

1 Introduction

The National Drug Strategy

The National Drug Strategy (NDS), formerly the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA), was created in 1985 with strong bi-partisan political support to address the impact licit and illicit drugs have on Australian society. The aims of the NDS are to prevent and reduce the uptake of harmful drug use and minimise the harmful effects of licit and illicit drugs in Australia.

The NDS is managed under the direction of the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS), which is comprised of ministers for health and law enforcement from the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments. The ministers are responsible for collectively determining national policies and programs designed to reduce the harm caused by drugs to individuals, families and communities in Australia (MCDS 1998).

Drug-related harm

The AIHW recently estimated that in 1998, 17,671 deaths and 185,558 hospital episodes were related to drug use (Ridolfo & Stevenson 2001). Tobacco and alcohol were responsible for over 93% of drug-related mortality and morbidity. The estimated direct health care cost of drug dependence and harmful use in Australia in 1992 was over \$1.0 billion – \$833 million for tobacco, \$145 million for alcohol, and \$43 million for illicit drugs (Collins & Lapsley 1996). More recently, the AIHW estimated that in 1993–94 the direct health system cost of the management of substance abuse disorders was \$274 million (this does not include the cost of managing other conditions attributable to the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs) (AIHW 1999).

About the 2001 survey

The 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey was built on the design of the 1998 survey, making it the most comprehensive survey concerning licit and illicit drug use ever undertaken in Australia. Almost 27,000 people aged 14 years and over provided information on their drug use patterns, attitudes and behaviours. The sample was based on households, therefore homeless and institutionalised persons were not included in the survey (consistent with the approach in previous years).

The survey was the seventh conducted under the auspices of the NDS. Previous surveys were conducted in 1985, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1995 and 1998. The data collected from these surveys have contributed to the development of policies for Australia's response to drug-related issues.

Comparison with previous surveys

The methodology of the 2001 survey differed slightly from that of previous surveys: a discussion of the main differences is presented in chapter 6.

The 2001 survey introduced the computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) method to supplement the drop and collect method and the face-to-face method. The CATI results were scrutinised by the Technical Advisory Committee and it was agreed that these results were sufficiently comparable with the drop and collect and face-to-face methods to support inclusion in the survey dataset.

The 2001 sample (26,744) was two-and-a-half times larger than the 1998 sample (10,030) and around seven times larger than the 1995 and 1993 samples (3,850 and 3,500 respectively). Due to the greater sample size, the 2001 estimates should be the most reliable.

There was a minor change in the wording of questions used to determine 'ever use' of illicit drugs. In 1993, 1995 and 1998, the questions were in the form 'ever tried' whereas in 2001 the questions were in the form 'ever used'. For this reason, extensive comparison of drugs ever used have not been reported. In addition, the 1998 and 2001 surveys used comprehensive logic and edit checks to increase the reliability of estimates of ever use of drugs. This may have produced marginally higher prevalence estimates when compared with the 1995 and 1993 estimates.

This report applies the *National Health Data Dictionary* (AIHW 2001) definition of tobacco smoking status, notably relating to ex-smokers and never-smokers where a threshold of 100 cigarettes is used. Data are presented for 1998 (revised) and 2001; however, the definition is not applicable to previous survey data.

About this report

The report presents estimates derived from survey responses weighted to the Australian population aged 14 years and over.

The chapters examine status of drug use in 2001, patterns of consumption, community support for drug-related policy and drug-related activities. A chapter detailing the survey methodology, response rates, reliability and definitions (Chapter 6) is provided. Estimates of sampling errors are presented in Appendix 2 and a copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix 5.

Prevalence figures and population estimates are provided for information, regardless of their levels of statistical reliability. For a number of the measures with low prevalence, resultant estimates are more likely to be statistically less reliable than the same measures with high prevalence. Readers are reminded, therefore, that when interpreting results, reference should always be made to the table of standard errors and relative standard errors (Table A2.1). Results subject to relative standard errors of between 25% and 50% should be considered with caution and those with relative standard errors greater than 50% should be considered as unreliable for most practical purposes.

For selected 'recent use' tables, the significance of change from 1998 to 2001 is presented. The difference is shown to be statistically significant if the z-statistic of the pooled estimate of the two rates being compared is > 1.96 or < -1.96 .

2 Overview—the status of drug use in 2001

The drugs most accepted by, available and used by Australians aged 14 years and over were the licit drugs: tobacco and alcohol. Overwhelmingly, the use of illicit drugs by adults was not accepted and increased penalties for the sale and supply of these drugs were supported. Most Australians did not want illicit drugs legalised and illicit drugs were more likely than licit drugs to be associated with the concept of a drug ‘problem’.

Drugs recently used (in the last 12 months)

Between 1993 and 2001, the proportions of persons recently using alcohol increased but the proportions using illicit drugs fluctuated. Comparison for recent use of tobacco is only possible for 1998 and 2001 due to a change in definition.

Table 2.1: Summary of drugs recently^(a) used: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, Australia, 1993–2001

Drug/behaviour	1993	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)			
Tobacco	n.a.	n.a.	24.9	23.2
Alcohol	73.0	78.3	80.7	82.4
Illicits				
Marijuana/cannabis	12.7	13.1	17.9	12.9 #
Pain-killers/analgesics ^(b)	1.7	3.5	5.2	3.1 #
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills ^(b)	0.9	0.6	3.0	1.1 #
Steroids ^(b)	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Barbiturates ^(b)	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2
Inhalants	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.4 #
Heroin	0.2	0.4	0.8	0.2 #
Methadone ^(c)	n.a.	n.a.	0.2	0.1
Other opiates ^(b)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.3
Amphetamines ^(b)	2.0	2.1	3.7	3.4
Cocaine	0.5	1.0	1.4	1.3
Hallucinogens	1.3	1.8	3.0	1.1 #
Ecstasy/designer drugs	1.2	0.9	2.4	2.9
Injected drugs	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6
<i>Any illicit</i>	14.0	17.0	22.0	16.9 #
None of the above	21.0	17.8	14.2	14.7

(a) Used in the last 12 months. For tobacco ‘recent use’ means daily, weekly and less than weekly smokers.

(b) For non-medical purposes.

(c) Non-maintenance.

2001 result significantly different from 1998 result (2-tailed $\alpha = 0.05$).

- One in two (49.4%) Australians aged 14 years and older in 2001 had smoked at least 100 cigarettes or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their lifetime, which is similar to the proportion in 1998 (50.8%).
- In 2001, nine out of every 10 (90.4%) people had consumed a full glass of alcohol in their lifetime. Over the period from 1993 to 2001, the proportion of the population having consumed a full glass of alcohol has not changed substantially.
- Marijuana/cannabis had been used by one-third of Australians aged 14 years or older in 2001 (33.1%).
- Over one-third of the population of Australians aged 14 years or older had ever used any illicit drug (37.7%).

