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# Drug Crime: Statistics for England and Wales



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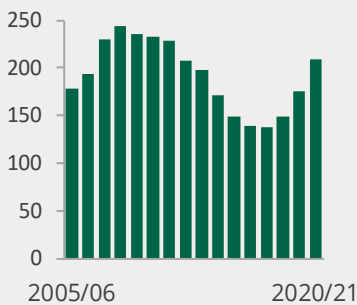
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## 1

## Summary

### Drug Crime has declined since 2008/09 but risen in recent years (000's)



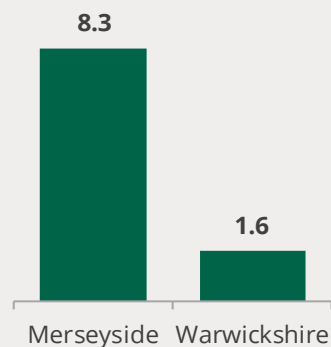
### Recorded crime

In 2020/21, there were around 210,000 drug offences recorded by the police in England and Wales. This is 19% higher than 2019/20. National totals exclude figures from Greater Manchester for the years ending March 2019 through to March 2021 and are not directly comparable with previous years.

### Drug crime by police force area

Merseyside recorded the highest rate of drug offences of 9.2 per 1,000 population in 2020/21, up from 8.3 in 2019/20. Staffordshire had the lowest rate of 1.4 offences per 1,000 individuals, 0.4 lower than the previous year.

### Highest/Lowest rate of drug offences per 1,000 population (2019/20)



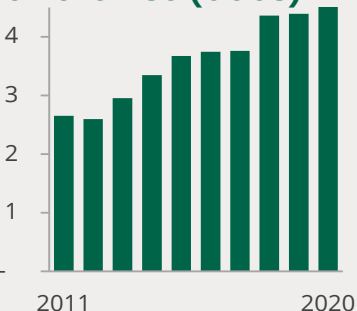
### Proven offences and offenders

In 2018/19, there were around 48,800 disposals given (cases dealt with) for drug offences. Between 2008/09 and 2018/19, the proportion of drug offenders receiving a caution fell from 46% to 30%. In the same decade, the proportion of drug offenders sentenced increased from 9% to 16%. Note 2018/19 is the latest available figures for caution data, due to the pandemic limiting the collection of data by the Ministry of Justice.

### Hospital admissions

There were 12 hospital admissions per 100,000 population in England due to drug related mental and behavioural disorders in 2019/20, and 17 per 100,000 in Wales. In the same year, there were also 31 hospital admissions per 100,000 due to poisoning by drug misuse in England and 30 per 100,000 in Wales.

### Deaths related to drug poisoning are on the rise (000s)



### Drug related deaths

Drug related deaths have increased year on year from 2,652 in 2011 to 4,561 in 2020, a 72% increase. Data prior to 2011 is not directly comparable. Drug related deaths were 4% higher in 2020 compared to the previous year.

---

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Legislation

The [Misuse of Drugs Act 1971](#) regulates the production, supply and possession of “controlled” drugs.

Controlled drugs are listed in Schedule 2 to the 1971 Act and are divided into three Classes – A, B and C – with Class A drugs considered the most harmful. Controlled drugs also include any substance or product specified in a temporary class drug order as a drug subject to temporary control.

Drug crime is divided between ‘trafficking in controlled drugs’ and ‘possession of drugs’ offences. Possession of controlled drugs offences were split with effect from April 2004 into possession of Cannabis and possession of drugs other than Cannabis. ‘Other drug offences’ also fall under the possession category, consisting of offences related to permitting the use of premises for the supply or production of a drug, or the possession of a psychoactive substance with intent to supply (covered by the [Psychoactive Substances Act 2016](#)).

The above offences are all “either way” offences, meaning they can be tried in either a magistrates’ court or a Crown court depending on the seriousness of the offence. However, offences relating to the production and supply of Class A drugs are rarely tried in magistrates’ courts due to their higher minimum sentences.

Maximum sentences for drug offences can range between a fine and life imprisonment depending on the class of the drugs involved and the seriousness of the crime.

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## 3 Police Recorded Crime

### 3.1 Stop and Search

The police have a variety of legislative powers to stop and search those they suspect have certain items. Their stop and search powers allow them to “allay or confirm” their suspicions without making an arrest.

