
National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2025: Tobacco, e-cigarettes and other nicotine insights

Web report | Last updated: **17 Jul 2026** | Topic: [Illicit use of drugs](#) | [Media release](#)

About

More than 17,500 people aged 14 and over across the country took part in the latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey, held from June to December 2025. In response to strong public interest in tobacco and vaping behaviours, initial results on tobacco, e-cigarettes and other nicotine products are being released first to support a better understanding of how nicotine use in Australia is changing over time. Two subsequent updates will provide further insights into tobacco, e-cigarettes and other nicotine product use, as well as information on alcohol consumption and the use of illicit drugs.

- 17 July 2026: The initial release, Tobacco, e-cigarettes and other nicotine insights, presents high level data on tobacco use, e-cigarette use and the use of other nicotine products in Australia.
- August 2026: The first update, Detailed Tobacco, e-cigarettes and other nicotine insights, presents more detailed findings on tobacco, e-cigarettes, illicit tobacco and emerging nicotine product use in Australia. It includes analysis of patterns of use, sources of supply, attitudes towards policy measures and related issues.
- End of 2026: The final update, Detailed Alcohol consumption and illicit drug insights, presents results on alcohol consumption, including risky drinking, and illicit drug use in Australia. The update also includes results for priority population groups and geographic areas.

Cat. no: PHE 371

Key findings

- [Daily tobacco smoking dropped to 5.6% in 2025, down from 8.3% in 2022–2023](#)
- [Daily e-cigarette use stabilised from 2022–2023 \(3.5%\) to 2025 \(3.6%\)](#)
- [1.8% of the population aged 14 and over have used oral nicotine pouches in the previous 12 months](#)
- [1 in 3 people \(34%\) who smoke purchased illicit tobacco in the last 3 months and/or currently smoke illicit tobacco](#)

Tobacco and nicotine insights

In this section

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- Nicotine pouches and snus
- Nicotine use among young people
- People are more likely to use multiple forms of nicotine
- More people are obtaining nicotine products from illicit sources

The use of tobacco in Australia is a leading risk factor for disease burden (AIHW 2024). Tobacco use causes harms such as cancers and chronic lung conditions, leading to high rates of mortality among people who do smoke (Department of Health and Aged Care, 2023). While the long-term health impacts of electronic cigarettes/e-cigarettes (also known as vapes) are not yet fully known, people who use them are exposed to toxic chemicals (National Health and Medical Research Council 2022). Evidence shows that vaping can cause short-term health harms, including lung inflammation, throat irritation, coughing and shortness of breath. Most e-cigarettes also contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can harm brain development in young people, have adverse effects during pregnancy and has been associated with changes in mood and mental health (Department of Health, Disability and Ageing 2025a; Greenhalgh & Scollo 2023).

It is important to monitor trends in tobacco and nicotine consumption to understand how shifting products, attitudes and use may impact the health of people in Australia now and in the future, and to allow governments to continue to respond.

