

# DASSA Statistical Bulletin

Number 22 – September 2023

South Australian Population Health Survey Module  
System 2022: a summary of the results relating to  
alcohol consumption

# **South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2022: an analysis of the results relating to alcohol consumption.**

This Bulletin is the 22<sup>nd</sup> in a series providing the most up-to-date data available on the prevalence of alcohol and other drug use, the harms associated with use, and alcohol and other drug treatment services in South Australia. It provides a summation of 2022 data collected through the *South Australian Population Health Survey Module System (SAPHS)* on alcohol consumption patterns. Note that these data are from one annual population health survey and are not intended to be representative of all drinkers. A more comprehensive picture of alcohol use and harm in the South Australian community requires the use of additional data from other sources, such as wastewater analysis, road crash data and hospital data.

## **Executive Summary<sup>1</sup>**

### **Frequency and quantity of use<sup>23</sup>**

***A higher proportion of men consume alcohol than women, but men's consumption has decreased.***

- Almost four in five (79%) South Australians had consumed any alcohol in the last 12 months (42% drank 2-6 days a week and 5.7% daily).
- A higher proportion of South Australian men (83%) than women (76%) had consumed any alcohol in the last 12 months, but there were decreases in the proportion of men who had consumed any alcohol (87% to 83%) and male daily drinkers (13% to 7.8%).

***Older people consume alcohol more frequently than younger people, but daily drinking has decreased among many age groups.***

- At least weekly consumption was highest among South Australians aged 60+ years (53%), with an increase in any alcohol consumption (74% to 79%).
- There were decreases over time in daily drinking among those aged 18-29 (2.5% to 0%), 40-49 (7% to 3.4%), 50-59 (13% to 3.9%) and 60+ years (16% to 9.9%).

***Men and young people drink more, but both groups have decreased their quantity of use.***

- A higher proportion of South Australian men (17%) than women (7.5%) usually consumed more than four drinks in a single day, although this decreased among both groups (28% to 17% for men and 13% to 7.5% for women).
- A higher proportion of South Australians aged 18-29 years usually consumed more than four drinks in a single day (28% compared with 4.5% of those aged 60+ years), although this decreased from 45% to 28%.

### **Guideline 1: Reducing the risk of alcohol-related harm for adults**

***Lifetime risk: the proportion of South Australians drinking at this level occurs more in the middle to older age groups but has decreased.***

<sup>1</sup> Changes described here include statistically significant results only and unless otherwise stated, are for 2022, based on South Australians aged 18 years and over, and report changes between 2011 and 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Data for age groups and for all South Australians include those who identified as non-binary (N=5 aged 18 years and over and N=1 aged 15-17years).

<sup>3</sup> Abstainers comprise both ex-drinkers (no longer consume alcohol and/or have not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months) and non-drinkers (have never consumed alcohol).

## OFFICIAL

- Consumption of 10 or more drinks per week on average decreased among South Australian men (41% to 32%) and women (18% to 14%).
- The highest proportions of lifetime risky drinkers were aged 50-59 (24%) and 60+ years (23%), with decreases among those aged 40-49 (31% to 22%) and 50-59 (31% to 24%) years.

***Single occasion risk: the proportion of South Australians drinking at this level occurs more often in the younger age groups but has decreased overall.***

- Consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least monthly decreased over time among South Australian men (38% to 30%) and women (17% to 13%).
- The highest proportions of single occasion risky drinkers in 2022 were aged 18-29 years, with decreases for those aged 30-39 years (32% to 24%).

### Guideline 2: People under 18 years of age

***The proportion of underage drinkers has decreased over time.***

- In 2022, one-third (33%) of 15-17-year-old South Australians had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months, significantly lower than in 2011 (49%) but stable from 2021 (36%).

### Impact of COVID-19

***The first year of the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on overall alcohol consumption, but most changes were not sustained over time.***

- There were decreases in alcohol consumption between 2011 and 2020, and between 2019 and 2020, among South Australian men and women.
- This trend was not maintained; evidenced by an increase in consumption between 2020 and 2022 among men (74% to 83%) and women (67% to 77%).
- There were decreases in consumption between 2019 and 2020 among almost all age groups: 18-29 (83% to 59%), 30-39 (81% to 71%), 40-49 (86% to 73%) and 50-59 (87% to 76%) years.
- These changes were not sustained, with the trend reversed between 2020 and 2022 among those aged 18-29 (59% to 77%), 50-59 (76% to 85%) and 60+ (72% to 79%) years.
- Interestingly, there were no changes between 2020 and 2022 in **risky** alcohol consumption, suggesting that while less people reported drinking alcohol in 2020, drinkers did so at similar levels of risk.

## Background

The Health Omnibus Survey (HOS) was a face-to-face survey that collected data on alcohol consumption from 2011 to 2017<sup>4</sup>. However, due to problems recruiting participants, in 2018 the South Australian Population Health Survey (SAPHS) Module System began collecting these data. This is a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) survey that utilises random digit dialling of mobile and landline numbers to draw a random sample of South Australians; 3,002 were surveyed in 2022. In 2018, proxies (parents or guardians) were used for 15-year-old respondents; this requirement was removed in 2019. A review of the changes to methodology and their implications on the prevalence of alcohol consumption and risky drinking estimates can be found in a previous bulletin<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> More information on the survey can be found here:

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/dassa+statistical+bulletin+number+18>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/dassa+statistical+bulletin+number+18>

## OFFICIAL

A total of 10 questions relating to alcohol consumption were included in these surveys; these were adapted from the National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS)<sup>6</sup>. In 2020, revisions to the Australian Alcohol Guidelines were released by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)<sup>7</sup>, which changed the way risky consumption is now reported (see Appendix 1 for a summary). The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has re-analysed data from the NDSHS and provided a method and rationale for measuring risky drinking according to the revised Guidelines<sup>8</sup>. These are summarised in a previous bulletin<sup>9</sup> which includes data on frequency and quantity of use to provide context; how they differ from those developed in 2009; and the implications for future reporting. In this bulletin, data on frequency and quantity of use are still included for ongoing monitoring, but risky drinking data are presented using the new Guidelines only. Data comparisons are made over time<sup>10</sup>, and more recently<sup>11,12</sup>.

## Results

### Alcohol consumption: frequency<sup>13</sup>

In 2022, 79% of South Australians aged 18 years and over had consumed alcohol at least once in the previous 12 months (42% drank 2-6 days a week and 5.7% daily), and 21% were abstainers<sup>14</sup>; see Figure 1. This is consistent with data collected in 2011-2019 and 2021; in 2020 there was a change in the pattern of alcohol consumption with significant decreases between 2011 and 2020 and 2019 and 2020, among both men and women. The first year of the COVID-19 pandemic may have had an impact in reducing overall alcohol consumption as this was not maintained in 2021 and 2022, as evidenced by a significant increase in consumption between 2020 and 2022 among both men (74% to 83%) and women (67% to 77%).

#### *Differences between men and women*

In 2022, a significantly higher proportion of men aged 18 years and over consumed alcohol than women (83% compared with 76%), including daily drinking (7.8% compared with 3.7%) and at least weekly drinking (60% compared with 40%). Men were also significantly less likely to be ex-drinkers (12% compared with 17%).

---

<sup>6</sup> The NDSHS is conducted triennially by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) since 1995. The survey provides information on drug use patterns, attitudes and behaviours among South Australians aged 12 years and over. Go to <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/illicit-use-of-drugs/ndshs-2016-key-findings/contents/summary>

<sup>7</sup> Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol. National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

<sup>8</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2021. Measuring risky drinking according to the Australian alcohol guidelines. Cat. no. PHE 284. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 16 March 2021, <https://pp.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/measuring-risky-drinking-aus-alcohol-Guidelines>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/dassa+statistical+bulletin+number+20>

<sup>10</sup> Over time refers to comparisons between 2011 and 2022.

<sup>11</sup> More recently refers to comparisons between 2021 and 2022. Some comparisons were made between 2020 and 2022.

