

# DASSA Statistical Bulletin

Number 19 – September 2020

South Australian Population Health Survey Module  
System 2019: a summary of the results relating to  
alcohol consumption



Government  
of South Australia

SA Health



## ***South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2019: a summary of the results relating to alcohol consumption***

This Bulletin is the 19th 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.

### **Background**

The Health Omnibus Survey (HOS) was a face-to-face survey that collected data on alcohol consumption from 2011 to 2017<sup>1</sup>. However, due to problems recruiting participants, in 2018 there was a change to the South Australian Population Health Survey Module System (SAPHS). This is a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) survey that utilised random digit dialling of mobile and landline numbers to draw a random sample of South Australians; 3,002 were surveyed in 2018 and 3,045 in 2019. In 2018, proxies (parents or guardians) were used for 15 year olds; 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>2</sup>.

A total of 10 questions relating to alcohol consumption were included in the 2019 survey. Questions were adapted from the National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS)<sup>3</sup> and were first included in the HOS in 2011. Information on risky drinking is presented separately for single occasion and lifetime use, with comparisons made between 2011 and 2019, and between 2018 and 2019. Moreover, given the two methodological changes implemented in 2018, one of which was subsequently removed in 2019, some comparisons were made between 2017 and 2019<sup>4</sup>.

### **Summary of findings**

#### **Alcohol consumption: frequency**

In 2019, 77% of South Australians aged 15 years and over had consumed alcohol at least once in the previous 12 months (43% drank at least weekly and 7.1% daily), and 23% were abstainers<sup>5</sup>. This has remained relatively stable since 2011, although there are sex and age differences.

A significantly higher proportion of men in 2019 consumed alcohol than women (82% compared with 72%), including daily drinking (9.5% compared with 4.7%) and at least weekly drinking (52% compared with 34%). However, there have been significant decreases in daily drinking among men (from 12% in 2011 to 9.5% in 2019).

In 2019, older South Australians consumed alcohol more often than younger people, with at least weekly consumption highest among those aged 50-59 years (54%), followed by those aged 40-49 years and 60 years and over (both 51%). Daily drinking was also highest among those aged 50-59 years and 60 years and over (both 10%). In contrast, there was a significant decrease between 2011 and 2019 in South Australians aged 15-19 years who had consumed alcohol (62% to 47%), and a significant decrease in the proportion who consumed alcohol at least weekly (21% to 8.3%). Between 2018 and 2019, there was a significant decrease in alcohol consumption among those aged 30-39 years, from 88% to 75%.

***There was a decrease between 2011 and 2019 in South Australians aged 15-19 years who consumed alcohol and a decrease between 2018 and 2019 among those aged 30-39 years. There was also a significant decrease in the proportion of men and those aged 60 years and over who drink daily, but a significant increase among those aged 50-59 years.***

### **Alcohol consumption: quantity**

For the majority (88%) of South Australians in 2019, 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 or less drinks). This is a significant increase since 2011 and 2017 (78% in both years usually consumed four or less drinks), but unchanged from 2018.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of South Australians in 2019 reported usually drinking quantities of alcohol that fell within the national guidelines for consumption at levels that would not put them at risk of disease or injury over a lifetime (two or less drinks on average). This is a significant increase since 2011 (48% consumed two or less drinks on average) but unchanged from 2018 (63%).

In 2019, men were significantly more likely to consume larger quantities of alcohol than women, with 16% usually consuming five or more drinks (8.8% of women). However, the proportion consuming five or more drinks has decreased among both men (from 28% in 2011) and women (from 15% in 2011). In addition, the proportion consuming five or more drinks decreased significantly between 2011 and 2019 among those aged 15-19 years (51% to 30%), and those aged 60 years and over (8.3% to 4%).

***In South Australia, men and young people consume larger quantities of alcohol than women and older age groups, although the quantity consumed decreased between 2011 and 2019 among men and women, and among those aged 15-19 and 60 years and over.***

### **Risky drinking**

In 2019, 22% of South Australians aged 15 years and over drank at levels that put them at risk of injury on a single occasion at least monthly, a significant decrease from 2011 (26%). A higher proportion of men (30%) than women (14%) drank at these levels at least monthly, although there was a significant decrease among men between 2011 (36%) and 2019 (30%); risky drinking at these levels remained stable among women. Risky drinking at least weekly decreased significantly between 2011 and 2019 for South Australian men (22% to 13%) and women (6.7% to 3.9%).

In 2019, 14% of South Australians aged 15 years and over drank at levels that put them at risk of injury or disease over a lifetime, a significant decrease since 2011 (19%). Again, a higher proportion of men (20%) than women (8.3%) drank at these levels, and there was a significant decrease between 2011 and 2019 for men (29% to 20%).

***In South Australia, a higher proportion of men drink at risky levels on a single occasion and over a lifetime than women, but there were decreases between 2011 and 2019 in both risk measures. Drinking at risky levels at least weekly has also decreased among men and women.***

From 2011 to 2019, 20-29 year olds had the highest proportion drinking at risky levels on a single occasion at least monthly (ranging from 34% to 48%); in 2019 this was followed by those aged 30-39 years (27%). Risky drinking on a single occasion at least monthly decreased significantly between 2011 and 2019 among those aged 15-19 years (29% to 13%) and remained unchanged for the other age groups.

***In South Australia, single occasion risky drinking at least monthly in 2019 is highest among 20-29 and 30-39 year olds, with a decrease between 2011 and 2019 for 15-19 year olds.***

In 2019, the highest proportion of South Australians drinking at levels that put them at risk of injury or disease over a lifetime were aged 50-59 (18%) and 20-29 (17%) years. There were no changes in lifetime risky drinking between 2011 and 2019, or between 2018 and 2019.

***In South Australia, lifetime risky drinking is more prevalent among those aged 50-59 years and 20-29 years with no changes between 2011 and 2019 for any age groups.***

## Conclusions

The survey data obtained in 2018 and 2019 may underestimate the true prevalence of alcohol consumption due to the change in survey mode. However, it is important to note that prevalence has been decreasing over time, with frequency of use and risky drinking showing decreases between 2011 and 2017, prior to the change in methodology. In addition, decreases have been reported among South Australian school students<sup>6</sup>. Wastewater data have also shown small decreases in alcohol consumption levels in Adelaide between 2016 and early 2020<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, while the data in 2018 and 2019 are reflective of this general trend, the magnitude of the decrease, especially in 2018, may have been overestimated. However, given that most measures remained stable between 2018 and 2019, the proxy requirement for those aged 15 years in 2018 may have had less of an impact than initially anticipated. It is possible that it has had some effect on estimates of the quantity of alcohol consumed in 2018, as results diverge from other years. Data from the 2020 SAPHS will enable a better assessment of the effect of these methodological changes on trends in alcohol consumption and risky drinking.