Tobacco smoking and e-cigarette use

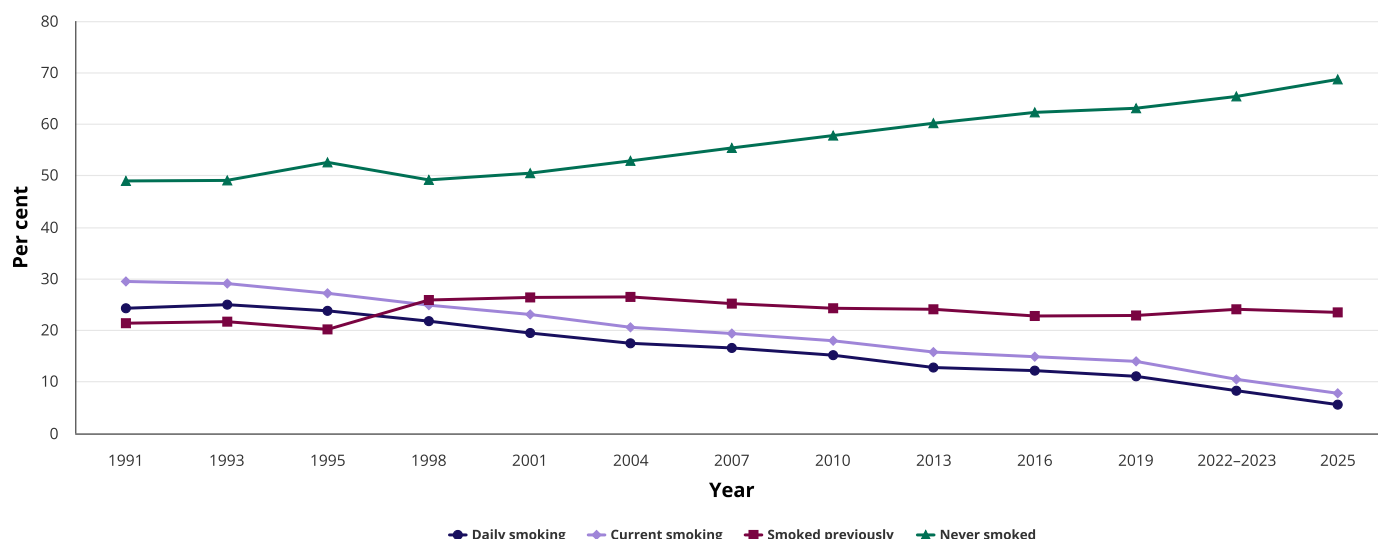
For much of the history of the National Drug Strategy Household Survey, *nicotine use* almost exclusively referred to smoking tobacco, which included cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and waterpipes. Over time, as Australian governments implemented policies, campaigns and strategies aimed at preventing people from smoking and encouraging them to quit, the proportion of people smoking in Australia has declined. The most recent changes to Commonwealth legislation, which came into effect in 2025, standardised tobacco product sizes and banned them from containing certain ingredients, including menthol (Department of Health, Disability and Ageing 2025b).

In 2025, 5.6% of people aged 14 and over smoked daily down from 19.5% in 2001 and 8.3% in 2022–2023. This was equivalent to around 1.3 million people smoking daily in Australia in 2025, compared with 3.0 million in 2001 and 1.8 million in 2022–2023 (Figure 1).

The decline was also evident among adults aged 18 and over, with daily smoking dropping from 20.1% in 2001 and 8.8% in 2022–2023 to 5.8% in 2025.

Figure 1: Smoking behaviour, people aged 14 and over, 1991 to 2025

Select measure:



Notes:

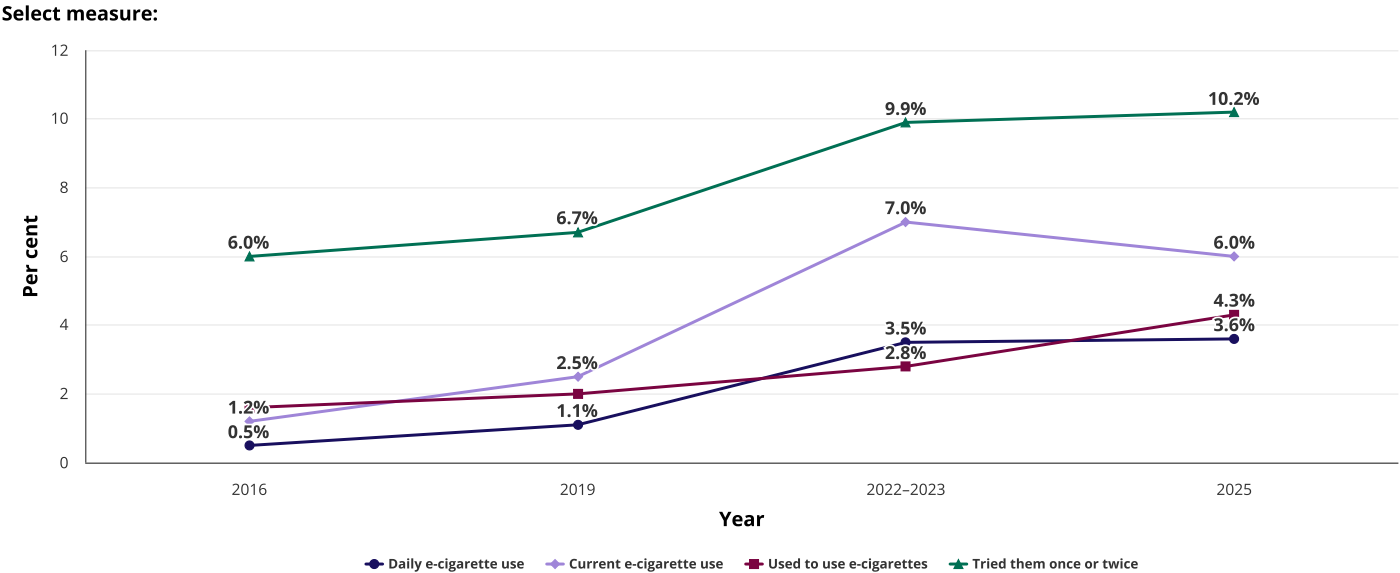
1. In 1991, daily smoking included people who reported smoking daily, or most days.
2. In 1993, smoking status was only asked to people aged 20 years or over.
3. Current smoking includes people who reported smoking daily, weekly or less than weekly.
4. Smoke previously includes people who smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life and reported no longer smoking.
5. Never smoked includes people who never smoked 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco.

Source: NDSHS 2025.

Over the last ten years, new forms of nicotine have become more common. The use of e-cigarettes increased from 2016, when only 1 in 200 people (0.5%) aged 14 and over used them daily, to 2022–2023 when 1 in 29 people (3.5%) did so. In response to this increase, in 2024, the Australian Government introduced significant reforms to the regulation of vapes. The *Therapeutic Goods and Other Legislation Amendment (Vaping Reforms) Act 2024* commenced on 1 July 2024 and prohibits the importation, domestic manufacture, supply, commercial possession and advertisement of disposal single use and non-therapeutic vapes. Under the vaping reforms, therapeutic vapes for smoking cessation and the management of nicotine dependence are only available for sale from participating pharmacies, where clinically appropriate (Therapeutic Goods Administration, 2024).

New data from 2025 show that daily e-cigarette use remained stable from 2022–2023, a shift from the previously increasing trend (3.6%). In addition, fewer people are using e-cigarettes weekly and monthly, meaning that the proportion of people currently using e-cigarettes in Australia has declined (6.0%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: E-cigarette use, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2025



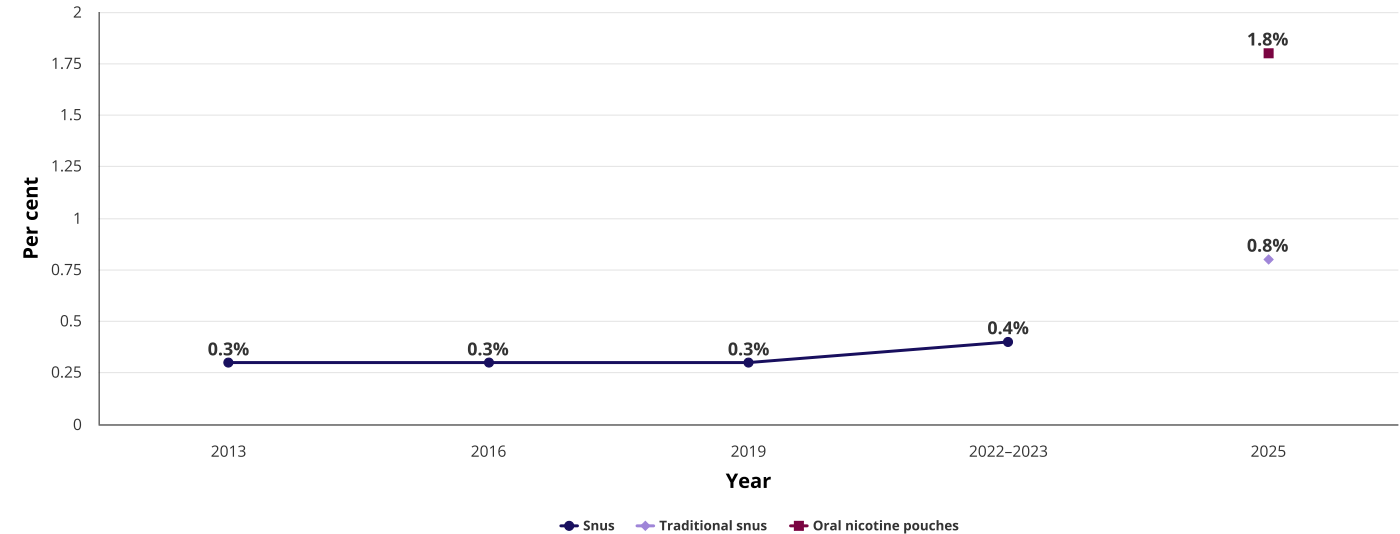
Source: NDSHS 2025.

