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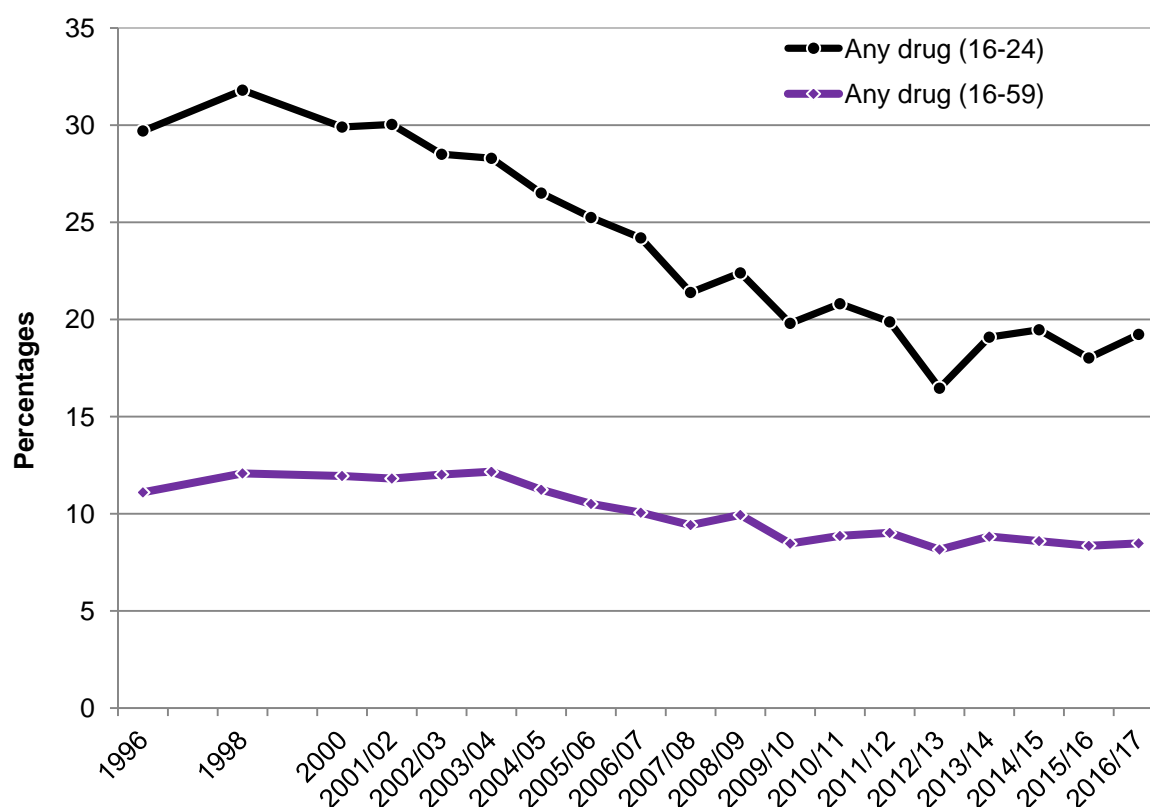
## Statistical News Release – Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2016/17 Crime Survey for England and Wales

The latest National Statistics on illicit drug use in England and Wales are released today, based on self reported responses from the 2016/17 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

### Key findings:

- **Around 1 in 12 (8.5%) adults aged 16 to 59 had taken an illicit drug in the last year.** This equated to around 2.8 million people. This level of drug use was similar to the 2015/16 survey (8.4%), but statistically significantly lower than a decade ago (10.1% in the 2006/07 survey). The trend in last year drug use among 16 to 59 year olds has been flat for eight years, since the 2009/10 survey.

*Proportion of 16 to 59 and 16 to 24 year olds taking drugs in the last year, 1996 to 2016/17 CSEW*



- **Around 1 in 5 (19.2%) young adults aged 16 to 24 had taken an illicit drug in the last year.** This proportion is more than double that of the wider age group, and equates to around 1.2 million people. This level of drug use was similar to the 2015/16 survey (18.0%), but again statistically significantly lower compared with a decade ago (24.2% in the 2006/07 survey).

- **The use of new psychoactive substances (NPS) among 16 to 59 year olds in the last year has fallen** from 0.7% in the 2015/16 survey to 0.4% in the 2016/17 survey, a statistically significant change. Use of NPS in the last year is concentrated among young adults aged 16 to 24, with around 1 in 80 (1.2%) young adults aged 16 to 24 taking an NPS in the last year, which equates to around 77,000 young adults.
- As in previous years, **cannabis was the most commonly used drug, with 6.6 per cent of adults aged 16 to 59 having used it in the last year (around 2.2 million people)**, similar to the 2015/16 survey (6.5%), but showing statistically significant falls compared with a decade ago (8.2%) and the start of measurement in 1996 (9.4%).

#### ***Frequency of illicit drug use in the last year***

- Estimates from the 2016/17 CSEW show that **2.0 per cent of all adults aged 16 to 59 were defined as frequent drug users** (having taken any illicit drug more than once a month on average in the last year), a **statistically significant fall** from 3.3 per cent in the 2015/16 CSEW.
- **Young adults were more likely to be frequent drug users than 16 to 59 year olds.** The proportion of young adults aged 16 to 24 who were classed as frequent drug users was 4.2 per cent.
- Six per cent of adults aged 16 to 59 who reported using drugs in the last year said they had used drugs **every day**.

Other findings from the 2016/17 CSEW include drug use by personal, household and area characteristics and lifestyle factors.

#### **Notes**

1. 'Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2016/17 Crime Survey for England and Wales' is available online via Gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/drug-misuse-findings-from-the-2016-to-2017-csew>

2. The [User Guide to Drug Misuse](#) provides background information on the CSEW self-completion module on drug use, as well as classifications of different drugs and other information pertaining specifically to the Drug Misuse statistical collection. The [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#) (published by the Office for National Statistics) provides further information on demographic and area classifications, and statistical conventions and methodology.

**For all press enquiries, please contact the Home Office Press Office who will liaise with Home Office Crime and Policing Statistics:**

Newsdesk - **020 7035 3535**

Monday - Friday: 07:00 – 20:00

Emergency media calls, out-of-hours: 07659 174 240

Please note: the press office deals with enquiries from the media only. Members of the public should phone **020 7035 4848**.