Age of initiation—ever use

The mean ages at which Australians first used licit and any illicit drug remained relatively stable between 1993 and 2001 (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Age of initiation of lifetime drug use, Australia, 1995–2001

Drug/behaviour	1995	1998	2001
	(years)		
Tobacco	15.6	15.7	15.5
Alcohol	17.3	17.1	17.1
Illicits			
Marijuana/cannabis	19.1	18.7	18.5
Pain-killers/analgesics ^(a)	19.0	19.7	18.9
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills ^(a)	23.8	23.4	22.8
Steroids ^(a)	18.7	21.6	22.5
Barbiturates ^(a)	18.2	19.7	18.7
Inhalants	16.1	17.5	17.6
Heroin	20.6	21.5	20.7
Methadone ^(b)	n.a.	21.6	21.8
Amphetamines ^(a)	20.2	19.9	20.4
Cocaine	21.1	22.3	22.6
Hallucinogens	19.1	18.8	19.1
Ecstasy/designer drugs	22.7	22.7	21.9
Injected drugs	n.a.	20.7	20.2
<i>Any illicit</i>	18.9	18.8	18.6

(a) For non-medical purposes.

(b) Non-maintenance.

- For tobacco and alcohol, the mean ages of initiation remained relatively stable between 1993 and 2001.
- The mean age of initiation for first use of marijuana/cannabis declined slightly from 19.1 years old in 1993 to 18.5 years old in 2001.
- The variations in the age of initiation of first use of all other illicit drugs may well be explained by sampling error owing to the small proportions of the population reporting use of these drugs.

Availability of drugs

Survey respondents were asked if they had been offered or had the opportunity to use selected drugs (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: Proportion of the population aged 14 years and over who were offered or had the opportunity to use selected drugs, by sex, Australia, 1998, 2001

Drug	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Tobacco	61.4	62.7	50.2	51.9	55.8	57.2
Alcohol	86.8	93.2	77.9	87.7	82.3	90.4
Marijuana/cannabis	27.8	28.0	19.0	20.4	23.4	24.2
Pain-killers/analgesics ^(a)	46.5	44.4	48.5	44.8	47.5	44.6
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills ^(a)	7.4	7.6	7.8	8.0	7.6	7.8
Steroids ^(a)	2.2	1.2	0.8	0.4	1.5	0.8
Barbiturates ^(a)	1.4	1.1	1.0	0.7	1.2	0.9
Inhalants	4.4	4.3	2.6	2.2	3.5	3.2
Heroin	3.4	2.0	1.4	1.0	2.4	1.5
Amphetamines ^(a)	7.2	9.3	4.8	5.8	6.0	7.6
Cocaine	3.2	4.3	2.1	2.6	2.7	3.4
Natural hallucinogens	3.5	3.0	2.0	1.5	2.7	2.2
LSD	7.4	4.5	3.8	2.4	5.6	3.4
Ecstasy/designer drugs	6.3	9.7	3.2	6.0	4.8	7.8
Kava	2.4	2.4	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.9

(a) For non-medical purposes.

- Six in 10 Australians (57.2%) aged 14 years and over had tobacco available for use, whereas nine in 10 (90.4%) had alcohol available for use. Availability of the licit drugs increased between 1998 and 2001.
- Almost one-quarter (24.2%) of the population were offered or had the opportunity to use marijuana/cannabis. The proportion with access to marijuana/cannabis was similar to that in 1998 (23.4%).
- The availability of amphetamines, cocaine, ecstasy and kava increased over the period, whereas for all other illicit drugs the proportions of the population who had been offered or had the opportunity to use these drugs declined.

Drugs thought to be associated with a drug 'problem'

Respondents were asked to name the drug they thought of when people talked about a drug 'problem'. Although the public perceived the same three drugs to be primarily associated with a drug problem in 1998 and 2001, there were differences in degree (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Proportion of the population aged 14 years and over who associate specific drugs with a drug 'problem', by sex, Australia, 1998, 2001

Drug first nominated	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Tobacco	4.3	2.8	4.0	2.6	4.2	2.7
Alcohol	14.9	7.9	13.3	7.7	14.1	7.8
Marijuana/cannabis	20.7	23.8	21.3	23.5	21.0	23.7
Pain-killers/analgesics	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.4
Steroids	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0
Barbiturates	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
Inhalants	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3
Heroin	37.5	50.6	37.2	49.6	37.4	50.1
Amphetamines	13.2	4.3	12.6	5.0	12.9	4.6
Cocaine	3.9	5.5	4.0	5.7	3.9	5.6
Naturally occurring hallucinogens	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1
LSD/synthetic hallucinogens	0.5	0.4	1.7	0.5	1.1	0.4
Ecstasy/designer drugs	1.1	2.2	1.3	2.5	1.2	2.3
Tea/coffee/caffeine	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
Drugs other than listed	1.1	0.3	1.1	0.2	1.1	0.3
None/can't think of any	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.7

Of the drugs 'first thought of' as associated with a drug 'problem':

- The proportion of persons nominating heroin increased from 37.4% of persons aged 14 years and over in 1998 to 50.1% of persons in 2001. The increase was similar for both males and females.
- Marijuana/cannabis was nominated by 23.7% of respondents in 2001, a slight increase over the proportion in 1998 (21.0%). The increase was similar for both males and females.
- The proportion of respondents nominating alcohol almost halved, decreasing from 14.1% in 1998 to 7.8% in 2001. The decrease was similar for both males and females.
- The proportion of persons nominating tobacco decreased between 1998 (4.2%) and 2001 (2.7%). The decrease was similar for both males and females.

Acceptability of drug use

In 2001 the licit drugs – tobacco and alcohol – were considered the most acceptable for regular use by adults by two out of five and three out of four Australians, respectively (Table 2.6). For most of the illicit drugs, less than 4% of Australians aged 14 years or older in 1998 thought that regular use by adults was acceptable.

Table 2.6: Proportion of the population aged 14 years and over who find regular drug use by adults acceptable, by drug, Australia, 1998, 2001

Drug	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Tobacco	41.8	42.5	38.6	36.8	40.2	39.7
Alcohol	67.7	81.4	55.1	68.0	61.3	74.7
Marijuana/cannabis	30.4	27.4	20.9	20.1	25.6	23.8
Pain-killers/analgesics ^(a)	10.3	6.7	8.8	5.8	9.5	6.3
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills ^(a)	7.2	4.5	3.8	3.2	5.5	3.8
Steroids ^(a)	3.9	2.8	0.9	0.9	2.4	1.8
Barbiturates ^(a)	2.7	1.6	0.7	0.7	1.6	1.1
Inhalants	1.7	1.1	0.3	0.5	1.0	0.8
Heroin	2.8	1.5	0.8	0.6	1.8	1.1
Methadone ^(b)	2.8	1.7	0.8	0.9	1.8	1.3
Amphetamines	4.7	4.1	1.7	2.3	3.1	3.2
Cocaine	3.8	2.9	1.1	1.5	2.4	2.2
Naturally occurring hallucinogens	6.4	5.3	2.2	2.4	4.3	3.8
LSD/synthetic hallucinogens	4.4	3.4	1.5	1.6	2.9	2.5
Ecstasy/designer drugs	5.1	5.3	1.5	2.6	3.3	4.0

(a) For non-medical purposes.

(b) Non-maintenance.

