



NCETA
National Centre for Education
and Training on Addiction

OK Boomer... Examining alcohol use trajectories across generations

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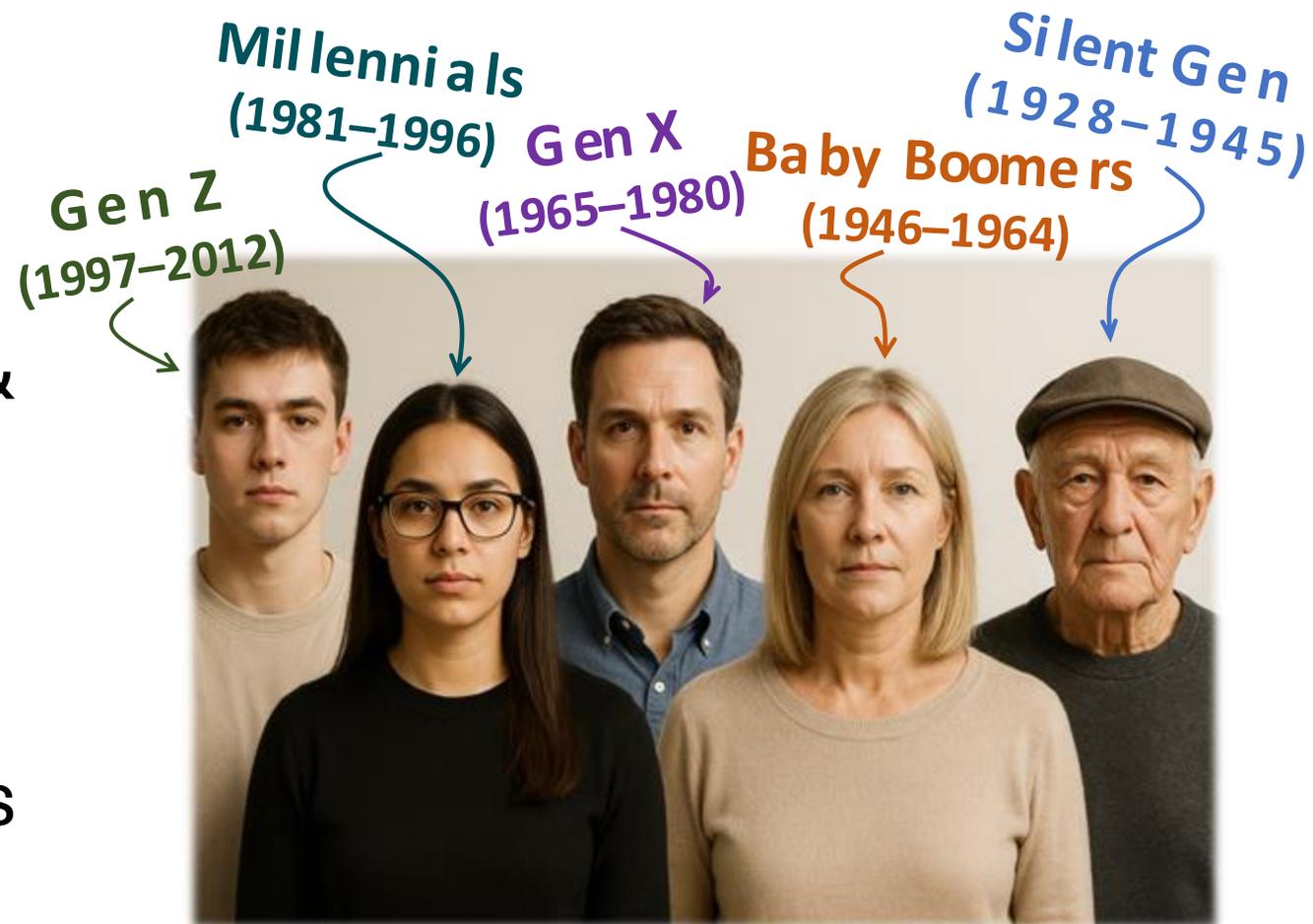
This research was funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

BACKGROUND

- Alcohol is the 6th highest risk factor for disease in Australia (AIHW, 2024)
- Contributes to 200+ health conditions (Anderson et al., 2023)
- Drinking behaviours change with age (Leggat et al., 2022)—but may also differ by generation (e.g., Livingston et al., 2016; Scully et al., 2023)
- Understanding these patterns is key to reducing alcohol-related harm

WHAT ARE GENERATIONS?

