

Alcohol, nicotine and prevention in the Faroe Islands

What population health data tell us

Noomi O. Gregersen · Faroese Health Authority

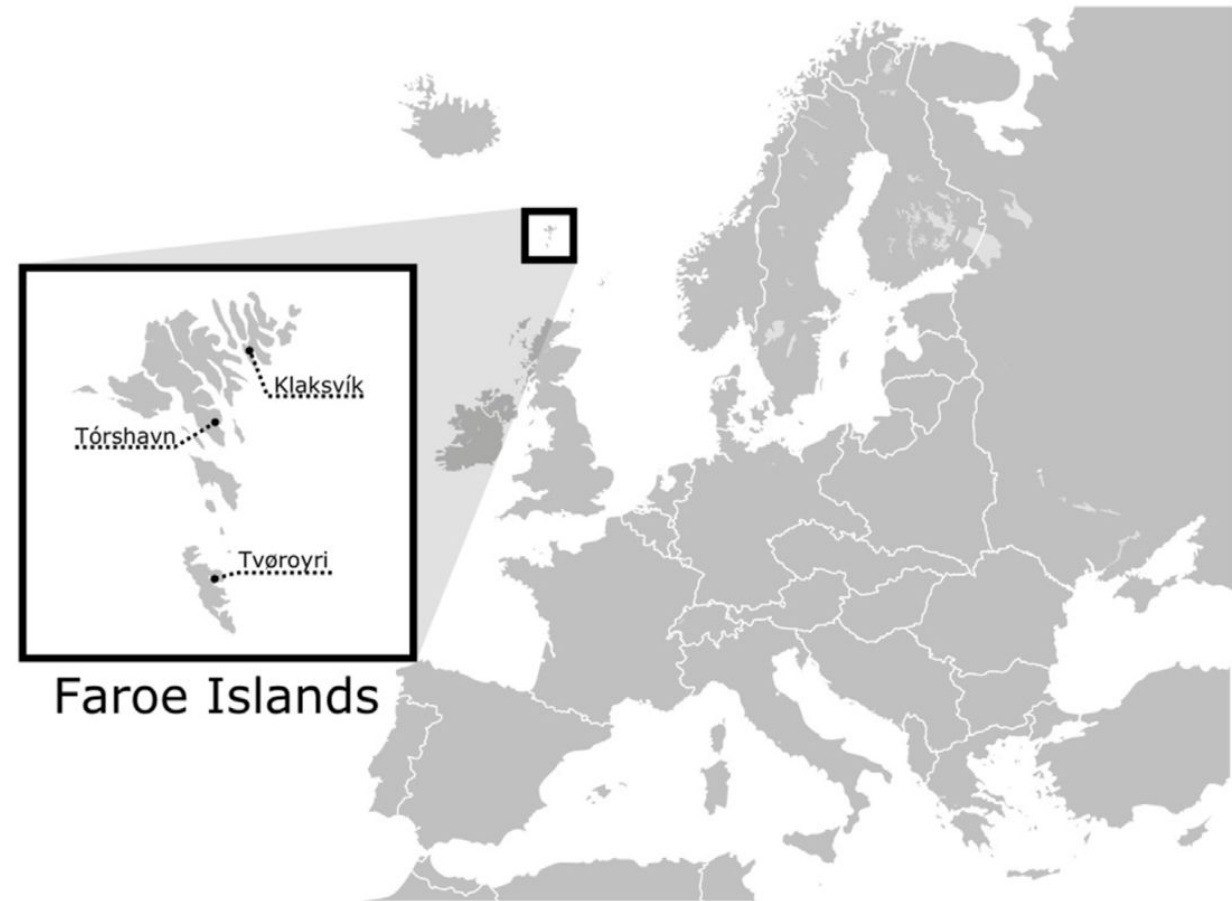
A nation small enough to know itself

The community behind the data

- The Faroe Islands: Around 55,000 people across 18 islands

~55,000 people