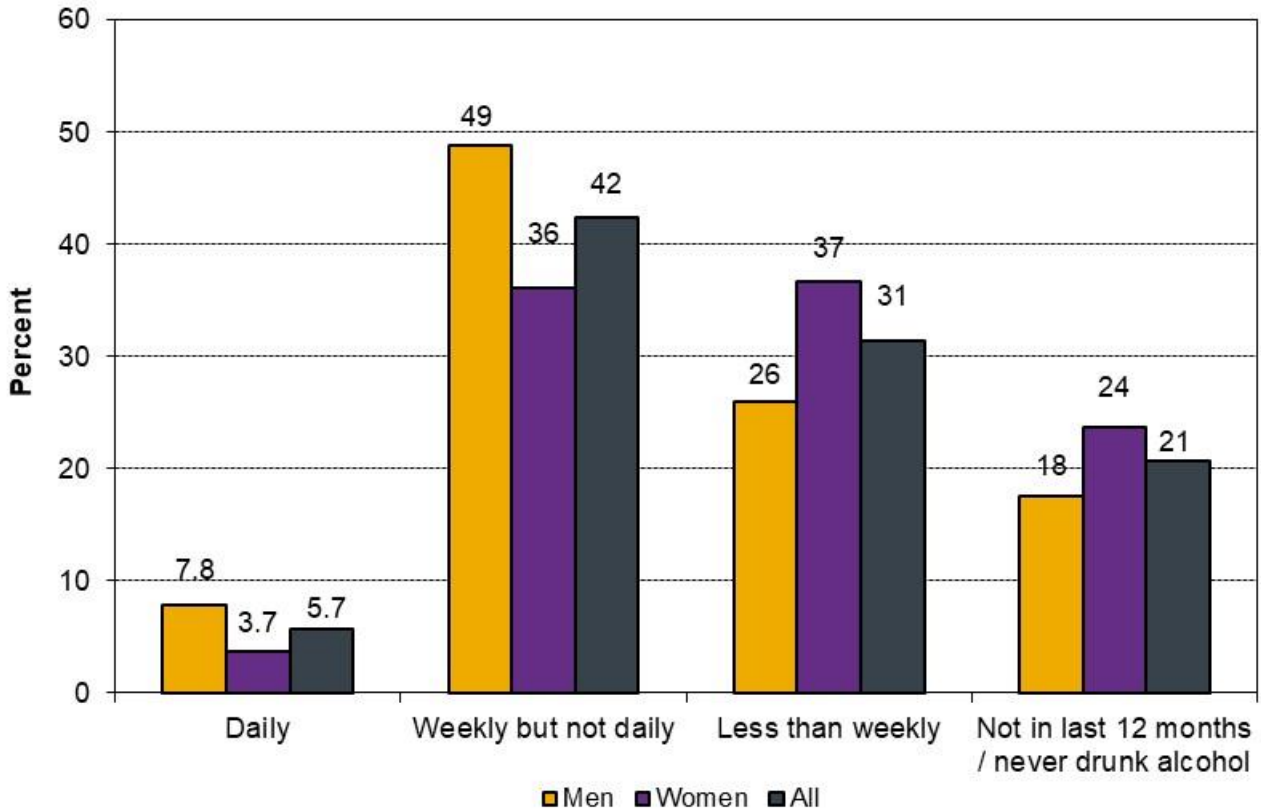
<sup>12</sup> Statistical tests include: The Pearson chi-squared statistic and linear regression. The Pearson chi-squared is corrected for the survey design with the second-order correction of Rao & Scott (1984: On chi-squared tests for multi-way contingency tables with cell proportions estimated from survey data. *Annals of Statistics* 12: 46-60) and is converted into an F statistic. Statistical significance was accepted at  $p < 0.05$ . All figures presented in this report are rounded to one decimal place in graphs and to zero decimal places in the text unless values fall below 10%. Comparisons over time are made between 2011 vs 2022, 2020 vs 2022 and 2021 vs 2022; significance testing is only carried out for those two time-points unless otherwise stated, rather than including all years.

<sup>13</sup> 'In the last 12 months, how often did you have an alcoholic drink of any kind?'

<sup>14</sup> Abstainers include both ex-drinkers who had not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months, or those who had never consumed alcohol.

OFFICIAL

Figure 1: Alcohol consumption in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2022



Source: South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2022

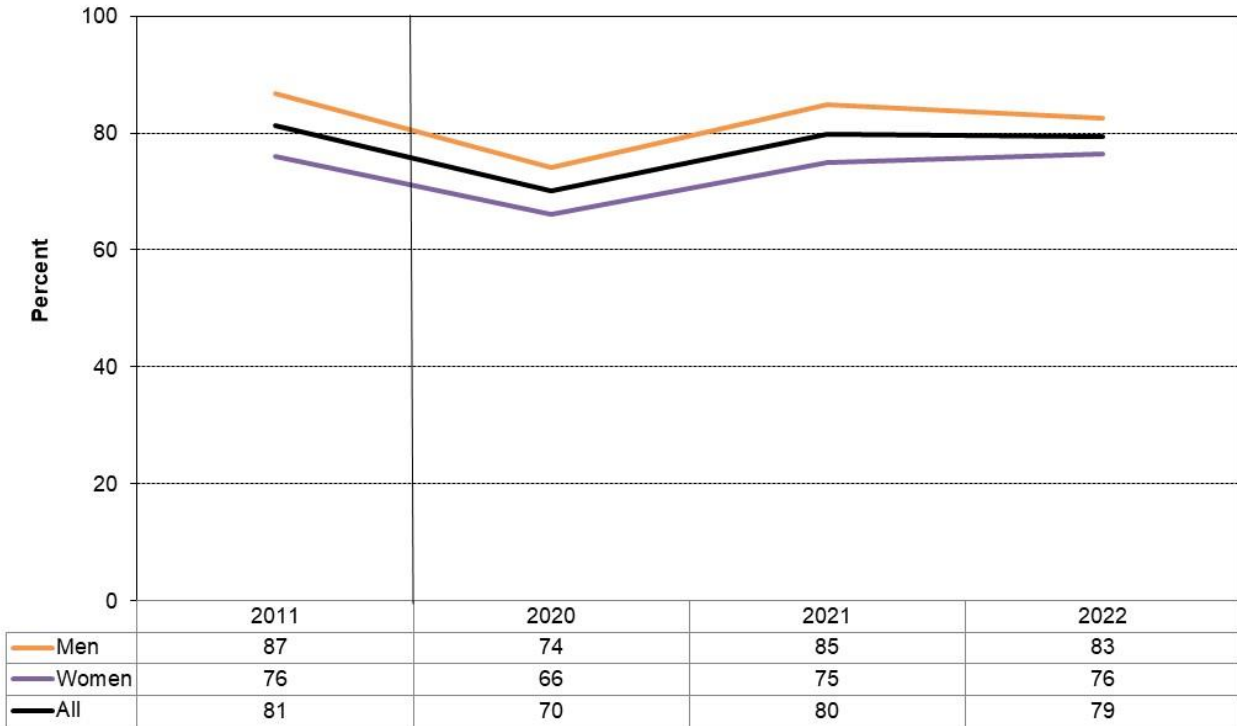
*Changes over time by sex*

Figure 2 shows any alcohol consumption by sex. While there were no changes over time in alcohol consumption among women (76% in both years), there was a significant decrease among men (87% to 83%). However, there were no changes more recently (85% to 83% for men and 75% to 76% for women). There were also no changes in at least weekly alcohol consumption over time for either men (61% to 57%) or women (39% to 40%), or more recently (60% to 57% for men and 43% to 40% for women).

Daily drinking decreased significantly over time among South Australian men (13% to 7.8%) but not among women (5% to 3.7%). There were no changes more recently for either men (9.1% to 7.8%) or women (5% to 3.7%) but there were significant increases between 2020 and 2022 (49% to 57% among men and 36% to 40% among women). Daily drinking did not change between 2020 and 2022.

OFFICIAL

Figure 2: Alcohol consumption at least once in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2011-2022



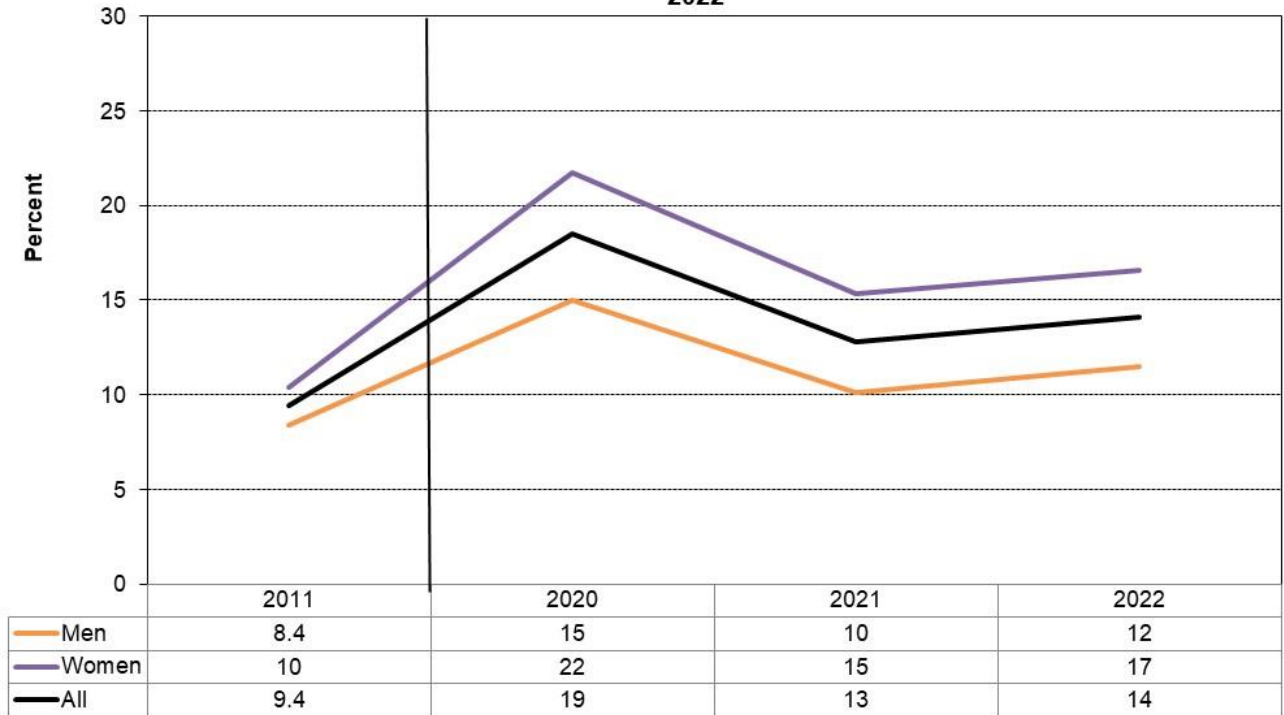
Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

Figures 3 and 4 divide abstainers into ex-drinkers and non-drinkers. Data show that there were significant increases over time in the proportion of South Australian women aged 18 years and over who were ex-drinkers (10% to 17%), but significant decreases in the proportion of South Australian women who had never consumed alcohol (14% to 7%). There were no changes among men over time, or among either men or women more recently.