There are different types of stop and search powers. The most used powers require officers to have “reasonable grounds” to conduct the search. These searches are typically authorised under [Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(PACE\)](#) and [Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 \(MDA\)](#).

Police officers also have the power under [Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994](#) to stop and search persons and/or vehicles in a defined area in anticipation of, or after, serious violence. These are sometimes known as a ‘no suspicion’ searches. Searches are also permitted under [Section 47a of the Terrorism Act 2000](#) when there is ‘reasonable suspicion’ of terrorism-related activity.

#### Section 23 of the MDA

Section 23(2) of the MDA gives police officers the power to stop and search persons and/or vehicles or vessels for controlled drugs or for evidence of an offence under the MDA.

In order to stop and search a person under this provision, the officer must have “reasonable grounds to suspect that [he] is in possession of a controlled drug in contravention of the MDA”. Similarly, to stop and search a vehicle/vessel, the officer must suspect that drugs may be found in it. As the College of Policing makes clear, this does not cover cases where the person is suspected “merely” to have used the drug or been present during its use by others.<sup>1</sup>

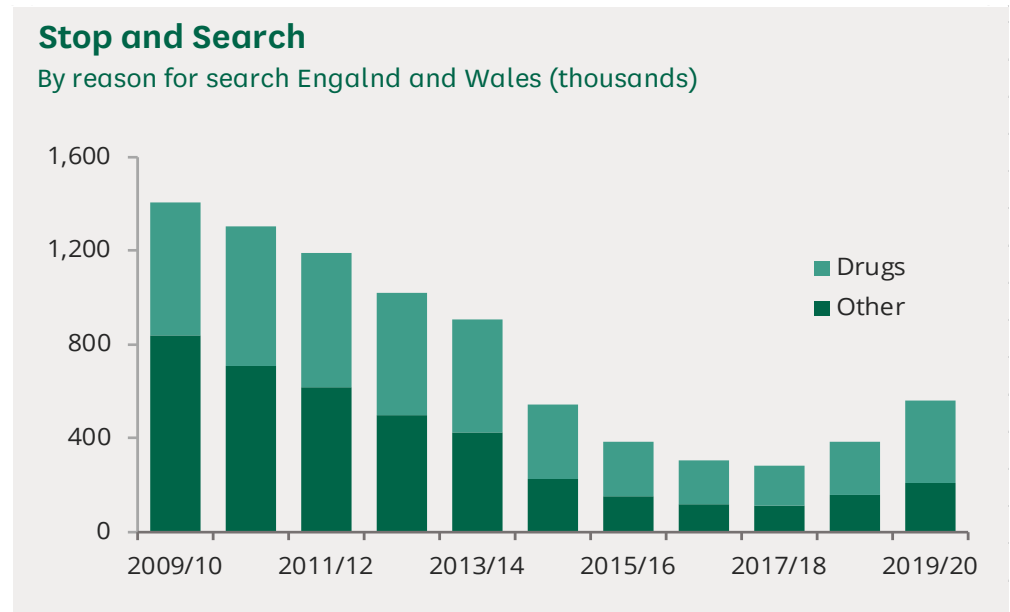
When a stop and search takes place, the reason for the search is recorded. Suspicion of carrying drugs is the most cited reason.

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<sup>1</sup> College of Policing, [Authorised Professional Practice: Stop and search – legal basis](#) (Accessed: 19 August 2020)



The chart below shows the number of stop and searches conducted in England and Wales between 2009/10 and 2019/20, broken down by searches for drugs and searches for all other reasons:



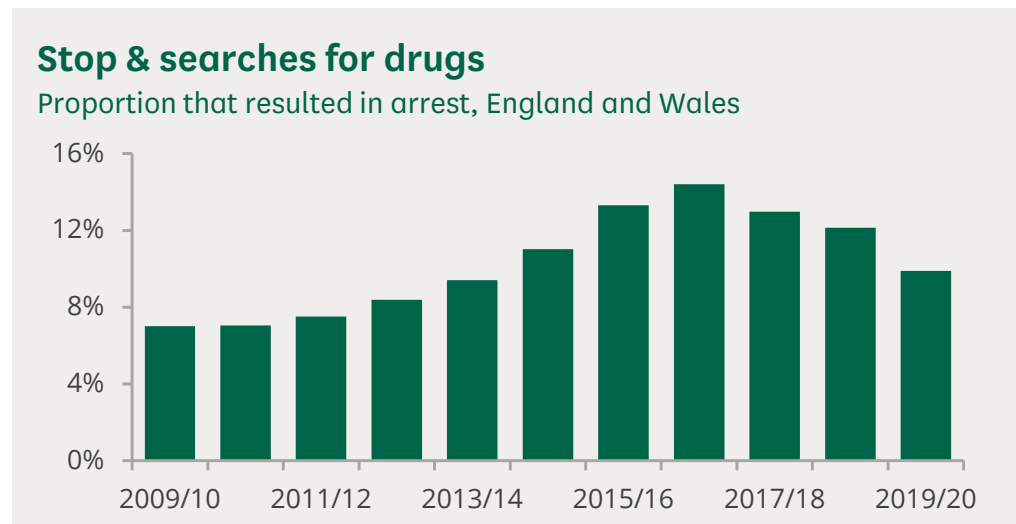
Note: Includes the British Transport Police

Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending March 2020, [Stop and search open data tables](#) [Accessed: 15 October 2021].

Over the decade shown, the number of searches conducted has fallen by 60% from a peak of roughly 1,400,000 in 2009/10 to 560,000 in 2019/20. However there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of searches since 2017/18, with searches in 2019/20 45% higher than the previous year. The proportion of searches with drugs stated as the reason has increased over this period, from 40% in 2009/10 to 63% in 2019/20. Since 2012/13, more than half of all stop and searches conducted each year have been looking for drugs.

Full data on searches conducted by police in England and Wales and the reasons why is provided in appendix table A1.

The chart below shows the proportion of stop and searches that resulted in arrest, for which the reason for the search was drugs-related. It is important to note that the reason for the resultant arrest may not be the same as the initial reason for the stop and search.



Note: Includes the British Transport Police

Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending March 2020, [Stop and search open data tables](#) [Accessed: 15 October 2021].

In 2019/20, 10% of stop and searches in which the initial reason for the search was drugs-related resulted in arrest. This represents a four percentage point decrease from a peak of 14% in 2016/17. However, this figure has increased by three percentage points since 2009/10 (7%).

As the overall number of searches conducted has decreased, the proportion of resultant arrests has increased. This suggests that searches have become better targeted and more effective, although the majority of searches still result in nothing being found (72%).<sup>2</sup>

In addition to collecting data on the number of stop and searches that result in an arrest, police forces must also record whether the reason for the arrest was linked to the initial reason for the search. This is in line with Home Office guidance on the [best use of stop and search](#) (BUSS). This guidance is specifically designed to promote a targeted approach to stop and search and reduce the use of pre-condition searches.<sup>3</sup>

The table below shows the proportion of stop and searches in which the outcome was linked to the initial reason for the search. Stop and searches conducted to find drugs most frequently return a linked outcome. In 2019/20, 1 in 4 drug stops led to an outcome related to 'Drugs'. In comparison, this figure was just under 1 in 11 (9%) for searches relating to 'Offensive weapons' and 'Going equipped'. Overall, 1 in 5 of all stop and searches resulted in an outcome that was linked to the reason for the search.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Home Office, *Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending March 2020* [Best use of stop and search statistics](#), 15 October 2021, BUSS\_04.

<sup>3</sup> For more information see the Commons Library briefing [Police powers: stop and search](#)

<sup>4</sup> Calculations exclude cases where it is unknown whether there was a link or if an object was found.

## Whether the outcome is linked to the reason for the search

England and Wales, 2019/20

	Drugs	Stolen property	Criminal damage	Firearms	Offensive weapons	Going equipped	Other	Total
Outcome linked	62,013	7,880	307	488	6,783	3,486	2,053	83,010
Outcome linked (%)*	28%	21%	13%	12%	12%	12%	9%	22%
Outcome not linked	5,534	1,900	126	298	3,134	1,898	1,329	14,219
Unknown link	3,055	936	38	32	478	311	217	5,067
Nothing found	152,237	27,571	1,876	3,313	48,974	24,063	18,644	276,678
Unknown if object found	2,527	681	56	65	722	559	45	4,655
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>225,366</b>	<b>38,968</b>	<b>2,403</b>	<b>4,196</b>	<b>60,091</b>	<b>30,317</b>	<b>22,288</b>	<b>383,629</b>

Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending March 2020, [Stop and search open data tables](#) [Accessed: 15 October 2021], [Best use of stop and search statistics](#), BUSS\_04, 15 October 2021.