## Results

### Frequency of alcohol consumption<sup>8</sup>

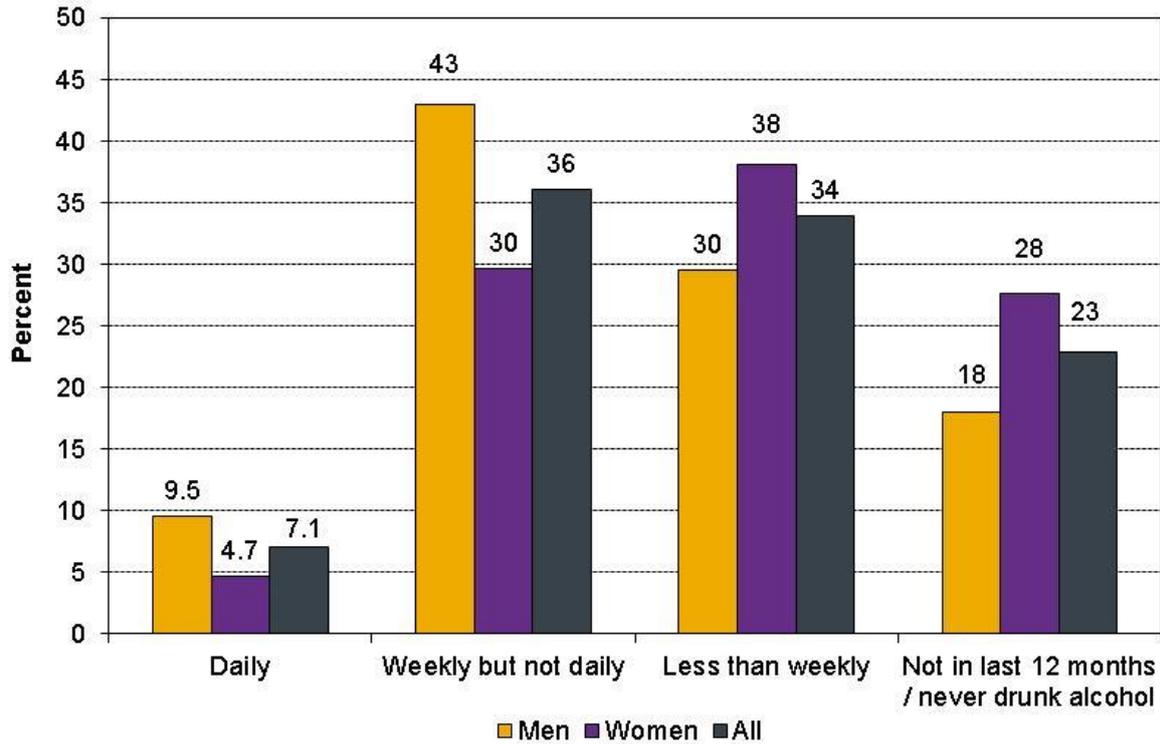
***A higher proportion of South Australian men than women consumed alcohol regularly; however there was a significant decrease between 2011 and 2019 in daily drinking among men.***

In 2019, 77% of South Australians reported consuming alcohol in the last 12 months. This has remained relatively stable since data collection began in 2011 (79%). Just under half (43%) drank at least weekly; 7.1% daily (see Figure 1).

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of South Australians were abstainers: 62% were women and 49% were aged 40 years and over, with a median age of 39 years. The proportion of abstainers who were women has changed significantly from 2018 (53%) but is similar to previous years.

Consistent with previous years, men were significantly more likely to consume alcohol more regularly, with 82% in 2019 reporting drinking at least once in the last 12 months (72% of women). In addition, 52% of men reported drinking at least once a week (34% of women) and 9.5% drank daily (4.7% of women).

**Figure 1: Alcohol consumption in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 15 years and over by sex, 2019**

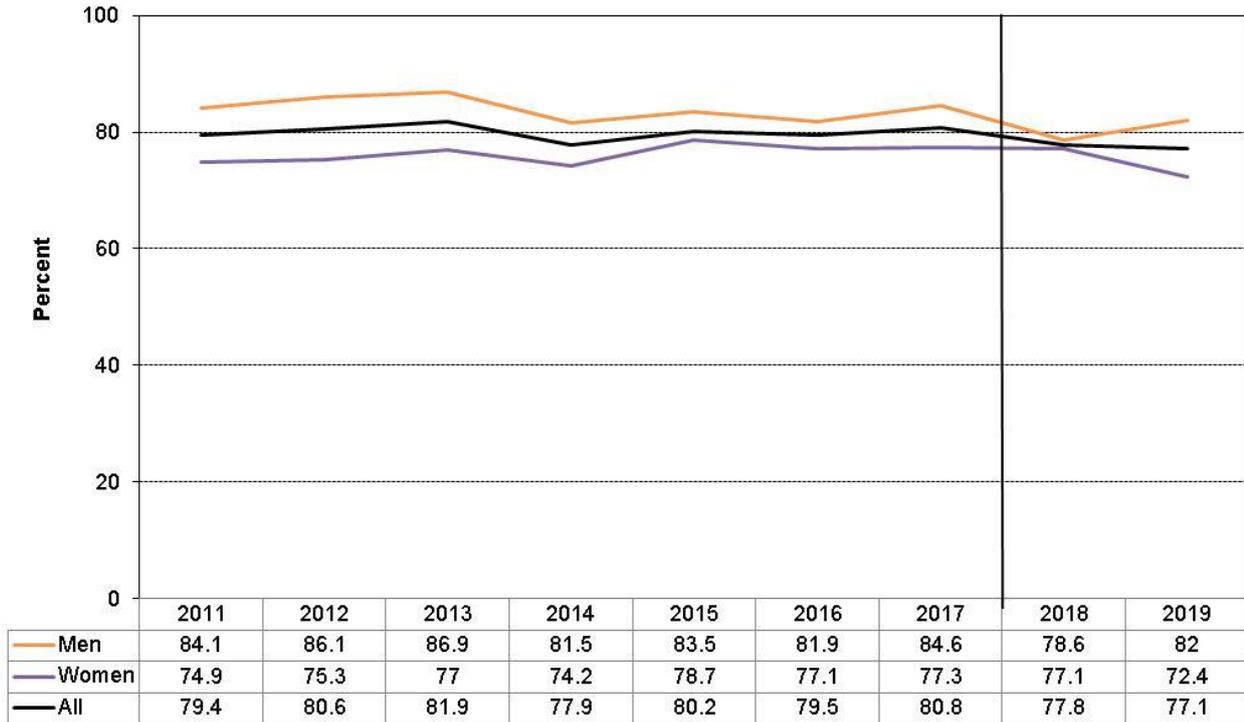


Source: South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2019

Figure 2 shows the proportion of men and women who had consumed alcohol at least once in the last 12 months over time. While there were significant decreases in 2018 in men’s drinking frequency (79% had consumed alcohol at least once in the last 12 months, lower than in 2011 [84%] and in 2017 [85%]), *any alcohol consumption* in the last 12 months increased in 2019 to 82%, and the proportion *who had never consumed alcohol* decreased, from 14% to 8.2%. Despite these changes, daily drinking among men significantly decreased over time, from 12.4% in 2011 to 9.5% in 2019.

There were also changes in drinking frequency among women, with significant increases in the proportion of women who abstained from alcohol, from 23% in 2018 to 28% in 2019. This was due to an increase in the proportion *who had not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months* (ex-drinkers; 10% to 18%), as the proportion *who had never consumed alcohol* actually decreased (14% to 9.6%).

**Figure 2: Alcohol consumption at least once in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 15 years and over by sex, 2011-2019**



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

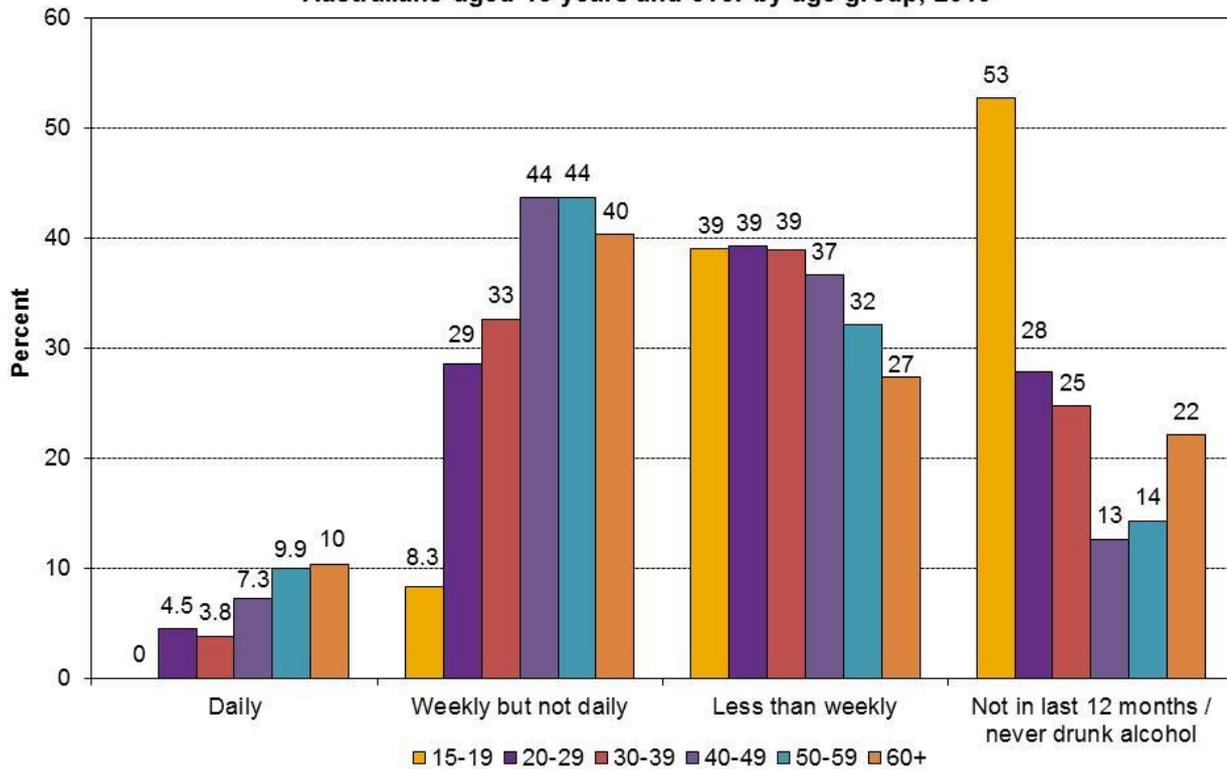
Figure 3 shows the proportion of South Australians in 2019 who reported consuming alcohol by age group. At least weekly (that is, including daily) consumption was highest among those aged 50-59 years (54%), followed by those aged 40-49 years and 60 years and over (both 51%). It was lowest among those aged 15-19 years (8.3%). The age group with the highest proportion of abstainers was aged 15-19 years (53%) and the lowest was aged 40-49 years (13%).