Highlighting that the trends seen between 2019 and 2020 were not maintained in subsequent years, there were significant decreases in both ex-drinkers and non-drinkers between 2020 and 2022 among men and women: the proportion of male ex-drinkers decreased from 15% to 12% and non-drinkers from 11% to 6%. Among women, the proportion of ex-drinkers decreased from 22% to 17% and non-drinkers from 12% to 7%.

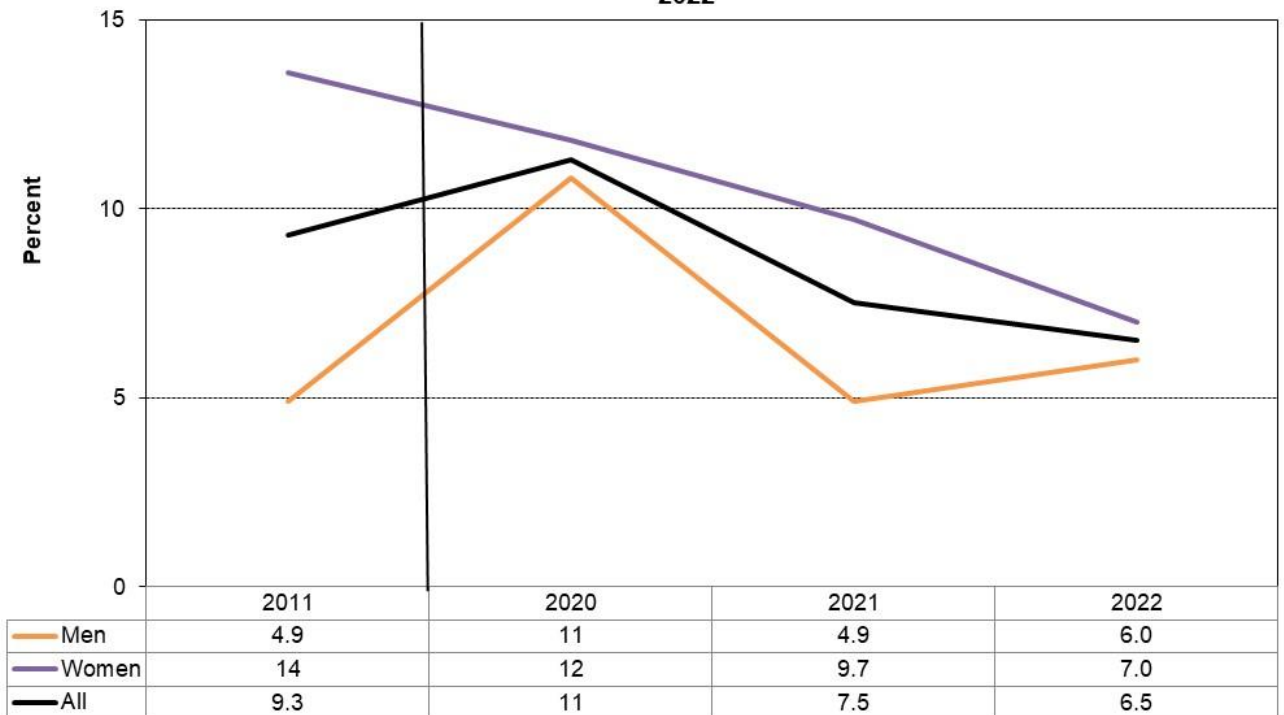
OFFICIAL

Figure 3: Ex-drinkers among South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2011-2022



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

Figure 4: Non-drinkers among South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2011-2022

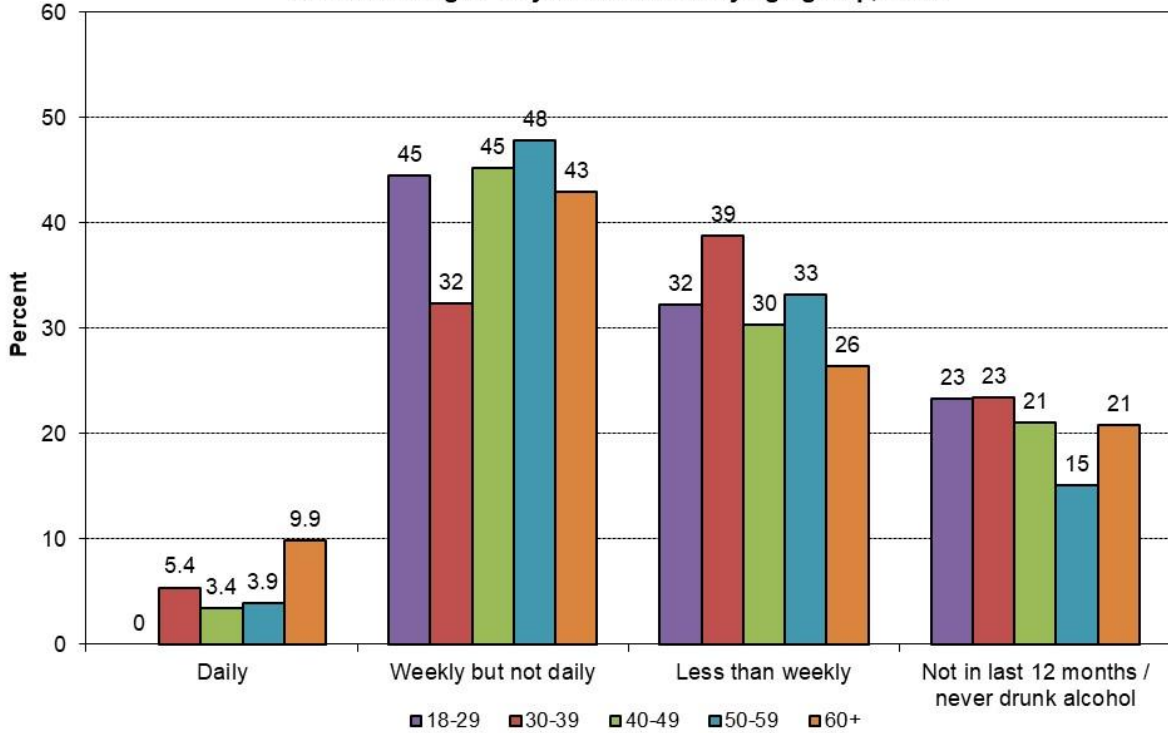


Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

*Differences between age groups*

In 2022, older South Australians consumed alcohol more often than younger people, with at least weekly consumption highest among those aged 60 years and over (53%), followed by those aged 50-59 (52%) and 40-49 (49%) years; see Figure 5. Daily drinking was highest among those aged 60 years and over (10%).

**Figure 5: Alcohol consumption in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2022**



*Changes over time by age group*

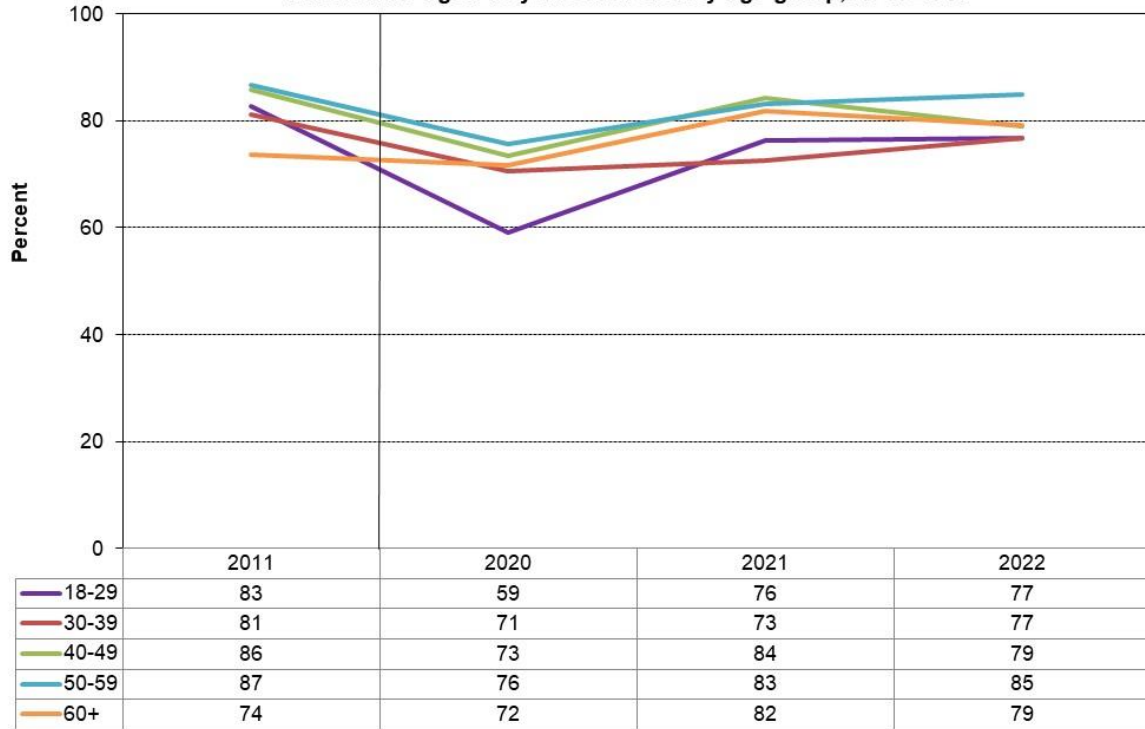
Figure 6 shows any alcohol consumption by age group. There were no changes over time in alcohol consumption among any age group except for those aged 60 years and over, where there was a significant increase (74% to 79%). Alcohol consumption more recently remained stable among all age groups. Notably, there have been significant increases in consumption among some age groups between 2020 and 2022, reversing the trend seen between 2019 and 2020: 18-29 (59% to 77%), 50-59 (76% to 85%) and 60 years and over (72% to 79%).