## Ethnicity

People from minority ethnic backgrounds have been consistently more likely to be stopped and searched than White people. The table below compares the proportion of stop and searches carried out on people from different ethnic groups in 2019/20.

### Stop & searches by self-defined ethnicity compared to general population

England and Wales, 2019/20

	Searches for drugs		All searches		Population estimate
	Number	%	Number	%	
White	173,241	50.4%	282,123	49.8%	84.4%
Asian (or Asian British)	43,295	12.6%	60,287	10.6%	7.6%
Black (or Black British)	55,950	16.3%	97,308	17.2%	3.7%
Chinese or other	5,966	1.7%	10,239	1.8%	2.4%
Mixed	11,050	3.2%	18,474	3.3%	1.9%
Not Stated	54,449	15.8%	98,009	17.3%	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>343,951</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>566,440</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total ethnic minority	116,261	33.8%	186,308	32.9%	15.6%

Note: Excludes 'vehicle only' searches

Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending March 2020, [Stop and search open data tables](#) [Accessed: 15 October 2021],

People stop and searched who self-identified as White were under-represented relative to the population, accounting for 84.4% of the

population but 50.4% of drug-related stop and searches. All other ethnic groups were over-represented, with the exception of the ‘Chinese or other’ ethnic category.

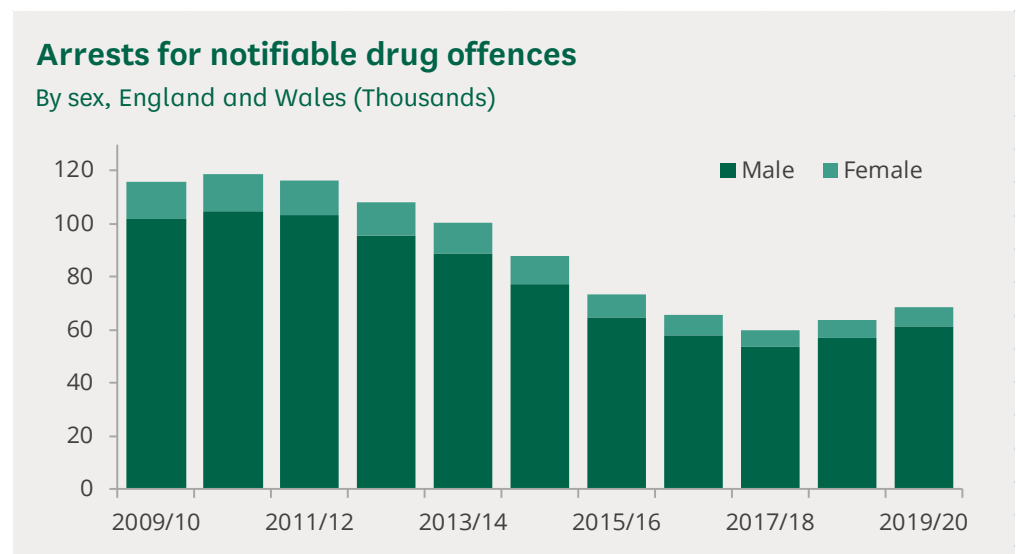
People who self-identified as Black or Black British were particularly over-represented, accounting for 17.2% of searches compared to 3.7% of the population. The ethnic breakdown of stop and searches for drugs is roughly proportional to that for all stop and searches.

## 3.2

### Arrests

Data on arrests made by the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales since 2006/07 is published by the Home Office as part of the [Police Powers and Procedures Statistics](#) series.

The chart below shows the number of arrests for notifiable drug offences for each financial year between 2009/10 to 2019/20, broken down by sex. The number of arrests peaked at roughly 119,000 in 2010/11 and has since fallen to 69,000 in 2019/20. It is important to note that arrest figures reflect police activity and cannot be reliably used to infer the level of crime being committed by offenders.



Notes: Excludes British Transport Police. Data for Nottinghamshire in 2015/16 was estimated. All data from Lancashire Police has been excluded. Devon & Cornwall, Kent and North Wales are unable to separately identify primary arrests on their recording system. Therefore, arrests for all notifiable offences are included, even if linked to a previous arrest.

Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending March 2020, [Stop and search open data tables](#) [Accessed: 15 October 2021]

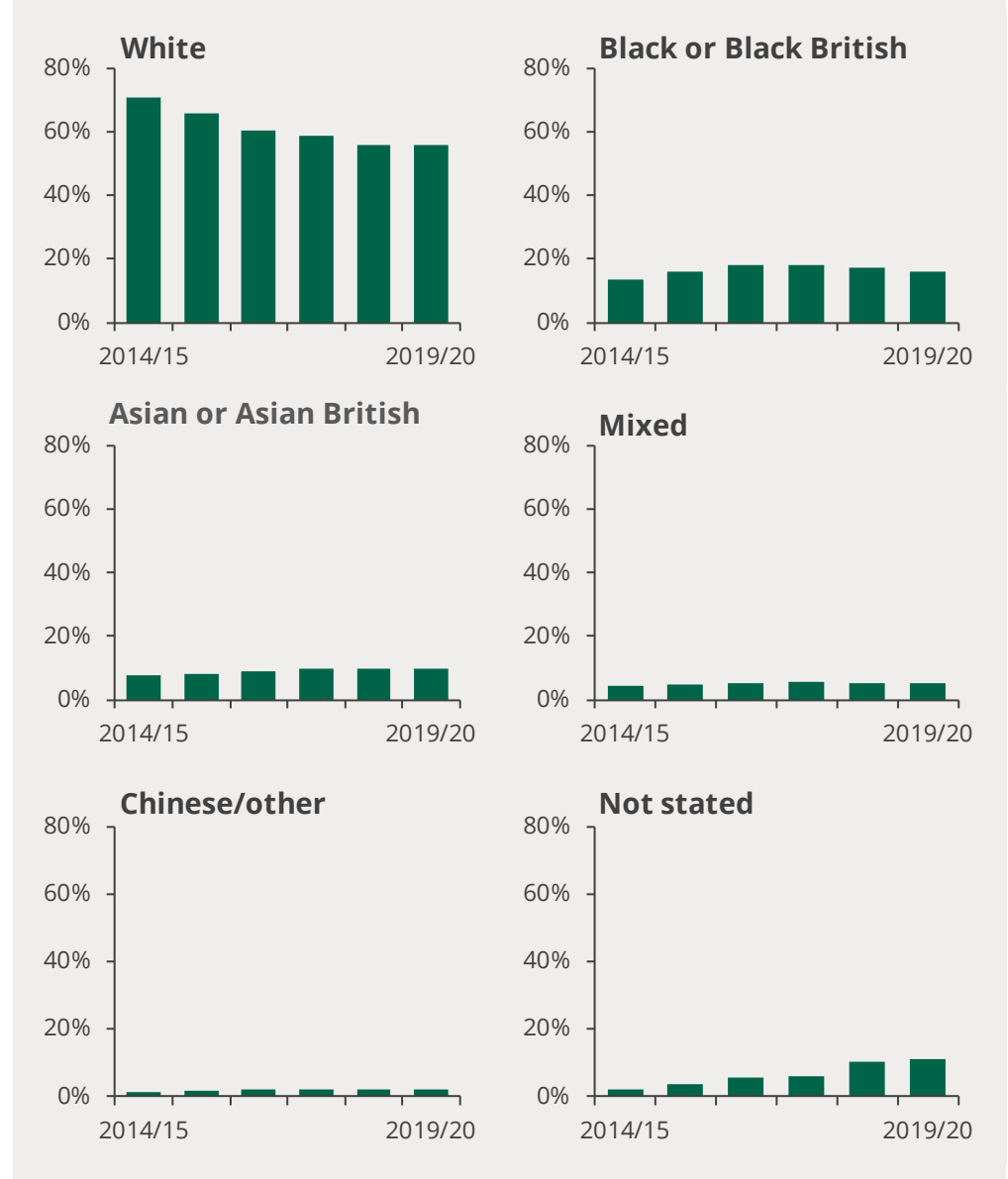
The majority of people arrested for drug offences are male. The proportions of men and women arrested has remained relatively stable, with 89% of those arrested between 2008/09 and 2019/20 being male and 11% female.

