This 2010 National Drug Strategy Household Survey report shows:
- positive and significant reductions since 2007 in daily tobacco smoking
- mixed findings on alcohol consumption and risk
- a small overall rise in illicit drug use.

In terms of attitudes to drugs, excessive alcohol use and tobacco smoking were nominated as the two most serious concerns to the community—and there were higher levels of support than previously for tobacco and alcohol harm reduction policies. Heroin continues to be the drug most associated with a drug problem, followed by cannabis. But there was also a small rise in community tolerance of regular cannabis use.

**Tobacco**
The proportion of people aged 14 and over smoking tobacco daily has continued to decline and is now 15.1%, down from 16.6% three years previously. The largest declines in daily smoking were among people in their early 20s to mid-40s, while the proportion of those aged 45 years or older smoking daily remained relatively stable or slightly increased between 2007 and 2010.

Around one-third of smokers had tried unsuccessfully to give up smoking in 2010. In the 12–17 years age group, girls were more likely to smoke daily than boys (3.2% to 1.8%). This was the only age group where females were more likely than males to smoke daily.

**Alcohol**
While daily drinking declined between 2007 and 2010, about 1 in 5 people drank at levels that put them at risk of harm over their lifetime (more than 2 standard drinks a day on average), and this proportion remained unchanged since 2007. Also little changed was the proportion of people (28.4%) drinking at least once a month at levels that put them at risk of accident or injury (more than 4 standard drinks in a session).

The proportion of teenagers aged 12–17 years abstaining from alcohol increased in 2010. About 7% of recent drinkers, especially people aged less than 29 years changed their drink preference in 2010 with a shift away from pre-mixed spirits.

**Illicit drugs**
Recent illicit drug use (use in the previous 12 months) rose from 13.4% of the population aged 14 and over in 2007 to 14.7% in 2010. This was still below the 1995 peak of 16.7%. The rise was mainly due to an increase in the proportion of people who had used cannabis (from 9.1% to 10.3%), pharmaceuticals for non-medical purposes (3.7% to 4.2%), cocaine (1.6% to 2.1%) and hallucinogens (0.6% to 1.4%). These drugs were also perceived as being more easily available or accessible in 2010 than in 2007.

Between 2007 and 2010, recent ecstasy use declined from 3.5% to 3.0%. There was no change in the use of meth/amphetamines, heroin (used by 0.2% in the last 12 months), ketamine, GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate), and inhalants. Recent illicit drug use was highest in the 20–29 year age group for both males and females (30.5% and 24.3%, respectively).

**Note:** This survey was the 10th in a series which began in 1985. More than 26,000 people aged 12 years or older participated in the survey, in which they were asked about their knowledge of and attitudes towards drugs, their drug consumption histories, and related behaviours.