- Generations are shaped by shared cultural events (e.g., GFC, COVID-19) (Mannheim, 1952; Strauss & Howe, 1991)
- This study uses longitudinal data to explore generational differences in trajectories of alcohol consumption across the lifespan

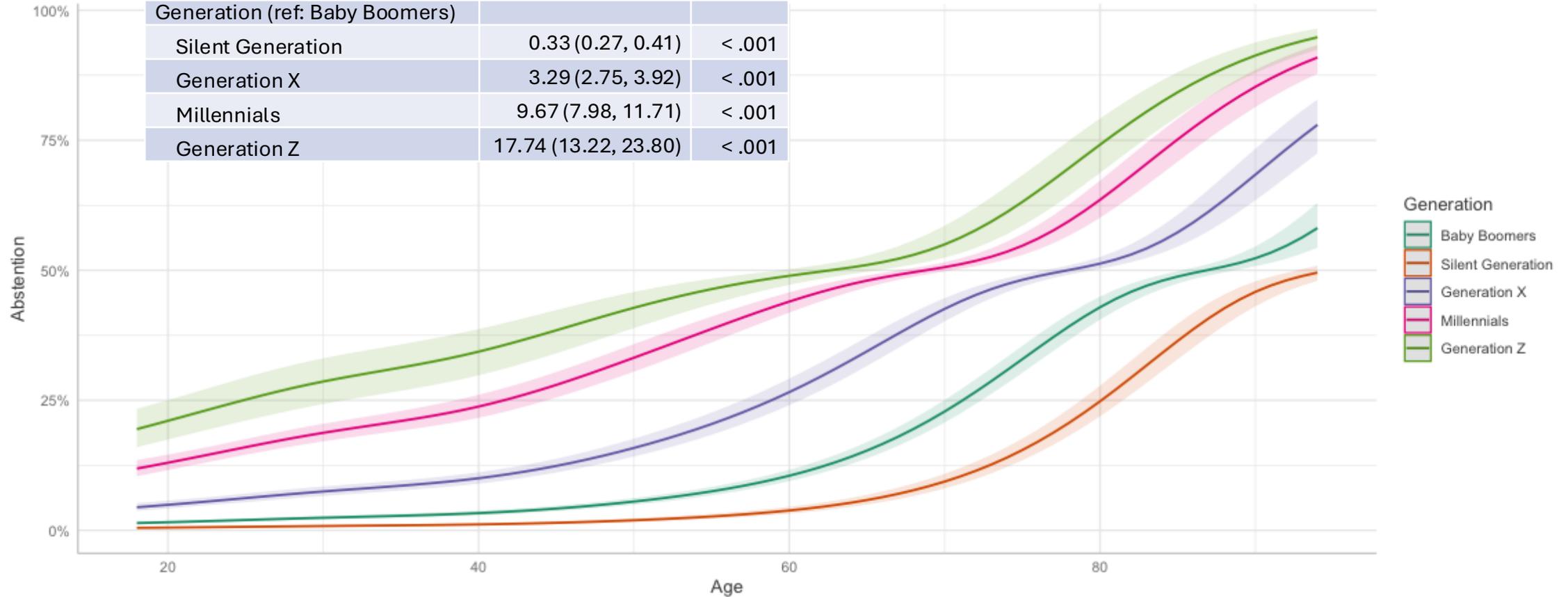


STUDY DESIGN

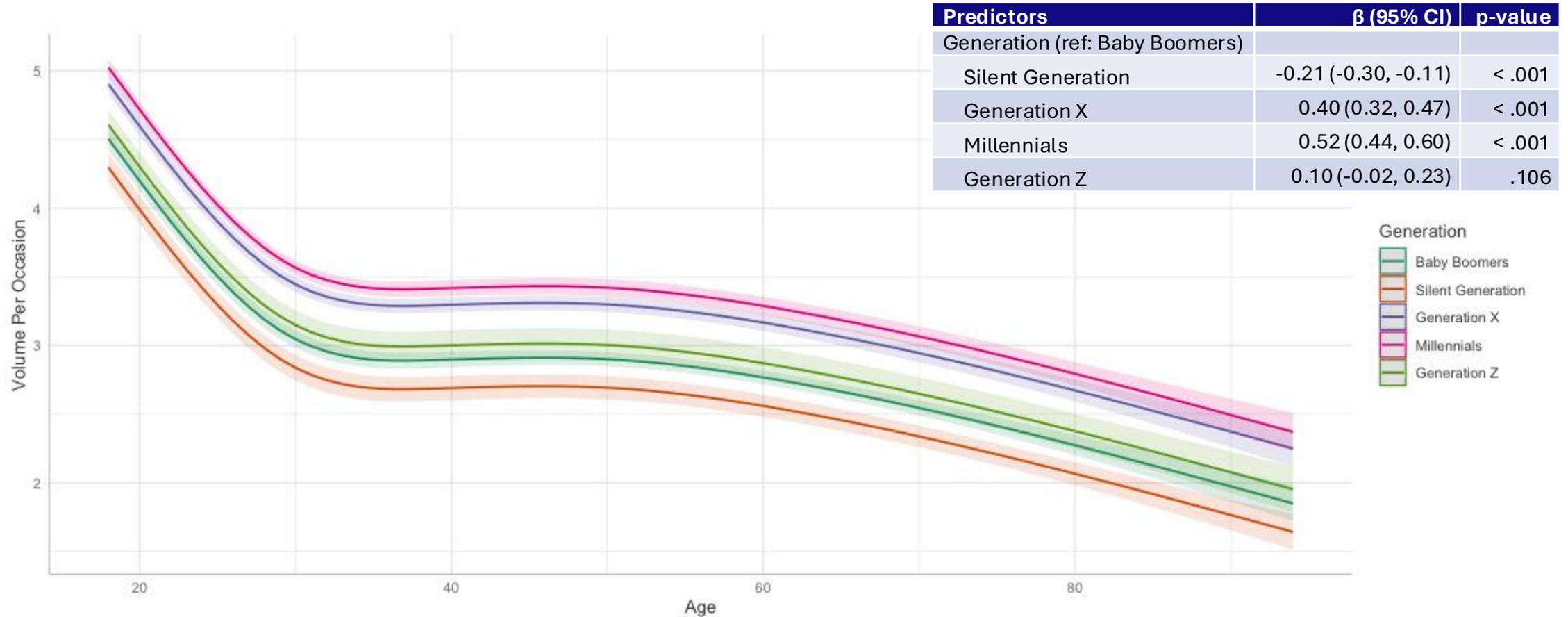
- Data: 23 waves from HILDA (N = 23,368)
- Model: Generalised Linear Mixed Models
 - Allows for non-linear age effects + cohort comparisons
- Outcomes:
 - Abstention (i.e., whether one drinks or not)
 - Per-occasion drinking (i.e., typical volume of alcohol consumed per occasion)
 - Per-week drinking (i.e., average volume of weekly consumption)

ABSTENTION BY GENERATION ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Predictors	OR (95% CI)	p-value
Generation (ref: Baby Boomers)		
Silent Generation	0.33 (0.27, 0.41)	< .001
Generation X	3.29 (2.75, 3.92)	< .001
Millennials	9.67 (7.98, 11.71)	< .001
Generation Z	17.74 (13.22, 23.80)	< .001

