



# Irish Water Safety

## Analysis of Drownings - 2014



Irish Water Safety

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# Analysis of Drownings 2014

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## Irish Water Safety - targeting at-risk groups with drowning prevention initiatives...

The total number of drownings in Ireland in 2014 was 114\*, 9 fewer than in 2013 when 123 drowned.

Each figure in the following graphical analysis, be it accidental, suicide or of undetermined cause, reflects a preventable tragedy that affects so many lives. Irish Water Safety continues to target at-risk groups with initiatives to highlight best practices so that drownings are reduced.

### A synopsis of some general contributory factors over the years:

1. Poor or inadequate equipment (e.g. boats or lifejackets);
2. Not wearing a correctly fitting lifejacket;
2. Alcohol consumption;
3. Falling unexpectedly into water;
4. Improper use of boats and equipment;
5. Overestimation of skills; underestimation of ability;
6. Lack of local knowledge when travelling in Ireland and abroad;
7. Not being able to swim or not having lifesaving and water survival skills;
8. Easy unauthorized access to waterways;
9. Cold water shock and hypothermia;
10. Current (including rip currents, river currents, and tidal currents);
11. Offshore winds (including flotation devices);
12. Pre-existing diseases;
13. Underwater entanglement;
14. Bottom surface gradient and stability;
15. Waves (coastal, boat);
16. Water transparency;
17. Impeded visibility (including coastal configuration, structures and overcrowding);
18. Lack of parental supervision (infants and children);
19. Change in weather conditions;
20. Excessive "horseplay" or over exuberant behaviour;
21. Swimming outside the depth of the user.

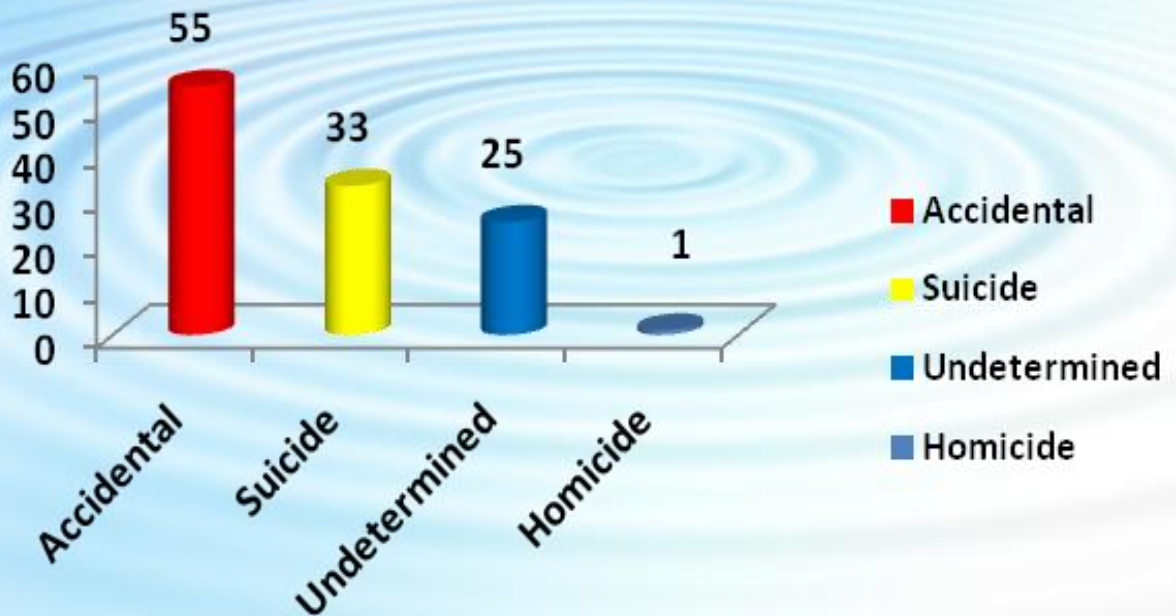
### A synopsis of some general preventive and management actions:

1. Public education by Irish Water Safety regarding hazards and safe behaviours;
2. Teaching children to stay away from water when unsupervised through the IWS PAWS (Primary Aquatics Water Safety) programme;
3. Continual adult supervision of children;
4. IWS media campaigns that drowning can happen quickly and quietly;
5. Promote in IWS press announcements, the restriction of alcohol provision before or during aquatic activities;
6. Provision by Irish Water Safety of properly trained and equipped lifeguards;
7. Provision of rescue services;
8. Irish Water Safety Risk Assessments that include assessments of local hazard warning notices, access to emergency response and availability of resuscitation skills/facilities and other factors;
9. Development by Irish Water Safety of rescue and resuscitation skills among general public and user groups;
10. Coordination by Irish Water Safety with user group associations concerning hazard awareness and safe behaviours;
11. Wearing of adequate lifejackets and Personal Flotation Devices when boating;
12. Fencing and doors to isolate outdoor aquatic environments.

*\*Any interpretation of the following figures must be exercised with caution because they are provisional, pending supplementary documentation and therefore subject to change pending further correspondence.*

