

Attitudes and Behaviour towards Alcohol Survey 2013/14 to 2015/16:

Last drinking occasion analysis

February 2018

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Executive Summary

The Attitudes and Behaviour towards Alcohol Survey (ABAS) is a nationwide survey of people aged 15 years and over about alcohol consumption patterns, alcohol-related behaviour, consequences of consuming alcohol, and attitudes. Data from the 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 surveys were combined to allow analysis of subpopulation groups such as those who reported a last drinking occasion. Such analyses are used to inform the planning and development of alcohol activities, policies and programmes that aim to reduce alcohol-related harm in New Zealand.

This report describes drinking behaviours using the combined 2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16 ABAS. It focuses on respondents who reported having at least two drinks containing alcohol on a single occasion in the last three months ('last occasion drinkers'). Specifically, it assesses the behaviours and contexts associated with those respondents' *most recent* occasion on which they reported consuming at least two drinks containing alcohol (the 'last drinking occasion').

Key findings

- Between 2013/14 and 2015/16, 54% of ABAS respondents were categorised as last occasion drinkers. Last occasion drinking was more common¹ among:
 - males (61%), compared with females (47%)
 - European/Other respondents (58%), compared with all other ethnic groups
 - those aged 18 to 64 years² (57-63% depending on age group), compared with those aged 65 and over (42%).
- Last occasion drinkers more likely to drink alone were:
 - males (9%), compared with females (4%)
 - those aged 65 years and over (12%), compared with those aged 15 to 64 years (1-7%).
- Table 1 shows the three most common kinds of last drinking occasion and who was more likely to report that kind of occasion.

Table 1: Three most common kinds of last drinking occasion, ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

Kind of last occasion	% reporting this kind of occasion	People who were more likely to report this kind of occasion
Catching up or hanging out with friends	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian (compared with European/Other) • 15 to 17-year-olds (compared with 65 years and older)
Dinner, lunch, or breakfast	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European/Other (compared with Māori respondents) • 65 years and older (compared with those aged 15 to 44 years) • Non-risky drinkers (compared with risky drinkers)³
Christmas/New Year	11	Not analysed due to the seasonal, unique nature of this response

¹ The comparisons between groups presented here are from regression analyses that adjust for potential confounding variables (eg, age, ethnicity). Only statistically significant comparisons are reported.

² Note that there was not a significant difference between 15 to 17-year-olds and those aged 65 years and over.

³ "Risky drinking" defined as seven or more drinks on any one occasion in the last four weeks for those aged 18 years and over, and five or more drinks on any one occasion in the last four weeks for those aged 15 to 17 years.

- The average last drinking occasion lasted for 3.9 hours. This was longer for:
 - females (4.1 hours), compared with males (3.8 hours)
 - Māori and Pacific respondents (4.9 hours), compared with European/Other respondents (3.7 hours)
 - European/Other respondents (3.7 hours), compared with Asian respondents (3.4 hours)
 - those aged 15 to 64 years (3.4-5.2 hours), compared with those aged 65 and over (2.9 hours)
 - risky drinkers (5.1 hours), compared with non-risky drinkers (3.4 hours).
- Table 2 shows the three most common locations for the last drinking occasion and who was more likely to report drinking at those locations.

Table 2: Three most common locations for the last drinking occasion, ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

Location of last occasion	% drinking at this location	People who were more likely to report this location for their last occasion
My home	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males (compared with females) • European/Other (compared with Asian respondents) • 65 years and older (compared with those aged 15 to 44 years)
Friend's house	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female (compared with males) • Asian (compared with European/Other respondents) • 15 to 44-year-olds (compared with 65 years and older) • Risky drinkers (compared with non-risky drinkers)
Pub/bar or hotel	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 to 64-year-olds (compared to 65 years and older) • 65 years and older (compared to 15 to 17-year-olds) • Risky drinkers (compared with non-risky drinkers)

- There were differences in last occasion drinking location across the week.
 - Drinking at home was most common on Monday (62%), compared with all other days of the week (41-51%).
 - Drinking at a friend's place was most common on Saturday (27%), compared with Monday (13%).
 - Drinking at a pub/bar or hotel was most common on Thursday or Friday (14-15%), compared with Monday (7%).
- Drinking at multiple locations (two or more) was more common on Friday or Saturday (9%), compared with Monday (5%).
- Respondents who reported drinking at multiple locations on the last drinking occasion were twice as likely to have drunk at a risky level on that occasion (52%), than those drinking at one location (26%).
- Last occasion drinkers were more likely to drink at a risky level at a friend's house (35%) or at a pub/bar or hotel (30%), compared with at their home (21%).

Introduction

The Attitudes and Behaviour towards Alcohol Survey (ABAS) is a national survey of people aged 15 years and over about alcohol consumption patterns, alcohol-related behaviour, consequences of consuming alcohol, and attitudes. The survey focuses on behaviour in the previous month and on the last drinking occasion, and includes questions on a range of attitudes and opinions towards alcohol. Results from the survey are used to inform the planning and development of alcohol activities, policies and programmes that aim to reduce alcohol-related harm in New Zealand.

This last drinking occasion analysis provides an opportunity to understand in more depth the context in which people are drinking, and contributes to HPA's understanding of the drinking culture in New Zealand. This report provides useful information about where people are drinking, whether they are drinking alone, and duration and kinds of drinking occasions.

This report

This report presents descriptive results from the 2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16 ABAS about drinking behaviours among people aged 15 years and over. It focuses on respondents who reported having at least two drinks containing alcohol on a single occasion in the last three months ('last occasion drinkers'). Specifically, it assesses the behaviours and contexts associated with those respondents' *most recent* occasion on which they consumed at least two drinks containing alcohol (the 'last drinking occasion').