Nicotine pouches and snus

Snus and more recently, oral nicotine pouches have emerged as increasingly popular and distinct forms of nicotine. Nicotine pouches are small, tobacco-free sachets placed between the lip and gum. Snus is a smokeless oral tobacco product that has been prohibited from supply in Australia since 1991.

New data in 2025 reveals that 1.8% of people aged 14 and over reported having used oral nicotine pouches in the previous year. While this is lower than the proportion of people who smoked tobacco or used e-cigarettes, it is much higher than the proportion of people who had used traditional tobacco-containing snus (0.8%) (Figure 3). In previous surveys, nicotine pouch use may have been reported under other response options such as oral nicotine products or snus.

Figure 3: Recent use of nicotine pouches and snus, people aged 14 and over, 2013 to 2025



Notes:

- 1. Recent use indicates used in the previous 12 months.
- 2. Nicotine pouch use and traditional snus use were reported separately for the first time in 2025.

Source: NDSHS 2025.

Overall, the proportion of people who use nicotine products in Australia is declining. The proportion of people who had used any form of nicotine in the past year remained relatively stable between 2016 (17%), 2019 (17.1%) and 2022–2023 (17.4%) despite increases in e-cigarette use over the same period, before falling to a historic low of 15.2% in 2025. The decline in use of nicotine products was driven by the decreases in tobacco smoking and e-cigarette use.

Nicotine use among young people

In 2022–2023, the daily smoking rate reached an all-time low among people aged 14–17 and those aged 18–24 (Figure 4). However, young people were the most likely to use e-cigarettes and vapes, meaning that the number of young people using nicotine increased in 2022–2023.