**Daily drinking among South Australians aged 60 years and over decreased between 2011 and 2019, but increased among those aged 50-59 years.**

Daily drinking in 2019 was highest among those aged 50-59 years and 60 years and over (10%). Although daily drinking among those aged 60 years and over decreased significantly between 2011 (16%) and 2019 (10%), there was also a significant decrease in the proportion who had never consumed alcohol (13% to 9%). This is indicative of changes in the proportion that consumed alcohol weekly but not daily, which increased from 33% in 2011 to 40% in 2019. There were no changes in the other age groups. Between 2018 and 2019 there was a significant increase in daily drinking among those aged 50-59 years (6% to 9.9%).

As in previous years, no South Australians aged 15-19 years reported daily drinking. The significant decrease in daily drinking among those aged 20-29 years seen between 2011 (2.7%) and 2018 (0%) was not maintained, with 4.5% reporting daily drinking in 2019.

**Figure 3: Alcohol consumption in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 15 years and over by age group, 2019**



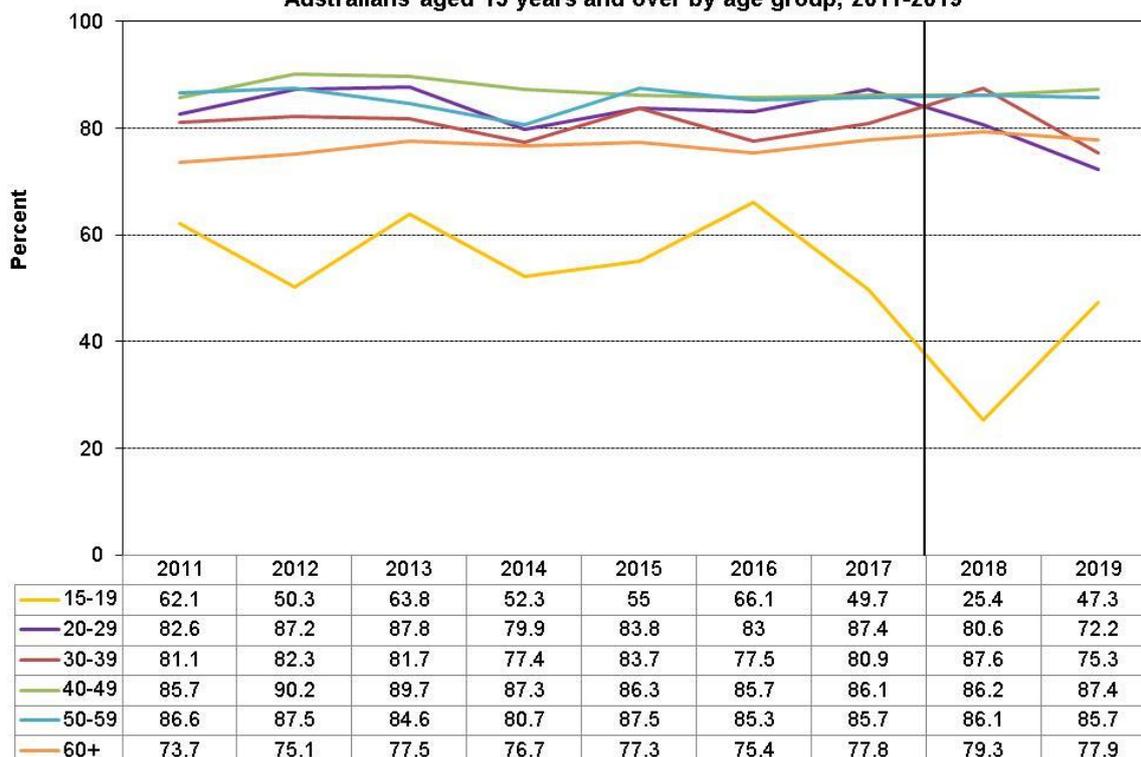
Source: South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2019

***There was a decrease between 2011 and 2019 in South Australians aged 15-19 years who consumed alcohol. Between 2018 and 2019, there was a decrease in South Australians aged 30-39 years who consumed alcohol.***

Figure 4 shows any alcohol consumption over time by age group. Between 2011 and 2019, there were significant changes in drinking frequency for the youngest age group (15-19 years). The proportion who consumed alcohol at least once in the last 12 months decreased, from 62% to 47%. These changes translated into a significant decrease in the proportion drinking at least weekly, from 21% to 8.3%. However, between 2018 and 2019 there was a significant *increase* in any alcohol consumption, from 25% to 47% (with a resultant decrease in abstainers, from 75% to 53%). This highlights the probable impact of the proxy requirement for 15 year olds in 2018; while there is a declining trend in alcohol consumption among young people, it may have been overestimated in 2018. When the proxy requirement was removed in 2019, alcohol consumption, as expected, increased among this age group. However it is still showing a downward trend, which is indicative of a 'real' decrease in consumption rather than due to the methodological change. There were no changes between 2011 and 2019 among any other age groups.

Between 2018 and 2019, there was a significant decrease in alcohol consumption among those aged 30-39 years, from 88% to 75%. There were decreases in at least weekly (42% to 36%) and less than weekly (45% to 39%) drinking, although daily drinking remained stable at just under 4%. Whilst consumption of alcohol at least once in the last 12 months among those aged 20-29 years did not change over time, daily drinking, which had decreased significantly between 2011 (2.7%) and 2018 (0%), increased to 4.5% in 2019.

**Figure 4: Alcohol consumption at least once in the previous 12 months among South Australians aged 15 years and over by age group, 2011-2019**



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

**Significantly higher proportions of South Australians aged less than 40 years reported being ex-drinkers; not having consumed alcohol in the last 12 months.**

Data from the 2019 SAPHS identified that over time, the proportion of ex-drinkers (those who had consumed alcohol but not in the last 12 months) has increased among most age groups, particularly among 15-19 year olds. Table 1 shows the proportions for all age groups, with statistically significant differences between 2019 and previous years highlighted. Between 2011 and 2019, there were significant increases in the proportion of South Australians aged 15-19, 20-29 and 30-39 years who reported being ex-drinkers. These differences were also significant between 2018 and 2019, suggesting that they may not be due to the change in methodology. The change among those aged 15-19 and 20-29 years was marked, increasing more than three-fold between 2011 and 2019 (7.7% to 26.3% for 15-19 and 6.8% to 21.1% for 20-29). There was also a significant increase between 2018 and 2019 in ex-drinkers aged 60 years and over (9.9% to 13.3%).

