

2016 NEW SOUTH WALES POLL

PERSPECTIVES ON ALCOHOL



fare
Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education

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KEY FINDINGS

- More than two-thirds (68%) of NSW residents support the continuation of the NSW Government's measures to reduce alcohol-related violence (including a 3am last drinks and a 1.30am lockout in Sydney, and a 10pm close for bottle shops selling takeaway alcohol across the state).
- The majority of NSW residents believe Australia has a problem with alcohol (80%), and that more needs to be done to reduce the harm caused by alcohol (79%). These have both increased since 2015.
- The majority (73%) of NSW residents believe that alcohol-related problems in Australia will either remain the same or get worse over the next five to ten years.
- The majority of NSW residents do not believe that governments (54%), alcohol companies (70%) and pubs and clubs (61%) are doing enough to address alcohol misuse.
- NSW residents support a number of policies to reduce alcohol-related harms including introducing a closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am (80%) and not allowing alcohol to be sold in supermarkets (64%).
- Over half (60%) of NSW residents consider the city or centre of town to be unsafe on a Saturday night.

ABOUT THE POLLING

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) commissioned Galaxy Research to undertake polling of New South Wales (NSW) residents to gain an understanding on their perspectives on alcohol policies.

This study was conducted online among members of a permission-based panel. The sample was selected from the panel members and had quotas applied to it, in order to ensure that it reflected the current population statistics. Fieldwork commenced on Friday 8 January 2016 and was completed on Thursday 14 January 2016. The survey sample comprised of 353 respondents aged 18 years and older currently residing in NSW.

Following the collection of data, the results were weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population estimates.

FINDINGS

AUSTRALIA'S PROBLEM WITH ALCOHOL AND GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS

The majority (80%) of NSW residents believe that Australia has a problem with excess drinking or alcohol abuse, 12% do not believe this and the remaining 8% are unsure. This represents an increase from 2015, where 74% of NSW residents believed Australia had a problem with alcohol.

The majority (73%) of NSW residents believe that alcohol-related problems in Australia will either remain the same or get worse over the next five to ten years, 15% believe there will be a reduction in alcohol-related problems and 12% are unsure.

The majority (79%) of NSW residents believe that more needs to be done to reduce the harm caused by alcohol-related illness, injury and related issues, 5% do not and 16% are unsure. This represents an increase from 2015, where 71% believed more needed to be done.

The majority of NSW residents do not believe that governments (54%), alcohol companies (70%) and pubs and clubs (61%) are doing enough to address alcohol misuse.

The table below provides an overview of NSW residents' attitudes about which bodies are not doing enough to address alcohol misuse.

	2015 (%)	2016 (%)
Governments are not doing enough to address alcohol misuse	57	54
Alcohol companies are not doing enough to address alcohol misuse	65	70
Pubs and clubs are not doing enough to address alcohol misuse	55	61

PERSPECTIVES ON ALCOHOL-RELATED POLICIES

More than two-thirds (68%) of NSW residents support the continuation of the NSW Government's measures to reduce alcohol-related violence (including a 3am last drinks and a 1.30am lockout in Sydney, and a 10pm close for takeaway alcohol across NSW), with 20% not supporting their continuation and 12% unsure.

The majority of NSW residents also support the introduction of 13 alcohol policies proposed to reduce violence, with support for each of these measures ranging from 58% to 86%.

Policies which received majority support include increasing penalties for people involved in alcohol-related violence (86%) and introducing a closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am (80%). The table below provides an overview of NSW residents' support for alcohol-related policies.

	SUPPORT (%)	DO NOT SUPPORT (%)	DON'T KNOW (%)
Increasing penalties for people involved in alcohol-related violence	86	7	7
Closed-circuit television (CCTV) in and around licensed venues	85	6	9
Increasing police numbers at times and places where alcohol-related violence is greater	82	6	12
More public transport options in areas where there are pubs, clubs and bars	81	5	14
A closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am	80	10	10
Introducing identification (ID) scanners	73	12	15
Stopping the sale of alcohol 30 minutes before closing time	72	17	11
Placing a limit of four drinks on the number of drinks a person can purchase at one time after 10pm	67	20	13
Introducing a 1am lockout for pubs, clubs and bars	66	20	14
A closing time for bottle shops of no later than 10pm	63	29	8
Stopping the sale of alcohol and energy drinks after midnight	63	21	16
Not allowing alcohol to be sold for less than \$1 per standard drink	62	21	17
Stopping the sale of shots after 10pm	58	28	14

The majority of NSW residents also support alcohol sponsorship not being allowed at sporting events (58%) and alcohol not being sold in supermarkets (64%).

COMMUNITY SAFETY

More than a quarter (27%) of NSW residents have been affected by alcohol-related violence.

Almost one in six (15%) NSW residents has been a victim of alcohol-related violence and one in five (20%) has had a family member or friend who has been affected by alcohol-related violence.

More than half (60%) of NSW residents consider the city or centre of town to be unsafe on a Saturday night, 31% consider it to be safe and 9% are unsure. The table below provides an overview of NSW residents' perceptions of safety.

	2015 (%)	2016 (%)
Very safe	2	2
Safe	32	29
Unsafe	38	42
Very unsafe	20	18
Don't know	8	9

NSW residents who indicated that the city or centre of town was unsafe were then asked what factors make it unsafe. The vast majority (88%) indicated that people affected by alcohol make the city or town unsafe. This is greater than those who selected people affected by drugs (80%) and threatening behaviour (74%) as factors that make the city or centre of town unsafe. The table below provides an overview of responses for NSW residents who indicated that they believe the city or centre of town is unsafe on a Saturday night.

	2015 (%)	2016 (%)
People affected by alcohol	91	88
People affected by drugs	76	80
Threatening behaviour	69	74
Large groups of people	48	55
Poor lighting	36	39
Other	4	6

Note that participants were able to select more than one response. Therefore the total may exceed 100%.

About the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol. Alcohol harm in Australia is significant. More than 5,500 lives are lost every year and more than 157,000 people are hospitalised making alcohol one of our nation's greatest preventative health challenges.

For over a decade, FARE has been working with communities, governments, health professionals and police across the country to stop alcohol harms by supporting world-leading research, raising public awareness and advocating for changes to alcohol policy. In that time FARE has helped more than 750 communities and organisations, and backed over 1,400 projects around Australia.

FARE is guided by the World Health Organization's (2010) *Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol* for stopping alcohol harms through population-based strategies, problem directed policies, and direct interventions.

If you would like to contribute to FARE's important work, call us on (02) 6122 8600, email info@fare.org.au or visit FARE's website: www.fare.org.au.