The chart overleaf shows arrests for notifiable drug offences broken down by self-defined ethnicity. In 2019/20, 56% of those arrested were White, 16% were Black or Black British, 10% Asian or Asian British, 5% Mixed and 2% Chinese or Other ethnic group. 11% of those arrested did not state their ethnicity.

Over the 5 years shown, since 2014/15, the proportion of those arrested who self-define as White has decreased by 15 percentage points. Over the same period, the proportion who identify as Black or Black British (+2 ppts), Asian or Asian British (+2 ppts) and Mixed (+1 ppt) have all increased slightly. The proportion of those not stating their ethnicity has also risen (+8 ppts). The proportion of those arrested who self-define as Chinese or Other is the same as 2014/15.

## Arrests for notifiable drug offences

By self-defined ethnicity, England and Wales



Notes: Excludes British Transport Police. Data for Nottinghamshire in 2015/16 was estimated. All data from Lancashire Police has been excluded. Devon & Cornwall, Kent and North Wales are unable to separately identify primary arrests on their recording system. Therefore, arrests for all notifiable offences are included, even if linked to a previous arrest

Source: Home Office, Police Powers and procedures England and Wales year end March 2020 [Arrest Statistics data Tables](#)

### 3.3

## Transferred or Cancelled Crime Records

Transferred or cancelled records (formerly referred to as ‘no-crimes’) occur when a police force initially records an offence and later decides that the crime did not take place, was recorded in error or should be transferred to

another police force. Cases where an incident was not initially recorded as a crime are not included.

Prior to April 2015, transferred or cancelled records were recorded collectively as ‘no crimes’. This has since been broken down into five different reason categories. The table below shows the reasons for the cancellation or transfer of drug crime records in 2020/21.

<b>Transferred or cancelled drug crime records</b>		
England and Wales 2020/21		
Reason	Number	%
Transfer: Crime committed outside force jurisdiction	462	7%
Cancel: Crime recorded in error	3,343	52%
Cancel: Duplicate record or part of a crime already recorded	2,115	33%
Cancel: AVI determines no notifiable crime occurred	518	8%
Cancel: Self defence claimed (specific recorded assaults)	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,438</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Home Office, *Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables* [Transferred or cancelled crime open data year ending March 2019 to year ending March 2021](#) Accessed 14 October 2021

The most common reason for transfer or cancellation of drug crime records was that the crime was deemed to have been recorded in error (accounting for 52% of transferred or cancelled records, compared to 23% for all crimes combined). Records were also cancelled on account of being duplicates or part of a crime that had already been recorded (33%, compared to 37% for all crimes), or because additional verifiable information had become available that determined that no notifiable crime had occurred (8%, compared to 20% for all crimes). In 7% of cases, the crime had been committed outside the jurisdiction of the police force in which it was recorded, so the record was transferred to the appropriate force. For both drug crime and all crime records, 0% were cancelled on the grounds of a self-defence claim.

## Outcomes

In April 2013, a new ‘outcomes’ framework was introduced, replacing the “detections” series previously recorded (the number of cases resolved with a formal or informal criminal justice outcome). A full, broader outcomes framework was introduced in April 2014 – data by outcome is therefore only comparable from 2014/15 onwards.

The table below shows the outcomes assigned to drug offences recorded in 2020/21:

<b>Drug Offence Outcomes 2020/21</b>		
England and Wales		
Outcome Group	Number	%
Out-of-court (formal)	22,952	11%
Out-of-court (informal)	70,271	34%
Charged/Summoned	42,636	20%
Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	14,481	7%
Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)	1,454	1%
Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest	6,257	3%
Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest – police decision	6,919	3%
Investigation complete – no suspect identified	6,700	3%
Diversions, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action.	5,025	2%
Responsibility for further investigation transferred to another body	445	0%
Taken into consideration	12	0%
Not yet assigned an outcome	31,809	15%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>208,961</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Home Office, [Police Recorded Crime and outcomes open data tables](#), 14 October 2021

The majority of drug offences resulted in some form of formal or informal criminal justice outcome, whereby the suspect was either charged or summonsed (20%), cautioned or issued a penalty notice for disorder (out-of-court formal -11%), issued a cannabis or khat warning or a Community Resolution was applied (out-of-court informal - 34%). 19% of drug offences recorded in 2020/21 went unsolved or the case was dropped for various reasons, whilst 15% had not yet been assigned an outcome.