Method

The ABAS is a national survey of usually resident New Zealanders aged 15 years and over. For each survey year, approximately 4,000 people aged 15 years and over were surveyed over November, December, January, and February. In addition, an extra 196 Pacific respondents were surveyed in February 2016 as part of the 2015/16 ABAS.

Households were stratified into telephone directory regions. A random sample of telephone numbers was generated from all number ranges found in the White Pages using a Random Digit Dialling (RDD) approach. The mode of the interview was Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI).

A full description of methodology and other ABAS publications can be found at <http://www.hpa.org.nz/research-library/research-publications>.

Last drinking occasion analysis

In 2016, the 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 ABAS datasets were combined in order to allow analysis of subpopulation groups within the dataset. A full description of the pooled datasets methods can be found at <https://www.hpa.org.nz/research-library/research-publications/attitudes-and-behaviour-towards-alcohol-survey-2013-14-to-2015-16-methods-report-for-the-combination>. This analysis focuses on the last occasion of drinking, as described above.

In total there were 12,206 respondents across the 2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16 surveys. Of those, 6,512 respondents were last occasion drinkers (Table 3).

Table 3: Combined ABAS total sample size and last occasion drinker sample size

Year	Survey sample size	Last occasion drinker sample size
2013/14	4,001	2,179
2014/15	4,005	2,179
2015/16	4,200	2,154
Total	12,206	6,512

The results presented in this report are weighted so that the estimated percentages reflect the makeup of the New Zealand population at the last Census (2013). The confidence level for comparing estimates by subgroup was set at 95%. Multiple logistic regression was used to test for statistical differences between responses across specific variables of interest including age, gender, ethnicity, and risky drinking. All variables of interest for a particular question were included in the regression model to enable estimation of the unique relationship between each predictor (eg, age) and outcome (eg, drinking location), while holding constant all other predictors (eg, gender, ethnicity, and risky drinking).

Interpreting the results

All percentages in this report (including in the figures) represent the weighted unadjusted percentages, with error bars representing the 95% confidence intervals. The text and figures in the Results section also indicate where there were statistically significant differences in response across particular subgroups of interest, after adjusting for all other variables included in that particular regression model. For example, if the model includes gender, ethnicity, age, and risky drinking status, the mention of a significant difference by age can be interpreted as, ‘a statistically significant difference by age, after adjusting for gender, ethnicity, and risky drinking status’.

The notes below each figure specify which variables were included in that particular regression model. They also indicate the sample size (‘base’). In the figures depicting subgroup differences, the base is that for the regression model. In some cases, the base may be slightly reduced from the overall total, as respondents were only included in the regression if they had no missing data and no ‘don’t know’ or ‘refused’ responses across any of the variables of interest. For example, if someone had all other variables recorded but was unable to be categorised as a risky or non-risky drinker, they would be excluded from the regression for that question.

Results

Table 4 outlines the characteristics of ABAS respondents categorised as last occasion drinkers.

Table 4: Characteristics of last occasion drinkers, 2013/14 to 2015/16 ABAS

		Number of respondents	Percent (%)
Total		6,512	
Gender	Female	3,098	47.6
	Male	3,414	52.4
Prioritised ethnicity ⁴	Māori	1,107	17.0
	Pacific	367	5.6
	Asian	293	4.5
	European/ Other	4,745	72.9
Age	15-17	242	3.7
	18-24	650	10.0
	25-44	2,421	37.2
	45-64	2,092	32.1
	65+	1,107	17.0
Risky drinking in last month ⁵	Risky	1,928	29.6
	Non-risky	4,552	69.9
	Could not be determined	32	0.5
Drank alone on last occasion	Alone	465	7.1
	With others ⁶	6,047	92.9

⁴ Ethnicity was prioritised in the order of: Māori, Pacific, Asian, and European/Other.

⁵ HPA conservatively defined “risky drinking” as seven or more drinks on any one occasion in the last four weeks for those aged 18 years and over, and five or more drinks on any one occasion in the last four weeks for those aged 15 to 17 years. The 32 respondents whose risky drinking status could not be determined were excluded from further analysis.

⁶ Note that drinking ‘with others’ included those who spent some time drinking alone and some time with others.