- Regular use of alcohol by adults was considered acceptable by three-quarters (74.7%) of Australians aged 14 years or older in 2001, compared with less than two-thirds of Australians in 1998 (61.3%). Females were less likely than males in both 1998 and 2001 to consider the regular use of alcohol acceptable.
- Regular use of tobacco by adults was considered acceptable by similar proportions of persons in 2001 (39.7%) as in 1998 (40.2%). Males (42.5%) considered such use more acceptable than females (36.8%).
- Almost one-quarter (23.8%) of Australians aged 14 years or older considered the regular use of marijuana/cannabis acceptable in 2001, representing a slight decrease over 1998 (25.6%). Males were more likely than females, in both 1998 and 2001, to consider the regular use of marijuana/cannabis by adults acceptable.

Support for the legalisation of illicit drugs

Support for the legalisation of illicit drugs was similar for 1998 and 2001 (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Proportion of the population aged 14 years and over who support the personal use of selected drugs being made legal, by sex, Australia, 1998, 2001

Drug	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Marijuana/cannabis	33.7	31.3	25.6	27.0	29.6	29.1
Heroin	8.4	7.9	6.3	7.2	7.3	7.6
Amphetamines/ speed	6.8	7.3	4.8	6.3	5.7	6.8
Cocaine	6.9	7.3	5.1	6.3	6.0	6.6

- Support for the legalisation of personal use of marijuana/cannabis in 2001 (29.1%) was similar to that in 1998 (29.6%). Males (31.3%) were more likely than females (27.0%) to support legalisation of marijuana/cannabis.
- Support for the legalisation of heroin, cocaine and amphetamines was similar in 1998 and 2001. The proportions supporting the legalisation for personal use remained at fewer than one in 10 Australians aged 14 years and over. Males were slightly more likely to support legislation than females.

Nominal distribution of a drugs budget

Respondents were asked how they would distribute \$100 to be spent on education, law enforcement and treatment for each of a selected list of drugs (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8: Preferred distribution of a hypothetical \$100 for reducing the use of selected drugs, Australia, 1998, 2001

Reduction measure	Alcohol		Tobacco		Marijuana/ cannabis		Amphetamines		Heroin/ cocaine	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(\$)									
Education	43.70	40.30	50.20	46.10	45.50	41.80	38.50	33.80	35.50	30.40
Treatment	30.70	29.90	30.40	30.20	25.10	25.20	24.40	23.40	24.90	23.70
Law enforcement	25.60	29.80	19.40	24.70	29.30	33.00	37.10	42.80	39.60	45.90

In 2001:

- For tobacco (\$46.10), marijuana/cannabis (\$41.80) and alcohol (\$40.30), the amount nominated to be spent on education exceeded amounts for both treatment and law enforcement.
- For heroin/cocaine (\$45.90) and amphetamines (\$42.80), law enforcement attracted the largest component of the \$100 budget.

Between 1998 and 2001:

- The proportion of \$100 preferred to be spent on education decreased for all of the selected drugs. The greatest decrease was for heroin/cocaine education, falling from \$35.50 in 1998 to \$30.40 in 2001.
- The proportion of \$100 preferred to be spent on treatment remained steady for alcohol, tobacco and marijuana/cannabis and dropped by only \$1 for amphetamines and heroin/cocaine.
- The proportion of \$100 preferred to be spent on law enforcement increased for all of the selected drugs. The greatest increase was for tobacco, rising from \$19.40 in 1998 to \$24.70 in 2001.

Support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of illicit drugs

Respondents were asked to consider to what extent they would support or oppose increased penalties for the sale or supply of a selected group of illicit drugs.

Between 1998 and 2001, there was a rise in the level of support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of selected illicit drugs (Table 2.9).

Table 2.9: Support^(a) for increased penalties for the sale or supply of selected illicit drugs, proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 1998, 2001

Drug	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Marijuana/cannabis	55.2	57.9	62.9	64.4	59.1	61.1
Heroin	84.6	87.8	85.4	88.8	85.1	88.3
Amphetamines	81.7	84.7	83.7	86.7	82.7	85.7
Cocaine	83.0	86.0	84.6	87.7	83.8	86.9

(a) Support or strongly support.

- In 2001, there was greater support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of illicit drugs compared with 1998.
- Support strengthened by between two and three percentage points for both males and females across all selected drugs.

3 Consumption patterns

Tobacco

The tobacco smoking status of Australians aged 14 years and over was broadly similar in both 1998 and 2001 (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Tobacco smoking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 1998, 2001

Smoking status	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Daily	24.2	21.1	19.6	18.0	21.8	19.5
Weekly	2.0	2.0	1.6	1.3	1.8	1.6
Less than weekly	1.6	2.6	1.1	1.5	1.3	2.0
Ex-smokers ^(a)	28.3	29.6	23.4	22.9	25.9	26.2
Never smoked ^(b)	43.9	44.7	54.3	56.4	49.2	50.6

(a) Ex-smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll your own) or the equivalent tobacco in their life, but reported no longer smoking.

(b) Never smoked more than 100 cigarettes or the equivalent amount of tobacco. The smoking status for 1998 has been recalculated using this threshold.

- One in five Australians aged 14 years or older smoked daily in 2001. The proportion that smoked daily decreased slightly between 1998 (21.8%) and 2001 (19.5%).
- Compared with 1998, rates of daily smoking declined significantly among males and females aged 20–29 years, with no significant changes for any other age groups.
- The proportions of weekly or less than weekly smokers were low. Combined, the proportion of weekly or less than weekly smokers was similar in 1998 (3.1%) and 2001 (3.6%).
- Males were more likely than females to smoke daily (21.1% compared with 18.0%), weekly (2.0% compared with 1.3%) and less than weekly (2.6% compared with 1.5%).
- Female smokers are more than six times more likely to smoke daily than weekly or less than weekly. Males are five times more likely to smoke daily than weekly or less than weekly.
- More than one-quarter of Australians aged 14 years or older had ceased smoking. The proportion of ex-smokers was similar in 1998 (25.9%) and 2001 (26.2%).
- The proportions of males and females who had never smoked increased over the period.

Ages of smokers

In 2001, age-specific smoking prevalence peaked for daily smokers, weekly and less than weekly smokers in the 20–29 years age group. The age group with the lowest proportion of smokers was 60 years or older (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Tobacco smoking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Smoking status	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
(per cent)							
Males							
Daily	14.1	28.5	27.3	23.6	20.3	10.2	21.1
Weekly	2.7	3.3	2.8	1.3	1.2	0.7	2.0
Less than weekly	3.4	5.1	2.8	2.3	1.7	0.6	2.6
Ex-smokers ^(a)	4.0	12.4	21.8	33.9	44.2	53.0	29.6
Never smoked ^(b)	75.9	50.7	45.4	38.9	32.5	35.5	44.7
Females							
Daily	16.2	23.7	24.3	20.8	16.1	7.8	18.0
Weekly	2.0	2.3	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.2	1.3
Less than weekly	2.4	3.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.3	1.5
Ex-smokers ^(a)	4.7	17.1	25.6	29.0	26.0	26.6	22.9
Never smoked ^(b)	74.7	53.7	46.7	47.8	56.4	65.2	56.4
Persons							
Daily	15.1	26.1	25.7	22.2	18.2	8.9	19.5
Weekly	2.3	2.8	2.2	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.6
Less than weekly	2.9	4.1	2.3	1.8	1.2	0.4	2.0
Ex-smokers ^(a)	4.4	14.7	23.7	31.5	35.3	38.7	26.2
Never smoked ^(b)	75.3	52.2	46.1	43.3	44.3	51.6	50.6

(a) Never smoked more than 100 cigarettes or the equivalent amount of tobacco. The smoking status for 1998 has been recalculated using this threshold.