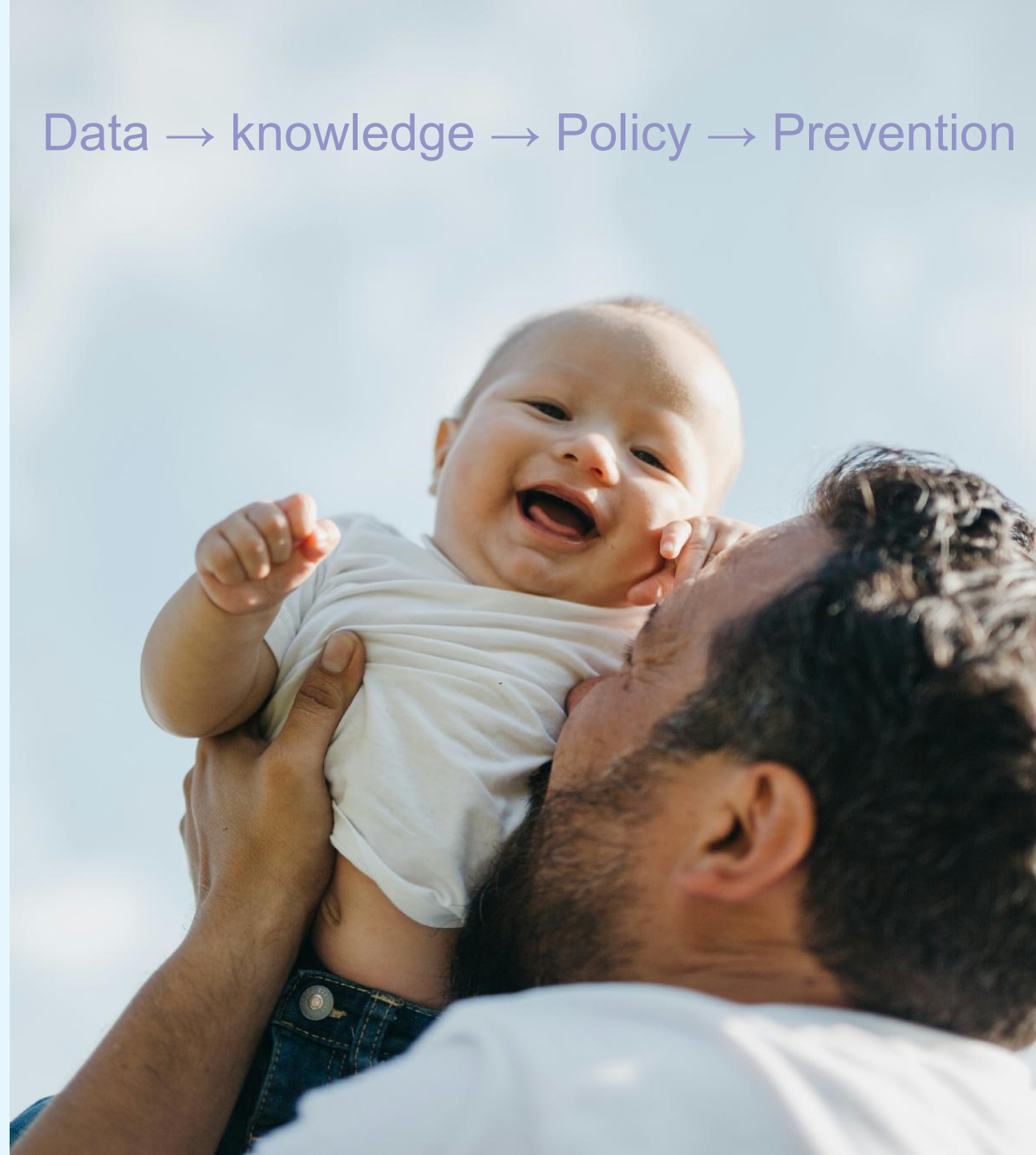
- Small scale creates both opportunities and challenges for public health



The Faroese Health Authority

- Public health action
- National health data and registries
- From data to prevention
- Knowledge for policy and planning

Data → knowledge → Policy → Prevention



How do we know?

