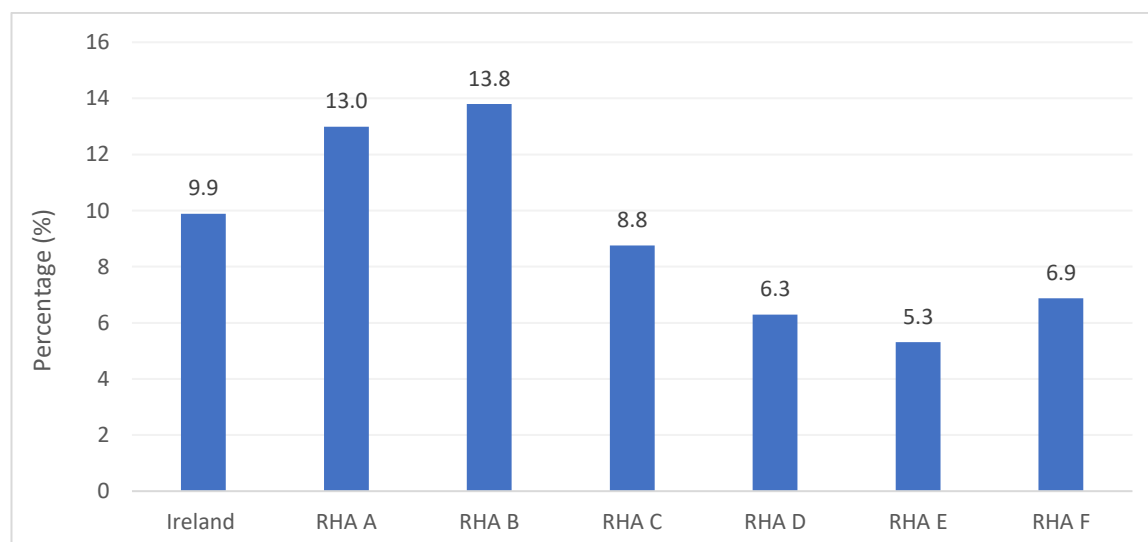


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents reporting experience of drug-related intimidation, by HSE health region.

Source: NDAS 2019–20

Data from the problematic opioid use in Ireland report

The report, Problematic opioid use in Ireland, 2020–2022,⁷ estimates the prevalence of problematic opioid use in Ireland from 2020 to 2022 using a four-source capture-recapture method. Three of the four data sources used for the analysis were derived from opioid substitution treatment records from the Central Treatment List (clinics, general practitioners and prisons) and the fourth data source was from the Irish Probation Service. In total, it is estimated that there were 19,460 opioid users aged 15–64 years in Ireland in 2022, see Tables 11– 16. This corresponds to a prevalence rate of 5.79 per 1,000 population.

Table 12: Summary of the known number of problematic opioid users, by RHA aged 15–64 years (2022)

| Variable | number (N) (%) [*] N=12,719 |
|---------------------------|---|
| RHA | |
| HSE Dublin and North East | 4,228 (33.2%) |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | 4,072 (32.0%) |
| HSE Dublin and South East | 2,483 (19.5%) |
| HSE South West | 967 (7.6%) |
| HSE Mid West | 575 (4.5%) |
| HSE West and North West | 394 (3.1%) |

^{*}Due to rounding, the percentages in this column do not add up to 100%

Table 13: Proportion of problematic opioid users, by RHA and age group (2022)

| | 15–24 years | 25–34 years | 35–64 years |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| A HSE Dublin and North East | 2.2% | 18.7% | 79.1% |
| B HSE Dublin and Midlands | 2.3% | 19.9% | 77.8% |
| C HSE Dublin and South East | 6.5% | 24.4% | 72.9% |
| D HSE South West | 2.5% | 32.1% | 61.4% |
| E HSE Mid West | 2.5% | 29.9% | 67.6% |
| F HSE West and North West | 3.4% | 25.9% | 70.8% |
| Total | 2.7% | 22.0% | 75.3% |

Table 14: Estimates of the number and rate per 1,000 population of problematic opioid users aged 15–24 years, by RHA (2022)

| | Known | Estimate | 95% CI | Rate | 95% CI |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| A HSE Dublin and North East | 53 | 140 | 130–191 | 0.92 | 0.86–1.26 |
| B HSE Dublin and Midlands | 66 | 143 | 136–184 | 1.03 | 0.98–1.33 |
| C HSE Dublin and South East | 60 | 107 | 101–131 | 0.9 | 0.85–1.10 |
| D HSE South West | 53 | 87 | 81–108 | 0.96 | 0.89–1.19 |
| E HSE Mid West | 18 | 24 | 21–33 | 0.46 | 0.40–0.63 |
| F HSE West and North West | 14 | 26 | 21–43 | 0.28 | 0.23–0.46 |
| Total | 264 | 527 | 524–627 | 0.82 | 0.81–0.97 |