(b) Ex-smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll your own) or the equivalent tobacco in their life, but reported no longer smoking.

- One in five teenagers smoked tobacco in 2001, with 15.1% smoking daily. A further 2.3% smoked weekly and 2.9% smoked less than weekly. Three-quarters (75.3%) of all teenagers had never smoked.
- Female teenagers (16.2%) were more likely than male teenagers (14.1%) to be daily smokers. For all other ages, males had higher smoking rates than females.
- Smoking rates peaked in the 20–29 age group: 26.1% smoked daily, 2.8% smoked weekly and 4.1% smoked less than weekly.

Population estimates of the number of smokers

It is estimated that in 2001 approximately 3.6 million Australians aged 14 years or older were smokers (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Tobacco: number of tobacco smokers, by status, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Smoking status	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
Males							
Daily	117,000	410,600	401,000	334,400	229,200	178,000	1,677,200
Weekly	22,200	47,100	40,900	19,100	13,900	11,900	155,700
Less than weekly	28,000	73,400	40,600	33,000	19,000	10,400	205,700
Ex-smokers ^(a)	33,500	178,300	320,400	480,300	498,400	923,800	2,355,200
Never smoked ^(b)	631,800	729,900	668,300	552,100	366,600	617,800	3,554,800
Females							
Daily	128,800	330,900	357,500	295,600	181,100	135,300	1,431,700
Weekly	15,800	32,400	24,900	15,800	7,700	3,900	100,500
Less than weekly	18,700	44,200	26,000	17,500	8,700	4,600	119,300
Ex-smokers ^(a)	37,200	238,800	376,000	411,700	293,500	463,000	1,816,600
Never smoked ^(b)	592,500	750,100	686,900	678,200	636,000	1,135,000	4,480,500
Persons							
Daily	245,900	741,400	756,700	630,100	416,600	285,000	3,072,900
Weekly	38,000	79,400	65,300	34,900	22,000	13,900	252,800
Less than weekly	46,700	117,600	66,200	50,700	28,200	13,400	320,500
Ex-smokers ^(a)	70,800	417,200	697,000	892,400	805,900	1,240,000	4,120,900
Never smoked ^(b)	1,224,300	1,480,100	1,354,200	1,226,900	1,012,000	1,654,100	7,959,900

(a) Never smoked more than 100 cigarettes or the equivalent amount of tobacco. The smoking status for 1998 has been recalculated using this threshold.

(b) Ex-smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll your own) or the equivalent tobacco in their life, but reported no longer smoking.

Note: 'All ages' and 'Persons' may not add up to sum of components due to rounding.

- Over three million Australians smoked daily, with a further 570,000 weekly or less than weekly smokers. There were more male daily smokers (1.7m) than female daily smokers (1.4m).
- Approximately 250,000 teenagers smoked daily. There were fewer male teenage daily smokers (117,000) than female teenage daily smokers (128,800).
- The number of ex-smokers (4.1m) and persons who had never smoked (8.0m) exceeded the number of smokers in 2001.

Number of cigarettes smoked

The mean number of cigarettes smoked per week was highest in the 50–59 age group, and lowest among teenagers (Table 3.4). The number of cigarettes smoked includes both manufactured and ‘roll your own’ cigarettes.

Table 3.4: Recent^(a) tobacco smokers: mean number of cigarettes smoked per week, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Males	Females	Persons
		(number)	
14–19	71.2	72.2	71.7
20–29	86.7	83.0	85.1
30–39	118.4	105.4	112.3
40–49	129.9	128.4	129.2
50–59	142.4	137.4	140.3
60+	115.4	120.0	117.5
All ages	111.8	106.5	109.4

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

- The mean number of cigarettes smoked per week increased with age until the 50–59 age group (140 cigarettes). This trend applied to both males and females.
- Male and female teenage smokers on average smoked 72 cigarettes per week.
- The mean number of cigarettes smoked per week by males (112) was higher than that for females (107). However, female teenagers and females aged 60 years and over smoked a higher average number of cigarettes per week than their male counterparts.

Alcohol

The alcohol drinking status of Australians aged 14 years and over was similar in 1998 and 2001 (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5: Alcohol drinking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 1998, 2001

Drinking status	Males		Females		Persons	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
Daily	12.1	11.1	5.1	5.6	8.5	8.3
Weekly	47.3	46.0	33.0	33.2	40.1	39.5
Less than weekly	25.2	28.8	38.5	40.3	31.9	34.6
Ex-drinker ^(a)	8.6	6.8	11.4	9.2	10.0	8.0
Never a full glass of alcohol	6.8	7.4	11.9	11.7	9.4	9.6

(a) Ex-drinker: a person who had consumed a full serve of alcohol, but not in the past 12 months.

- The proportion of Australians aged 14 years or older who consumed alcohol daily remained steady between 1998 (8.5%) and 2001 (8.3%). Males (11.1%) were more likely than females (5.6%) to drink daily.
- The proportion of the population who consumed alcohol on a weekly basis remained about the same in 1998 (40.1%) and 2001 (39.5%). Males (46.0%) were more likely than females (33.2%) to drink weekly.
- In 2001 (34.6%), the proportion consuming alcohol less than weekly increased slightly over 1998 (31.9%). Females (40.3%) were more likely than males (28.8%) to consume alcohol less than weekly.
- The proportions of ex-drinkers decreased slightly between 1998 (10.0%) and 2001 (8.0%).
- The proportion of the population who had never consumed a full glass of alcohol remained stable over the period.

Ages of alcohol drinkers

The proportion of daily drinkers increased with age; the peak for weekly drinkers was in the 20–29 age group, and the peak for less than weekly drinkers was among teenagers (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6: Proportion of the population who are recent^(a) alcohol drinkers aged 14 years and over, by drinking status, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Drinking status	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
(per cent)							
Males							
Daily	0.3	4.2	6.6	11.5	17.6	22.7	11.1
Weekly	31.2	54.8	53.0	48.2	47.0	36.3	46.0
Less than weekly	41.2	32.5	30.5	28.8	22.9	20.8	28.8
Ex-drinker ^(b)	5.6	3.2	4.6	7.2	7.7	11.9	6.8
Never a full glass of alcohol	21.7	5.2	5.3	4.3	4.8	8.2	7.4
Females							
Daily	0.5	1.8	2.9	6.3	9.1	10.6	5.6
Weekly	25.4	39.4	35.2	39.0	33.6	25.2	33.2
Less than weekly	48.7	47.5	45.9	38.2	35.3	30.7	40.3
Ex-drinker ^(b)	3.9	5.8	9.5	8.0	11.5	13.5	9.2
Never a full glass of alcohol	21.5	5.6	6.5	8.4	10.5	20.0	11.7
Persons							
Daily	0.4	3.0	4.7	8.9	13.4	16.1	8.3
Weekly	28.3	47.2	43.9	43.7	40.4	30.3	39.5
Less than weekly	44.9	39.9	38.4	33.4	29.0	26.2	34.6
Ex-drinker ^(b)	4.8	4.5	7.1	7.6	9.6	12.8	8.0
Never a full glass of alcohol	21.6	5.4	5.9	6.3	7.6	14.6	9.6

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

(b) Ex-drinker: a person who had consumed a full serve of alcohol, but not in the past 12 months.