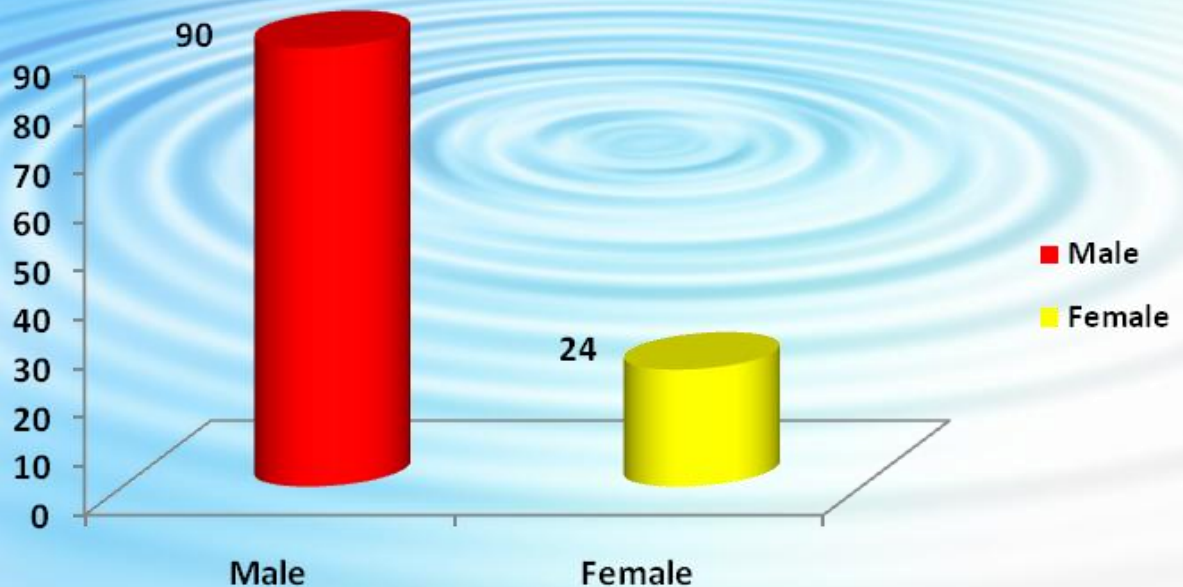
## 2014 Drownings by Cause

Total: 114

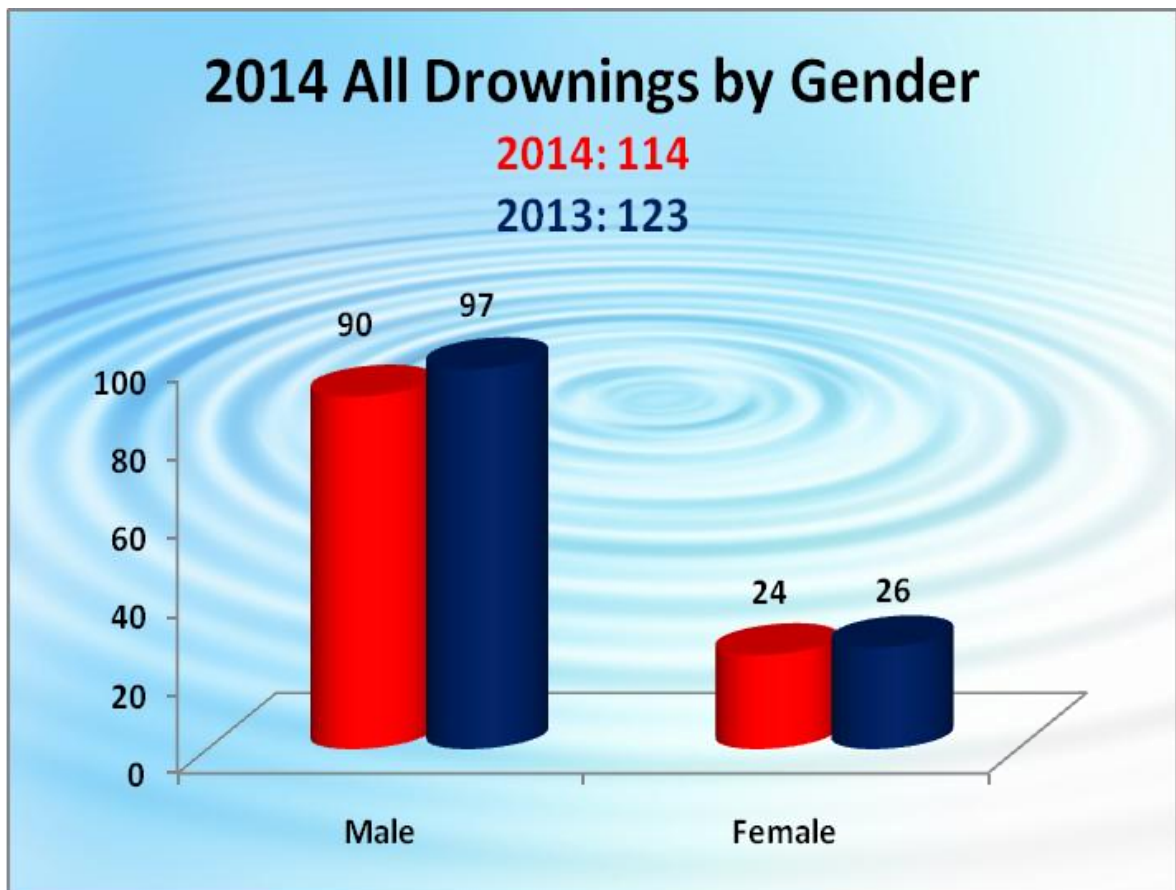
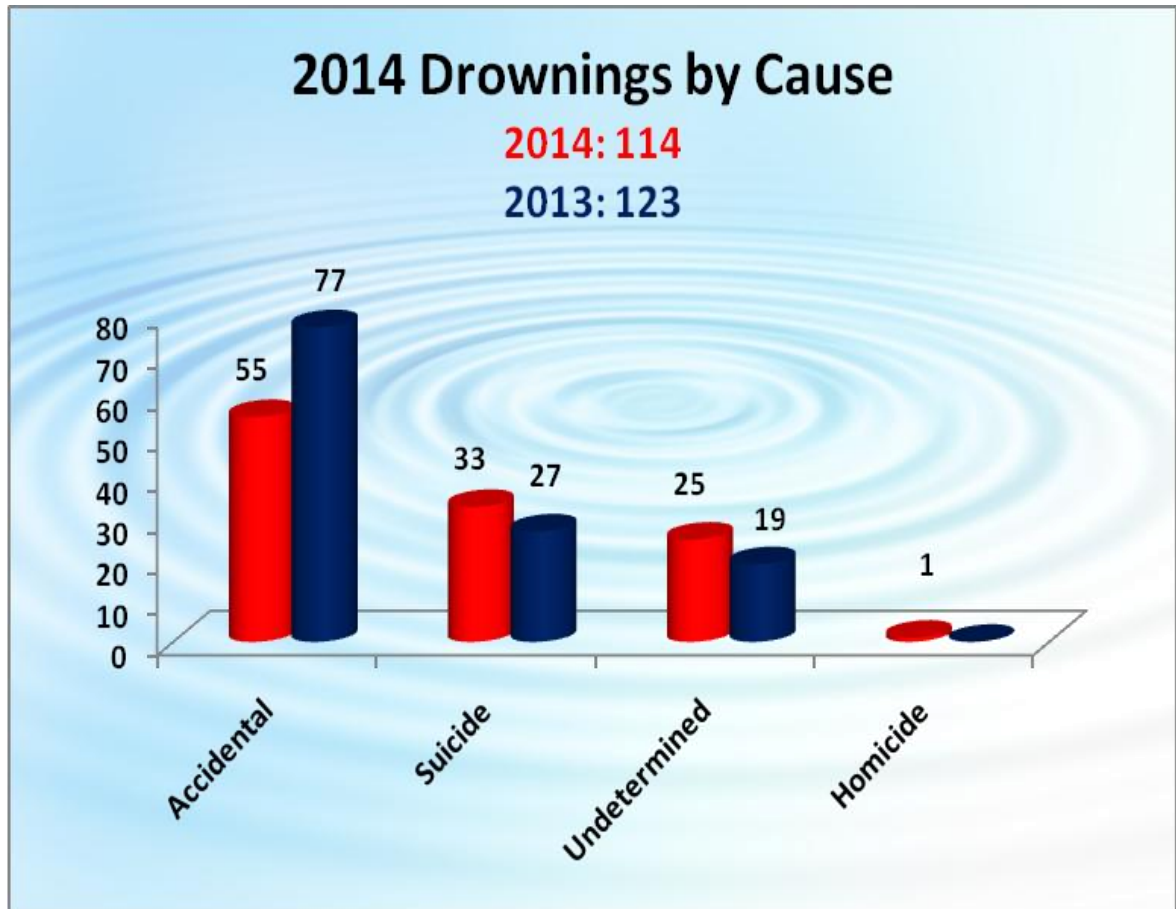