A higher proportion of drug offences resulted in a formal or informal criminal justice outcome compared with all offences combined (65% and 11% respectively). This is partly due to the nature of the crime. Drug crime tends to be detected when the perpetrator is found in possession of drugs. Therefore, there is no need to identify a suspect and the police are already in possession of evidence. In contrast, most other recorded crime is reported to the police by the victim, who is often unaware of, or unwilling to identify, the perpetrator.

## 3.4

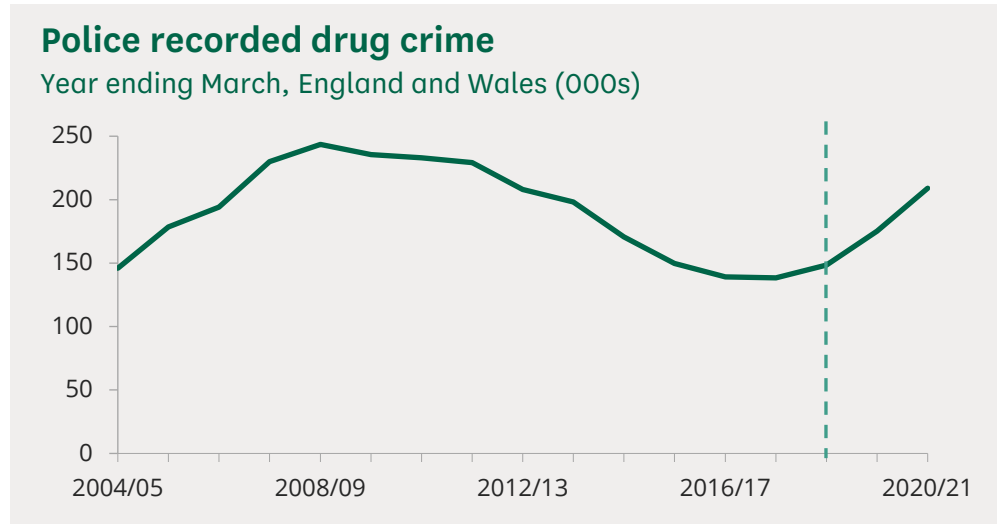
### Trends over time

Appendix table A2 shows the number and proportion of drug offences recorded by the police in England and Wales since 2004/05.

The chart below shows that the number of drug offences fell between 2008/09 and 2017/18, before rising again over the next two years. Data for



2018/19 through to 2020/21 excludes Greater Manchester Police Force (GMP) and is not comparable with previous years. In the year ending March 2021, there were around 210,000 drug offences. With GMP excluded, this is still 31% higher than in 2017/18 (the lowest level of drug crime recorded since 2004/05), but 14% lower than in 2008/09 when drug crime peaked.