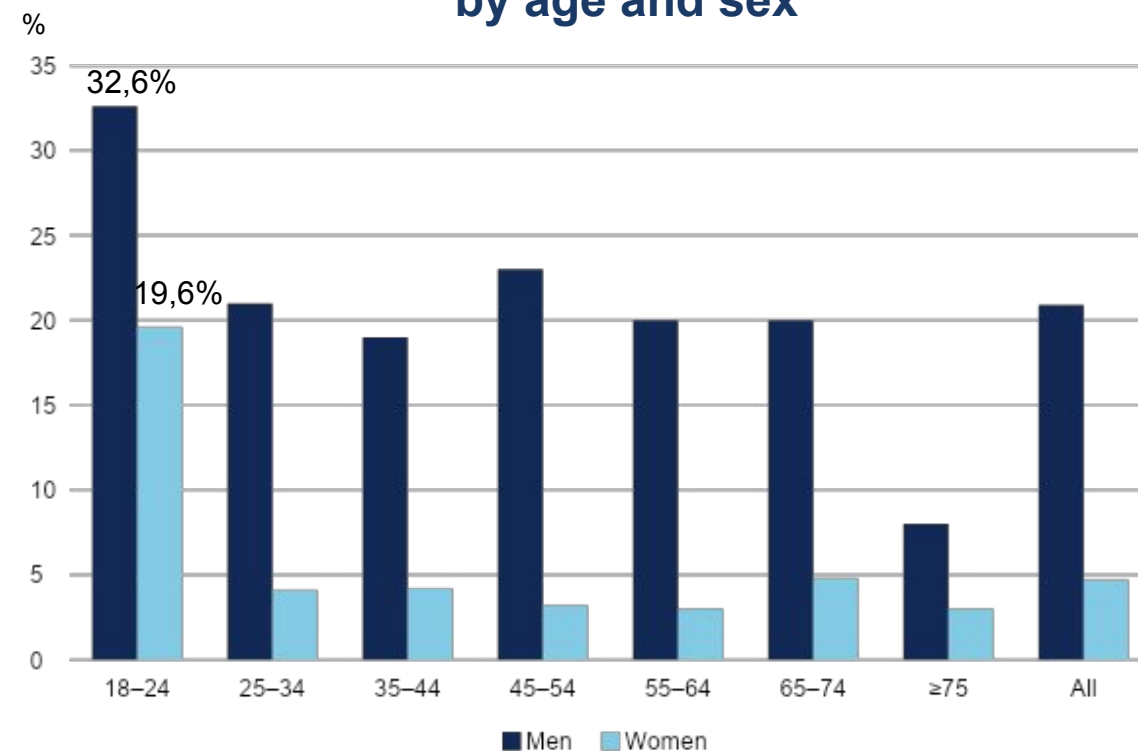
“Hvussu hevur tú tað?” - The Faroese Population Health Survey



Tracking population health over time

Young adults stand out in alcohol consumption

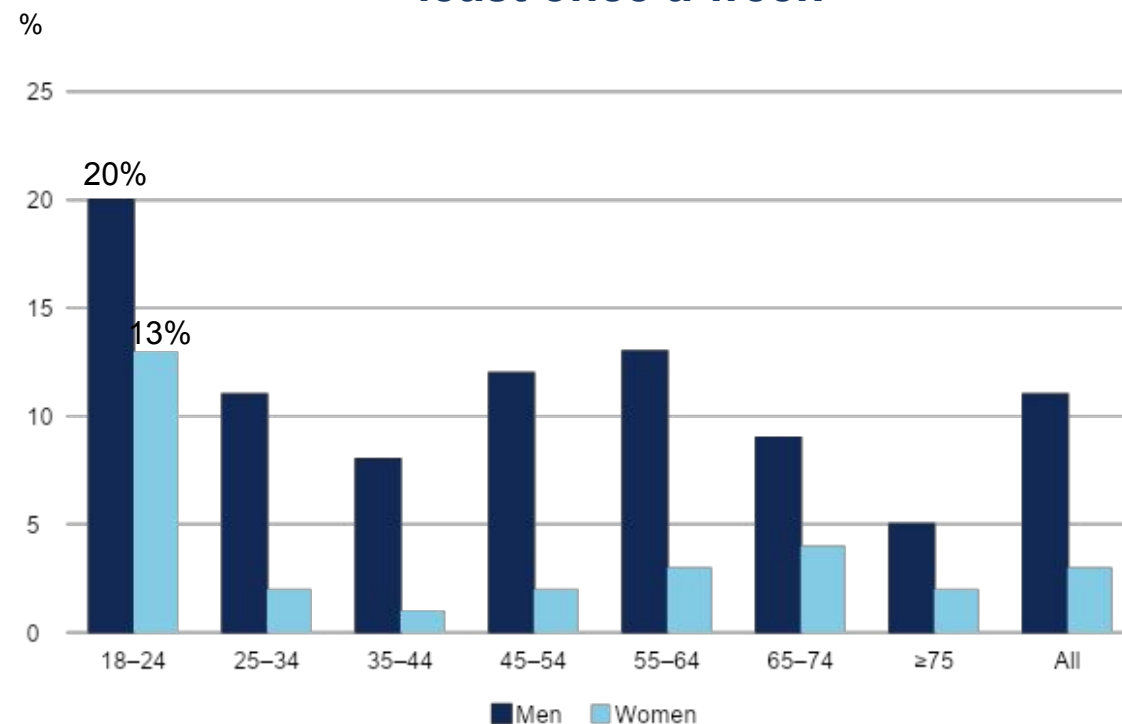
Drinking more than 10 units per week, by age and sex