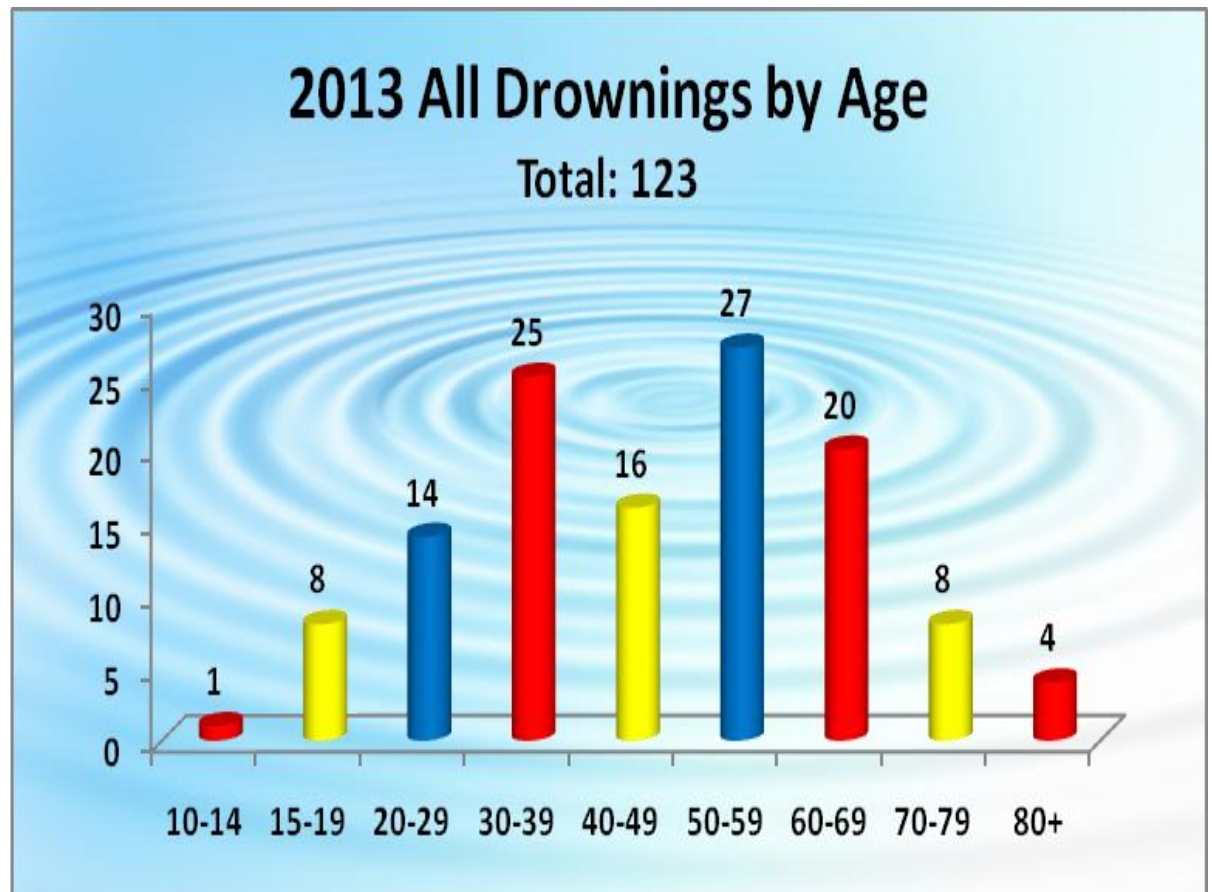
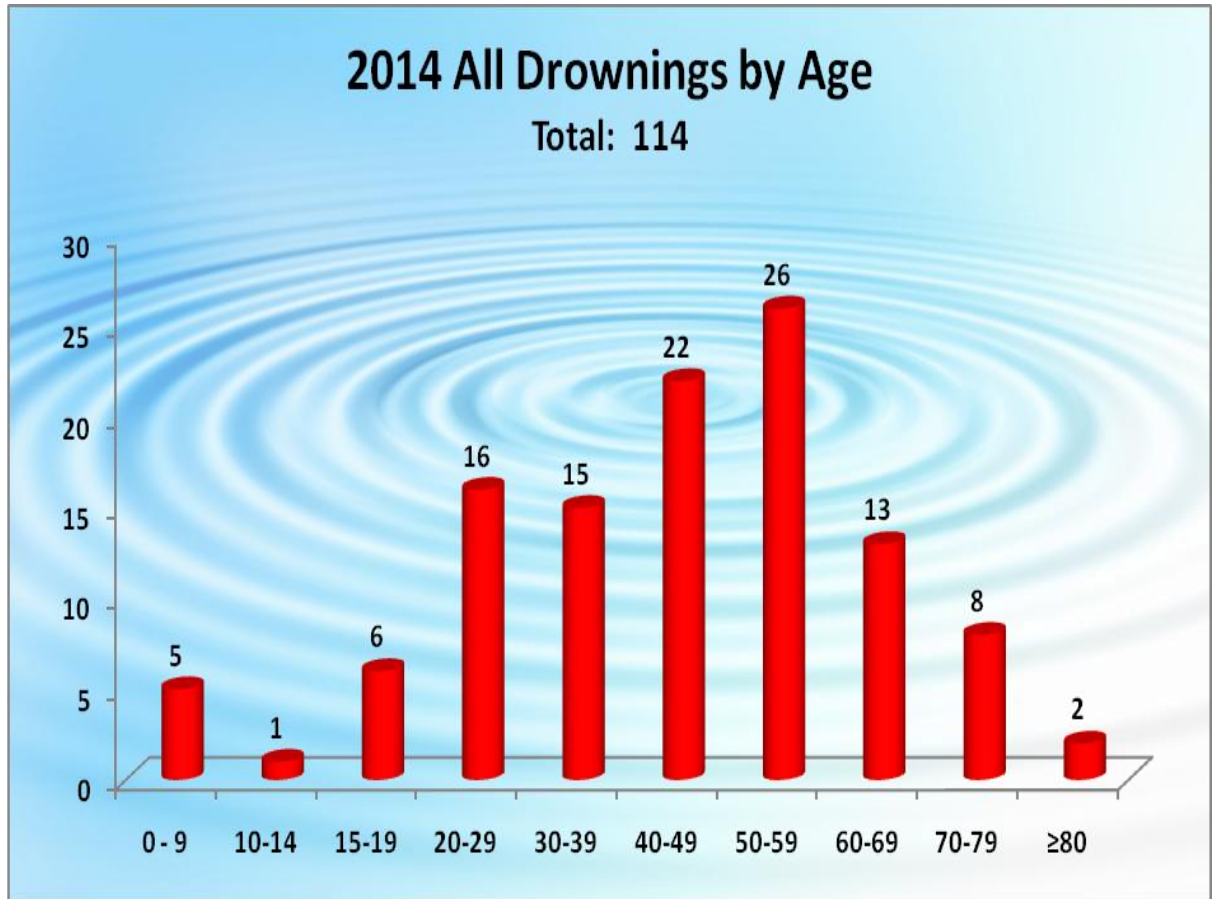
## 2014 All Drownings by Gender