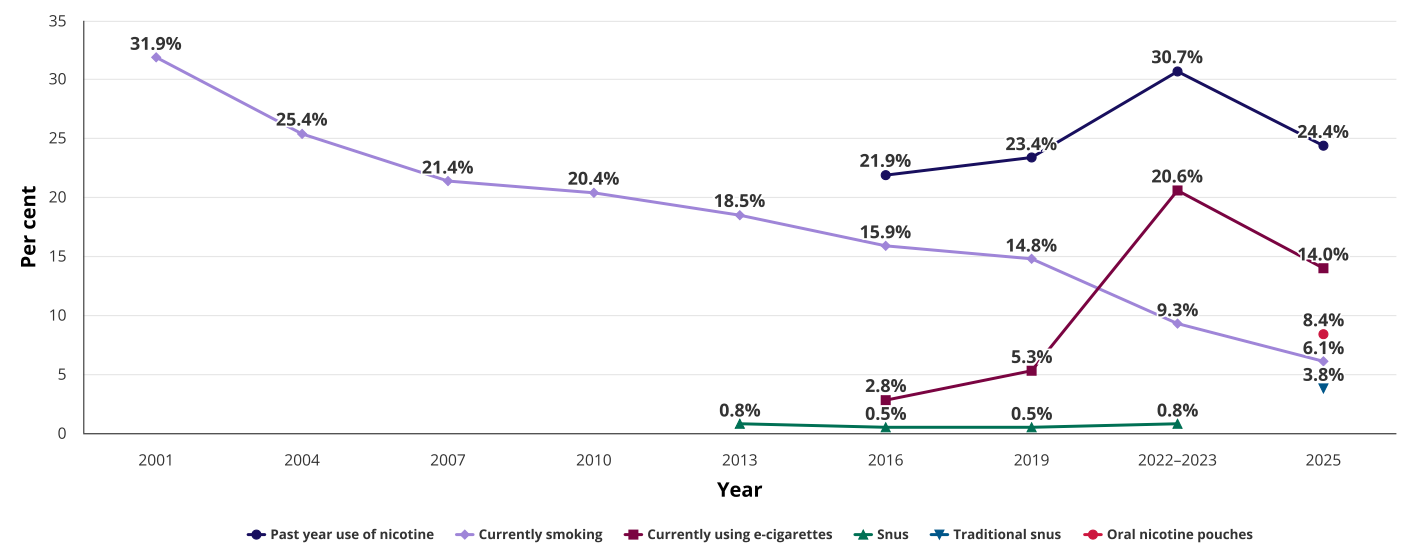
Results from 2025 show that nicotine use among young people is changing. While daily use of e-cigarettes remained high in 2022–2023 (9.3%) and 2025 (8.3%), the proportion of people aged 18–24 using e-cigarettes less often than daily declined from 11.3% to 5.8% over the same period.

At the same time, past-year use of tobacco-containing snus and oral nicotine pouches was highest among young people aged 18–24. In 2025, 8.4% of people aged 18–24 reported using nicotine pouches and 3.8% reported using traditional snus (Figure 4).

The combination of a substantial decline in current e-cigarette use, with a further decline in tobacco smoking, has contributed to an overall decrease in the proportion of young people using nicotine in 2025 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Smoking, e-cigarette use and use of nicotine products, by age group, 2001 to 2025

Select measure:

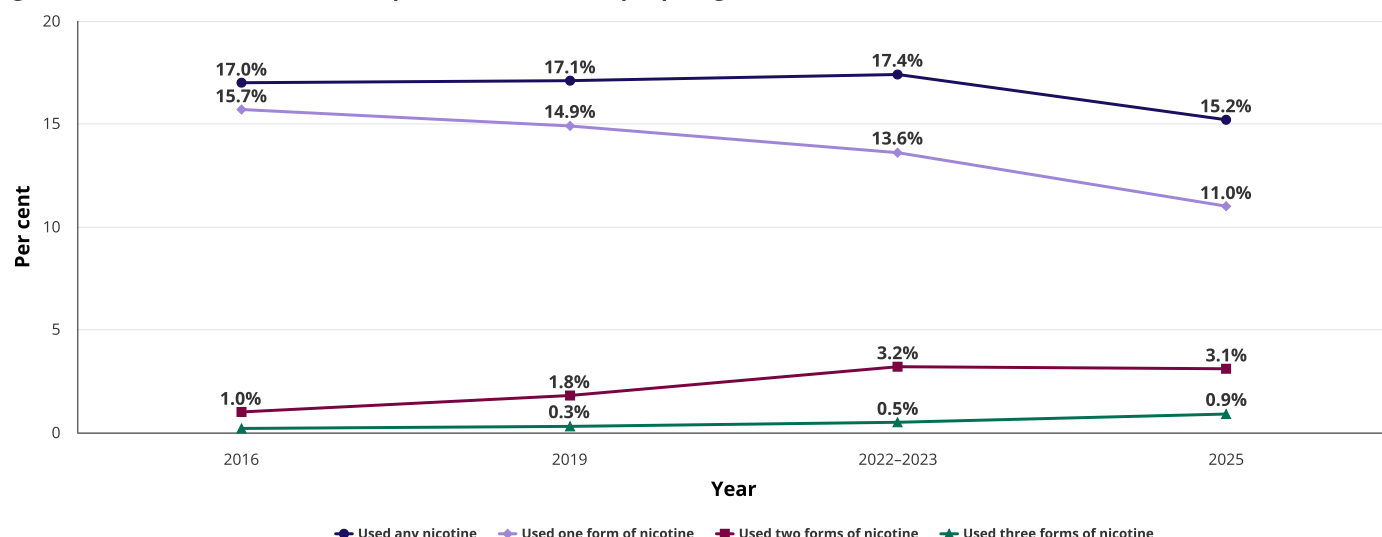


- Notes:
- 1. Currently smoking includes people who reported smoking daily, weekly or less than weekly.
 - 2. Currently using e-cigarettes includes people who reported using electronic cigarettes/vapes daily, weekly, monthly or less than monthly.
 - 3. Past year use of nicotine includes smoking tobacco daily, weekly or less than weekly, using e-cigarettes/vapes daily, weekly, monthly or less than monthly, and/or using any other nicotine products in the previous 12 months.
 - 4. Use of nicotine pouches and traditional snus use refer to use in the previous 12 months.
 - 5. Nicotine pouch use and traditional snus use were reported separately for the first time in 2025.
- Source: NDSHS 2025.

People are more likely to use multiple forms of nicotine

There is new evidence that people are increasingly using multiple forms of nicotine. While the proportion of people using any nicotine in the last year has declined, the proportion who had used three or more forms of nicotine (poly-use) in the last year almost doubled (Figure 5). This is an emerging area of concern and could potentially represent an increase in the average amount of nicotine being consumed by people who smoke, use e-cigarettes and also use other nicotine products.

Figure 5: Form of nicotine use in the previous 12 months, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2025



Notes: Includes smoking tobacco daily, weekly or less than weekly, using e-cigarettes/vapes daily, weekly, monthly or less than monthly, or using any other nicotine product in the previous 12 months.

Source: NDSHS 2025.

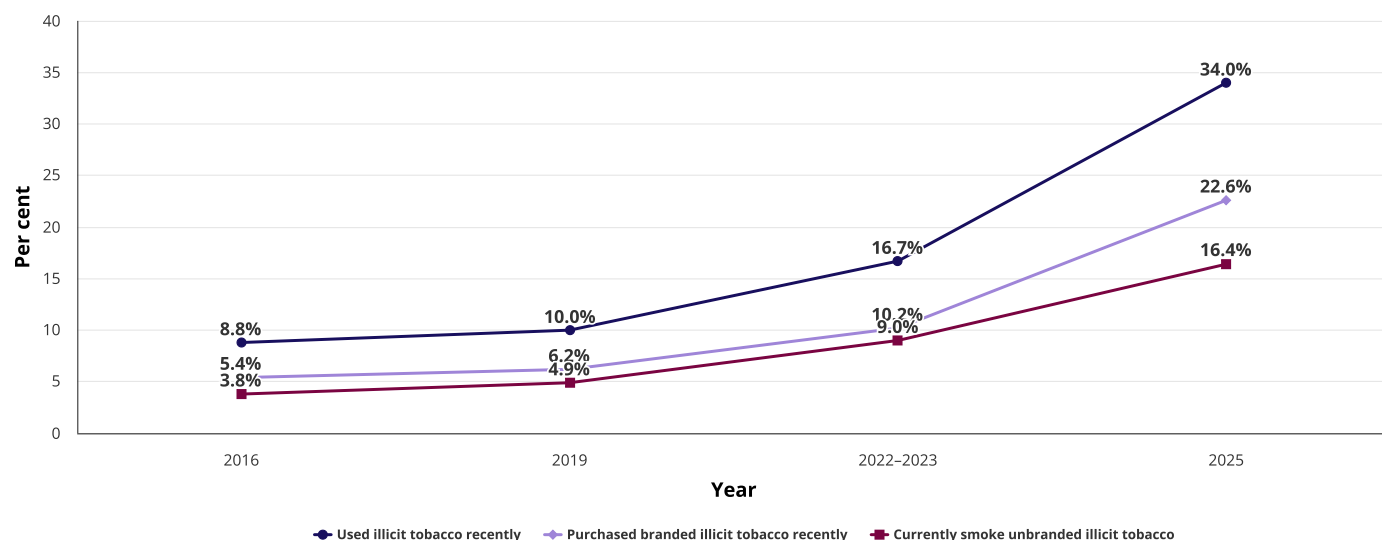
More people are obtaining nicotine products from illicit sources