Table 15: Estimates of the number and rate per 1,000 population of problematic opioid users aged 25–34 years, by RHA (2022)

| | Known | Estimate | 95% CI | Rate | 95% CI |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------|-------------|------|------------|
| A HSE Dublin and North East | 629 | 1,179 | 1,094–1,608 | 7.4 | 6.86–10.09 |
| B HSE Dublin and Midlands | 556 | 1,217 | 1,157–1,563 | 8.39 | 7.98–10.78 |
| C HSE Dublin and South East | 488 | 969 | 911–1,188 | 8.47 | 7.96–10.38 |
| D HSE South West | 347 | 433 | 402–540 | 5.11 | 4.74–6.37 |
| E HSE Mid West | 187 | 287 | 256–389 | 6.3 | 5.62–8.53 |

| | | Known | Estimate | 95% CI | Rate | 95% CI |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|
| F | HSE West and North West | 97 | 198 | 163–331 | 2.51 | 2.07–4.19 |
| | Total | 2,304 | 4283 | 4,258–5,097 | 6.82 | 6.78–8.12 |

Table 16: Estimates of the number and rate per 1,000 population of problematic opioid users aged 35–64 years, by RHA (2022)

| | | Known | Estimate | 95% CI | Rate | 95% CI |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------|
| A | HSE Dublin and North East | 3,546 | 4,980 | 4,620–6,790 | 10.35 | 9.60–14.11 |
| B | HSE Dublin and Midlands | 3,450 | 4,755 | 4,522–6,109 | 10.89 | 10.36–14.00 |
| C | HSE Dublin and South East | 1,935 | 2,896 | 2,723–3,551 | 7.37 | 6.93–9.04 |
| D | HSE South West | 567 | 828 | 769–1,033 | 2.73 | 2.53–3.40 |
| E | HSE Mid West | 370 | 649 | 579–879 | 3.89 | 3.47–5.26 |
| F | HSE West and North West | 283 | 542 | 446–906 | 1.77 | 1.45–2.95 |
| | Total | 10,151 | 14,650 | 14,566–17,434 | 7.02 | 6.98–8.35 |

Drug poisoning deaths for HSE health region areas

The HRB's [National Drug-Related Deaths Index](#) (NDRDI) is a database which records cases of death by drug and alcohol poisoning, and deaths among drug users and those who are alcohol dependent. 354 people died from poisoning in 2021.⁸

Table 17: Number of drug poisoning deaths by HSE health region of incident, NDRDI 2012 to 2021

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| HSE Dublin and North East | n | 66 | 101 | 90 | 93 | 82 | 92 | 80 | 99 | 111 | 101 |
| | % | 24.2 | 31.2 | 28.9 | 30.0 | 26.7 | 28.3 | 22.2 | 26.4 | 25.3 | 28.5 |
| HSE Dublin and Midlands | n | 61 | 69 | 90 | 88 | 93 | 79 | 105 | 107 | 132 | 81 |
| | % | 22.3 | 21.3 | 28.9 | 28.4 | 30.3 | 24.3 | 29.1 | 28.5 | 30.1 | 22.9 |
| HSE Dublin and South East | n | 46 | 32 | 50 | 50 | 45 | 45 | 61 | 60 | 69 | 64 |
| | % | 16.8 | 9.9 | 16.1 | 16.1 | 14.7 | 13.8 | 16.9 | 16.0 | 15.7 | 18.1 |
| HSE South West | n | 22 | 26 | 31 | 32 | 39 | 38 | 39 | 49 | 58 | 48 |
| | % | 8.1 | 8.0 | 10.0 | 10.3 | 12.7 | 11.7 | 10.8 | 13.1 | 13.2 | 13.6 |
| HSE Mid West | n | 13 | 25 | 16 | 12 | 16 | 21 | 26 | 21 | 22 | 28 |
| | % | 4.8 | 7.7 | 5.1 | 3.9 | 5.2 | 6.5 | 7.2 | 5.6 | 5.0 | 7.9 |
| HSE West and North West | n | 14 | 27 | 16 | 23 | 20 | 25 | 24 | 28 | 35 | 17 |
| | % | 5.1 | 8.3 | 5.1 | 7.4 | 6.5 | 7.7 | 6.6 | 7.5 | 8.0 | 4.8 |
| Ireland unknown / other ^a | n | 51 | 44 | 18 | 12 | 12 | 25 | 26 | 11 | 12 | 15 |
| | % | 18.7 | 13.6 | 5.8 | 3.8 | 3.9 | 7.7 | 7.2 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 4.2 |

a Other: relevant geocodes were not available

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NDTRS data in the interactive tables on the library website <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/tables/> (Under the final option, 'Select geographical region of residence' – choose 'health area').

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