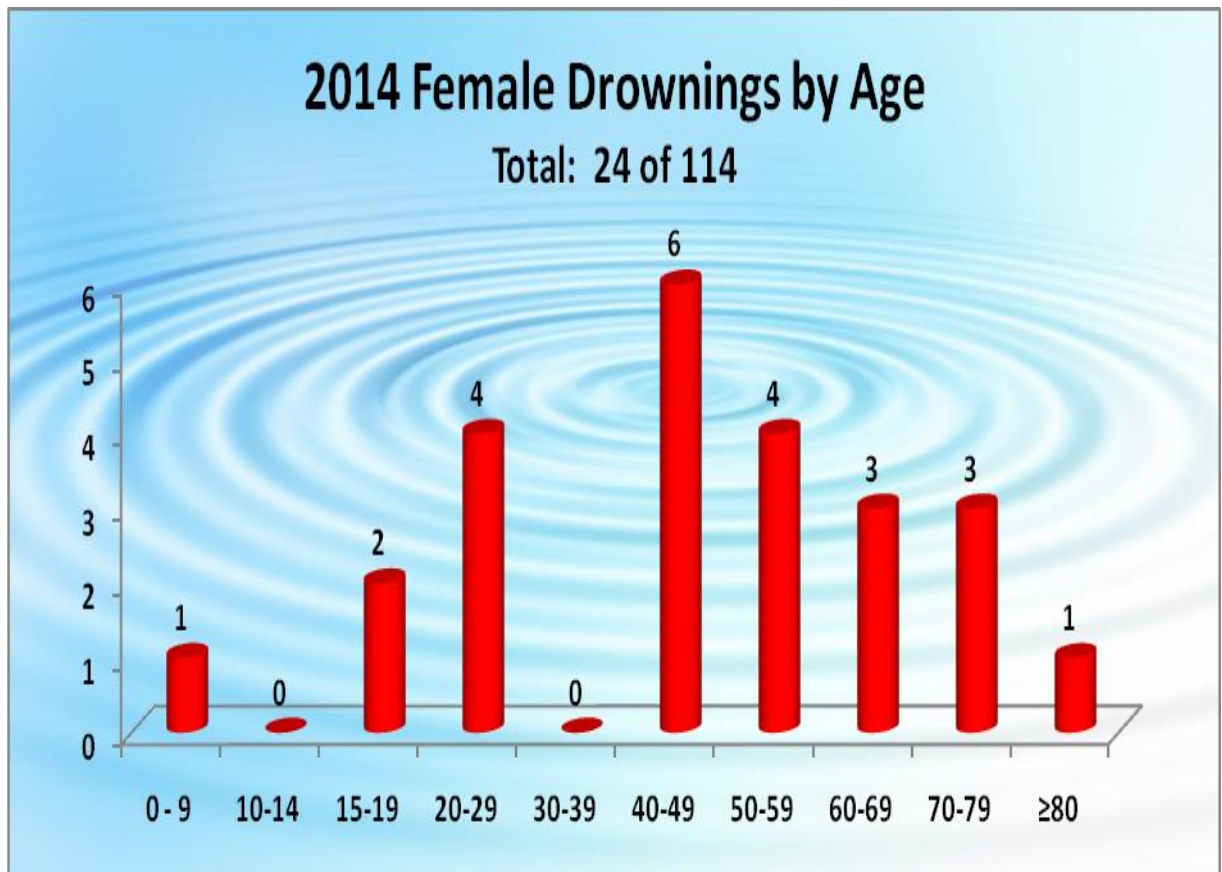
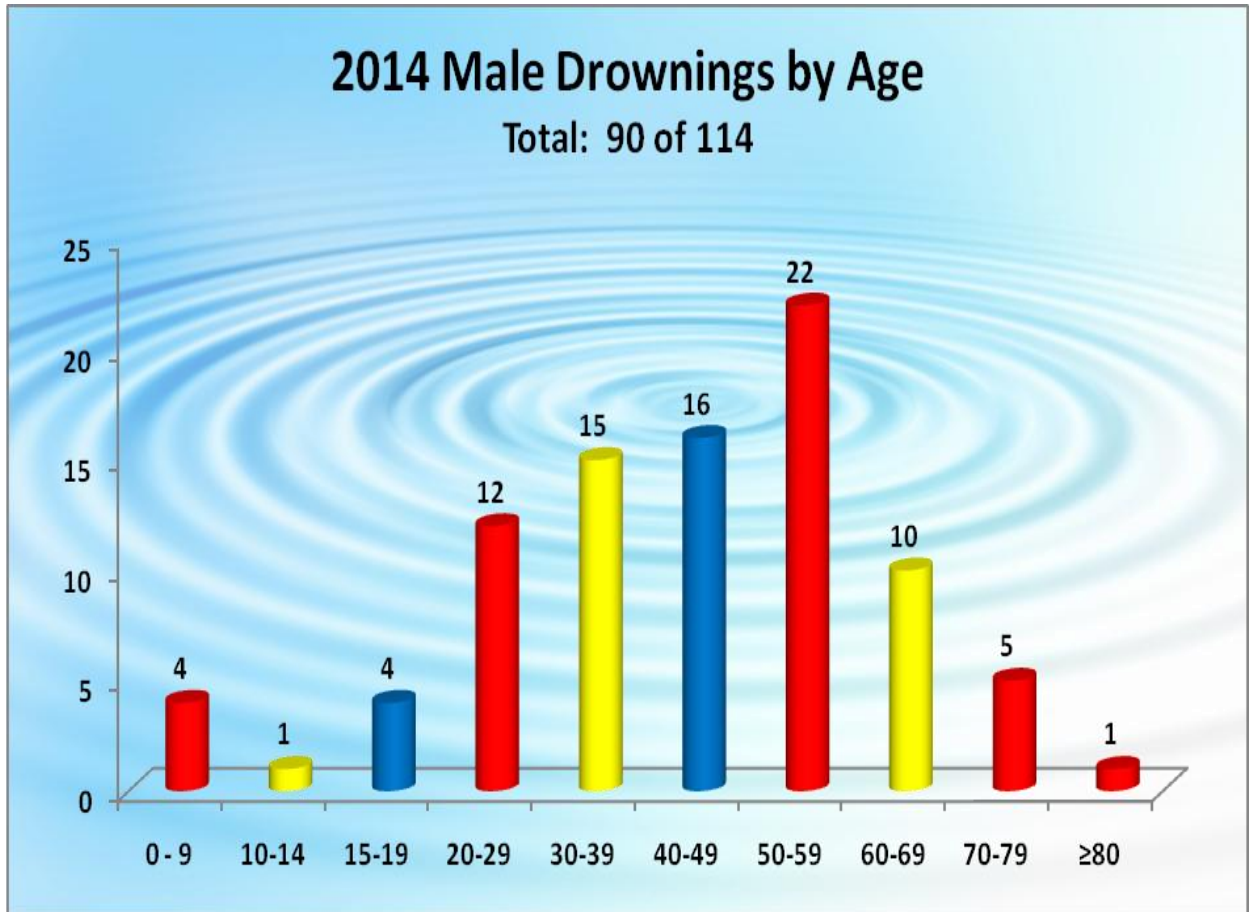
Total: 114









