

# Plastics: Attitudes and behaviours in Ireland 2019 – 2021

## Attitudes

- 95%** of people in Ireland are concerned about the amount of plastic that we use as a society.
- 81%** are 'willing to take steps to reduce their plastic waste even if it impacts on convenience and costs'.
- While **86%** believe they know the correct bin to use, the survey findings indicate some confusion about how to correctly segregate certain plastic wastes.
- 86%** are concerned about littering & illegal dumping of plastic.
- 85%** believe a Deposit Return Scheme for plastic drinks bottles or containers would reduce littering.
- 64%** support the introduction of a levy on single use plastics at the point of purchase, and this level of support has remained stable over time. (65% 2020, 62% 2021)
- 83%** are concerned about single use plastics and this level of concern remained stable over time.
- 91%** would prefer if there were alternatives to single use plastics and this preference has remained stable over time. (88% 2020, 90% 2021)
- People in Ireland associate plastics with many benefits, for example, **55%** agree it keeps products safe and hygienic.

## Behaviours

- 85%** of people in Ireland say they have tried to cut down on single use plastic items at some point.
- 86%** are aware their personal actions can reduce plastic waste in the environment.
- 85%** have encountered barriers to reducing plastic waste.
- 56%** believe that they produce most of their plastic waste at home, with plastic food packaging from supermarkets considered to be the main source.
- 81%** reported having a reusable water bottle but **80%** don't know where to refill it in a public place.
- 69%** of people in Ireland report having a reusable coffee cup.
- The **two main barriers** are access to alternatives and perceived high costs of buying products with sustainable packaging.

## Responsibility

- 33%** people see manufacturers as the stakeholders 'most responsible' for reducing plastic waste in Ireland.
- 26%** of people see themselves as the 'most responsible' for reducing plastic waste in Ireland.
- 70%** of the population distrust manufacturers and online retailers in ensuring plastic waste is reduced in society.
- Providing 'alternative formats'** is seen to be the most beneficial thing that retailers or manufacturers could do to combat plastic usage.

## Communication

- 94%** have heard of the public service communications message to place recyclables "clean, dry, loose" into recycling bins.
- 41%** state that they always 'search package information for what bin to use for their plastic packaging'.
- TV programmes** about plastic waste and the environment are seen to be one of the most influential mediums to encourage people to reduce plastic.