**Table 1: Proportion of ex-drinkers by age group, 2011 to 2019**

| Age group (years) | % ex-drinkers |         |       |
|-------------------|---------------|---------|-------|
|                   | 2011          | 2018    | 2019  |
| 15-19             | 7.7%**        | 5.1%**  | 26.3% |
| 20-29             | 6.8%**        | 11.3%** | 21.1% |
| 30-39             | 10.2%*        | 7.3%**  | 14.6% |
| 40-49             | 8.2%          | 6.4%    | 7.6%  |
| 50-59             | 8.2%          | 7.6%    | 10.9% |
| 60+               | 13.2%         | 9.9%*   | 13.3% |

\*Statistically significant difference between this year and 2019,  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*Statistically significant difference between this year and 2019,  $p < 0.01$

Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019

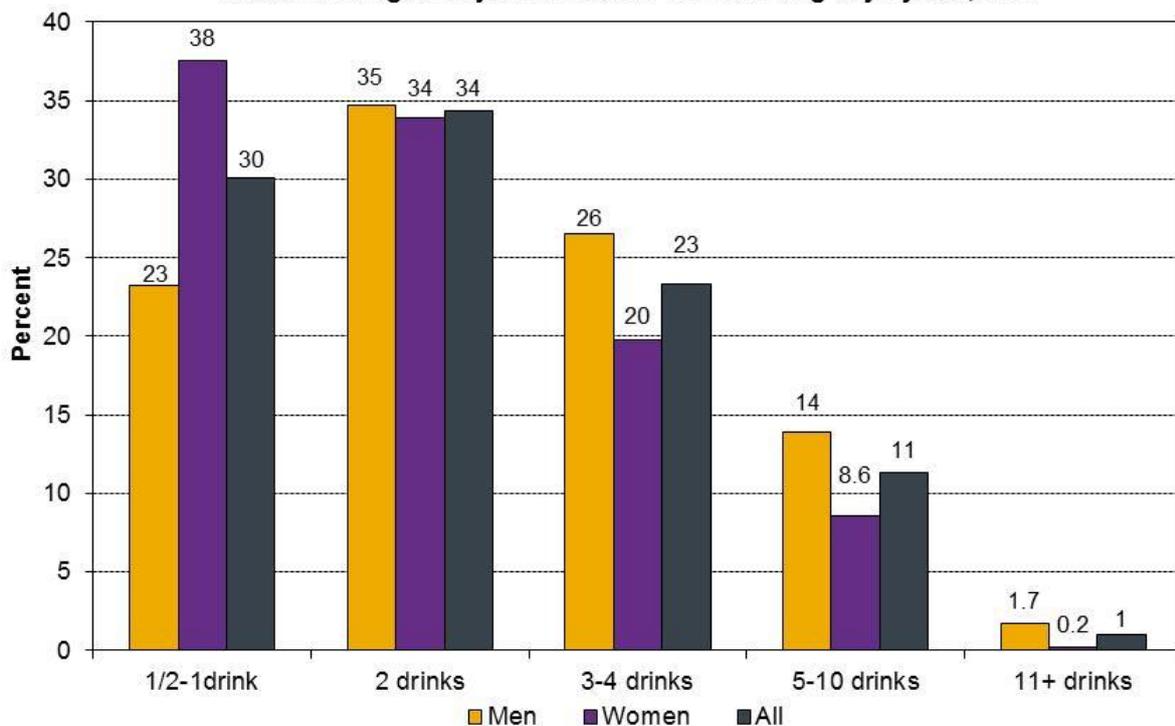
## Quantity<sup>9</sup> of alcohol consumption<sup>10</sup>

The majority (88%) of South Australians in 2019 reported that they usually consumed between a half and four standard drinks on a day they drank (see Figure 5); this is significantly higher than in 2011 (78%) but unchanged from 2018 (88%).

**South Australian men consume larger quantities of alcohol than South Australian women, although there were decreases between 2011 and 2019 in the proportion of both men and women who usually drank at levels that exceed the national guidelines for safe consumption.**

On a single drinking occasion, a significantly lower proportion of men (84%) than women (91%) reported usually having between a half and four standard drinks (Figure 5). Thus, 16% of men and 8.8% of women reported usually consuming five or more drinks (an amount that exceeds the national guidelines for consumption at levels that would not put them at risk of injury from a single drinking occasion<sup>11</sup>). In addition, 42% of men and 29% of women reported usually consuming three or more drinks on a drinking day (an amount that exceeds the national guidelines for consumption at levels that would not put them at risk of disease or injury over a lifetime)<sup>12</sup>.

**Figure 5: Number of standard drinks usually consumed by South Australians aged 15 years and over on a drinking day by sex, 2019**



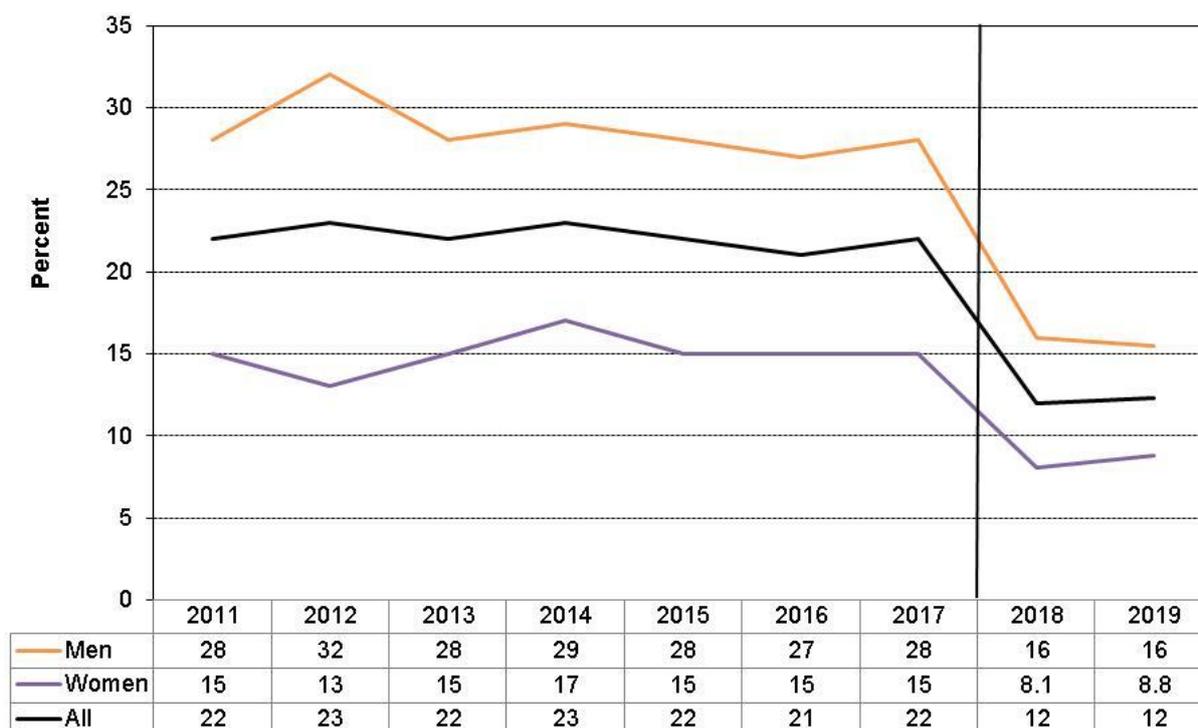
Source: South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2019

Figure 6 shows the quantity of alcohol usually consumed for men and women over time. There were significant decreases between 2011 and 2019 in the proportion of men who reported usually consuming five or more drinks (28% to 16%), as well as in the proportion of women (15% to 8.8%). However, there were no significant changes between 2018 and 2019.

There were also significant decreases between 2017 and 2019 in the proportion of men (28% to 16%) and women (15% to 8.8%) who reported usually consuming five or more drinks). Given there were no changes between 2018 and 2019, this may be partly related to the change in methodology in 2018.

Of those who drank in the last 12 months, the majority (91%) in 2019 reported having at least one alcohol-free day per week; 88% of men and 94% of women. This is unchanged from previous years.