While drinking at least weekly remained unchanged over time among South Australians, there were significant decreases in daily drinking among those aged 18-29 (2.5% to 0%), 40-49 (7% to 3.4%), 50-59 (13% to 3.9%) and 60 years and over (16% to 9.9%). There were no changes more recently in at least weekly drinking, but daily drinking decreased significantly among those aged 50-59 years (7.8% to 3.9%). As seen with any alcohol use, at least weekly drinking increased significantly between 2020 and 2022 for those aged 18-29 years (23% to 45%).



OFFICIAL

Figure 6: Alcohol consumption at least once in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022



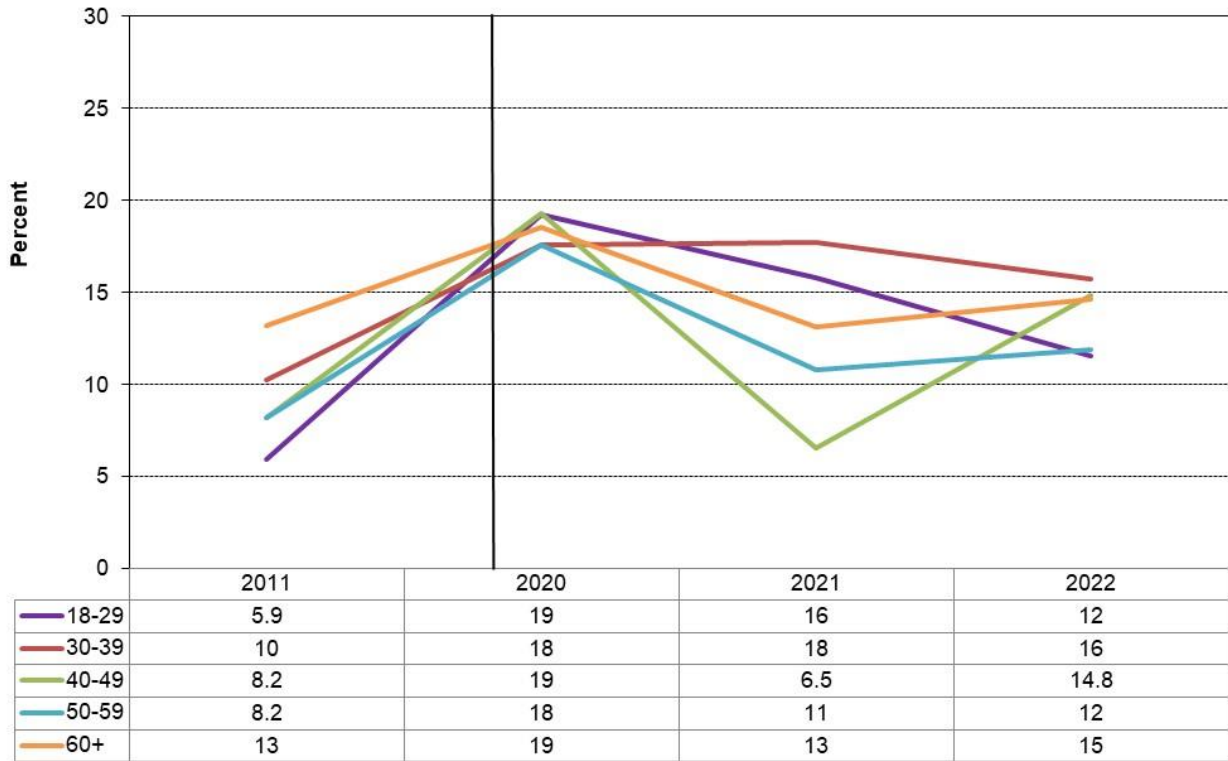
Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

Figures 7 and 8 break abstainers down into ex-drinkers and non-drinkers. For ex-drinkers, there were significant increases over time among South Australians aged 30-39 (10% to 16%) and 40-49 (8.2% to 15%) years. More recently, there was a significant increase among those aged 40-49 years (6.5% to 15%). For non-drinkers, there was a decrease over time among South Australians aged 60 years and over (13% to 6.2%). There were no changes more recently among any age group.

The increase in ex-drinkers over time was driven by those aged 30-49 years. More recently, the increase in ex-drinkers was seen among those aged 40-49 years. The decrease in non-drinkers over time was driven by those aged 60 years and over. Changes seen in 2020 were generally not maintained in 2022 except for the decrease in non-drinkers aged 60 years and over, and the increase in ex-drinkers aged 30-39 years; the significant decrease in 2020 in ex-drinkers aged 18-29 years was not observed in 2022.

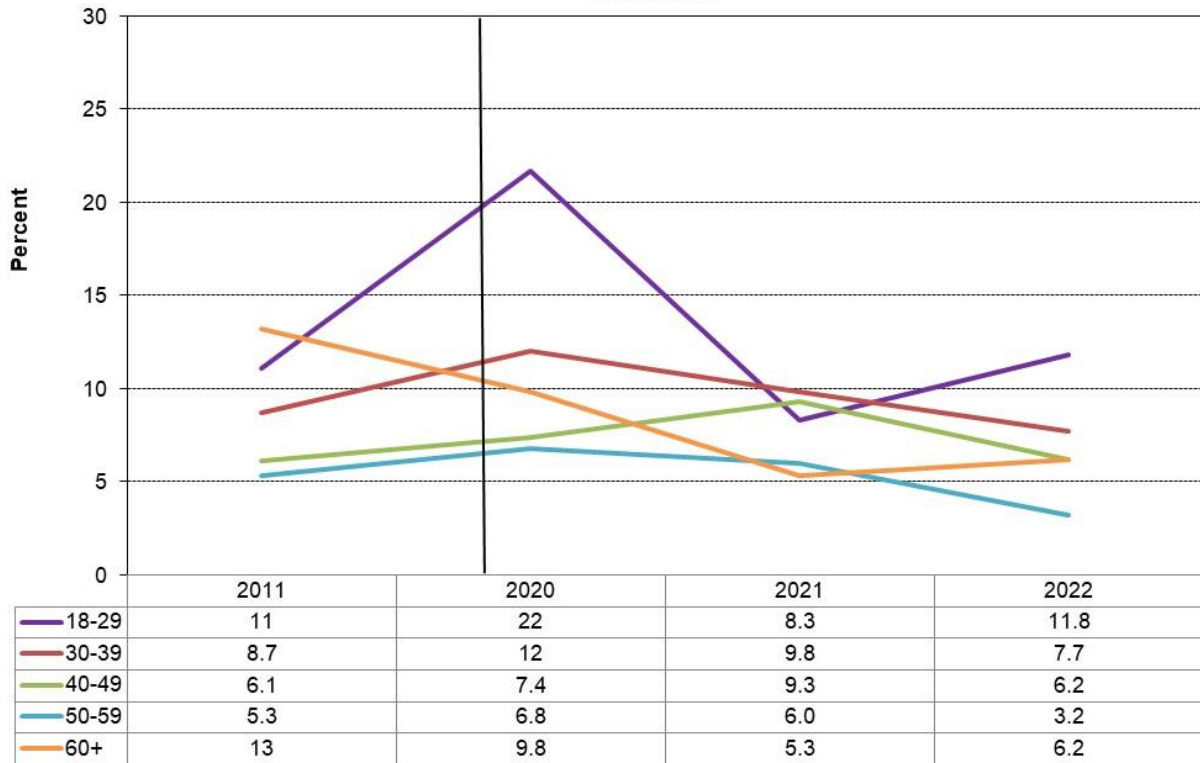
OFFICIAL

Figure 7: Ex-drinkers among South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

Figure 8: Non-drinkers among South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

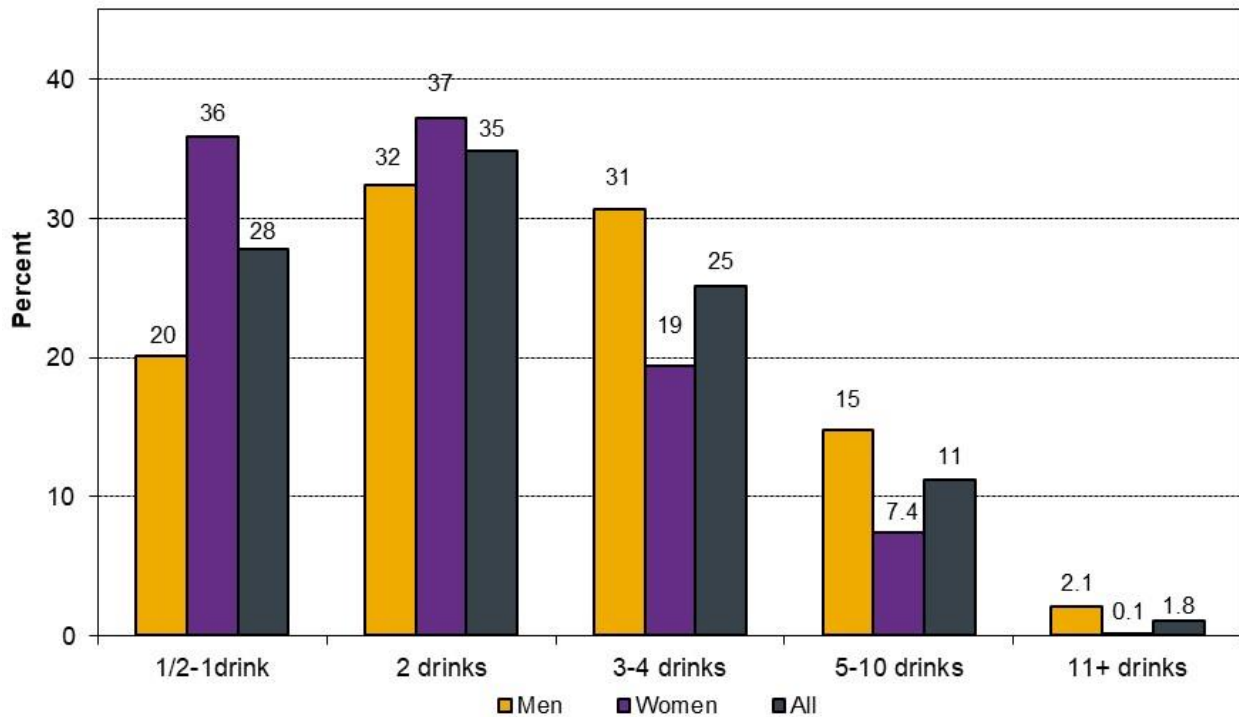
**Alcohol consumption<sup>15</sup>: quantity<sup>16</sup>**