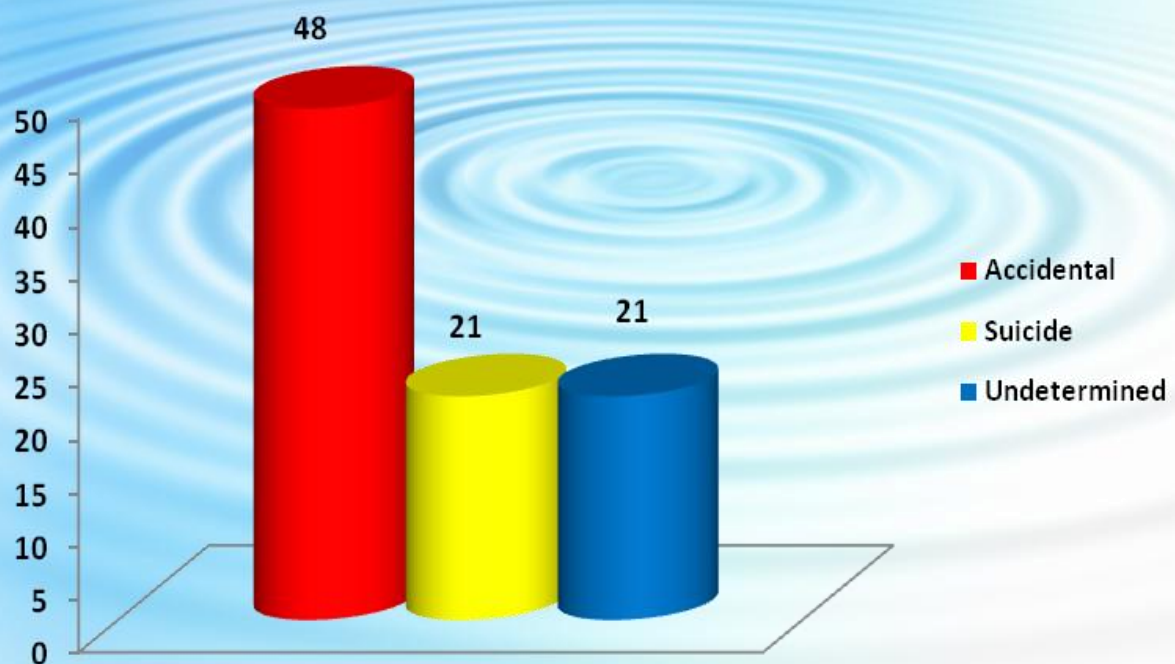


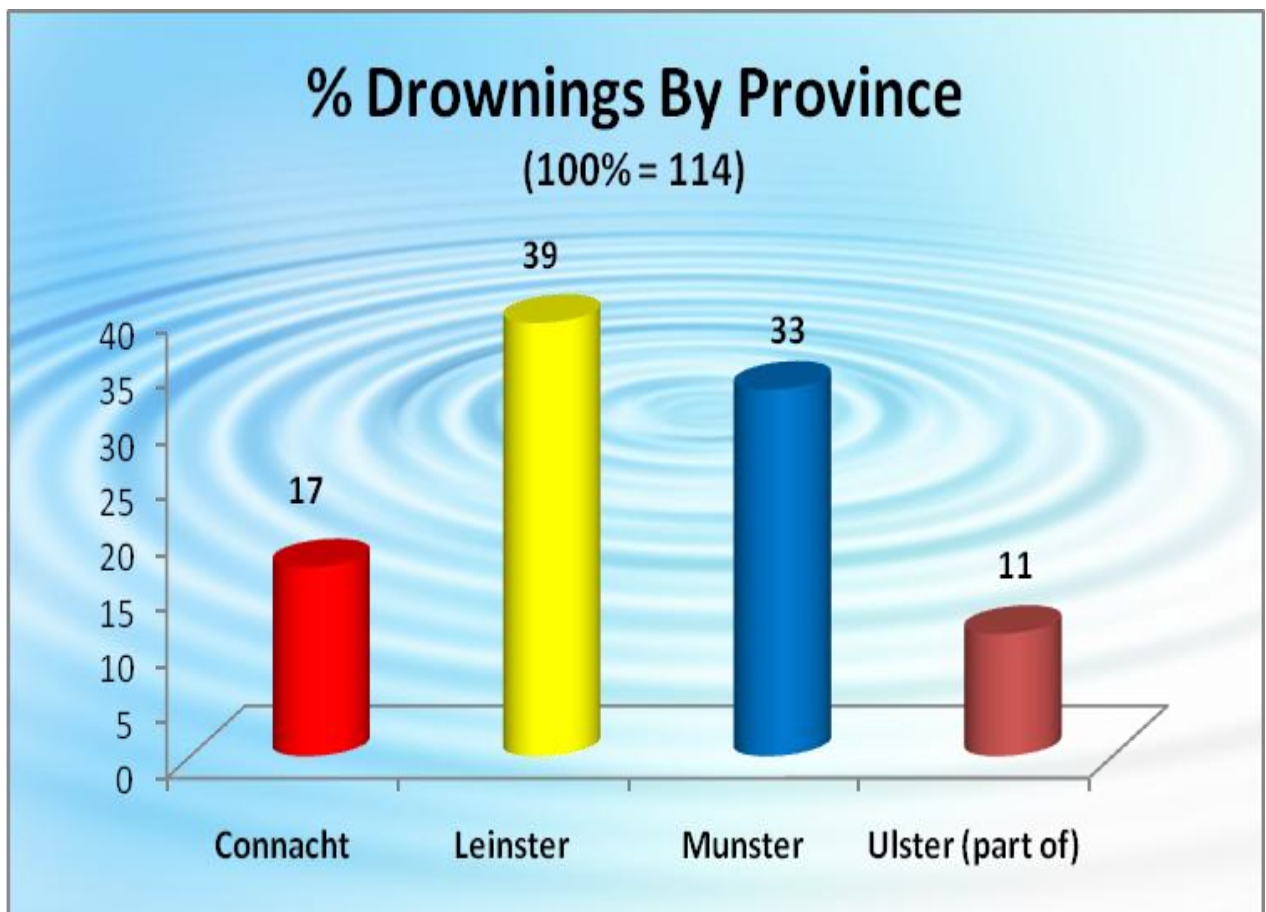