**Figure 6: Usual consumption of five drinks or more on a drinking day among South Australians aged 15 years and over, 2011-2019**

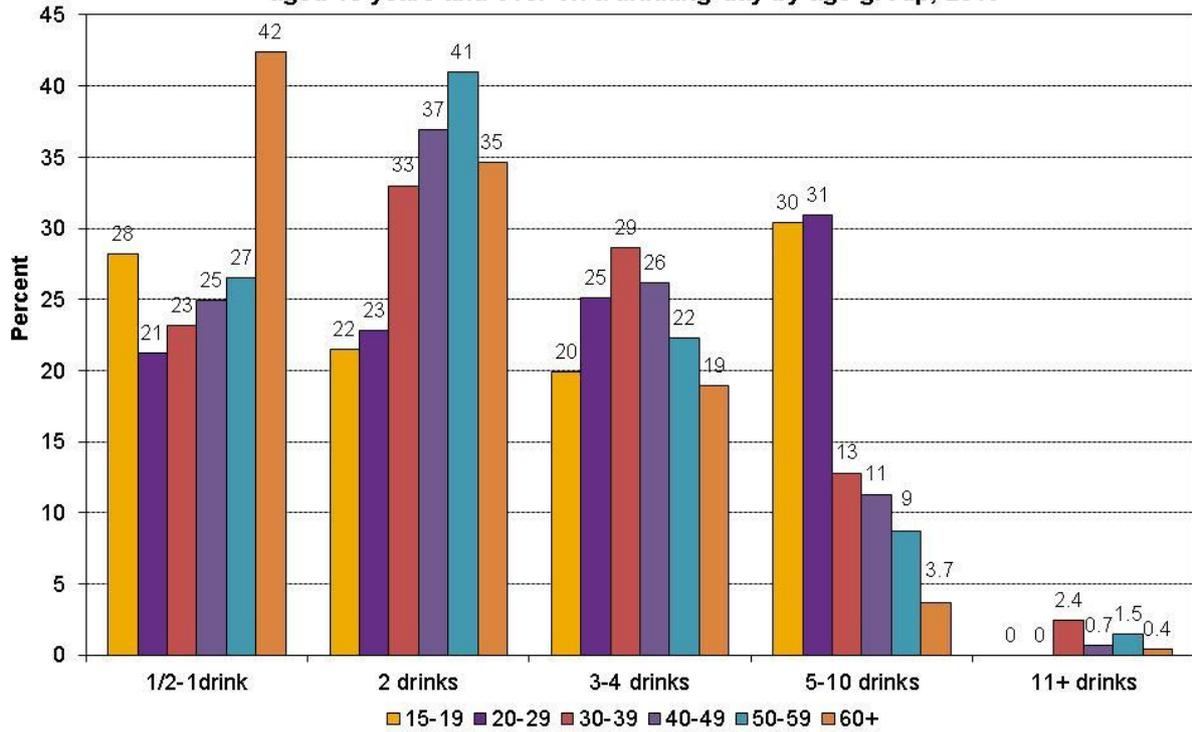


Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

***Drinking quantities of alcohol that exceeded at least one of the national guidelines decreased between 2011 and 2019 among South Australians aged 15-19 years, and 60 years and over.***

The proportion of South Australians who usually consumed five or more drinks on a single drinking occasion (thus exceeding the guidelines) generally decreased with age (see Figures 7 and 8). Thirty percent of those aged 15-19 years consumed five or more drinks, followed by 31% of those aged 20-29 years, and 15% of those aged 30-39 years. This decreased to 12% of those aged 40-49 years, followed by 10% of those aged 50-59 years. Only four percent of those aged 60 years and over usually consumed five or more drinks on a single drinking occasion.

**Figure 7: Number of standard drinks usually consumed by South Australians aged 15 years and over on a drinking day by age group, 2019**



**Figure 8: Usual consumption of 5+ drinks on a drinking day by South Australians aged 15 years and over by age group, 2019**

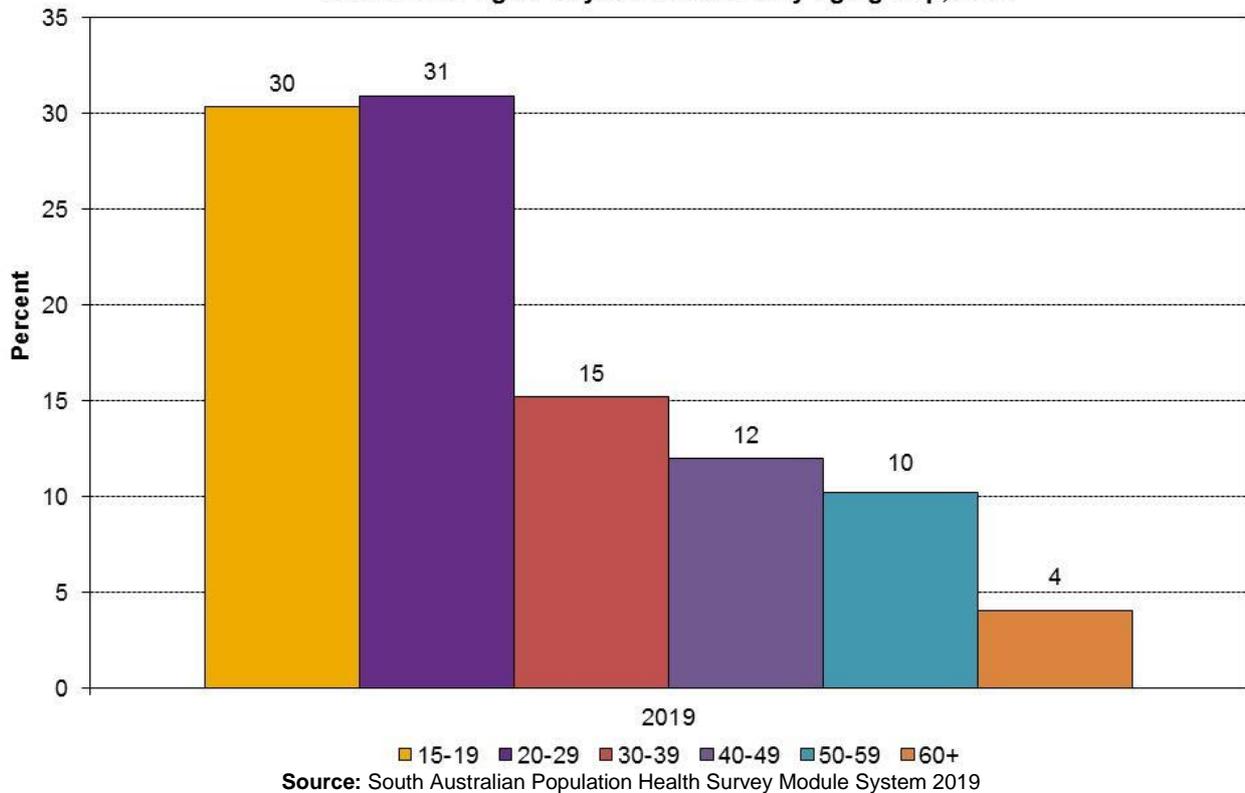
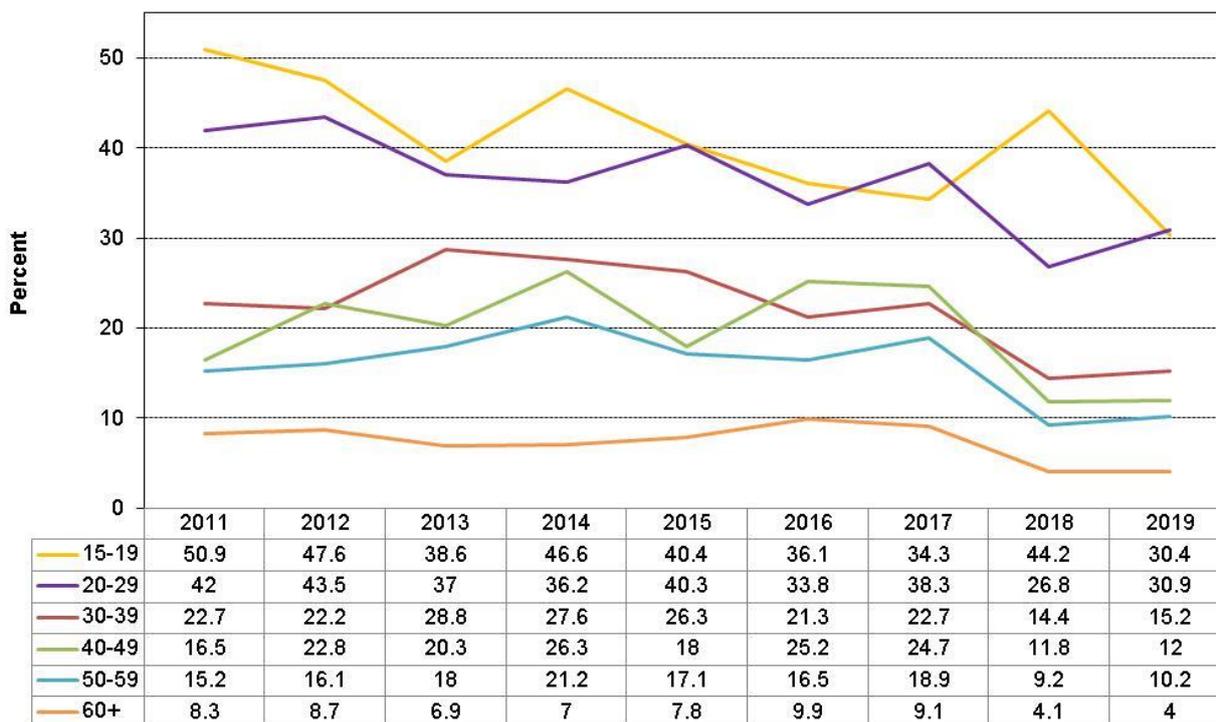