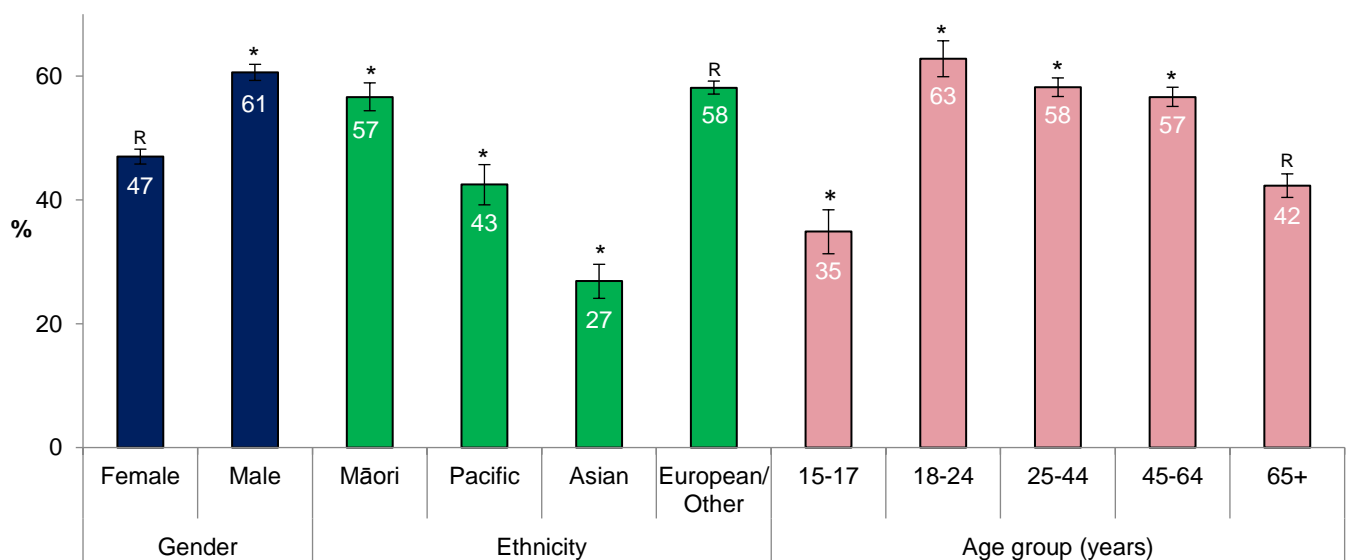
Last occasion drinking prevalence

A demographic profile of last occasion drinkers is shown in Figure 1. This profile shows the proportion of ABAS respondents who reported having at least two drinks containing alcohol on a single occasion in the last three months (ie, was a 'last occasion drinker').

Overall, 54% of ABAS respondents were categorised as last occasion drinkers. Last occasion drinkers were more likely to be:

- males (compared with females)
- European/Other respondents (compared with Māori, Pacific, and Asian respondents)
- younger respondents (those aged 18 to 64 years, compared with those aged 65 and over).

Figure 1: Last occasion drinkers, by gender, ethnicity, and age group



Base: All respondents, $n = 12,206$

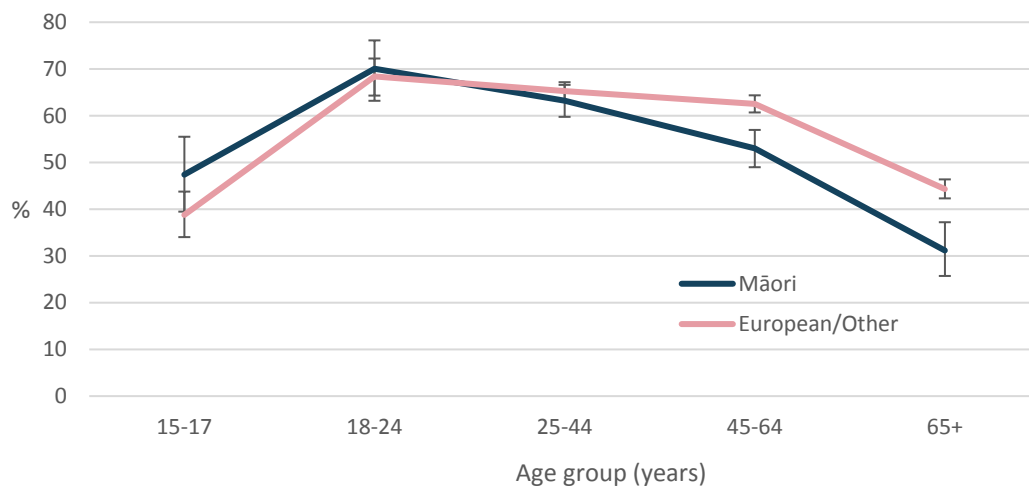
Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity and an interaction of age with ethnicity. Note that risky drinking status was excluded from this model as all risky drinkers are by definition last occasion drinkers

Although the prevalence of last occasion drinking among Māori does not appear to differ markedly from that for European/Other respondents, when age (and gender) were adjusted for statistically, the difference between these groups was significant (shown by the asterisk in Figure 1). The difference, however, is not simple. As shown in Figure 2, the prevalence of last occasion drinking is clearly lower for older Māori than for older European/Other respondents, but this is not the case for younger age groups.⁷

⁷ Statistically, this more complex pattern is demonstrated by a significant interaction between age and ethnicity.

Figure 2: Prevalence of last occasion drinking by ethnicity and age



Base: All respondents, $n = 2,008$ (Māori) and $n = 8,273$ (European/Other)
 Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

Drinking alone on the last drinking occasion

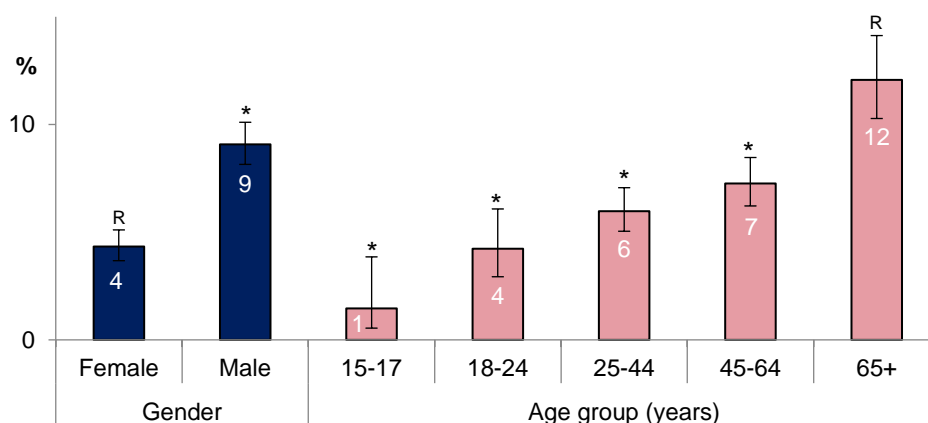
All last occasion drinkers were asked whether they drank by themselves or with others on their last drinking occasion. Respondents were categorised as drinking alone if they drank by themselves *exclusively* across the whole occasion. Those who spent some time drinking by themselves but also some time with others were included in the group who drank with others.

Overall, 7% of last occasion drinkers drank alone on their last drinking occasion. Those who were more likely to drink alone (Figure 3) were:

- males (compared with females)
- older respondents (those aged 65 years and over, compared with those aged 15 to 64).

There were no differences by ethnicity or risky drinking status.