Almost 1 in 3 young men and 1 in 5 young women drink more than 10 units per week

Drinking patterns matter

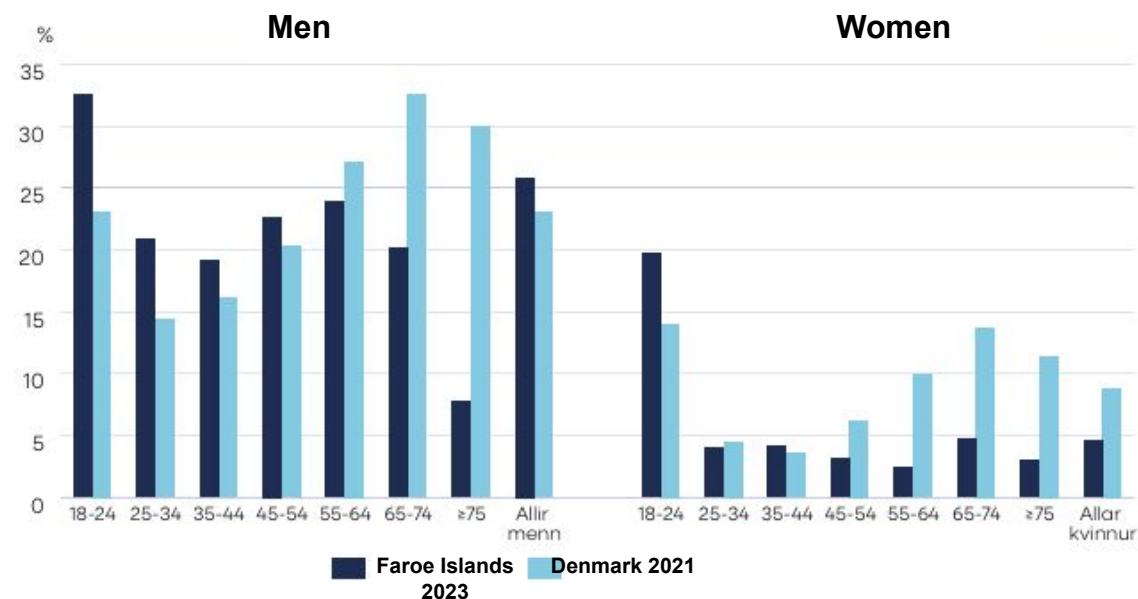
Drinking 5+ units on one occasion at least once a week



Among 18–24-year-olds, 20% of men and 13% of women report weekly heavy drinking occasions

The Faroese drinking pattern is different

Drinking more than 10 units per week: Faroe Islands vs Denmark



Higher consumption is concentrated among
younger adults in the Faroe Islands

Alcohol policy is part of public health

- STATE RETAIL MONOPOLY
- 18+ AGE LIMIT
- PRICE & AVAILABILITY

Public health messages at the point of sale



“Drink as little as possible

No level of alcohol consumption is risk-free.”

“Do you buy alcohol for your children?

