

7 Other data sources

Seizures by police in Scotland and Northern Ireland

As well as providing a comparison to seizures in England and Wales, drug seizure figures for Scotland and Northern Ireland give a more complete UK-wide picture. Data relating to seizures of drugs by the police in Scotland are collected and published by the Scottish Government¹⁹.

Prior to 2014/15, the Scottish Government used the same counting rules and broad methodology as for England and Wales. However, since then they have changed the data collection process, splitting seizures into supply and possession offences, and using extrapolation methods to estimate the latter from a sample. As a result, the figures from Scotland are not directly comparable with those from England and Wales.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland²⁰ (PSNI) collects and publishes data on drug seizures by police in Northern Ireland, and they are also presented on the same basis as those for England and Wales.

Border Force seizures

Seizures made by Border Force officials outside England and Wales (e.g. Scotland, Northern Ireland) are excluded from figures presented in this statistical release. A quarterly breakdown of Border Force seizures in the UK is available online as part of their regular key performance indicators²¹.

Misuse of drugs

The extent and trends in illicit drug use among adults aged 16 to 59, measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), are published separately by the Home Office²². According to the 2018/19 CSEW, around 1 in 11 (9.4%) adults had taken any illicit drug in the last year, similar to 2017/18 (9.0%) and similar to a decade ago (9.9% in the 2008/09 survey).

The Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People in England²³ is published by NHS Digital and contains results from a biennial survey of school children aged 7 to 11. Based on the 2018 survey, 24% of pupils reported they had ever taken drugs, the same as in 2016 and similar to over a decade ago (25% in 2007).

¹⁹ Latest drug seizure statistics for Scotland were published in March 2019 and are available online at: [The Scottish Government website](#).

²⁰ Latest drug seizure statistics for Northern Ireland are published monthly, and are available online at: [Police Service of Northern Ireland website](#).

²¹ Border Force publishes data on its key performance indicators at [Border Force transparency data](#).

²² See the latest edition of 'Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2018/19 Crime Survey for England and Wales', available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/drug-misuse-findings-from-the-2018-to-2019-csew>

²³ See the latest edition of 'Smoking, Drinking and Drug use among Young People in England', available at <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/smoking-drinking-and-drug-use-among-young-people-in-england/2018/part-8-drug-use-prevalence-and-consumption>

Statistical Bulletins are prepared by staff in Home Office Crime and Policing Statistics under the Official Statistics Code of Practice and can be downloaded from GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/about/statistics>

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