Figure 3: Drinking alone on the last drinking occasion, by gender and age group



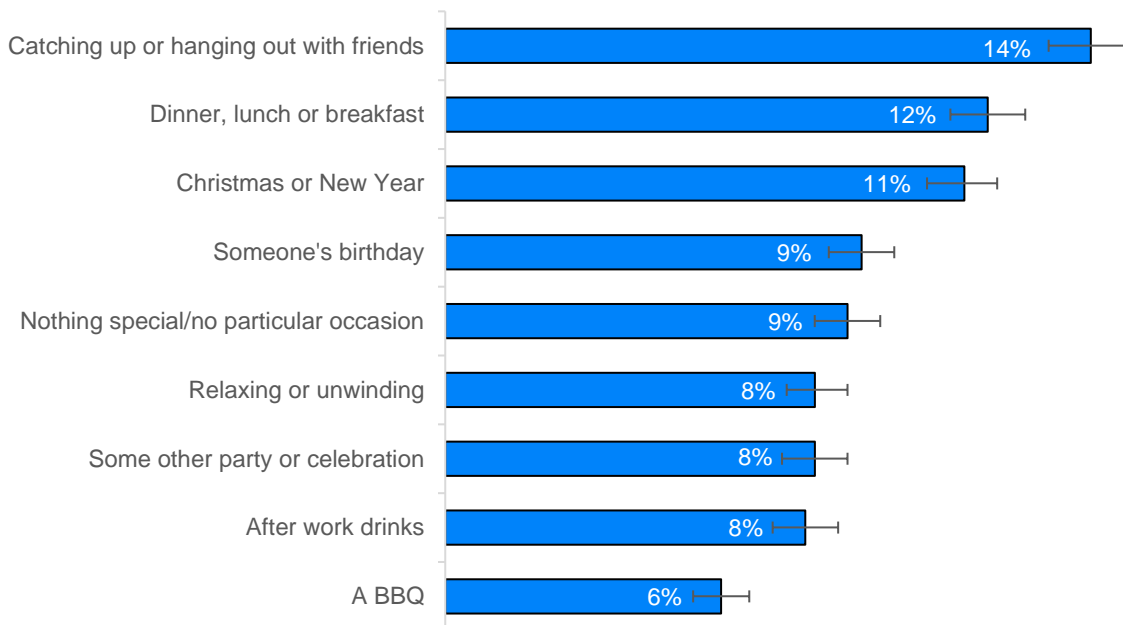
Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6512$.
 Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

Common kinds of last drinking occasions

All last occasion drinkers were asked about what kind of occasion this was (for example, a party, barbecue, after work drinks or because you wanted to relax). Figure 4 shows the kinds of occasions that were reported by at least 5% of respondents. The three most common kinds of occasion were: 'catching up or hanging out with friends', 'dinner, lunch or breakfast', and 'Christmas or New Year'.

Figure 4: Common kinds of last drinking occasion (reported by at least 5% of respondents)



Base: Last occasion drinkers, $n = 6,512$. Multiple responses were allowed.
Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

For multiple response questions, we typically assess the three most common responses for differences by subgroups. However, for this question, we did not conduct subgroup analyses for 'Christmas or New Year' due to its highly seasonal and unique nature. Thus, the following figures show the subgroup differences for only the two most common kinds of occasion: 'catching up or hanging out with friends' and 'dinner, lunch, or breakfast'.

As shown in Figure 5, last occasion drinkers who said their occasion involved 'catching up or hanging out with friends' were more likely to be:

- Asian respondents (compared with European/Other respondents)
- 15 to 17-year-olds (compared with those aged 65 years and over).

There were no differences by gender or risky drinking status.

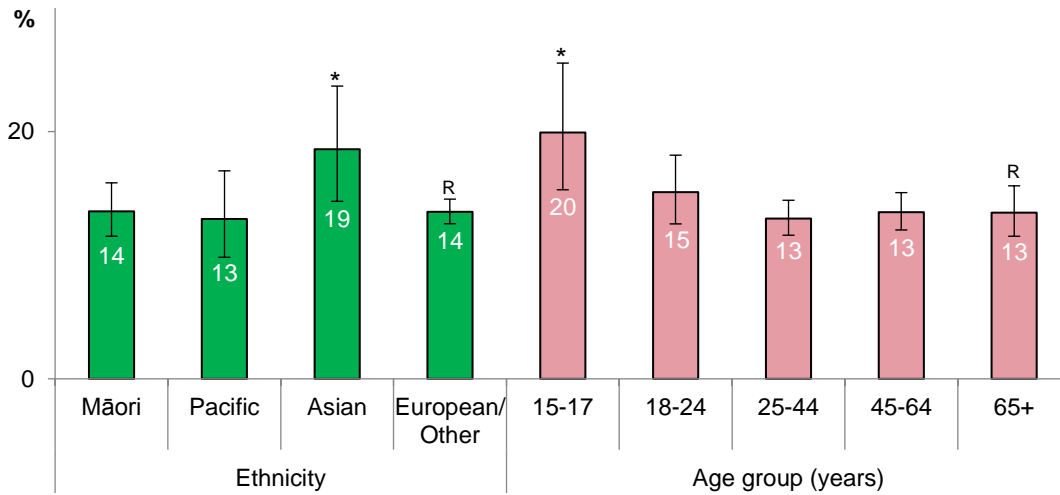
As shown in Figure 6, last occasion drinkers who said their occasion involved 'dinner, lunch, or breakfast' were more likely to be:

- European/Other respondents (compared with Māori respondents)
- older respondents (those aged 65 years and over, compared with those aged 15 to 44)

- non-risky drinkers (compared with risky drinkers).

There was no difference by gender.