Figure 9 shows changes over time by age group. There were significant decreases between 2011 and 2019 in the proportion consuming five or more drinks among those aged 15-19 years (51% to 30%) and 60 years and over (8.3% to 4%). There were no changes between 2018 and 2019; the decrease among those aged 15-19 years from 44% to 30%, while large, was not statistically significant. In addition, the decrease among those aged 15-19 years between 2017 (34%) and 2019 (30%) was not significant, suggesting that while there has been a decreasing trend in the quantity consumed since 2011, the increase seen in 2018 may be related to the use of proxies for 15 year olds and the under-representation of 16-19 year olds in the survey, and thus may not be a reliable depiction of this measure. Quantity of alcohol consumption among drinkers has consistently decreased over time among all age groups.

**Figure 9: Usual consumption of 5+ drinks on a drinking day by South Australians aged 15 years and over by age group, 2011-2019**



Source: South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

### Risky alcohol consumption – single occasion

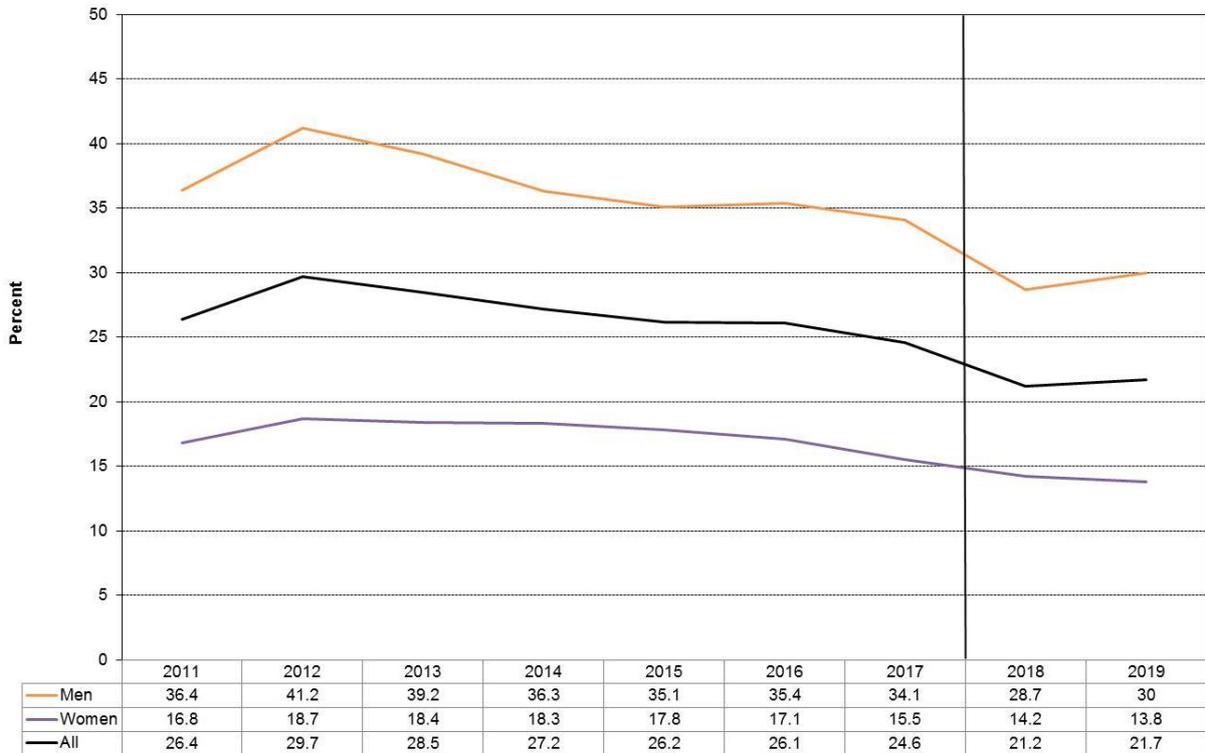
**South Australian men were more likely than women to drink at risky levels. Single occasion risky drinking at least monthly and at least weekly decreased significantly between 2011 and 2019 among men, and risky drinking at least weekly among men and women.**

In 2019, 22% of South Australians aged 15 years and over drank at levels that put them at risk of injury on a single occasion at least monthly (Figure 10). This was significantly lower than in 2011 (26%) and the second lowest since data collection began. Decreases between 2011 and 2019 were significant among men (36% to 30%) but remained stable among women (17% to 14%). However, changes between 2018 and 2019 were not significant. In 2019, men were significantly more likely than women to drink at these levels at least monthly (30% compared with 14%).

In 2019, 8.7% of South Australians aged 15 years and over drank at levels that put them at risk of injury on a single occasion at least weekly (Figure 11), a significant decrease from 2011 (14%). Decreases between 2011 and 2019 were significant among men (22% to 13%) and women (6.7% to 4.5%), but again there were no significant changes between 2018 and 2019. In 2019, men were significantly more likely to drink at these levels at least weekly (13% compared with 4.5%). However, there was no change over time in the proportion of South Australians that reported drinking at levels

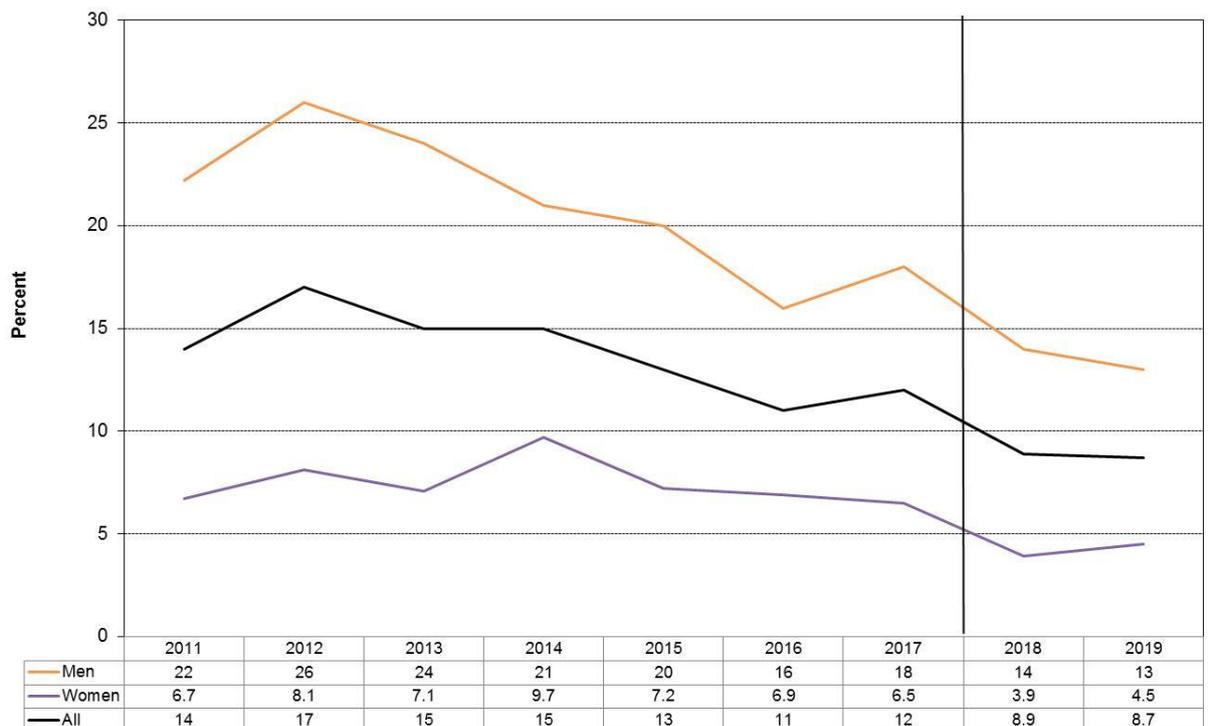
that increased their risk of injury from a single occasion at least once in the previous 12 months (44% in 2011 and 43% in 2019). Although risky drinking at least once in the previous 12 months did not change over time, in 2019, men were again significantly more likely to drink at these levels (55% compared with 32%).