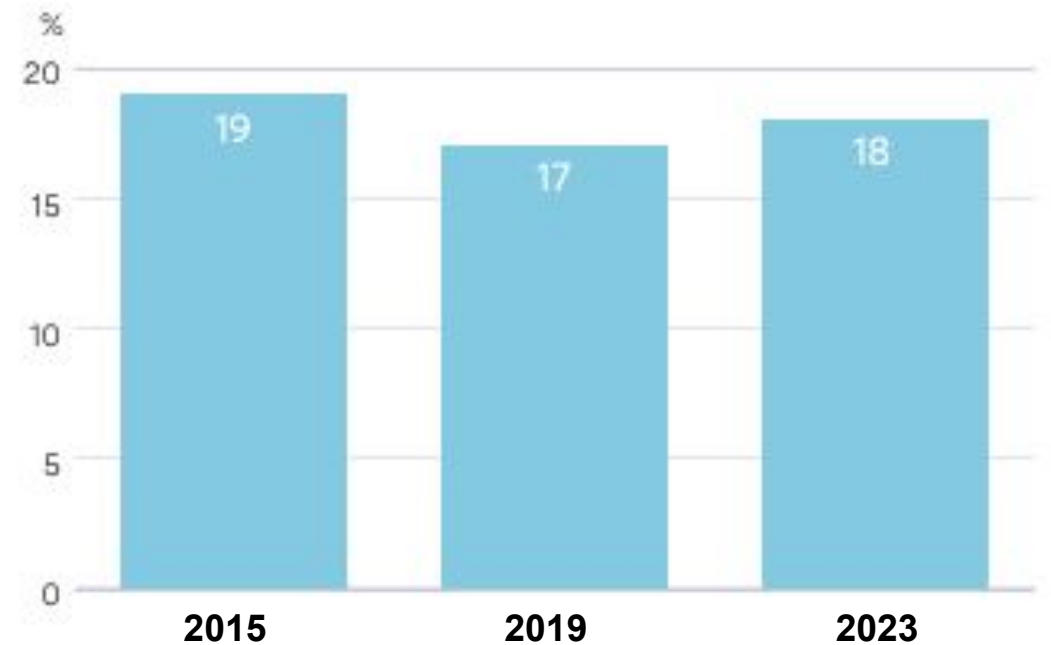
Alcohol affects the developing brain, learning and memory.”

“Do you buy alcohol for your children?

Teach them healthy habits – drinking alcohol isn't one of them.”