Figure 5: Last occasion drinkers who said their last occasion involved ‘catching up or hanging out with friends’, by ethnicity and age group

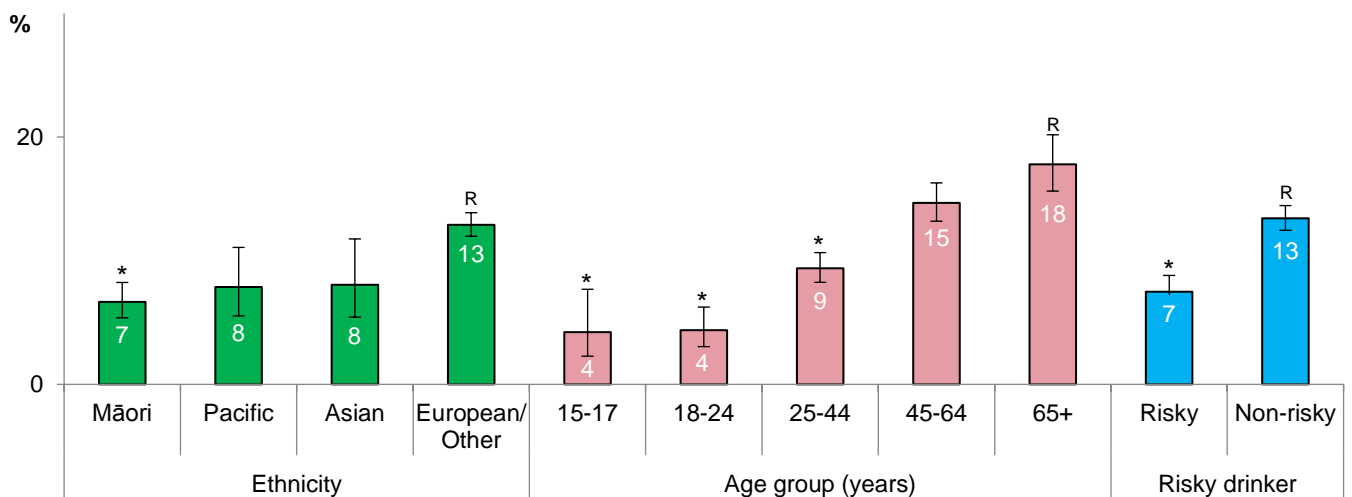


Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded ‘don’t know’ or ‘refused’, $n = 6,512$.

Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

Figure 6: Proportion of last occasion drinkers who said their last occasion involved ‘dinner, lunch, or breakfast’, by ethnicity, age group, and risky drinking status



Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded ‘don’t know’ or ‘refused’, $n = 6,512$.

Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

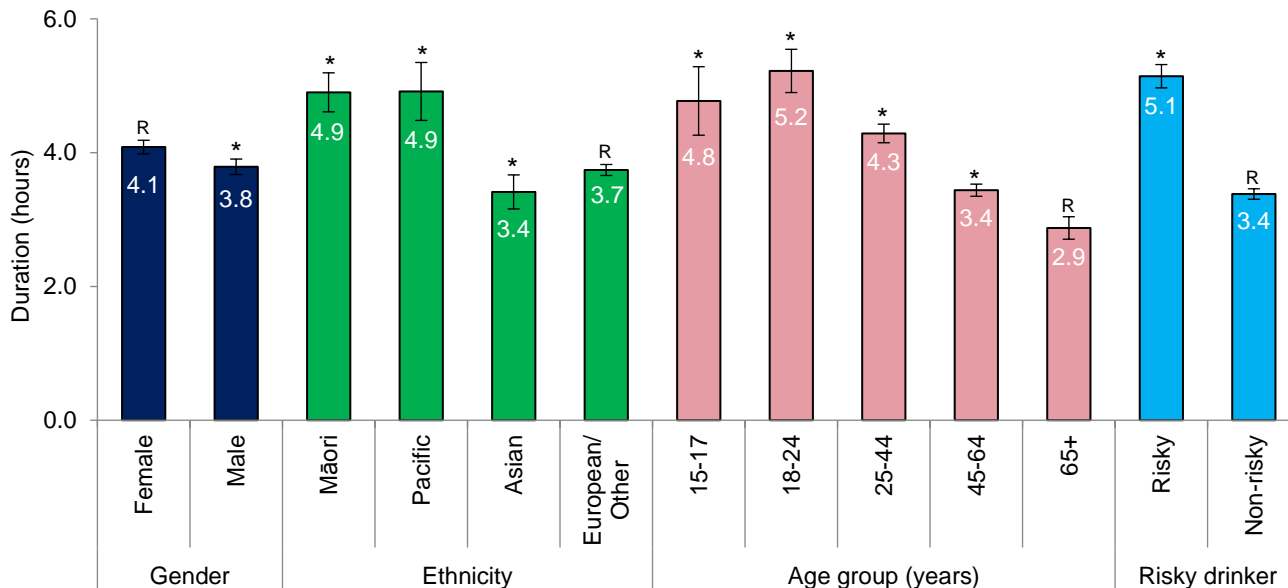
Duration of the last drinking occasion

All last occasion drinkers were asked how long their last drinking occasion lasted. Responses were grouped into three categories (two hours or less; three to five hours; and six or more hours). The most common duration of the last drinking occasion was between three and five hours: 48% of last occasion drinkers reported that. A further 33% reported two hours or less and 19% reported six hours or more (the base number of last occasion drinkers for these percentages excludes those who responded “don’t know” or “refused”).

Means were calculated to allow for subgroup comparison of the average duration of the last drinking occasion. Overall, the average last drinking occasion lasted for 3.9 hours. As shown in Figure 7, the last drinking occasion tended to be longer for:

- females (compared with males)
- Māori and Pacific respondents (compared with European/Other respondents)
- European/Other respondents (compared with Asian respondents)
- younger respondents (those aged 15 to 64 years, compared with those aged 65 and over)
- risky drinkers (compared with non-risky drinkers).

Figure 7: Average duration of the last drinking occasion, by gender, ethnicity, age group and risky drinking status



Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded ‘don’t know’ or ‘refused’, $n = 6,472$ (gender, ethnicity, age); $n = 6,443$ (risky drinkers).