- Almost half (44.9%) of teenagers consumed alcohol less than weekly. A further three in 10 (28.3%) consumed alcohol weekly and fewer than one in 100 (0.4%) drank alcohol daily. Almost one in three (31.2%) male teenagers consumed alcohol weekly, compared with one in four (25.4%) females. Almost half of female teenagers (48.7%) consumed alcohol on a less than weekly basis, compared with 41.2% of males.
- Across all age groups, most drinkers in 2001 were weekly drinkers. For males, the proportion of weekly drinkers outweighed daily and less than weekly drinkers at all ages. Conversely, females were more likely to consume alcohol on a less than weekly basis.

Population estimates of the number of alcohol drinkers

It is estimated that in 2001 almost 13 million Australians aged 14 years or over consumed alcohol in the last 12 months (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7: Alcohol consumption: numbers of recent^(a) alcohol drinkers, by drinking status, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Drinking status	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
	(per cent)						
	Males						
Daily	2,600	61,000	97,300	162,900	203,600	332,300	860,600
Weekly	259,900	789,500	778,000	683,000	544,200	531,900	3,576,500
Less than weekly	343,000	467,800	448,200	408,000	265,200	304,400	2,238,700
Ex-drinker ^(b)	46,600	46,700	67,100	101,800	89,300	175,000	527,900
Never a full glass of alcohol	180,600	74,400	77,600	60,400	55,300	120,800	574,700
	Females						
Daily	3,900	24,700	42,800	89,200	102,200	184,000	445,000
Weekly	201,100	549,700	517,800	554,000	379,000	439,600	2,636,400
Less than weekly	386,500	663,100	675,100	542,700	397,900	535,000	3,204,600
Ex-drinker ^(b)	31,000	80,400	140,500	113,800	129,600	235,100	730,100
Never a full glass of alcohol	170,500	78,600	95,000	119,200	118,400	348,200	932,500
	Persons						
Daily	6,500	85,700	138,900	253,500	306,000	516,300	1,305,300
Weekly	460,700	1,338,600	1,289,800	1,239,500	923,500	971,500	6,212,000
Less than weekly	729,800	1,131,500	1,128,500	948,100	662,900	839,400	5,444,100
Ex-drinker ^(b)	77,500	127,100	209,200	215,400	218,800	410,100	1,258,100
Never a full glass of alcohol	351,100	153,000	173,000	178,500	173,600	469,100	1,507,500

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

(b) Ex-drinker: a person who had consumed a full serve of alcohol, but not in the past 12 months.

- In 2001, 1.3 million Australians consumed alcohol daily, 6.2 million on a weekly basis and a further 5.4 million on a less than weekly basis.
- It is estimated that 1.2 million teenagers consumed alcohol in 2001. Approximately 6,500 teenagers were daily drinkers, 460,700 were weekly drinkers and a further 730,000 drank less than weekly.
- Slightly more male (606,000) than female (592,000) teenagers consumed alcohol in 2001; however, there were more female teenagers (3,900) than male teenagers (2,600) who consumed alcohol on a daily basis.

Consumption patterns

In the 12 months prior to the survey, 72.7% of Australians aged 14 years and over consumed alcohol in quantities that were considered a low risk to health in the long term by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC 2001).

A further 17.5% of the population aged 14 years and over did not consume alcohol in the previous 12 months. The remaining 9.9% of the population consumed alcohol in a way considered risky or a high risk to health in the long term (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8: Proportion of the population aged 14 years and over at risk of harm in the long term, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Abstainers ^(a)	Level of risk ^(b)		
		Low risk	Risky	High risk
(per cent)				
Males				
14–19	27.2	64.0	6.1	2.7
20–29	8.4	77.1	9.5	5.0
30–39	9.8	81.4	5.8	3.1
40–49	11.4	79.0	6.4	3.2
50–59	12.5	75.8	7.3	4.3
60+	20.1	71.9	5.4	2.6
All ages	14.1	75.6	6.7	3.5
Females				
14–19	25.3	60.1	9.9	4.7
20–29	11.3	73.7	10.9	4.0
30–39	16.0	75.4	6.8	1.9
40–49	16.4	73.9	7.8	1.9
50–59	21.9	70.7	5.9	1.5
60+	33.0	62.6	3.7	0.7
All ages	20.8	69.8	7.2	2.2
Persons				
14–19	26.2	62.1	8.0	3.7
20–29	9.9	75.4	10.2	4.5
30–39	13.0	78.3	6.3	2.5
40–49	13.9	76.5	7.1	2.6
50–59	17.1	73.3	6.6	2.9
60+	27.1	66.8	4.4	1.6
Total	17.5	72.7	7.0	2.9

(a) Not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months.

(b) For males, the consumption of up to 28 standard drinks per week is considered 'Low risk', 29 to 42 per week 'Risky', and 43 or more per week 'High risk'. For females, the consumption of up to 14 standard drinks per week is considered 'Low risk', 15 to 28 per week 'Risky', and 29 or more per week 'High risk'.

- People in the 20–29 years age group are most likely to consume alcohol in a way that puts them at risk for long-term (chronic) alcohol-related harm. This age group is also the least likely to abstain from consuming alcohol.
- Female teenagers (14.6%) are more likely than male teenagers (8.8%) to consume at risky or high risk levels for long-term harm.

Table 3.9: Proportion of the population aged 14 years and over at risk of harm in the short term, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Abstainers ^(a)	Low risk	Risky and high risk ^(b)		
			At least yearly (per cent)	At least monthly	At least weekly
Males					
14–19	27.2	30.0	13.3	19.8	9.6
20–29	8.4	27.4	21.7	27.8	14.6
30–39	9.8	39.7	22.2	20.4	7.8
40–49	11.4	50.7	17.2	12.9	7.7
50–59	12.5	59.1	11.7	8.5	8.2
60+	20.1	66.5	5.8	3.6	4.0
Total	14.1	46.5	15.5	15.3	8.5
Females					
14–19	25.3	28.3	13.4	21.2	11.8
20–29	11.3	32.1	20.4	26.8	9.3
30–39	16.0	47.5	18.9	12.8	4.8
40–49	16.4	55.1	14.7	9.3	4.6
50–59	21.9	62.0	8.6	4.3	3.3
60+	33.0	62.3	2.0	1.3	1.3
Total	20.8	49.6	12.7	11.6	5.3
Persons					
14–19	26.2	29.2	13.4	20.5	10.7
20–29	9.9	29.8	21.1	27.3	12.0
30–39	13.0	43.7	20.5	16.5	6.3
40–49	13.9	52.8	16.0	11.1	6.2
50–59	17.1	60.5	10.2	6.4	5.8
60+	27.1	64.2	3.7	2.4	2.6
Total	17.5	48.1	14.1	13.4	6.9

(a) Not consumed alcohol in the last 12 months.