For the majority (88%) of South Australians aged 18 years and over in 2022, the quantity of alcohol usually consumed in a session fell within the national Guidelines for consumption at levels that would not put them at risk of injury from a single drinking occasion (four drinks or less; see Figure 9). This is a significant increase from 2011 (79% usually consumed four or less drinks), but unchanged from 2021 (86%).

*Differences between men and women*

In 2022, South Australian men aged 18 years and over were significantly more likely to consume larger quantities of alcohol than women of the same age, with 17% usually consuming more than four drinks (7.5% of women). Of those who drank in the last 12 months, the majority (93%) in 2022 reported having at least one alcohol-free day per week; 91% of men and 95% of women. This is stable from previous years.

**Figure 9: Number of standard drinks usually consumed by South Australians aged 18 years and over on a drinking day by sex, 2022**



Source: South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2022

*Changes over time by sex*

Figure 10 shows the quantity of alcohol usually consumed for men and women, with significant decreases over time in the proportion of men who reported usually consuming more than four drinks (28% to 17%), as well as decreases in the proportion of women (13% to 7.5%). There were no significant changes more recently, or between 2020 and 2022.

<sup>15</sup> 'On a day that you drink, how many standard drinks do you usually have?'

<sup>16</sup> This section excludes participants who had not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months or had never consumed alcohol.

Figure 10: Usual consumption of more than four drinks on a drinking day among South Australians aged 18 years and over, 2011-2022



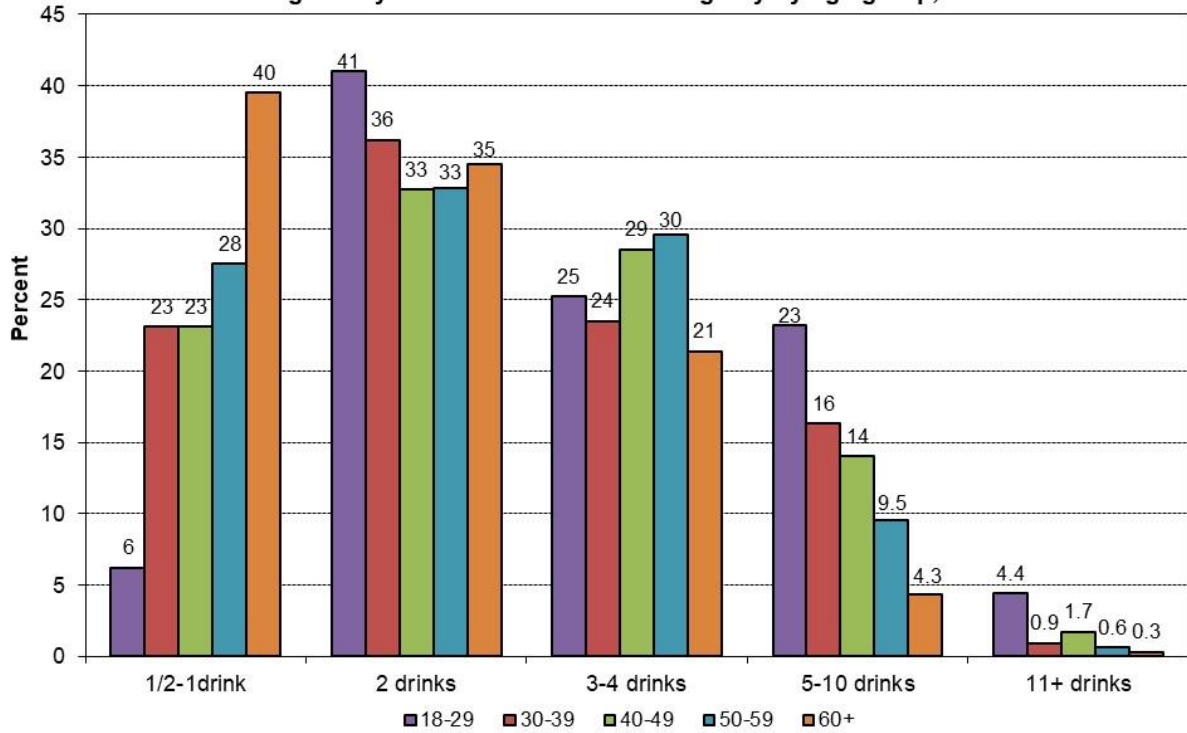
Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

*Differences between age groups*

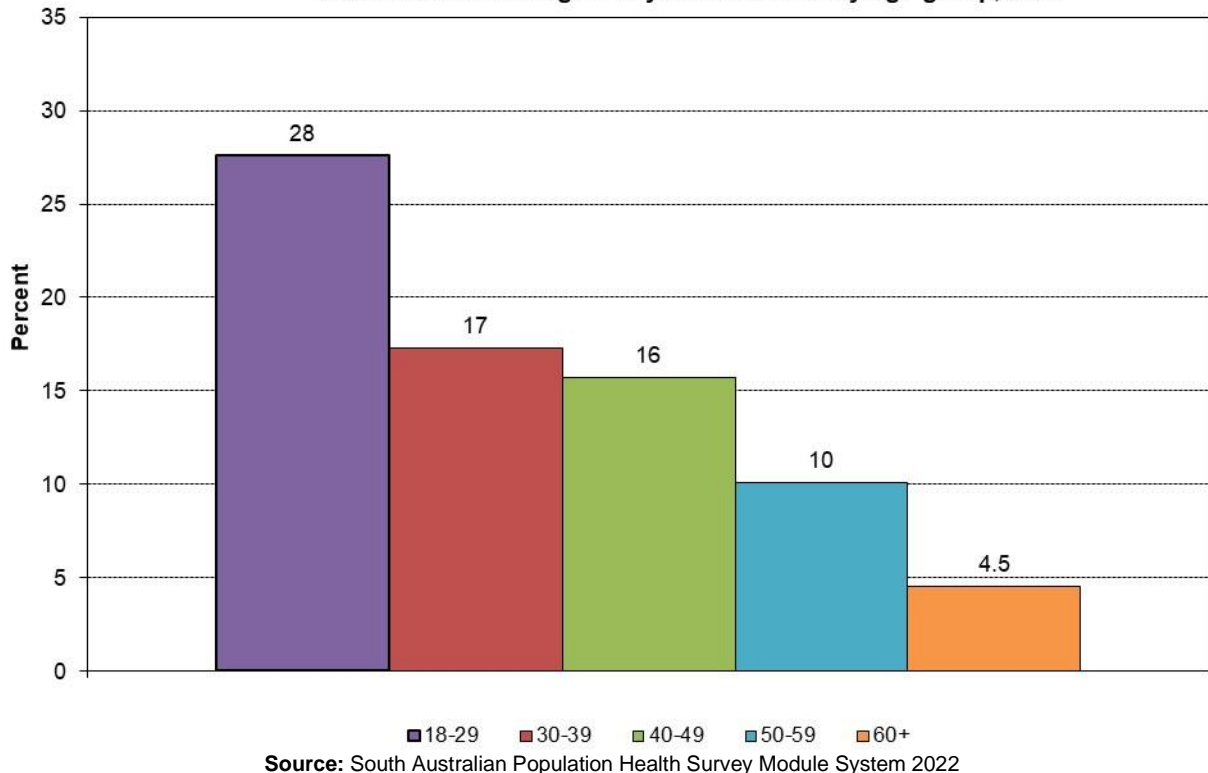
The proportion of South Australians who usually consumed more than four drinks on a drinking day (thus exceeding the Guidelines) broadly decreased with age (see Figures 11 and 12). Twenty-eight percent of those aged 18-29 years consumed more than four drinks, followed by 17% of those aged 30-39 years. In contrast, 16% and 10%, respectively, of those aged 40-49 and 50-59 years consumed more than four drinks. Only 4.5% of those aged 60 years and over usually consumed more than four drinks on a drinking day.