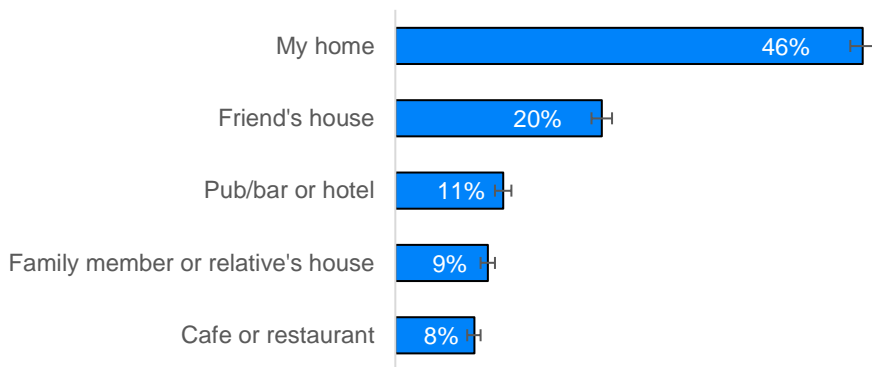
Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

Common locations for the last drinking occasion

All last occasion drinkers were asked about where they drank on their last drinking occasion. Figure 8 shows locations reported by at least 5% of respondents. The three most common locations were: 'my home', 'friend's house', and 'pub/bar or hotel'.

Figure 8: Common locations for the last drinking occasion (reported by at least 5% of respondents)



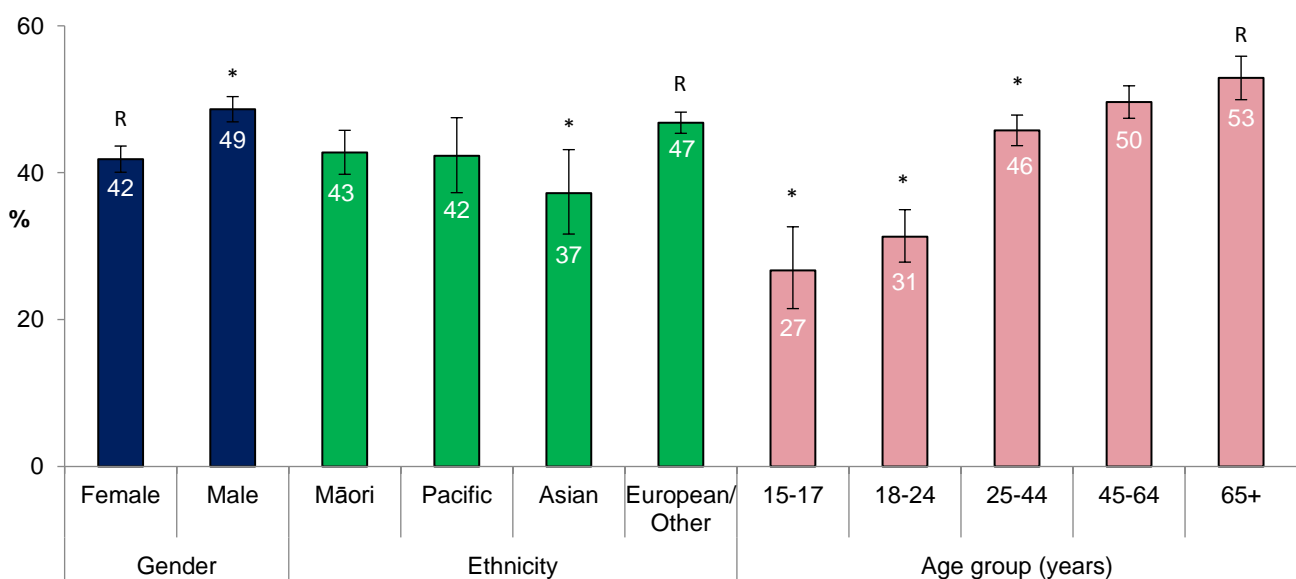
Base: Last occasion drinkers, $n = 6,512$. Multiple responses were allowed.
Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

The three most common locations were examined for differences by subgroups. As shown in Figure 9, last occasion drinkers more likely to have drunk at their home on their last occasion were:

- males (compared with females)
- European/Other respondents (compared with Asian respondents)
- older respondents (those aged 65 years and over, compared with those aged 15 to 44).

There was no statistically significant difference by risky drinking status.

Figure 9: Last occasion drinkers who drank at home, by gender, ethnicity and age group