(b) For males, the consumption of 7 or more standard drinks on any one drinking occasion. For females, the consumption of 5 or more standard drinks on any one drinking occasion.

- At all ages, greater proportions of the population drink at levels that are risky or high risk for short-term harm compared with risk for long-term harm.
- Overall, about one-third (34.4%) of persons aged 14 years and over put themselves at risk of alcohol-related harm in the short term on at least one drinking occasion during the last 12 months.
- Over one in 10 females aged 14–19 years (11.8%) and one in six males aged 20–29 years (14.6%) put themselves at risk of alcohol-related harm in the short term on at least a weekly basis during the last 12 months.

Illicit drugs

Over one-third of the population aged 14 years and over had ever used an illicit drug (37.7%, Table 3.10). Illicit drugs can include illegal drugs (such as marijuana/cannabis), prescription drugs when used for illicit purposes (such as tranquilisers/sleeping pills) and other substances used inappropriately (such as naturally occurring hallucinogens and inhalants).

Table 3.10: Use of any illicit drug: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and numbers, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Ever use ^(a)			Recent use ^(b)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
14–19	37.4	37.9	37.7	28.8	26.6	27.7
20–29	65.2	59.9	62.6	40.4	30.5	35.5
30–39	58.1	48.9	53.4	25.2	15.6	20.3
40–49	46.5	36.4	41.5	14.4	9.5	12.0
50–59	27.1	16.8	22.0	8.2	5.2	6.7
60+	9.2	7.7	8.4	4.0	3.8	3.9
All ages	41.3	34.2	37.7	19.8	14.2	16.9
	(number)					
14–19	311,600	300,700	612,400	240,200	210,800	450,900
20–29	938,200	837,200	1,775,400	581,300	425,300	1,007,500
30–39	853,700	718,700	1,569,400	369,500	229,200	595,300
40–49	657,800	516,800	1,177,100	204,100	134,600	339,800
50–59	313,300	189,600	503,700	94,800	58,800	153,800
60+	134,400	134,000	268,600	58,200	66,700	124,900
All ages	3,211,700	2,717,600	5,930,400	1,536,800	1,125,800	2,663,600

(a) Used at least once in lifetime.

(b) Used in the last 12 months.

Ever use of illicit drugs

- More than three in five (62.6%) people aged 20–29 years had used an illicit drug in their lifetime. Compared with other age groups, this age group had the greatest proportion of people who had ever used an illicit drug.
- More than one-third (37.7%) of teenagers had ever used an illicit drug.
- Female teenagers were slightly more likely than male teenagers to have ever used an illicit drug. However, for all other age groups, males were more likely than females to have ever used an illicit drug.

Recent use of illicit drugs

- Across all age groups, males were more likely than females to have recently used an illicit drug. There were 1.5 million male recent illicit drug users compared with 1.1 million female users.
- The age group with the highest proportion of recent illicit drug users was 20–29 years (35.5%, 1 million users).
- More than one-quarter (27.7%) of teenagers had used illicit drugs in the past 12 months. That is, almost half a million teenagers (450,900) were recent illicit drug users, with approximately 29,000 more males than females.

When comparing ever and recent usage, approximately 50% of males and 60% of females who had used illicit drugs at some time in their life no longer consumed illicit drugs.

Recent use of any illicit drug 1995–2001

The proportion of the population who had used any illicit drug in the last 12 months fluctuated over the period 1995–2001 (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11: Recent use^(a) of any illicit drug: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over by age and sex, Australia, 1995–2001

Age group	Males			Females		
	1995	1998	2001	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
14–19	37.9	38.3	28.8 #	25.0	37.1	26.6 #
20–29	46.1	47.1	40.4 #	27.4	33.5	30.5
30–39	24.7	27.5	25.2	13.6	20.4	15.6 #
40–49	12.0	22.1	14.4 #	7.9	10.1	9.5
50–59	3.5	7.2	8.2	3.9	13.4	5.2 #
60+	1.8	5.2	4.0	3.7	6.3	3.8
All ages	21.1	25.0	19.8 #	12.9	19.1	14.2 #

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

2001 result significantly different from 1998 result (2-tailed $\alpha = 0.05$).

- Between 1998 and 2001, the decreases in the proportions of total males and females who had used illicit drugs in the last 12 months were significant. The decreases for some other age groups were also significant.

Marijuana/cannabis use

One in every three Australians aged 14 years or older had used marijuana/cannabis at some time in their lives (Table 3.11).

Table 3.12: Use of marijuana/cannabis: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and numbers, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Ever use ^(a)			Recent use ^(b)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
14–19	35.2	33.4	34.3	26.6	22.6	24.6
20–29	61.6	56.2	58.9	35.1	23.2	29.3
30–39	54.8	45.0	49.8	20.8	11.7	16.1
40–49	42.0	32.4	37.3	10.7	6.6	8.7
50–59	21.6	12.1	16.9	4.5	2.0	3.3
60+	3.5	1.6	2.5	0.7	0.3	0.5
All ages	36.9	29.4	33.1	15.8	10.0	12.9
	(number)					
14–19	293,100	264,900	557,600	221,100	179,500	400,300
20–29	886,600	784,800	1,670,300	505,600	324,300	829,600
30–39	804,600	662,000	1,463,900	305,300	172,800	474,700
40–49	594,800	459,700	1,057,400	151,000	93,500	245,500
50–59	250,000	136,400	386,100	52,700	22,400	75,100
60+	51,300	27,900	80,200	10,100	4,800	14,900
All ages	2,870,900	2,338,800	5,205,600	1,232,800	1,025,700	2,029,500

(a) Used at least once in lifetime.

(b) Used in the last 12 months.

Ever use of marijuana/cannabis

- More than one-third (34.3%) of teenagers had used marijuana/cannabis in their lifetime.
- Australians aged 20–29 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used marijuana/cannabis at some time in their lives. Almost three in five (58.9%) people aged 20–29 years had used marijuana/cannabis in their lifetime.
- Across all age groups, males were more likely than females to have ever used marijuana/cannabis.

Recent use of marijuana/cannabis

- There were over two million Australians aged 14 years or older who had recently used marijuana/cannabis.
- Almost one-quarter of teenagers had used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months. More male teenagers (221,100) than female teenagers (179,500) were recent marijuana/cannabis users.
- People aged 20–29 years were most likely to be recent marijuana/cannabis users.
- Across all age groups, males were more likely than females to have recently used marijuana/cannabis.

When comparing lifetime and recent rates of usage, approximately 60% of males and 70% of females who had used marijuana/cannabis at some time in their life were no longer using in 2001.