Smoking rates are not declining

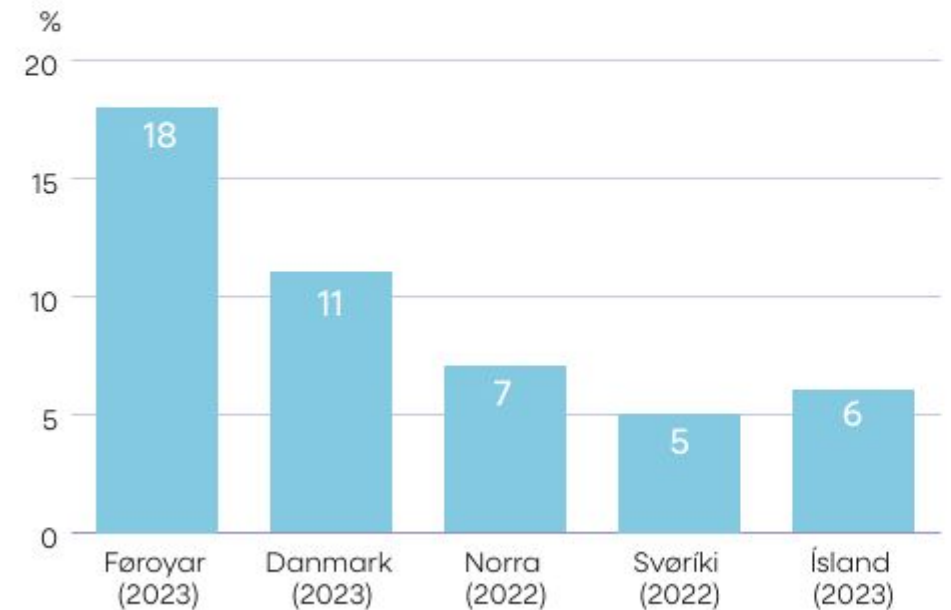
Daily smoking among adults



Almost 1 in 5 adults still smoke daily

Smoking rates are not declining

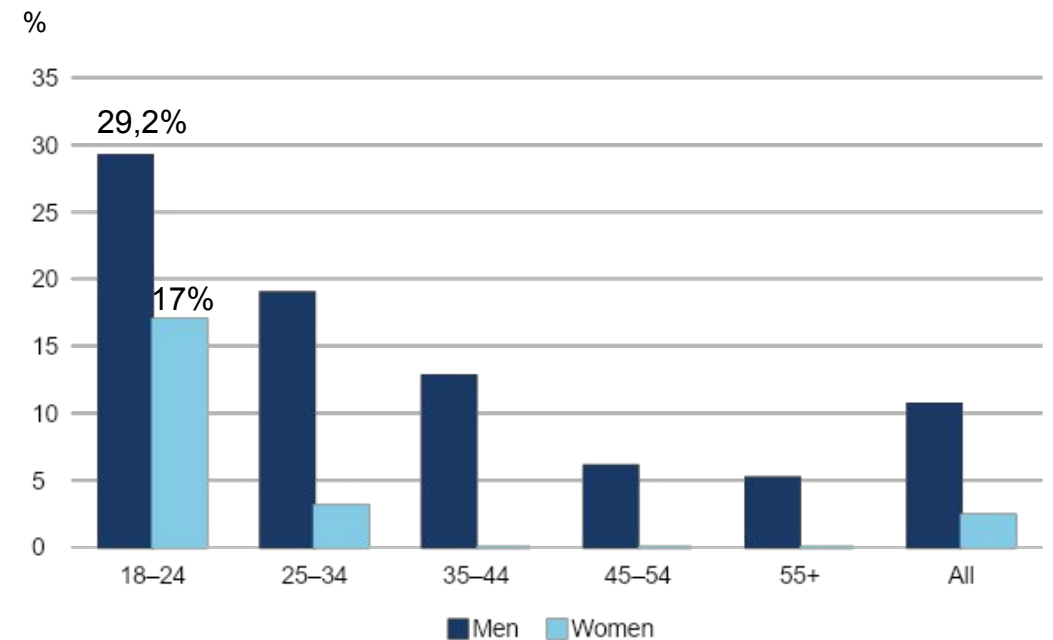
Daily smoking in the Nordic



Daily smoking is considerably more common
in the Faroe Islands

The nicotine landscape is changing

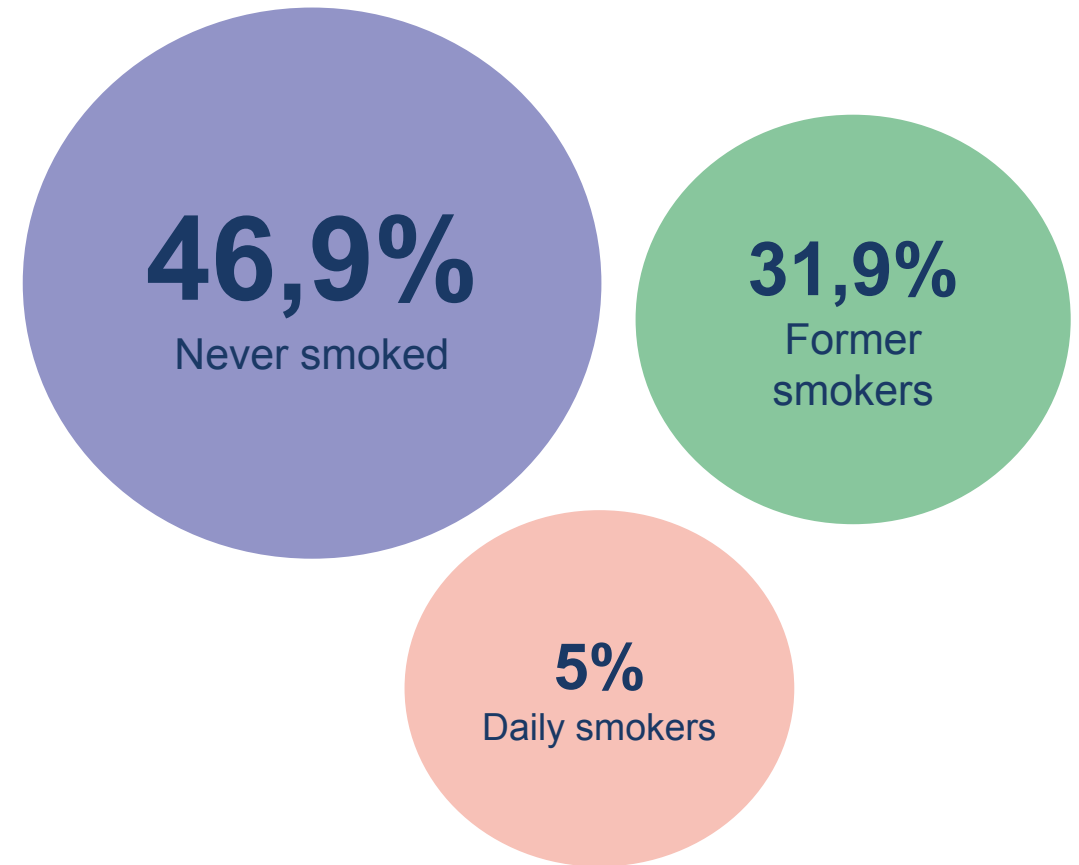
Daily snus use, by age and sex



Daily snus use is strongly concentrated among younger adults

Snus is not simply replacing cigarettes

Among daily snus users aged 18–34



Almost half of young daily snus users have never smoked

Drug use: what do we know?