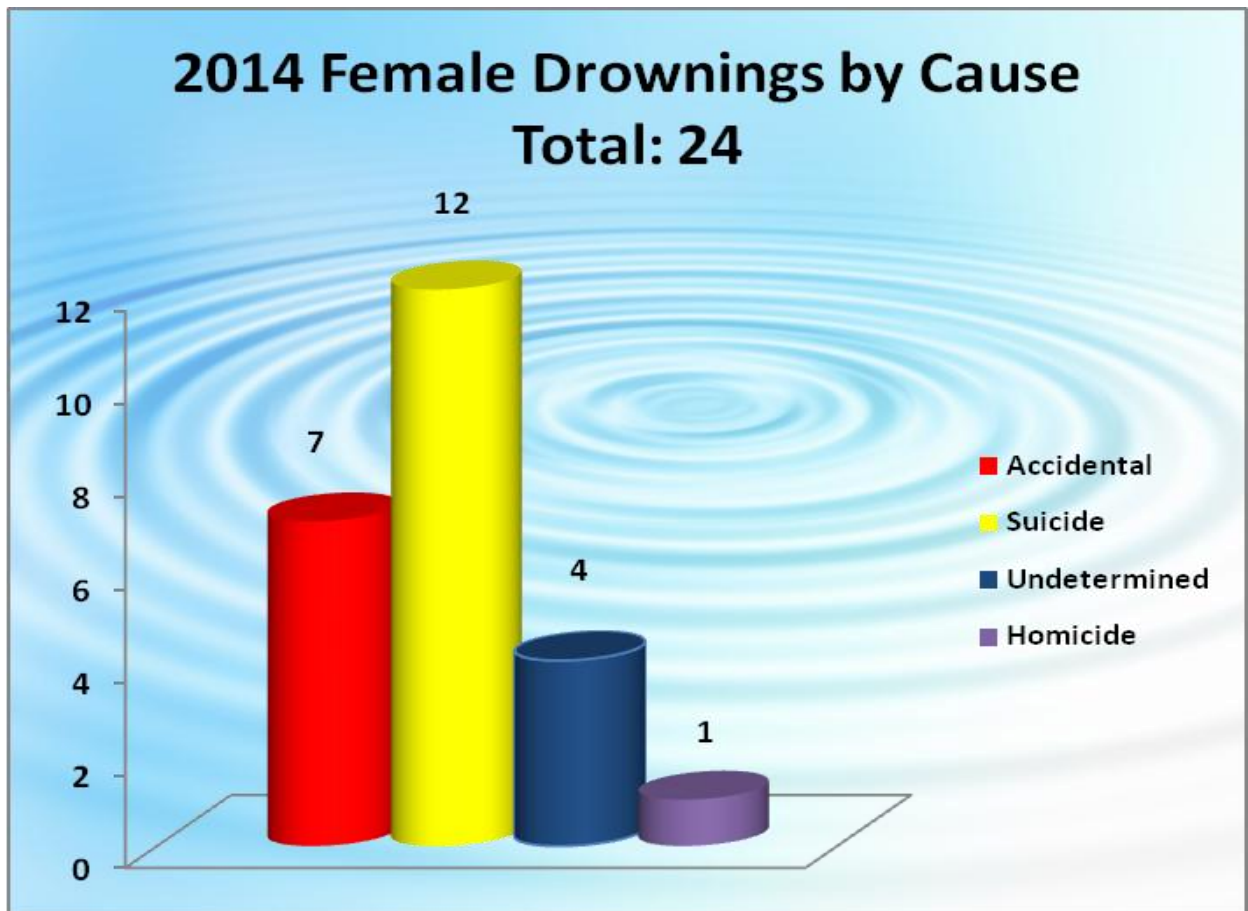