Recent use of marijuana/cannabis 1995–2001

The proportion of the population who had used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months fluctuated over the period 1995–2001 (Table 3.13).

Table 3.13: Recent^(a) use of marijuana/cannabis: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 1995–2001

Age group	Males			Females		
	1995	1998	2001	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
14–19	35.9	35.0	26.6 #	20.1	34.2	22.6 #
20–29	43.7	43.7	35.1 #	23.4	29.3	23.2 #
30–39	19.0	24.1	20.8	8.2	16.3	11.7 #
40–49	8.0	16.6	10.7 #	2.2	6.3	6.6
50–59	1.9	5.6	4.5	1.2	7.6	2.0 #
60+	–	1.1	0.7	0.5	1.2	0.3 #
All ages	18.0	21.3	15.8 #	8.6	14.7	10.0 #

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

2001 result significantly different from 1998 result (2-tailed $\alpha = 0.05$).

- Between 1998 and 2001, decreases in proportions of the population who had used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months were statistically significant for most age groups.

Heroin

The proportions of Australians aged 14 years or older who had recently used or used in their lifetime were low (Table 3.14).

Table 3.14: Use of heroin: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and numbers, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Ever use ^(a)			Recent use ^(b)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
14–19	0.7	1.1	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4
20–29	5.2	2.0	3.6	0.6	0.5	0.5
30–39	2.6	1.7	2.1	0.2	0.3	0.3
40+	1.4	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.1
All ages	2.2	1.0	1.6	0.3	0.2	0.2
	(number)					
14–19	6,200	8,500	14,700	3,600	3,400	6,900
20–29	75,200	28,200	103,400	7,900	6,600	14,500
30–39	37,600	24,900	62,200	3,600	4,100	7,700
40+	55,700	20,400	76,400	6,200	2,600	8,800
All ages	170,800	81,800	252,600	21,000	16,700	37,700

(a) Used at least once in lifetime.

(b) Used in the last 12 months.

Ever use of heroin

- The 20–29 age group had the highest proportion and number of people who have ever used heroin. Within this age group, males were more than twice as likely as females to have ever used heroin.
- With the exception of teenagers, males were more likely than females to have ever used heroin.
- Heroin had been used by 1.6% of the population aged 14 years and over.

Recent use of heroin

- The 20–29 age group had the highest proportion and number of recent heroin users (0.5%, 14,700).
- There were similar proportions of males and females who had recently used heroin; however, in terms of numbers, there were slightly more male (21,000) than female (16,700) recent heroin users.

When comparing ever and recent use of heroin, 80% of persons who had used heroin at some time in their life were no longer using in 2001.

Recent use of heroin 1995–2001

The proportion of the population who had used heroin in the last 12 months fluctuated over the period 1995–2001 (Table 3.15).

Table 3.15: Recent^(a) use of heroin: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 1995–2001

Age group	Males			Females		
	1995	1998	2001	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
14–19	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.4	0.4
20–29	2.2	2.9	0.6 #	0.5	1.3	0.5
30–39	0.4	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
40+	–	0.4	0.2	–	0.1	0.1
All ages	0.5	1.0	0.3 #	0.2	0.5	0.2 #

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

2001 result significantly different from 1998 result (2-tailed $\alpha = 0.05$).

- Between 1998 and 2001, recent use of heroin by total males and females decreased significantly. Changes for all age groups, with the exception of males aged 20–29 years, were not statistically significant.

Amphetamines

Approximately 3% of the population aged 14 years or older have ever used or recently used amphetamines (Table 3.16).

Table 3.16: Use of amphetamines: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and numbers, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Ever use ^(a)			Recent use ^(b)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
14–19	8.2	8.7	8.4	5.7	6.8	6.2
20–29	25.0	19.0	22.0	14.1	8.2	11.2
30–39	16.6	10.5	13.5	4.0	2.2	3.1
40+	4.3	2.2	3.2	0.6	0.3	0.4
All ages	10.6	7.3	8.9	4.2	2.7	3.4
	(number)					
14–19	67,900	69,100	137,000	47,600	53,700	101,400
20–29	359,500	265,300	624,600	202,900	115,200	317,800
30–39	244,100	154,700	396,600	58,500	32,800	90,600
40+	173,700	93,800	268,300	24,300	11,600	36,000
All ages	828,200	577,800	1,405,800	323,100	211,200	534,200

(a) Used at least once in lifetime.

(b) Used in the last 12 months.

Ever use of amphetamines

- The age group with the highest proportion of people who have ever used amphetamines is the 20–29 year age group (22.0%).
- Similar proportions of male and female teenagers had ever used amphetamines. For the other age groups, males were more likely than females to have ever used amphetamines.

Recent use of amphetamines

- Overall, males (4.2%) were more likely than females (2.7%) to have used amphetamines in the last 12 months; however, female (6.8%) teenagers were more likely to be recent users than male (5.7%) teenagers.
- One in nine people (11.2%) aged 20–29 years had used amphetamines in the last 12 months, the highest proportion of all age groups.

Recent use of amphetamines 1995–2001

The proportion of the population who had used amphetamines in the last 12 months fluctuated over the period 1995–2001 (Table 3.17).

Table 3.17: Recent^(a) use of amphetamines: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 1995–2001

Age group	Males			Females		
	1995	1998	2001	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
14–19	2.9	5.5	5.7	1.9	6.3	6.8
20–29	10.5	16.4	14.1	6.3	7.6	8.2
30–39	2.1	4.1	4.0	0.5	1.2	2.2
40+	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.3
All ages	2.8	5.0	4.2	1.5	2.5	2.7

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

- Between 1998 and 2001, there were no statistically significant differences in the proportions of the population who had used amphetamines in the last 12 months.

Ecstasy

Similar proportions of the population aged 14 years or older had ever used or recently used ecstasy (Table 3.18) as had used amphetamines.

Table 3.18: Use of ecstasy: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and numbers, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Ever use ^(a)			Recent use ^(b)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
14–19	7.2	6.8	7.0	5.7	4.3	5.0
20–29	22.5	16.9	19.7	12.5	8.3	10.4
30–39	8.9	5.9	7.4	3.1	1.7	2.4
40+	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.2
All ages	7.1	5.1	6.1	3.6	2.3	2.9
	(number)					
14–19	59,900	54,300	114,200	47,500	34,500	81,900
20–29	323,100	236,500	559,500	179,500	115,800	295,200
30–39	130,800	87,200	217,000	45,100	25,100	69,800
40+	52,300	30,300	82,800	13,100	7,500	20,600
All ages	550,400	401,800	952,100	277,000	179,400	456,400

(a) Used at least once in lifetime.

(b) Used in the last 12 months.

Ever use of ecstasy

- The 20–29 age group had the highest proportion and number of people ever using ecstasy compared with all other age groups.
- Similar proportions of teenagers (7.0%) and people aged 30–39 years (7.4%) had ever used ecstasy.
- For all age groups, males were more likely than females to have ever used ecstasy.

Recent use of ecstasy

- One in 10 (10.4%) people aged 20–29 years and one in 20 (5.0%) teenagers had used ecstasy in the last 12 months.
- At all ages, males were more likely than females to have used ecstasy in the last 12 months.