**Figure 10: The proportion of South Australians aged 15 years and over who drank at levels that put them at risk of injury from a single drinking occasion at least monthly, 2011-2019**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

**Figure 11: The proportion of South Australians aged 15 years and over who drank at levels that put them at risk of injury from a single drinking occasion at least weekly, 2011-2019**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

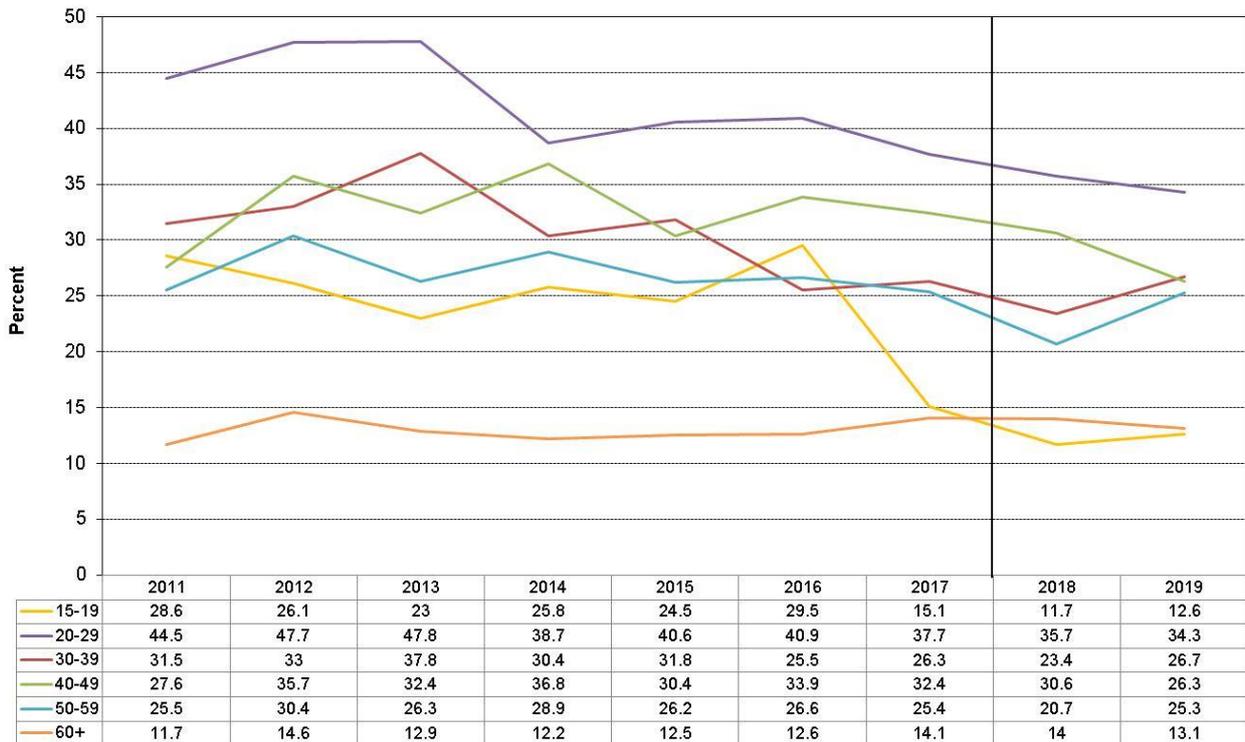
**Single occasion risky drinking at least monthly was highest among 20-29 and 30-39 year old South Australians, with a decrease between 2011 and 2019 for those aged 15-19 years.**

Figure 12 shows that in all nine years (2011 to 2019), the group with the highest proportion drinking at risky levels at least monthly was aged 20-29 years (ranging from 34% to 48%). In 2019 this was followed by those aged 30-39 years (27%) and 40-49 (26%) years. The groups with the lowest proportion were aged 60 years or over and 15-19 years (both 13%). This differs from 2011-2016, where the proportion of 15-19 year olds drinking at these levels was much higher, ranging from 23% to 30%.

Although 20-29 year olds had the highest proportion that drank at risky levels at least monthly, there has been a significant decrease among this group since its peak in 2012 (48%), to 34% in 2019. However, there was no change between 2011 (45%) and 2019, or between 2018 (36%) and 2019. Between 2011 and 2019, the only age group that showed a significant decrease was 15-19 year olds (from 29% to 13%). Drinking at risky levels at least monthly did not change significantly among any age group between 2018 and 2019, and drinking at risky levels at least weekly also remained unchanged.

These data, together with no significant changes between 2017 (which was the last year using face-to-face methodology) and 2019 indicate that risky drinking at least monthly has remained fairly stable over the last few years, and that the use of proxies for 15 year olds in 2018 is unlikely to have had a significant impact. The change in methodology to CATI also appears to have had minimal effects on this measure of risky drinking. In addition, significant decreases among younger age groups between 2011 and 2017 indicate that risky drinking among younger people was already trending down.

**Figure 12: The proportion of South Australians aged 15 years and over who drank at levels that put them at risk of injury from a single drinking occasion at least monthly, by age group, 2011-2019**



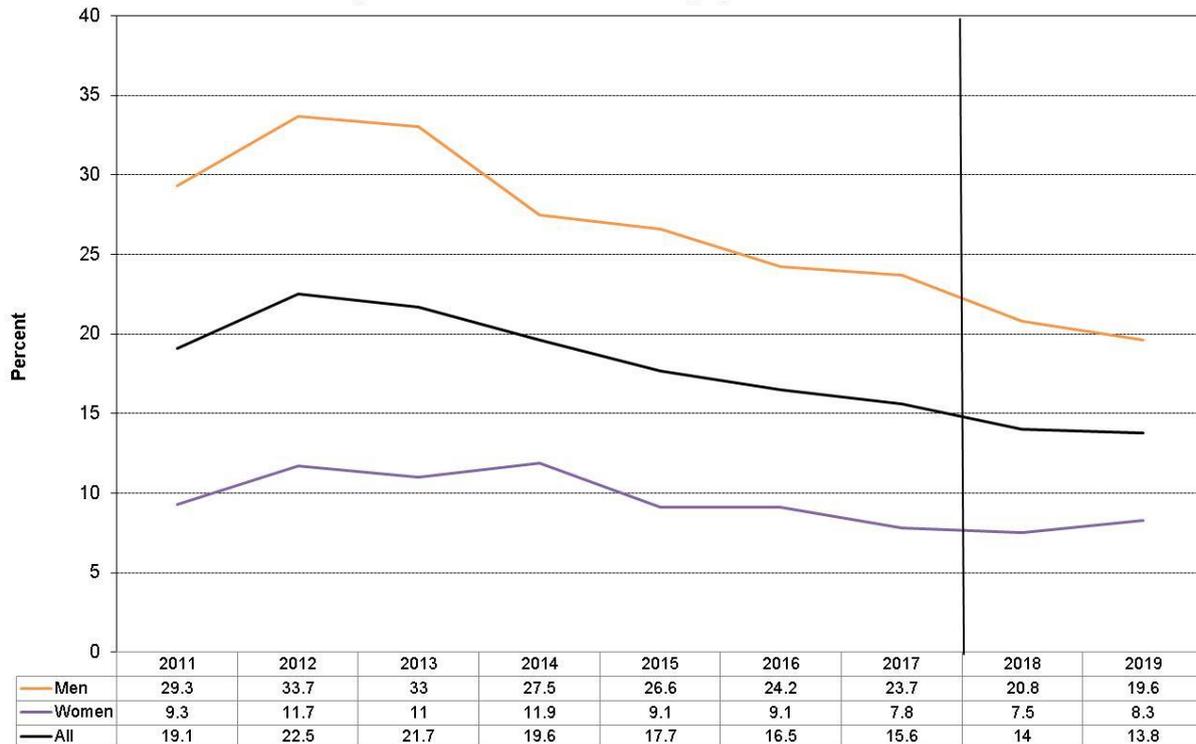
**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