**OFFICIAL**

**Figure 11: Number of standard drinks usually consumed by South Australians aged 18 years and over on a drinking day by age group, 2022**



**Figure 12: Usual consumption of more than four drinks on a drinking day by South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2022**



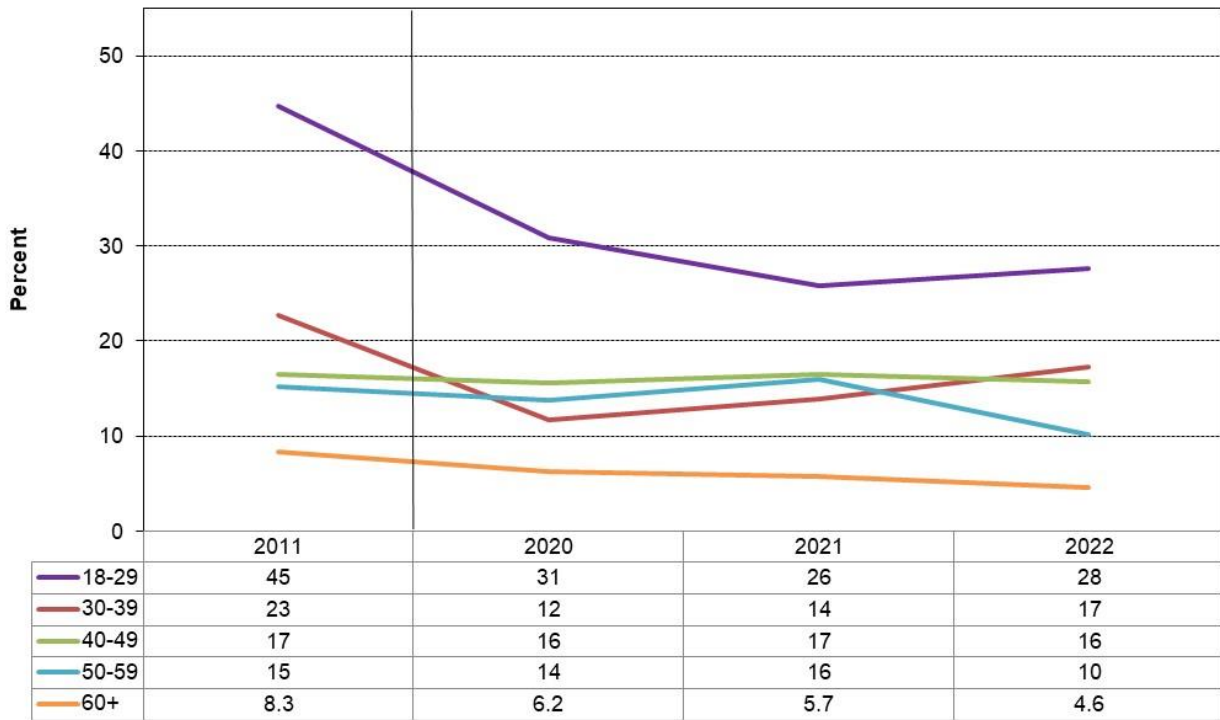
*Changes over time by age group*

Figure 13 shows changes over time by age group. There were significant decreases between 2011 and 2022 in the proportion consuming more than four drinks among those aged 18-29 (45% to 28%) and 60 years and over (8.3% to 4.5%). There was also a significant decrease more recently among

**OFFICIAL**

those aged 50-59 years (16% to 10%). The quantity of alcohol consumption among drinkers has decreased over time among all age groups, but there were no changes between 2020 and 2022.

**Figure 13: Usual consumption of more than four drinks on a drinking day by South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

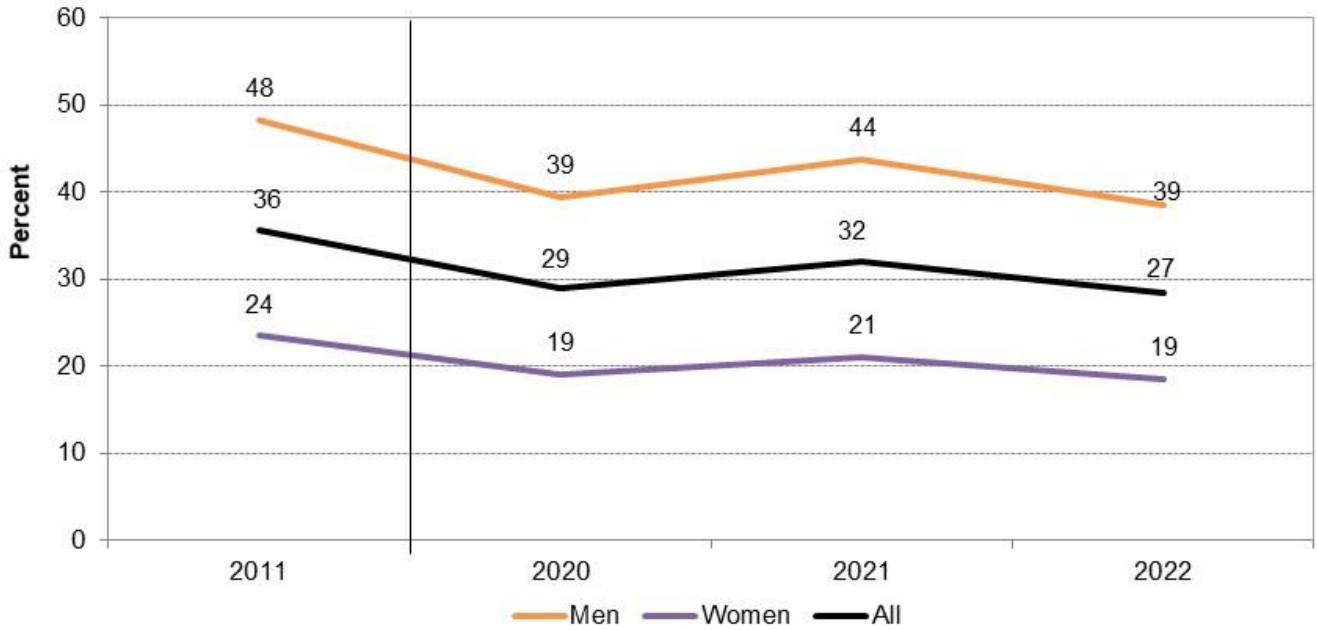
**Guideline 1: No more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than four standard drinks on a single day**

The proportion of South Australians aged 18 years and over drinking alcohol in ways that increased the risk of alcohol-related disease or injury decreased significantly over time (36% to 28%) but remained stable more recently (32% to 28%).

*Changes over time by sex*

Figure 14 shows the proportion of South Australians aged 18 years and over drinking alcohol in ways that increased the risk of alcohol-related disease or injury by sex. There were significant decreases over time among both men (48% to 39%) and women (24% to 19%), remaining stable more recently (44% to 39% for men and 21% to 19% for women). There were no changes between 2020 and 2022.

**Figure 14: Risky alcohol consumption according to the 2020 Alcohol Guidelines for South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2011-2022**

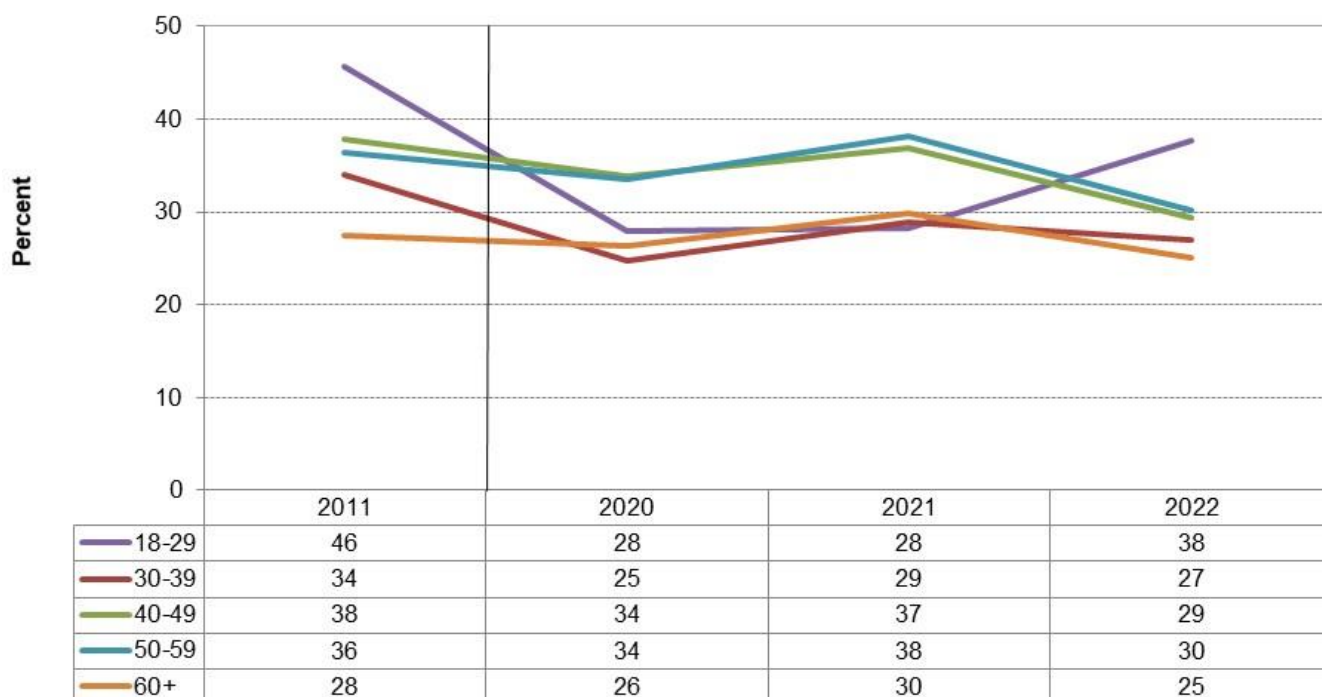


Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

*Changes over time by age group*

Figure 15 shows the proportion of South Australians aged 18 years and over drinking alcohol in ways that increased the risk of alcohol-related disease or injury by age group. The groups with the highest proportion of risky drinkers in 2022 were aged 18-29 (38%) and 50-59 (30%) years. There was a significant decrease over time for those aged 40-49 years (38% to 29%), with risk remaining stable among the other age groups. There were also significant decreases more recently among those aged 50-59 (38% to 30%) and 60 years and over (30% to 25%). There were no changes between 2020 and 2022.