## 2014 Drownings by Gender and Cause Male / Female (Total: 114)

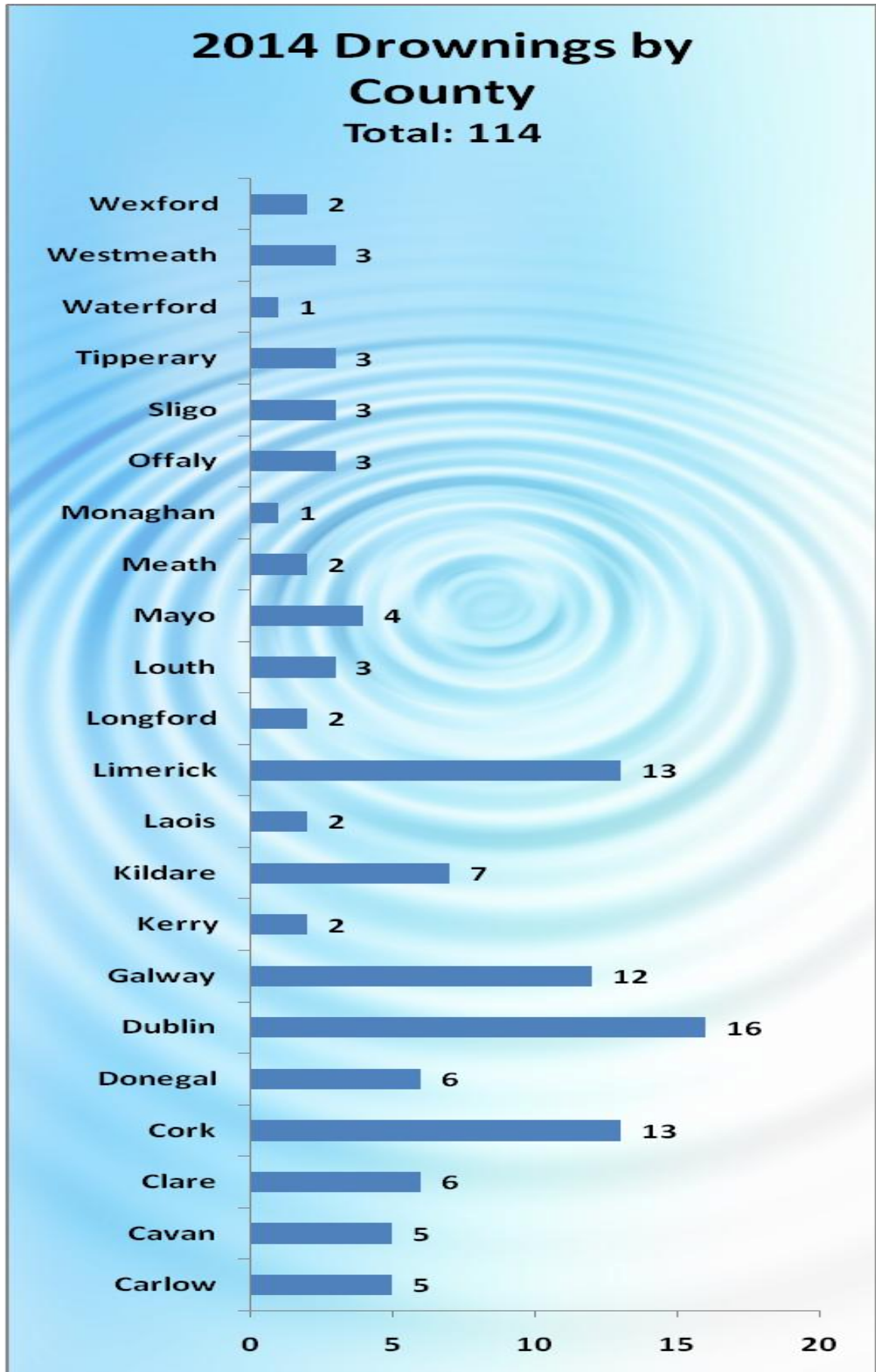


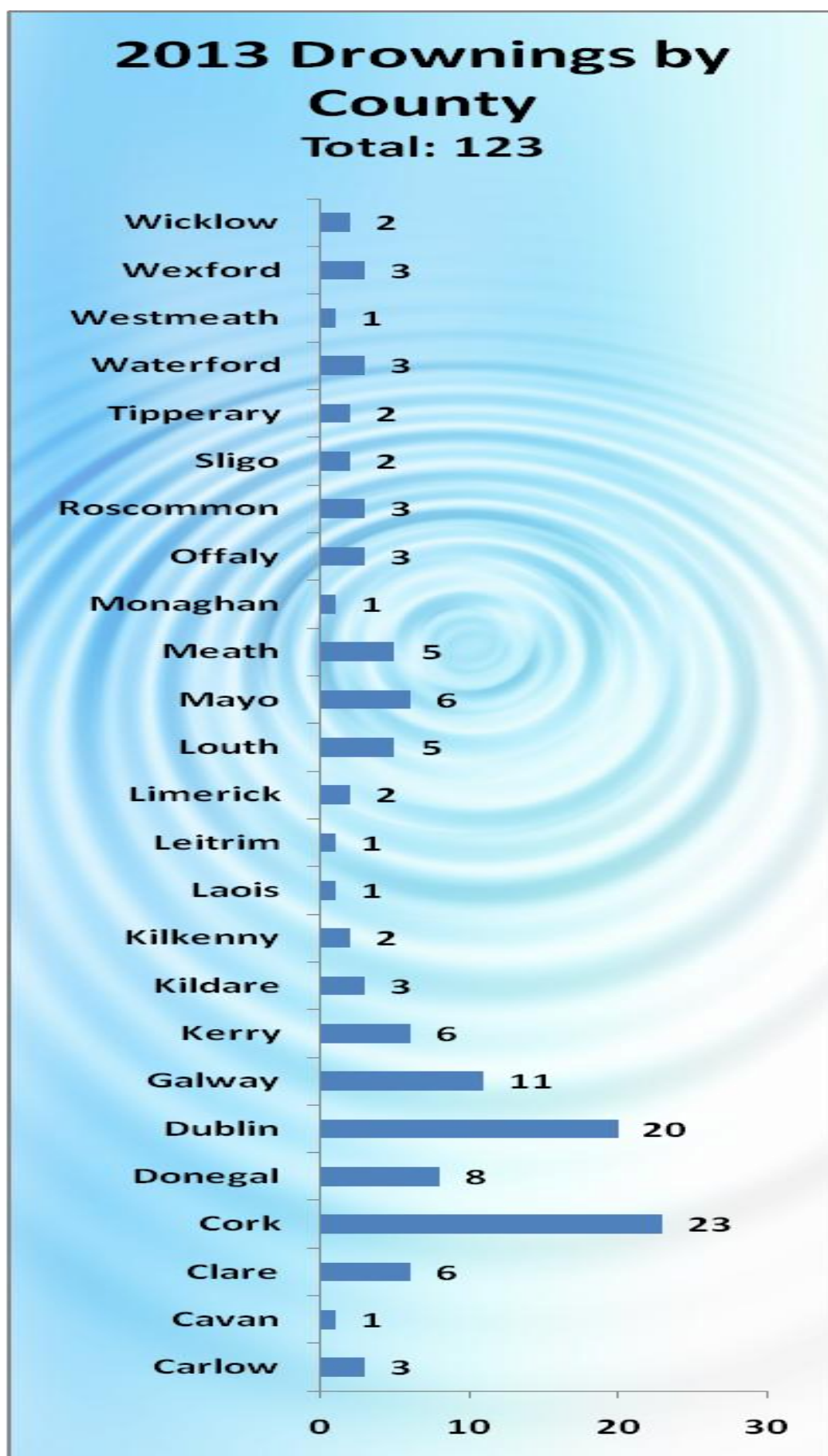
## 2014 Male Drownings by Cause Total: 90