Unlike regulated nicotine products, illicit tobacco and nicotine products may not comply with regulatory requirements including plain packaging or health warnings which are required in Australia. Illicit tobacco products may also have higher nicotine content which may increase the addictiveness (Illicit Tobacco and E-cigarette Commissioner, 2025). Recent use of illicit tobacco in this report refers to the purchase of branded illicit tobacco in the last three months, and/or smoking unbranded illicit tobacco every day, some days or only occasionally.

New data from 2025 show that one in three people (34%) aged 14 and over who currently smoke, have used illicit tobacco recently, compared with around one in 6 (16.7%) in 2022-2023 (Figure 6). This included almost one in four people (22.6%) who smoke having purchased “branded” illicit tobacco (tobacco products without plain packaging and graphic health warnings) in the previous 3 months, and one in 6 (16.4%) currently smoking “unbranded” illicit tobacco (tobacco or cigarettes sold loose, often in plastic bags). More than half of the people who purchased branded illicit tobacco reported buying it from a tobacconist (57%).

Figure 6: Use of illicit tobacco, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2025

Select measure:



Notes:

1. Illicit tobacco includes 'Purchased tobacco products in Australia which do not have the plain packaging/graphic health warnings in the last 3 months' and/or 'Smoke unbranded tobacco (chop chop) every day, some days or only occasionally'.
2. Currently smoke includes people who reported smoking daily, weekly or less than weekly.
3. Branded illicit tobacco includes 'Tobacco products in Australia which do not have the plain packaging/graphic health warnings, purchased in the last 3 months'.
4. Unbranded illicit tobacco includes 'Current use of unbranded tobacco (also called chop chop) usually sold loose in plastic bags either as tobacco or rolled into cigarettes'.

Source: NDSHS 2025.

Illicit markets are not limited to cigarettes and tobacco. Policy that came into effect in 2024 means that the only way to legally purchase e-cigarettes in Australia is through a participating pharmacy, where clinically appropriate (Department of Health, Disability and Ageing 2025b). Unregulated e-cigarettes may also have a different nicotine content to what the label claims, as well as including other harmful chemicals that can lead to severe health impacts for the people who use them.

In 2025, only *2.5% of people who used e-cigarettes had obtained them from a physical pharmacy, while a further 4.8% had obtained them from an online pharmacy. The remaining 93% of people using e-cigarettes had obtained them from an illicit source, most often a tobacconist (50%).

* Estimate has a Relative Standard Error between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

References

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Notes

Two updates to this initial report are expected to be released later in 2026, containing detailed information on tobacco, e-cigarettes, illicit tobacco and emerging nicotine product use (August 2026) and alcohol and illicit drug use (end of 2026).

Report editions

- National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2025: Tobacco, e-cigarettes and other nicotine insights |
Web report | 17 Jul 2026
This release
- National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022–2023 |
Web report | 27 May 2025
- National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019 |
Publication | 16 Jul 2020
- National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2016: detailed findings |
Publication | 28 Sep 2017
- National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2016—key findings |
Web report | 01 Jun 2017
- National Drug Strategy Household Survey detailed report: 2013 |
Publication | 25 Nov 2014
- 2010 National Drug Strategy Household Survey report |
Publication | 27 Jul 2011
- 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: detailed findings |
Publication | 18 Dec 2008
- 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: detailed findings |
Publication | 22 Nov 2005
- 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: detailed findings |
Publication | 19 Dec 2002
- 1998 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: detailed findings |
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