**Figure 15: Risky alcohol consumption according to the 2020 Alcohol Guidelines for South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

### Consumption of 10 or more drinks per week on average (revised lifetime risk)

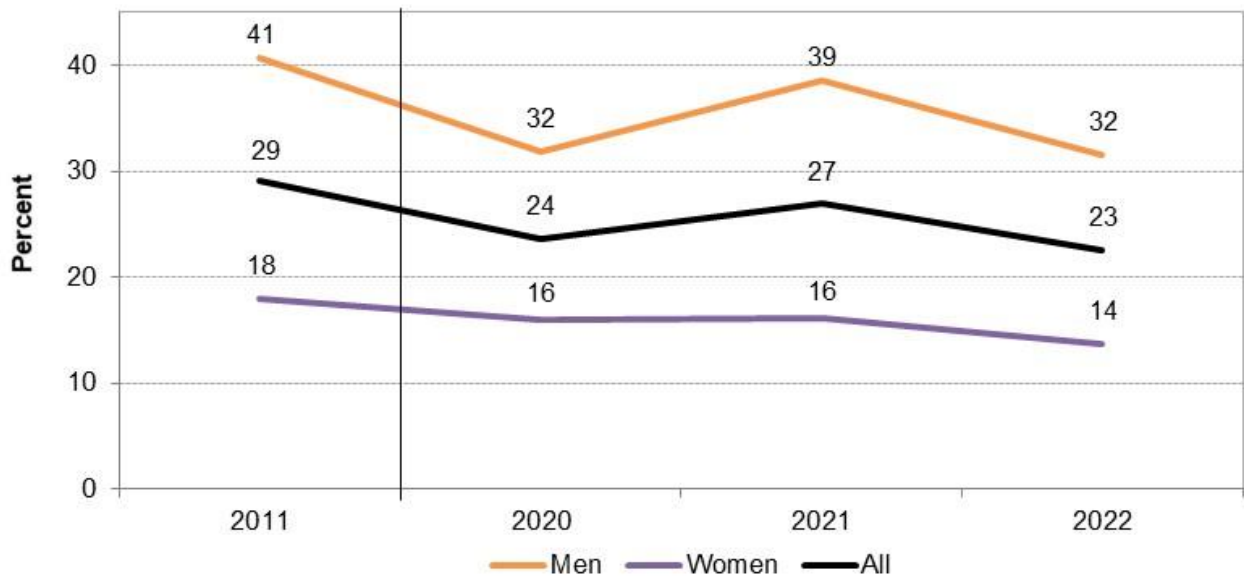
Figure 16 shows that the consumption of 10 or more drinks per week on average over the last 12 months among South Australians aged 18 years and over decreased significantly over time (29% to 23%) and more recently (27% to 23%).

#### *Changes over time by sex*

The consumption of 10 or more drinks per week on average over the last 12 months decreased significantly over time for both men (41% to 32%) and women (18% to 14%) and decreased significantly more recently for men (39% to 32%). There were no changes between 2020 and 2022.



**Figure 16: Consumption of 10 or more drinks per week on average for South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2011-2022**

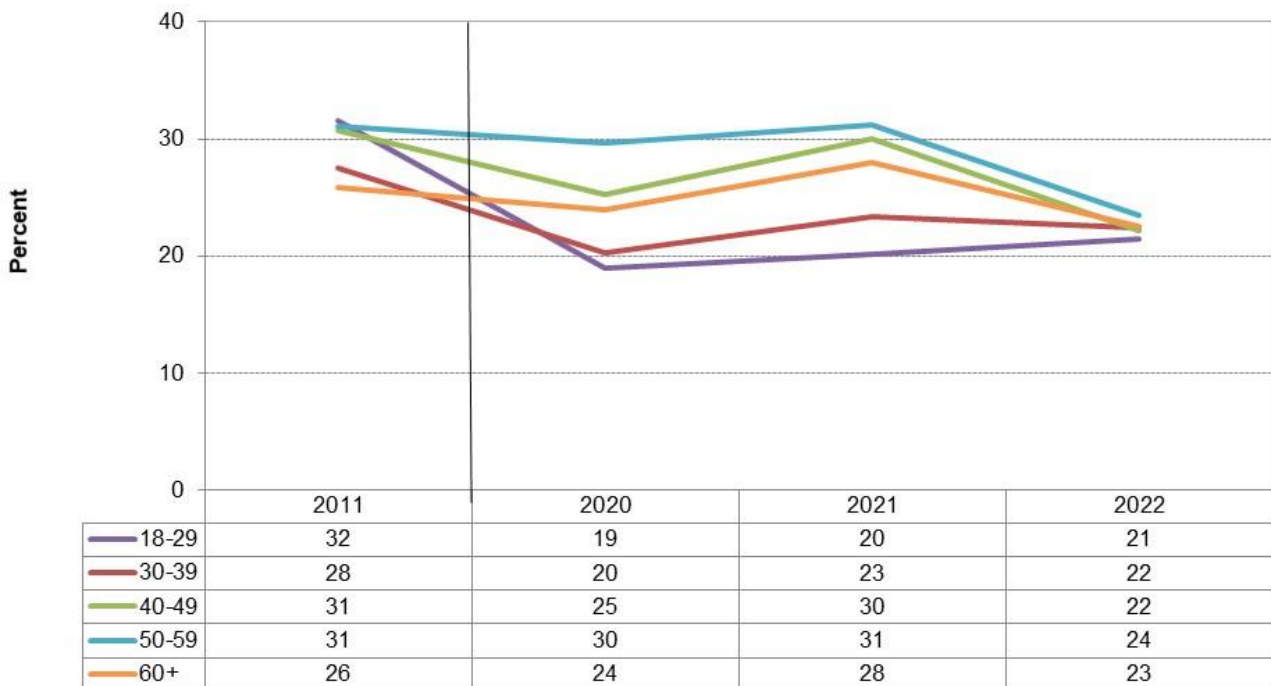


Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

*Changes over time by age group*

Figure 17 shows the proportion of South Australians aged 18 years and over consuming 10 or more drinks per week on average by age group. The groups with the highest proportion drinking this amount in 2022 were aged 50-59 (24%) and 60 years and over (23%). There were significant decreases over time among those aged 40-49 (31% to 22%) and 50-59 (31% to 24%) years. The proportion also decreased significantly more recently among those aged 60 years and over (28% to 23%). There were no changes between 2020 and 2022.

**Figure 17: Consumption of 10 or more drinks per week on average for South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022**



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

**Consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least monthly (single occasion risk)**

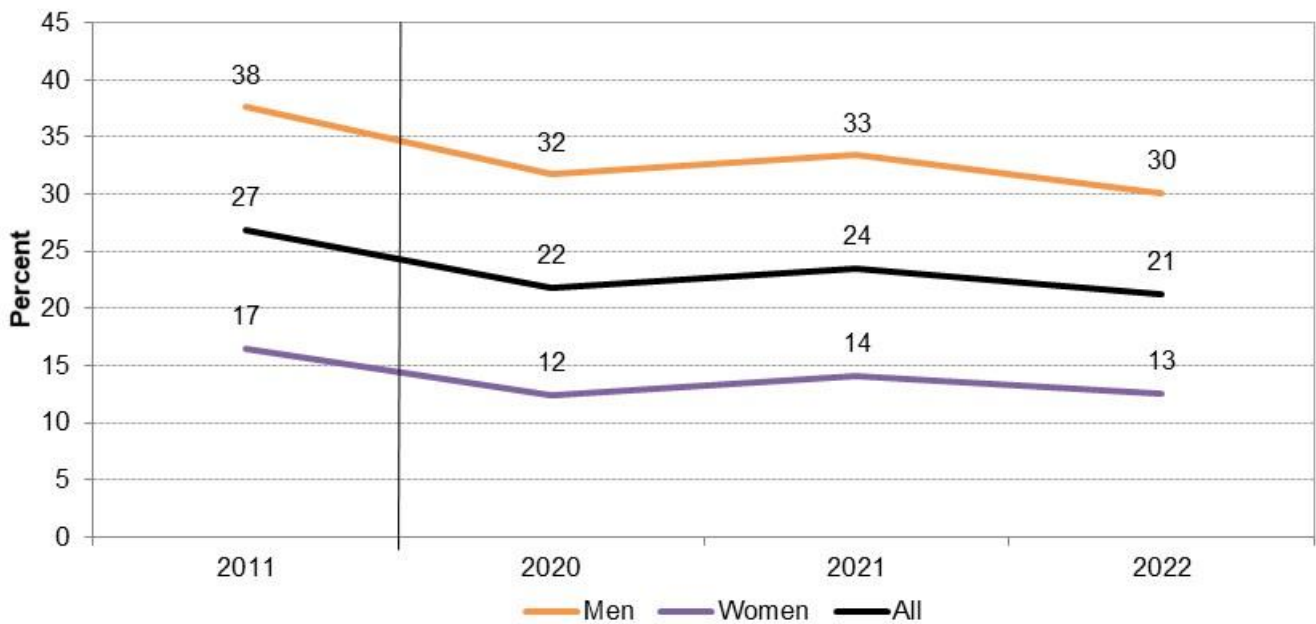
Figure 18 shows that the consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least monthly decreased significantly over time among those aged 18 years and over (27% to 21%), remaining stable more recently (24% to 21%).

The consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least weekly also decreased significantly over time among men (23% to 14%). There were no changes among South Australians in the consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least yearly (45% in 2011 and 41% in 2022). There were no changes more recently.

*Changes over time by sex*

The consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least monthly decreased significantly over time for both men (38% to 30%) and women (17% to 13%) but remained stable more recently (33% to 30% for men and 14% to 13% for women). There were no changes between 2020 and 2022.

**Figure 18: Consumption of more than 4 drinks in a single day at least monthly for South Australians aged 18 years and over by sex, 2011-2022**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

*Changes over time by age group*

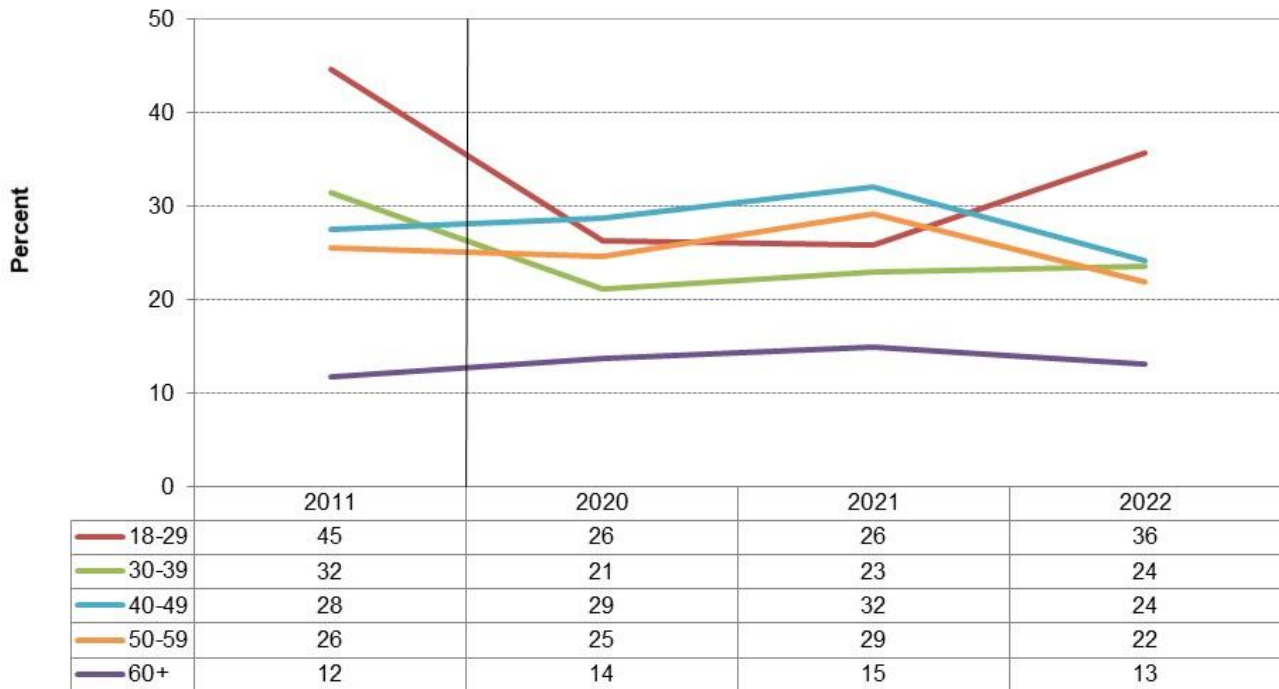
Figure 19 shows the proportion of South Australians aged 18 years and over consuming more than four drinks in a single day at least monthly by age group. The groups with the highest proportion drinking this amount in 2022 were aged 18-29 years (36%), a contrast from 2021 when the highest proportion was among those aged 40-49 years. There were significant decreases over time for those aged 30-39 years (32% to 24%), as well as significant decreases more recently among those aged 40-49 (32% to 24%) and 50-59 (29% to 22%) years.

The consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least weekly also decreased significantly over time among South Australians aged 18-29 years (26% to 13%). The consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least yearly increased significantly among those aged 60 years and over (22% to 27%). More recently, the consumption of more than four drinks in a single day at least weekly

**OFFICIAL**

or at least yearly decreased significantly over time among South Australians aged 50-59 years (15% to 9.2%, and 52% to 41%, respectively). There were no changes between 2020 and 2022.

**Figure 19: Consumption of more than 4 drinks in a single day at least monthly for South Australians aged 18 years and over by age group, 2011-2022**



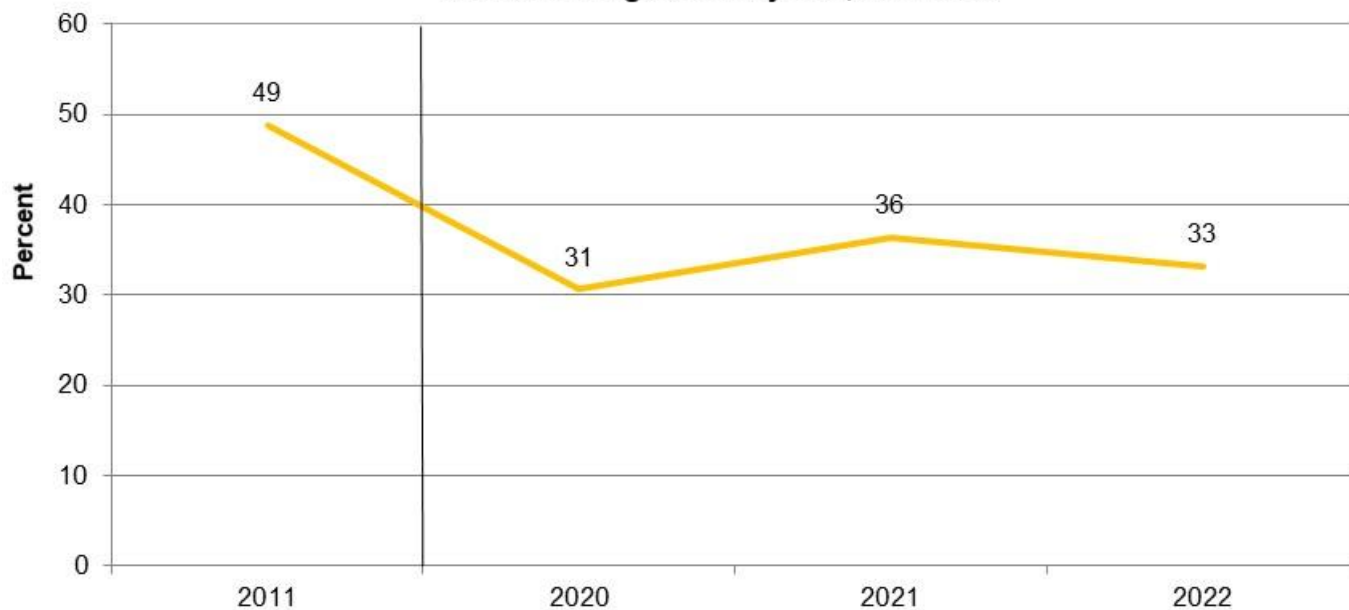
**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

**2020 Guideline 2: Alcohol consumption among those aged 15-17 years should be zero<sup>17</sup>**

In 2022, one-third of 15-17-year-old South Australians had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months. This decreased significantly from 49% in 2011 (see Figure 20). There was no significant change more recently (36% to 33%).

<sup>17</sup> These data should be interpreted with caution due to unreliable estimates, and further breakdowns by sex were not possible.

**Figure 20: Consumption of alcohol in the last 12 months among South Australians aged 15-17 years, 2011-2022**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2020-2022  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

## Appendix 1: New Guidelines

### *Guideline 1: Reducing the risk of alcohol-related harm for adults*

Instead of two Guidelines for risky drinking (single occasion and lifetime risk separately), there is now one, which includes two recommendations: *to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury, healthy men and women should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day.* Any person who, in the past 12 months, consumed fewer than 10 standard drinks per week on average; and never consumed more than 4 standard drinks on a single day (or did so less often than once per month on average) are classified as having consumed alcohol in ways that reduced their risk of experiencing alcohol-related disease or injury.

Risky drinking data will be presented separately for each recommendation in Guideline 1, as well as for the combined measure of risk (consumed more than 10 standard drinks per week on average or consumed more than 4 standard drinks per day at least once a month on average). The Guideline is now based only on those aged 18 years and over.

### *Guideline 2: Children and people under 18 years of age*

Guideline 2 specifies that those under 18 years of age should not drink: *to reduce the risk of injury and other harms to health, children and people under 18 years of age should not drink alcohol.* Risky drinking data will exclude those aged 15-17 years; for this age group, data will only be presented on alcohol consumption (as any consumption is deemed risky).

### *Guideline 3: Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding*

Guideline 3 specifies that: *to prevent harm from alcohol to their unborn child, women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy should not drink alcohol. For women who are breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is safest for their baby.*

## OFFICIAL

The new Guidelines relate to risky drinking only; 15-17-year-old South Australians are excluded from these analyses as Guideline 2 states that there is no safe level of consumption for this age group. The 20-29-year age group has now changed to include those aged 18 and 19 years.

### **For more information**

This Bulletin was produced by Marie Longo and Richard Cooke, Planning and Performance Unit, Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia.

For more information, please contact:  
Planning and Performance Unit  
Telephone: 08 7425 5101  
Email: [richard.cooke@sa.gov.au](mailto:richard.cooke@sa.gov.au)

Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia acknowledges the contribution of Dr Kamalesh Venugopal, Principal Statistician, Wellbeing SA, for his ongoing statistical assistance and advice.