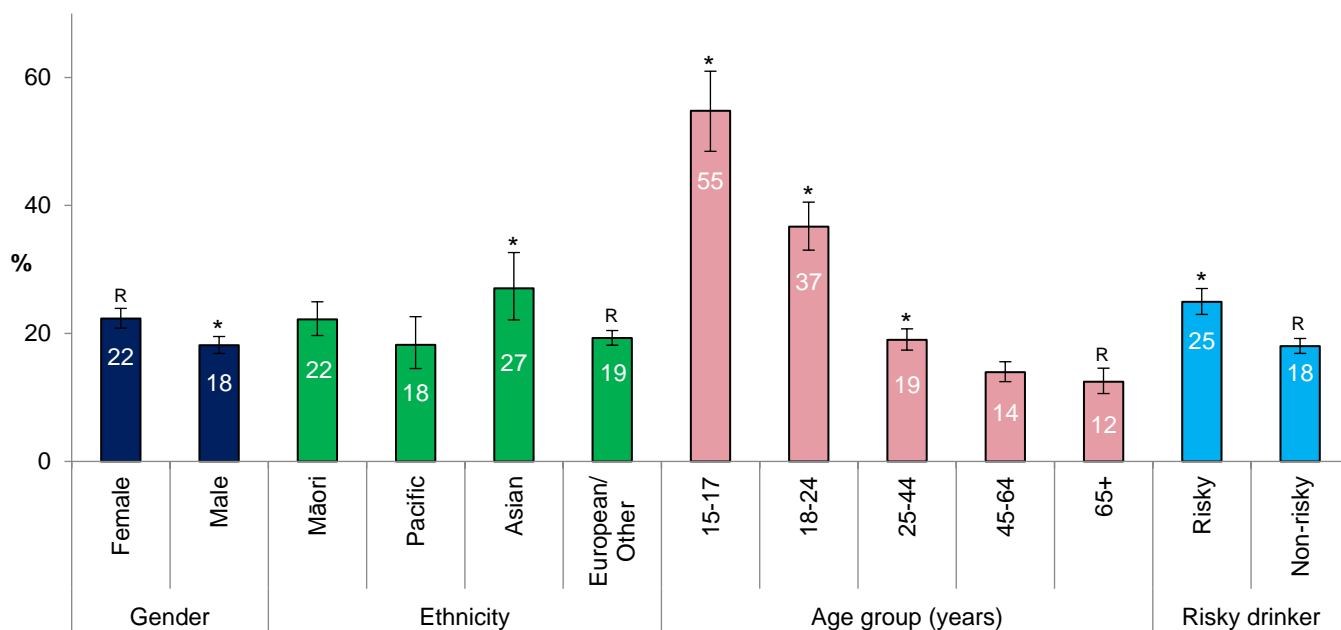
Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6,512$.
Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

As shown in Figure 10, last occasion drinkers more likely to have drunk at a friend's house on their last occasion were:

- females (compared with males)
- Asian respondents (compared with European/Other respondents)
- younger respondents (those aged 15 to 44 years, compared with those aged 65 and over)
- risky drinkers (compared with non-risky drinkers).

Figure 10: Last occasion drinkers who drank at a friend's house, by gender, ethnicity, age group, and risky drinking status



Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6,512$ (gender, ethnicity, age); $n = 6,480$ (risky drinkers).

Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

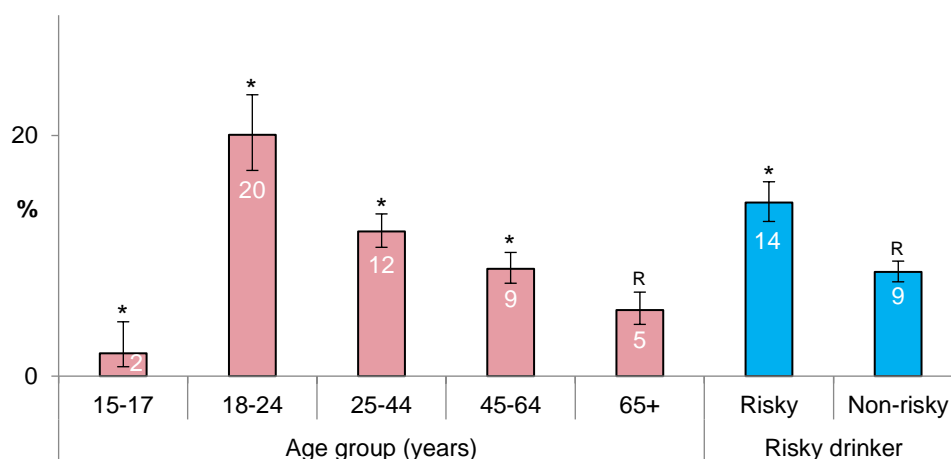
* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

As shown in Figure 11, last occasion drinkers more likely to drink at a pub/bar or hotel on their last occasion were:

- younger respondents (those aged 18 to 64 years, compared with those aged 65 and over)
- those aged 65 years and over when compared with 15 to 17-year-olds (who rarely drink at a pub/bar or hotel, since the legal age for the purchase of alcohol is 18 years)
- risky drinkers (compared with non-risky drinkers).

There were no statistically significant differences by gender or ethnicity.

Figure 11: Last occasion drinkers who drank at a pub/bar or hotel, by age group and risky drinking status



Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6,512$ (gender, ethnicity, age); $n = 6,480$ (risky drinkers).

Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including gender, age, ethnicity, and risky drinking status.

Differences in drinking locations across the days of the week

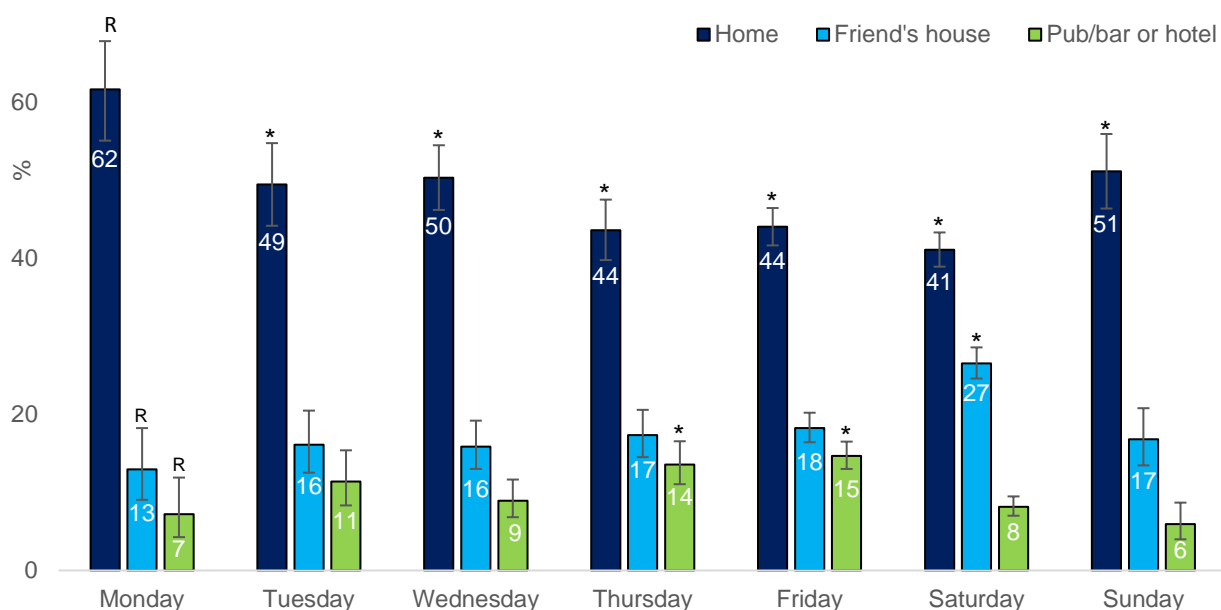
The three most common last occasion drinking locations were also examined by the day of the week that the last drinking occasion *started*.⁸