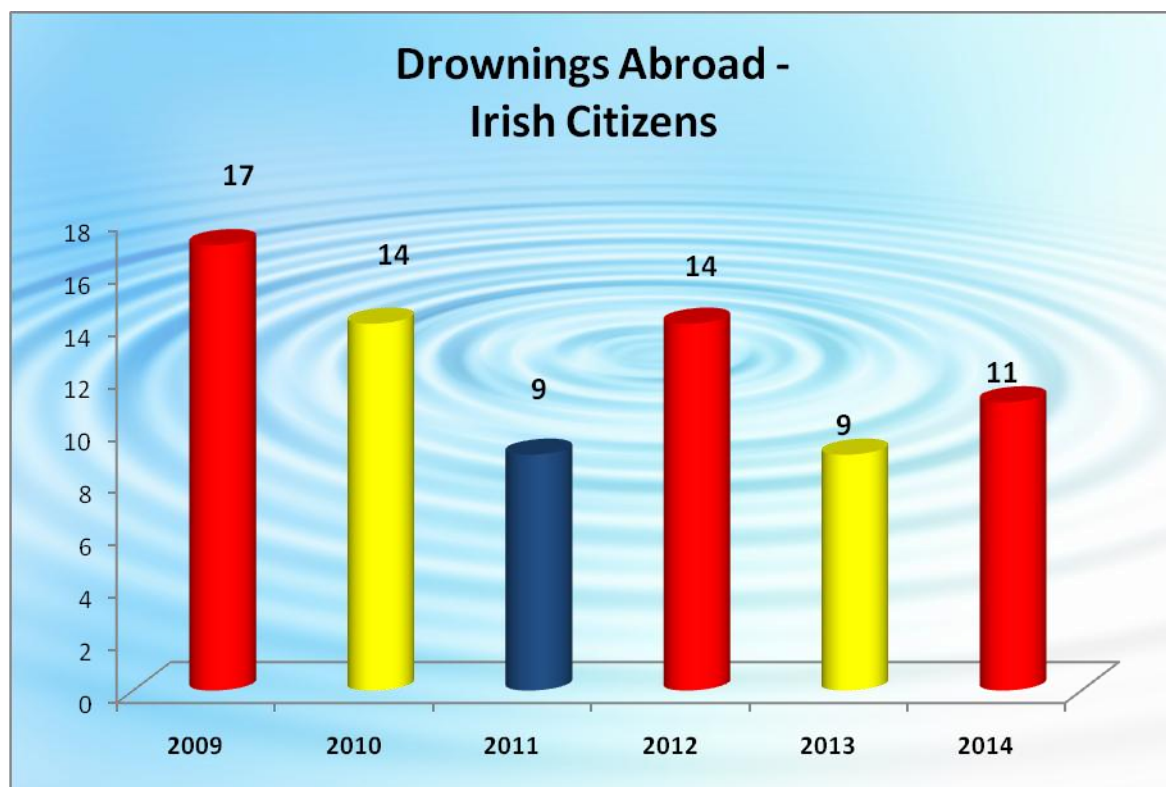






## Drowning Statistics – Irish Citizens abroad in 2014

The Consular Assistance Section was informed of the deaths of 217 Irish citizens in 2014. Of these, 11 were by drowning, of which 10 were male and 1 was female. The breakdown by continent is as follows: Europe: 4; Americas: 3; Asia: 2; Australia: 2.





**IRISH WATER SAFETY**  
the  
**statutory voluntary body and registered**  
**charity established to promote water**  
**safety in Ireland.**



Our focus is on Public Awareness and education. Tragically, an average of 135 people drown each year in Ireland. We feel that this is simply unacceptable considering that most fatalities are avoidable. We strive to reduce these fatalities by increasing water safety awareness and by changing attitudes and behaviors so that our aquatic environments can be enjoyed with confidence and safety.

**WHAT WE DO:**

Teach swimming, lifesaving, water confidence, safety, survival, rescue skills and basic life support. Courses are provided nationwide to the general public and also to children as part of the primary school curriculum. Many qualifications such as our Pool and Beach Lifeguarding Awards are recognised internationally.

Arrange conferences, lectures and demonstrations to Local Authorities, Government Agencies, NGO's, schools, Colleges and members of the public.

Publish literature to promote water safety and target at-risk groups. We provide publications for all aquatic activities to assist the public adhere to best practices.

Our volunteers carry out Risk Assessments on bathing areas and waterways nationwide that may pose a particular risk to the public, in order to make them safer by the erection of Public Rescue Equipment, signage and other necessary facilities. We also advise and assist Local Authorities, state agencies and private enterprises on matters relating to water safety and we complete Public Rescue Equipment checks.

Our staff support the work of approximately 3,000 volunteer members and we also administer approximately 250 people who are commercially delivering swimming, lifesaving and CPR training.

Beach Lifeguards are trained and tested by our examiners for the Local Authorities, prior to the annual summer season each year.

Train and examine rescue boat crews for the Community Inshore Rescue Services.

Promote marine safety along with other members of the Marine Safety Working Group and the Irish Marine Search and Rescue Committee.

National and local media help build public awareness by actively communicating our safety messages to the public.

Press releases target the seasonal hazards at sea, on our inland waterways and other aquatic environments.

Analysis and provision of drowning statistics that enables effective targeting of "at risk" groups in Ireland.

Work with a range of organisations to help reduce the high number of drownings by suicide annually.

Organise the Annual National Lifesaving Championships; some of our members then go on to compete in international events each year.

Organise the National Water Safety Awards Ceremony. The "JUST IN TIME" Rescue Award and other awards recognize people's work, providing training and promoting Water Safety in Ireland.

Partners from the private sector sponsor the delivery of messages to key "at risk" groups.

Provide information on the locations of Lifeguarded waterways in Ireland.

Public and private bodies call on us to make submissions on water safety related matters.

Maintain a comprehensive websites of water safety advice, publications and courses.

IWS is registered charity CHY 16289

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[www.iwsmemberinsurance.com](http://www.iwsmemberinsurance.com)

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**Notes:**