## Risky alcohol consumption – lifetime

**Lifetime risk decreased significantly between 2011 and 2019 among South Australian men.**

Figure 13 shows that in 2019, 14% of South Australians aged 15 years and over drank at levels that put them at risk of injury or disease over a lifetime. This was significantly lower than in 2011 (19%), and along with 2018, the lowest since data collection began. Lifetime risk decreased significantly over time for men (29% to 20%) but not for women (9.3% to 8.3%). There were no changes between 2018 and 2019.

**Figure 13: The proportion of South Australians aged 15 years and over who drank at levels that put them at risk of disease or injury over a lifetime, 2011-2019**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

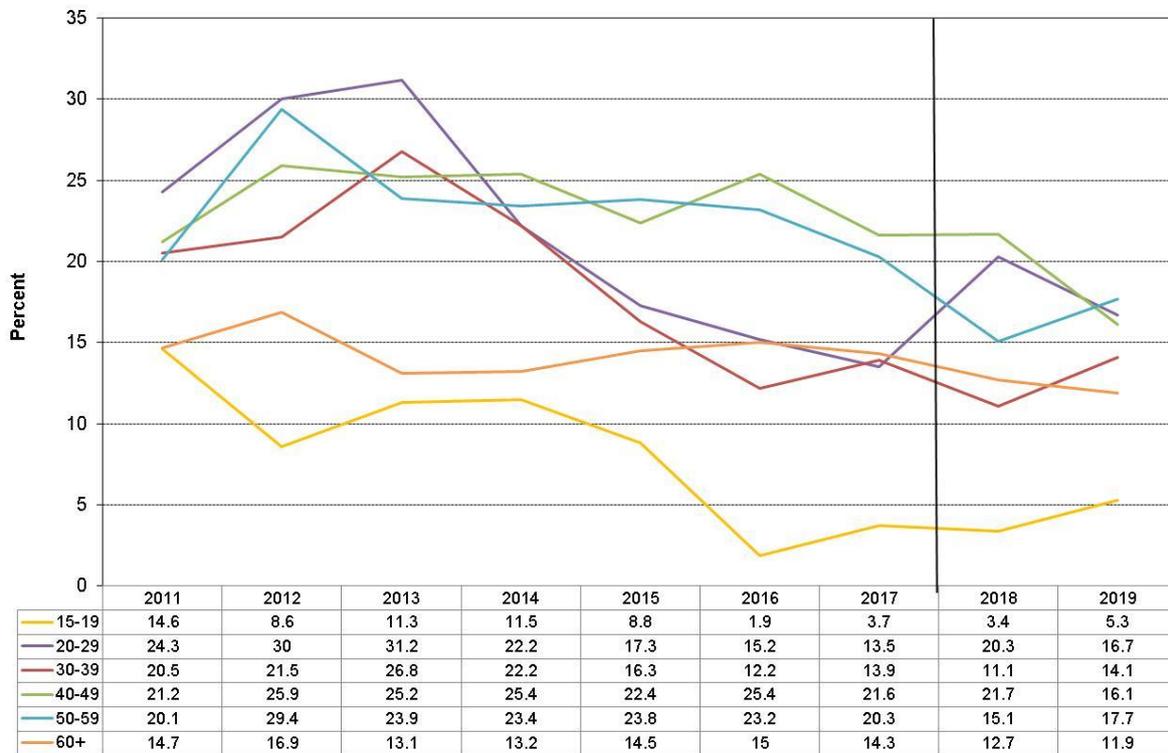
**Lifetime risky drinking was highest among 50-59 and 20-29 year old South Australians, with no changes between 2011 and 2019 or between 2018 and 2019 among any age groups.**

Figure 14 shows that from 2011-2013, the group with the highest proportion drinking at levels that put them at risk of injury or disease over a lifetime was aged 20-29 years (ranging from 24% in 2011 to 31% in 2013). In contrast, from 2014 to 2017, the highest proportion drinking at these levels were aged 40-49 (22% in 2017) and 50-59 (20% in 2017) years. There were significant decreases in lifetime risk between 2011 and 2017 for those aged 15-19 (from 15% to 3.7%), 20-29 (from 24% to 14%), and 30-39 (from 21% to 14%) years. These findings may offset the potential unreliability of 2018 estimates for 15-19 year olds as risky lifetime drinking among the younger age group was already trending down.

In 2018, the groups with the highest proportion drinking at levels that put them at risk of injury or disease over a lifetime were aged 40-49 years (22%) and 20-29 years (20%). There were significant decreases in lifetime risk between 2011 and 2018 among those aged 15-19 (15% to 3.4%), 30-39 (21% to 11%) and 50-59 (20% to 15%) years, and decreases between 2017 and 2018 among those aged 50-59 years (20% to 15%).

In 2019, the groups with the highest proportion drinking at levels that put them at risk of injury or disease over a lifetime were aged 50-59 years (18%) and 20-29 years (17%). Despite a decreasing trend among most age groups, lifetime risky drinking remained stable, with no significant differences between 2011 and 2019, or between 2018 and 2019.

**Figure 14: The proportion of South Australians aged 15 years and over who drank at levels that put them at risk of disease or injury over a lifetime by age group, 2011-2019**



**Source:** South Australian Health Omnibus Survey 2011-2017 and South Australian Population Health Survey Module System 2018-2019  
The vertical line denotes the change in methodology that occurred in 2018

## For more information

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<sup>1</sup> More information on the survey can be found here:

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/dassa+statistical+bulletin+number+18>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/dassa+statistical+bulletin+number+18>

<sup>3</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>4</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%. Two types of analyses are carried out on the risky drinking data: (1) Two-level ordinal variable: 'not risky at least monthly' and 'risky at least monthly' for single occasion risk, and 'no risk' 'risk' for lifetime risk; (2) Multi-level ordinal variables that include all levels of risk, including abstainers. Analyses on alcohol quantity and frequency are based on both multi-level ordinal variables: five for quantity and 11 for frequency, as well as more specific comparisons ('four drinks or less' vs 'five or more drinks' for quantity, and 'abstainers' vs 'less than weekly' vs 'at least weekly', 'any alcohol use' vs 'abstainers', 'never drank alcohol' vs 'drank alcohol' for frequency). For age and sex breakdowns, unless otherwise stated, comparisons are as stated above for the total sample. Comparisons over time are made between 2011 vs 2019, 2017 vs 2019 and 2018 vs 2019 only; significance testing is only carried out for those two time-points rather than including all years.

<sup>5</sup> Abstainers include both ex-drinkers who had not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months, or non-drinkers, who had never consumed alcohol.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/fbb851ae-cac8-4f04-be5e-20b05d3b192b/Statistical+Bulletin+17+-+May+2019+FINAL.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE-fbb851ae-cac8-4f04-be5e-20b05d3b192b-mHprDyH>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/drug+use+in+adelaide+monitored+by+wastewater+analysis>

<sup>8</sup> 'In the last 12 months, how often did you have an alcoholic drink of any kind?'

<sup>9</sup> This section excludes participants who had not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months, or had never consumed alcohol.

<sup>10</sup> 'On a day that you drink, how many standard drinks do you usually have?'

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ds10-alcohol.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ds10-alcohol.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*