



26 July 2018

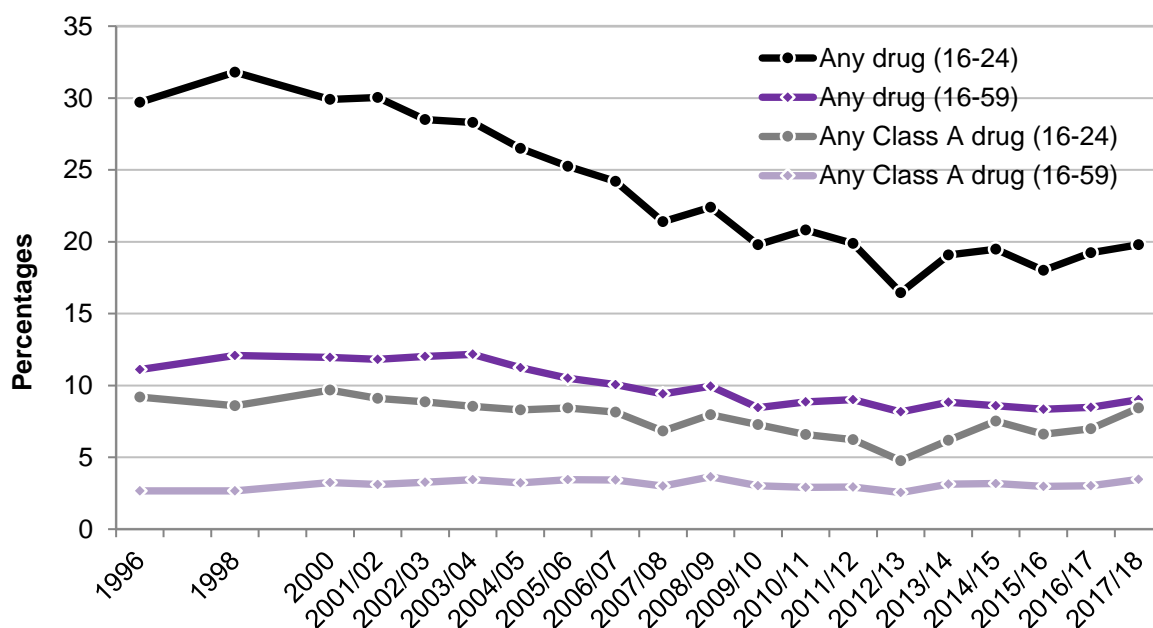
## Statistical News Release – Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2017/18 Crime Survey for England and Wales

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

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