



26 July 2018

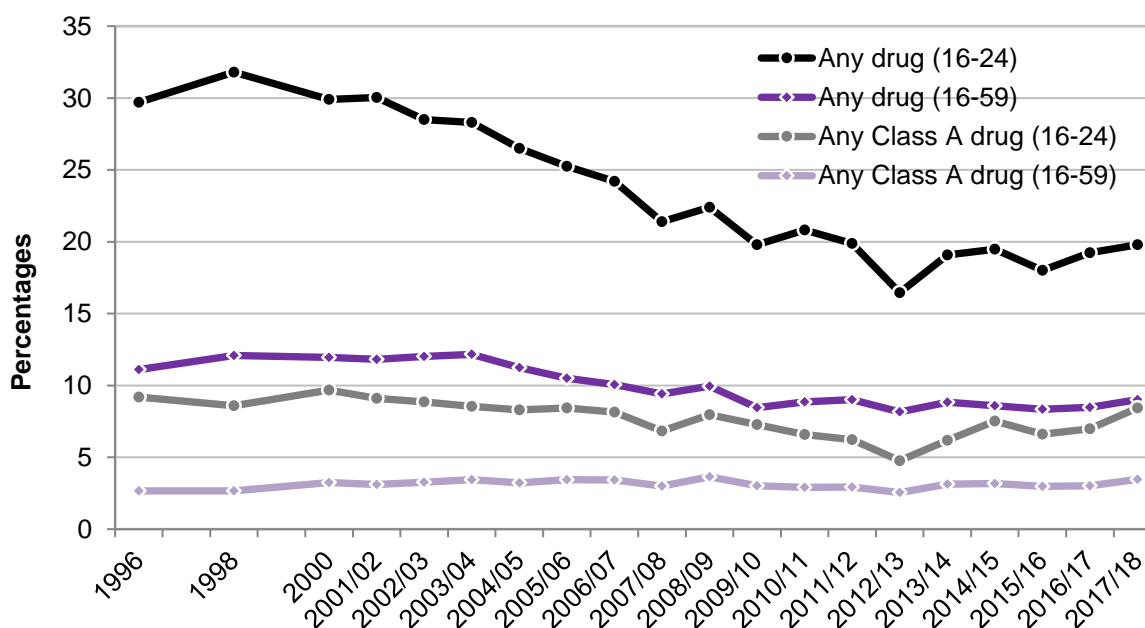
Statistical News Release – Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2017/18 Crime Survey for England and Wales

The latest National Statistics on illicit drug use in England and Wales are released today, based on self-reported responses from the 2017/18 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

Key findings:

- **Around 1 in 11 (9.0%) adults aged 16 to 59 had taken a drug in the last year.** This equated to around 3.0 million people, and was similar to the 2016/17 survey (8.5%). The trend in last year drug use among 16 to 59 year olds has been relatively flat since the 2009/10 survey, and the latest estimate was similar to a decade ago (9.4% in 2007/08). However, the 2017/18 prevalence estimate was lower than in 1996 (11.1%), when the time series began.

Trends in drug use in the last year among adults, 16 to 59 and 16 to 24 year olds, 1996 to 2017/18 CSEW



- **Around 1 in 5 (19.8%) adults aged 16 to 24 had taken a drug in the last year.** This proportion was more than double that of the wider age group, and equates to around 1.2 million people. This was similar to the 2016/17 survey (19.2%), but there was a decrease from 1996 (29.7%). There was no significant change compared with a decade ago (21.4% in 2007/08).
- **Around 1 in 29 (3.5%) of adults aged 16 to 59 had taken a Class A drug in the last year,** equivalent to 1.1 million people. This increased compared with the previous year and a decade ago (2007/08; both 3.0%).
- **Class A drug use among 16 to 24 year olds has been increasing since 2011/12.** While not statistically significant from year to year, there is an upward trend apparent in the use of Class A drugs, particularly among 16 to 24 year olds. Although there was no significant change from the 2016/17 estimate for this age group, there was an increase

from the 2011/12 survey estimate (6.2% to 8.4%). This was mainly driven by an increase in powder cocaine and ecstasy use.

- As in previous years, **cannabis was the most commonly used drug in the 2017/18 CSEW**, with 7.2 per cent of adults aged 16 to 59 having used it in the last year (around 2.4 million people). This was similar to the 2016/17 estimate (6.6%), and there was no significant change between 2017/18 and a decade ago (7.5% in 2007/08), but the 2017/18 estimate was lower than at the start of measurement in 1996 (9.4%).

Frequency of illicit drug use in the last year

- Estimates from the 2017/18 CSEW show that **2.1 per cent of all adults aged 16 to 59 were classed as frequent drug users** (having taken any illicit drug more than once a month on average in the last year). This was similar to the 2016/17 CSEW (2.0%).
- **Young adults aged 16 to 24 were more likely to be frequent drug users than 16 to 59 year olds.** The proportion of young adults who were classed as frequent drug users was 4.1 per cent. This was similar to the 2016/17 CSEW (4.2%).
- **The majority of ecstasy and powder cocaine users reported having taken the drug only once or twice a year** (68% for ecstasy and 54% for powder cocaine).

Other findings from the 2017/18 CSEW include drug use by personal, household and area characteristics and lifestyle factors.

Notes

1. 'Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2017/18 Crime Survey for England and Wales' is available online via Gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/drug-misuse-findings-from-the-2017-to-2018-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**.