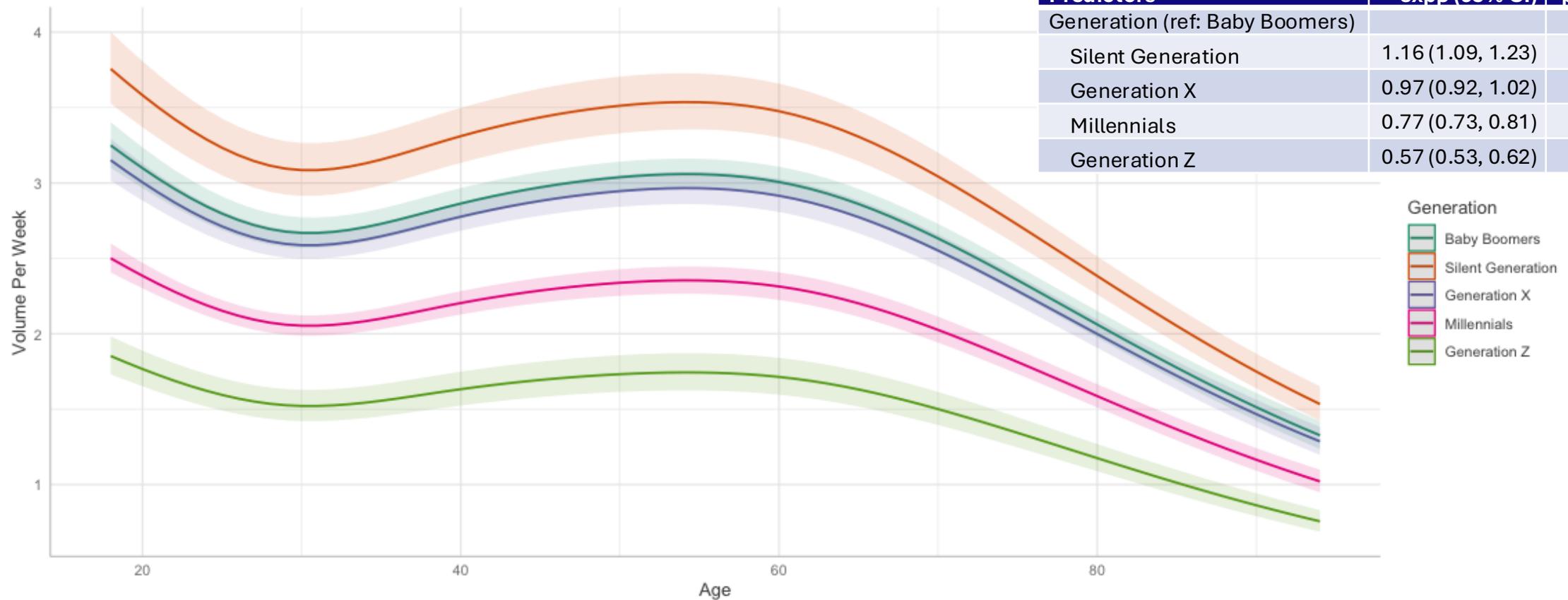


PER-OCCASION ALCOHOL VOLUME BY GENERATION ACROSS THE LIFESPAN



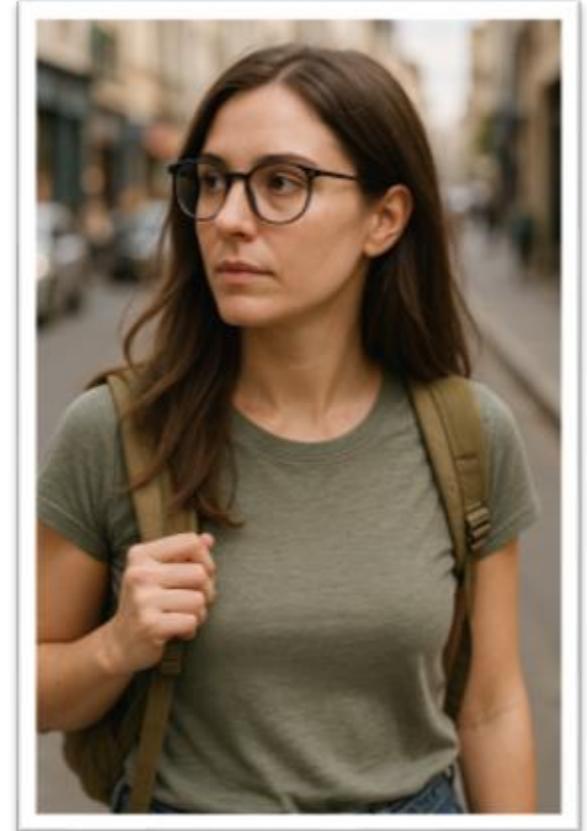
VOLUME OF ALCOHOL PER WEEK BY GENERATION ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Predictors	exp β (95% CI)	p-value
Generation (ref: Baby Boomers)		
Silent Generation	1.16 (1.09, 1.23)	< .001
Generation X	0.97 (0.92, 1.02)	.209
Millennials	0.77 (0.73, 0.81)	< .001
Generation Z	0.57 (0.53, 0.62)	< .001



WHY MIGHT GEN Z BE DRINKING LESS ALCOHOL?

1. Alcohol consumption de-normalised, abstinence more socially acceptable (Caluzzi et al., 2021)
2. Rising cost of living (ABS, 2024)—alcohol is expensive
3. Spend more time socialising online, less at venues (e.g., bars, restaurants)
4. Shift towards health consciousness, consumption of health-related media



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RESEARCH REPORT

ADDICTION

SSA

OK Boomer: A longitudinal analysis unravelling generational cohort differences in alcohol consumption among Australians

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Abstract

Background and aims: Alcohol consumption is a key preventable cause of disease and injury worldwide. Recent evidence suggests that younger generations may be consuming less alcohol. However, it is still uncertain whether this trend is temporary or indicative of an enduring generational shift. This study sought to determine whether there are generational differences in alcohol consumption among Australians.