Recent use of ecstasy 1995–2001

[Note: the following table and text was corrected in July 2002.]

The proportion of the population who had used ecstasy in the last 12 months fluctuated over the period 1995–2001 (Table 3.19).

Table 3.19: Recent^(a) use of ecstasy: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 1995–2001

Age group	Males			Females		
	1995	1998	2001	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
14–19	0.9	3.3	5.7	0.1	3.0	4.3
20–29	5.1	11.9	12.5	2.9	4.9	8.3 #
30–39	0.6	1.9	3.1	0.4	0.8	1.7
40+	–	0.4	0.3	–	1.0	0.2 #
All ages	1.1	3.3	3.6	0.6	1.6	2.3 #

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

2001 result significantly different from 1998 result (2-tailed $\alpha = 0.05$).

- Between 1998 and 2001, the recent use of ecstasy among females increased significantly, both overall and for those aged 20–29 years. Among females aged 40 years and over there was a significant decline in the recent use of ecstasy.

Injecting drug use

It is estimated that a low proportion of the population aged 14 years or older had ever injected or recently injected drugs (Table 3.20).

Table 3.20: Use of injecting drugs^(a): proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and numbers, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

Age group	Ever use ^(b)			Recent use ^(c)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
14–19	1.0	1.7	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.6
20–29	5.8	2.9	4.4	2.8	1.3	2.1
30–39	3.5	2.3	2.9	0.6	0.5	0.5
40+	1.1	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.1
All ages	2.4	1.3	1.8	0.8	0.4	0.6
	(number)					
14–19	8,300	13,900	22,200	5,000	4,600	9,700
20–29	83,900	40,100	123,900	40,500	17,700	58,200
30–39	51,300	33,300	84,200	8,700	7,500	16,100
40+	44,100	19,800	64,200	6,600	2,900	9,500
All ages	183,300	107,200	290,600	58,600	32,400	91,000

(a) Any illicit drug injected.

(b) Used at least once in lifetime.

(c) Used in the last 12 months.

Ever use of injecting drugs

- People aged 20–29 years were the most likely compared with those in the other age groups to have ever injected drugs.
- Males (2.4%) were more likely than females (1.3%) to have ever injected drugs.

Recent use of injecting drugs

- Males (0.8%) were more likely than females (0.4%) to have injected drugs in the last 12 months.
- Almost 10,000 teenagers were injecting drug users.
- The age group with the highest proportion and number of injecting drug users was the 20–29 age group, with 2.1% or almost 60,000 injecting drug users.

When comparing ever injecting drug use with recent injecting drug use, approximately 70% of persons who had injected at some time in their life were no longer injecting in 2001.

Recent use of injecting drugs 1995–2001

The proportion of the population who had injected drugs in the last 12 months fluctuated over the period 1995–2001 (Table 3.21).

Table 3.21: Recent^(a) use of injecting drugs: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 1995–2001

Age group	Males			Females		
	1995	1998	2001	1995	1998	2001
	(per cent)					
14–19	1.1	0.3	0.6	0.9	1.2	0.6
20–29	2.8	3.0	2.8	0.7	1.1	1.3
30–39	0.6	0.9	0.6	–	0.3	0.5
40+	–	0.4	0.2	0.3	< 0.1	0.1
All ages	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

- Between 1998 and 2001, there were no statistically significant differences in the proportions of the population who had injected drugs in the last 12 months.

Illicit drugs injected

Overwhelmingly, the first drug injected was amphetamines, followed by heroin (Table 3.22).

Table 3.22: Injecting drug use: first and recent^(a) illicit drugs injected, proportion of ever/recent injecting drug users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001

Drug	First injected ^(b)			Recently injected ^(c)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
Heroin	30.0	31.3	30.5	18.8	30.2	22.9
Methadone	0.0	0.3	0.1	9.1	5.0	7.6
Other opiates	3.0	3.2	3.1	15.8	22.7	18.3
Amphetamines	59.8	61.2	60.3	76.4	78.3	77.1
Cocaine	2.4	1.9	2.3	11.3	18.0	13.6
Hallucinogens	0.7	0.2	0.5	3.4	0.8	2.5
Ecstasy	0.0	1.6	0.6	14.8	11.4	13.6
Steroids	4.1	0.2	2.7	5.6	4.9	5.4
Benzodiazepines	–	–	–	2.2	4.4	3.0
Other drugs	–	–	–	3.9	6.9	4.9

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

(b) Answered by respondents who have ever injected.

(c) Answered by respondents who have injected in the last 12 months.

First drug injected

- Amphetamines was the most common (60.3%) first drug injected by injecting drug users. Similar proportions of males (59.8%) and females (61.2%) injected amphetamines as their first injected drug.
- Heroin (30.5%) was the next most frequent first illicit drug injected by injecting drug users. Similar proportions of females (31.3%) and males (30.0%) who had injected drugs first injected heroin.

Drugs injected recently

- The most common drug among recent injecting drug users was amphetamines (77.1%). Similar proportions of male (76.4%) and female (78.3%) injecting drug users recently injected amphetamines.
- The second most common drug among injecting drug users was heroin, with 22.9% of injecting drug users reporting recently injecting this drug.

Source of supply

Illicit drugs were almost always sourced from friends or acquaintances, with the exception of heroin which was mostly sourced from dealers (Table 3.23).

Table 3.23: Source of supply of illicit drugs, by drug, Australia, 2001

Drug	Friend or acquaintance	Relative	Dealer	Doctor shopping / forged script		Buy at shop	Other
				(per cent)			
Marijuana/cannabis	70.6	6.0	13.9	..	..	..	9.5
Analgesics ^(a)	6.5	8.9	3.5	4.9	70.6	..	5.6
Tranquillisers ^(a)	34.3	16.2	4.8	15.4	..	..	29.3
Steroids ^(a)	15.5	3.8	13.0	2.7	..	..	65.0
Barbiturates ^(a)	50.4	3.8	18.4	13.6	..	..	13.8
Inhalants	29.7	1.7	0.3	–	50.8	..	17.5
Heroin	28.3	1.1	69.3	–	..	..	1.4
Methadone ^(b)	73.0	–	12.9	–	..	..	14.0
Amphetamines ^(a)	68.7	2.8	22.5	0.5	..	..	5.5
Cocaine	72.7	2.9	19.2	–	..	..	5.2
Hallucinogens	50.9	2.6	28.7	–	..	..	17.7
Ecstasy, designer drugs	72.2	2.6	22.8	–	..	..	2.4

(a) Non-medical use.

(b) Non-maintenance.

Note: Base for each substance equals respondents using in the last 12 months.

- Seven out of every 10 marijuana/cannabis (70.6%) users obtained this drug from friends and acquaintances. The proportion was similar for amphetamines (68.7%), cocaine (72.7%), methadone (73.0%) and ecstasy (72.2%) users.
- The majority of heroin users (69.3%) obtained the drug from dealers.
- Purchasing at shops was the most common source of supply for analgesic (70.6%) and inhalant (50.8%) users.
- One-third of steroid users obtained this drug from gyms/sporting clubs/fitness centres.