

Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia

People in contact with the criminal justice system



Prison entrants in 2018 were more likely than the general population to be non-drinkers, however those that did drink were more likely to drink at high risk levels than people in the general community.^[2]



In 2018, **1 in 3 police detainees** indicated that **illicit drug** use contributed to their offending.^[1]



Around 8% of prison dischargees reported using a **needle and syringe** that had been **used by someone else** while in prison in 2018.^[2]



79% of police detainees who provided a urine sample in 2018 tested positive for at least one drug type.[1]



Police detainees reporting consumption of alcohol in the 48 hours prior to arrest; 32% in 2018.[1]

15% of referral episodes for clients receiving **alcohol and other drug treatment** were referred from police or court diversion in 2017–18.^[4]

In 2018, police detainees consumed a median **11 standard drinks** before their arrest.^[1]



Prison entrants in 2018:

75% currently **smoked tobacco** 67% **smoked tobacco daily**.^[2]



65% of prison entrants in 2018 reported **using illicit drugs** in the 12 months before incarceration, with the most common being methamphetamine (43%).^[2]

Illicit drug offences accounted for 11% of magistrate court cases, of which 63% were **possess and/or use illicit drugs** in 2018–19.^[3]

- Voce A & Sullivan T 2019. Drug use monitoring in Australia: Drug use among police detainees, 2018. Statistical Reports no. 18. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. Viewed 8 January 2020.
- 2. AlHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2019. The health of Australia's prisoners 2018. Cat. no. PHE 207. Canberra: AlHW. Viewed 30 May 2019.
- 3. ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2020. Criminal Courts, Australia, 2018–19. ABS cat. no. 4513.0.Canberra: ABS. Viewed 27 February 2020.
- AIHW 2019. Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia 2017–18: key findings. Web Report. Viewed 17 April 2019.

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For more detail, see the full report,

Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia,

which can be downloaded for free from the AIHW website.



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