

DRINKAWARE

Barometer 2022 Summary Briefing Paper

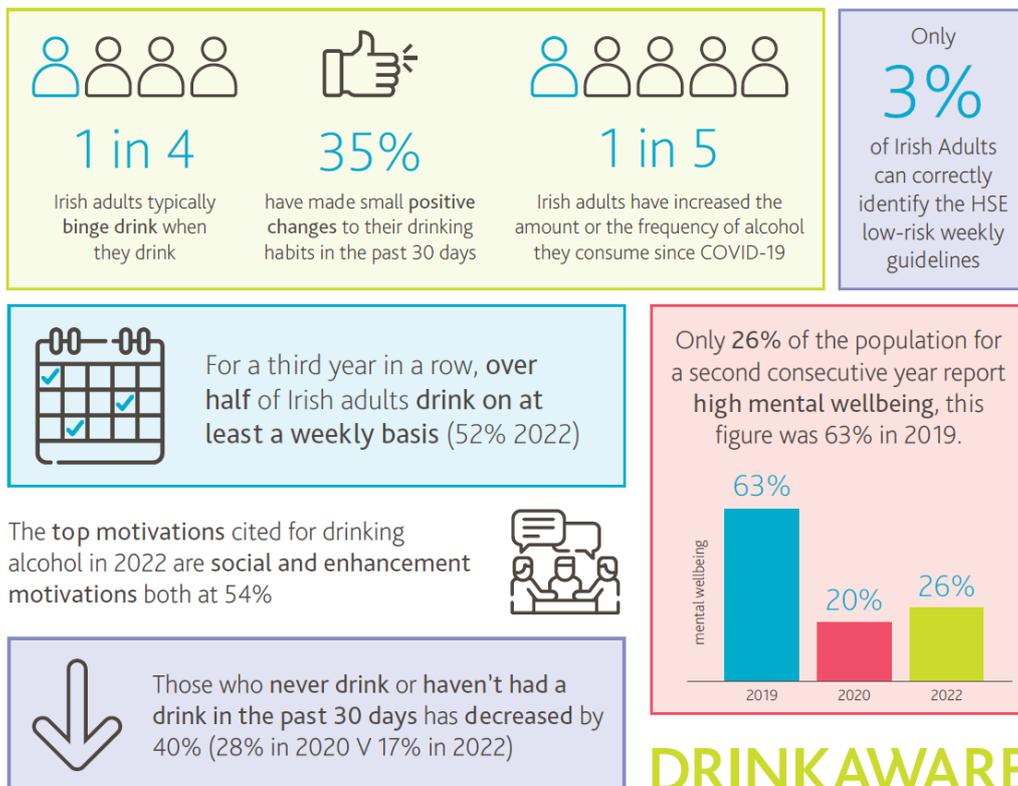
The purpose of the Drinkaware Annual Barometer is to deliver insight and context that enriches the understanding of the behaviours and attitudes towards alcohol from the adult Irish public, to create a greater understanding around the use and misuse of alcohol.

Research serves a very critical purpose, and the value of the Drinkaware Annual Barometer is its ability to illustrate the evolving patterns of the attitudes, behaviours, and culture regarding alcohol use & misuse in Ireland. The result is a timely and comprehensive set of data, which serves to inform and support our work through our core workstreams of outreach & engagement and education.

Consumption:

How often and how much are Irish adults drinking in 2022, why are they drinking and what changes have occurred since pre-pandemic?

Drinkaware Barometer Survey 2022 – Key findings



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Mental Wellbeing:

The Short Warwick -Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) is utilised to measure wellbeing. The mental wellbeing scores provide an extraordinary representative picture of broad culture and the mental wellbeing of Irish Adults:

- In 2019, 63% of those surveyed recorded a high mental wellbeing score. This has decreased dramatically to 20% in 2020 and 26% in 2021 & 2022.
- Levels of low mental wellbeing have increased nearly threefold at 280% since 2019. With only the 65+ age cohort reporting relatively high levels of mental wellbeing at 44%.
- Of those reporting low mental wellbeing:
 - 29% (21% national average) indicate they have increased the amount or frequency of alcohol consumed since March 2020.
 - 46% indicate increased levels of stress & tension (26% national average).
- Low mental wellbeing peaks for those who have increased their alcohol consumption since Covid-19 at 42% which is 12% higher than the national average.

National Attitudes:

Significant positive findings suggest a shift in the cultural expectancies regarding alcohol and the stated positive intentions from the public:

- 50% of respondents agree 'drinking to excess is just part of Irish culture' - a dramatic drop from 75% reported in 2019*
- Just under 1 in 3 agree 'we all drink to excess at some stage - it's no big deal' - decreasing from 50% in 2019*
- 30% would like to drink less often & 35% agree they have already made small positive changes to their drinking habits in the past 30 days.
- The top three influences to drink less were reported as: physical health (63%), personal finances (37%) and mental health (32%)

Recommendations:

The following recommendations merit consideration with regard to Drinkaware's work programmes and strategic cycle 2022-2024.

1. A **national multi-media campaign** on the HSE low-risk weekly alcohol guidelines with specific reference to binge drinking.
2. The evidence provided in Barometer 2022 to be **considered in future discussion regarding alcohol preventions and interventions**. Drinkaware offers open access to all the charity's research data.
3. A **targeted behaviour change programme** based on best practice and further evidence to convert alcohol-related health information into actionable knowledge.
4. **Effective collaboration & partnerships** with mission aligned stakeholders.
5. **Additional areas of research:** Further research into those who have decreased/ made positive changes to their alcohol consumption and the links between those with low-mental wellbeing & risky/harmful drinking.

[*Drinkaware Index 2019](#)