Regardless of the day of the week, drinking at their home was the most common location, followed by drinking at a friend's house. However, the specific proportion of people drinking at each location varied across the week.

As shown in Figure 12, drinking at their home was most common on a Monday (compared with all other days of the week). Drinking 'at a friend's house' was more likely to take place on a Saturday (compared with Monday), and drinking at a pub/bar or hotel was most likely to take place on a Thursday or Friday (compared with Monday).

⁸ Note that the drinking occasion may have *finished* on the following day.

Figure 12: Last occasion drinkers who drank at their home, a friend's house, or the pub/bar or hotel, by day of the week that the drinking occasion started



Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6,146$. Note that 361 respondents did not know what day of the week the last drinking occasion started.

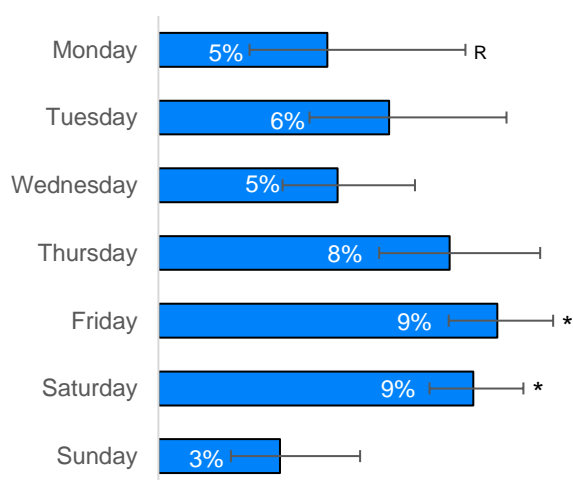
Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R). Note that the statistical comparisons are made within each location (ie, compared with the proportion who drank at that location on a Monday). No subgroup analyses were conducted for this question and thus, no adjustments have been made for gender, age, ethnicity, or risky drinking status.

Number of drinking locations across the days of the week

The total number of drinking locations were also examined by day of the week that the drinking occasion started. As shown in Figure 13, drinking at multiple locations (two or more) was more common on a Friday and Saturday (compared with Monday).

Figure 13: Last occasion drinkers who drank at multiple locations, by day of the week the drinking occasion started



Base: Last occasion drinkers, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6,134$.

Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

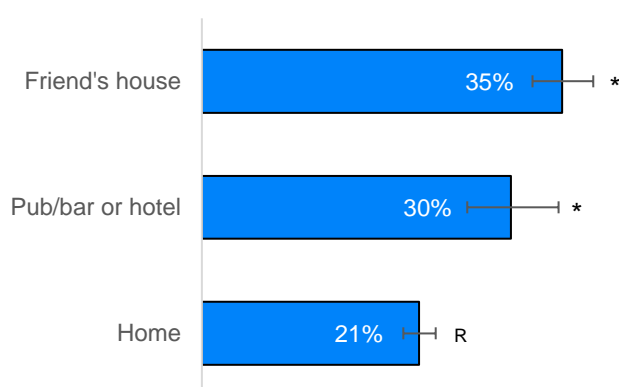
* Significantly different from the reference group (R). No subgroup analyses were conducted for this question and thus, no adjustments have been made for gender, age, ethnicity, or risky drinking status

Differences in risky drinking across locations

Finally, risky drinking behaviour on the last drinking occasion⁹ was compared across the three most common locations. Comparisons were made to see whether last occasion drinkers were more likely to drink at a risky level at specific locations, after controlling for gender, age, and ethnicity. Note that this analysis was restricted to those who reported only one location for their last drinking occasion ($n = 6,022$) to allow for comparison of the number of drinks across locations.

As shown in Figure 14, last occasion drinkers were more likely to drink at a risky level at a friend's house or at a pub/bar or hotel, compared with at home. There was no significant difference in the level of risky drinking at a friend's house and at a pub/bar or hotel.

Figure 14: Risky drinking at common last drinking occasion locations



Base: Last occasion drinkers who reported only one location for that occasion, excluding those who responded 'don't know' or 'refused', $n = 6,022$.

Source: ABAS 2013/14 to 2015/16

* Significantly different from the reference group (R), from a regression model including drinking location (pub/bar or hotel, friend's house, and home), gender, age, and ethnicity.

Finally, respondents who reported drinking at multiple locations on their last drinking occasion were significantly more likely to have drunk at a risky level (one location: 26% drank at a risky level; multiple locations: 52% drank at a risky level) compared with those who reported drinking at only one location. This relationship persisted after adjusting for gender, ethnicity, and age.

⁹ Note that the definition of risky drinking used in this section differs from that used in previous sections. Here, risky drinking is defined as those who drank at a risky level on their last occasion whereas in previous sections, risky drinking was defined as drinking at a risky level in the last 4 weeks. This is because for this section, we are interested in the frequency of risky drinking that occurs at specific locations, hence want to know about risky drinking on this particular occasion. In the other sections, we are interested in the association of sociodemographic characteristics and risk factors (including risky drinking behaviour in general) with features of the last drinking occasion.