National prevalence data are
limited

UPPER-SECONDARY STUDENTS, 2021

26%

had tried drugs

>50%

had been offered drugs

- 1,316 students · 66% response rate
- Cannabis was the most commonly reported drug

From concern to action

National action plan 2022–2028

01 — PREVENTION

Prevent drug use and reduce harm

02 — TREATMENT

Support and treatment for people with
drug-related problems

03 — CONTROL & KNOWLEDGE

Enforcement · Monitoring · Research

Prevention is also about promoting wellbeing

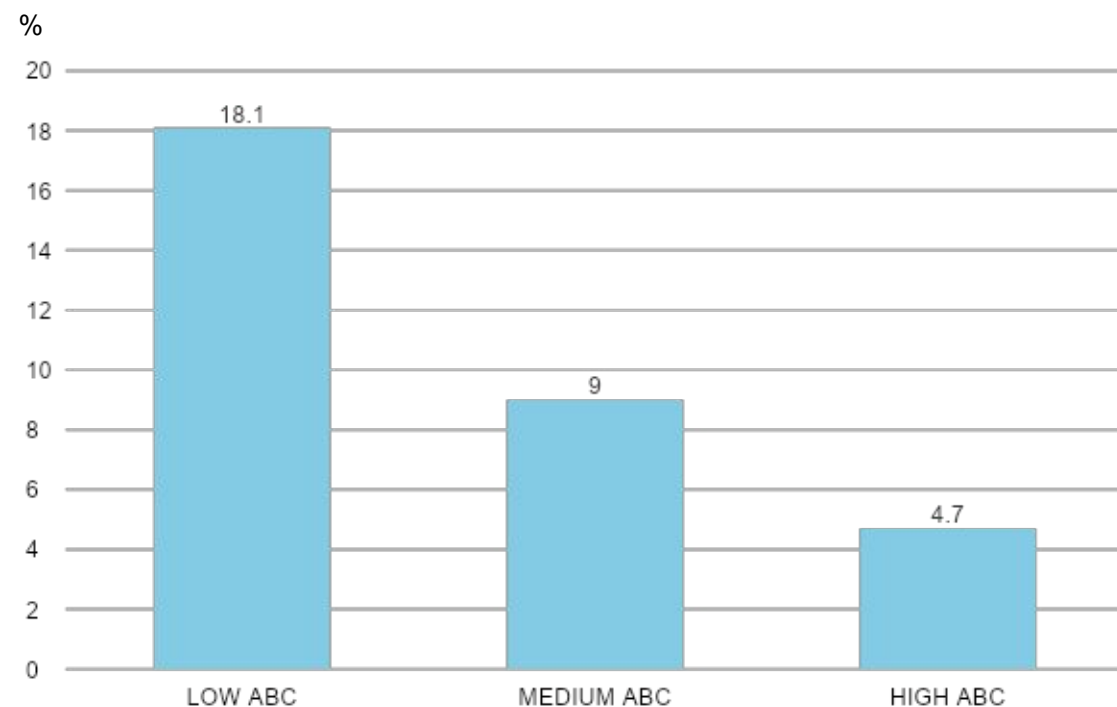
ABC for mental health

A — Act

B — Belong

C — Commit

Signs of loneliness, by ABC engagement



ABC score: 3-15; groups represent the lowest 20%, middle 60% and highest 20% of scores

Belonging and meaningful participation
matter for wellbeing

Three messages from the Faroe Islands

Data → Knowledge → Policy → Prevention

01 — LOOK BEYOND AVERAGES

Small populations can hide important differences
between groups

02 — MONITOR WHAT IS CHANGING

Regular population health surveys help us identify
emerging patterns

03 — CONNECT DATA WITH ACTION

Good data should lead to action – through policy,
support and stronger communities

Thank you!