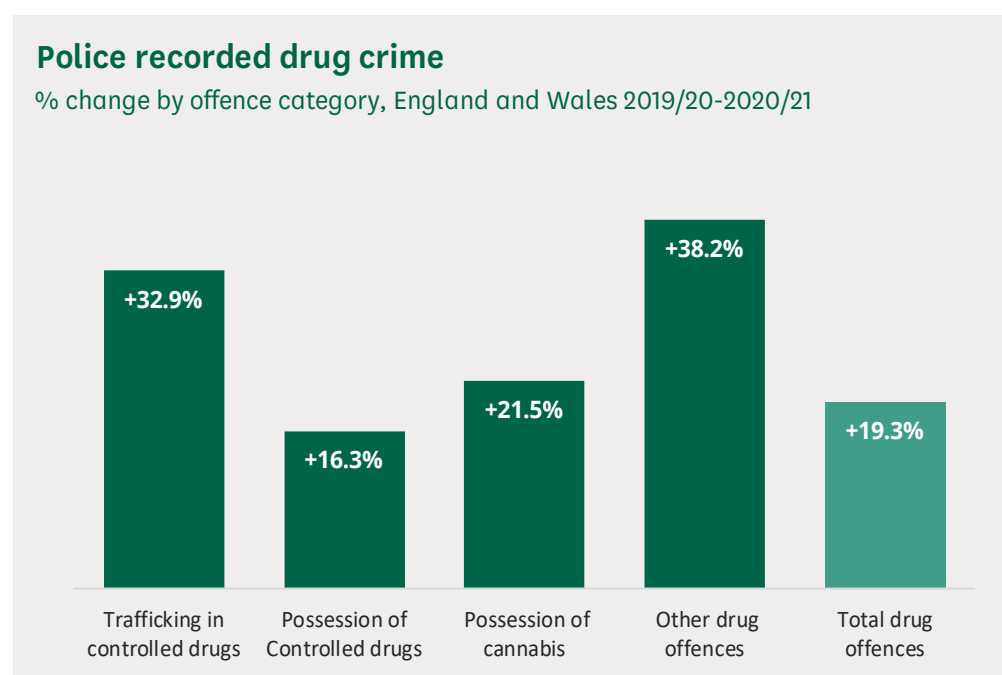


Source: ONS, Crime in England and Wales: [Appendix tables](#), 15 October 2021 Table 4a

From April 2004, possession of controlled drug offences were split into possession of cannabis and possession of drugs other than cannabis.

The main drug offence recorded in 2020/21 was ‘possession of cannabis’ (63%), followed by ‘possession of controlled drugs (excluding cannabis)’ (18%), ‘trafficking in controlled drugs’ (18%) and ‘other drug offences’ (0.4%).

The chart below shows the percentage change in recorded drug crime for each offence category between 2019/20 and 2020/21



Source: ONS, Crime in England and Wales: [Appendix tables](#), 15 October 2021 Table 4a

Over this period, the total number of drug offences increased by 19%. There was an increase in offences recorded across all categories: Other drug offences increased the most (38%), followed by trafficking in controlled drugs (33%), possession of controlled drugs (22%) and possession of controlled drugs (excluding cannabis) (16%). All categories of drug offences showed notable increases compared to the previous year.

## 3.5 Police Force Areas (PFA)

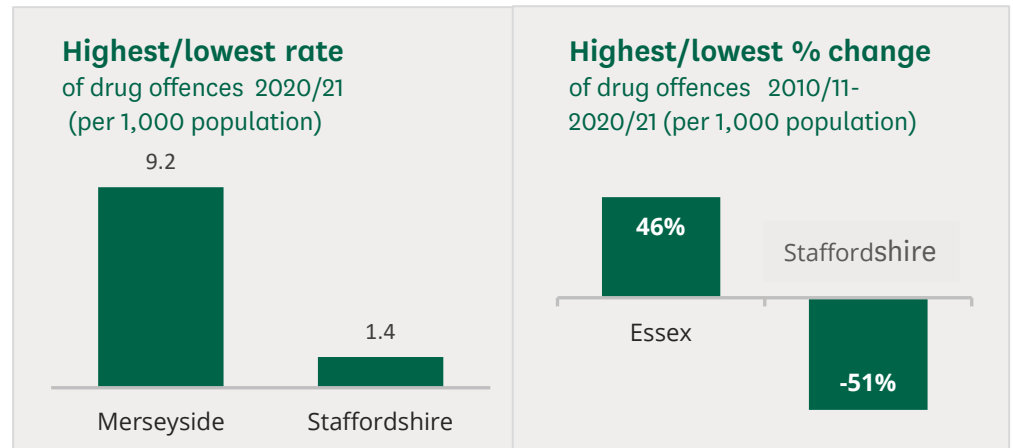
Appendix table A3a shows the number and rate, per 1,000 population, of recorded drug offences for each police force area since 2010/11. The map overleaf provides a visual comparison of drug crime rates in 2010/11 compared to 2020/21. Maps for each year between 2010/11 and 2020/21 are available in the appendix (chart A3b).

In 2020/21, Merseyside Police Force recorded the highest rate of 9.2 drug offences per 1,000 population. The Staffordshire Constabulary recorded the lowest rate of 1.4 offences per 1,000 population.

Between 2010/11 and 2020/21, only eight police forces in England and Wales have seen an increase in drug offences.<sup>5</sup> Essex experienced the largest percentage increase in drug offences: from 1.6 per 1,000 population in 2010/11

<sup>5</sup> The eight police forces that have seen the rate of drug offences increase are Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Surrey, Gloucestershire and Yorkshire

to 2.2 in 2020/21 (+46%). In contrast, Staffordshire Police saw the largest percentage decrease, from 2.9 offences per 1,000 population in 2010/11 to 1.4 in 2020/21 (-51%).

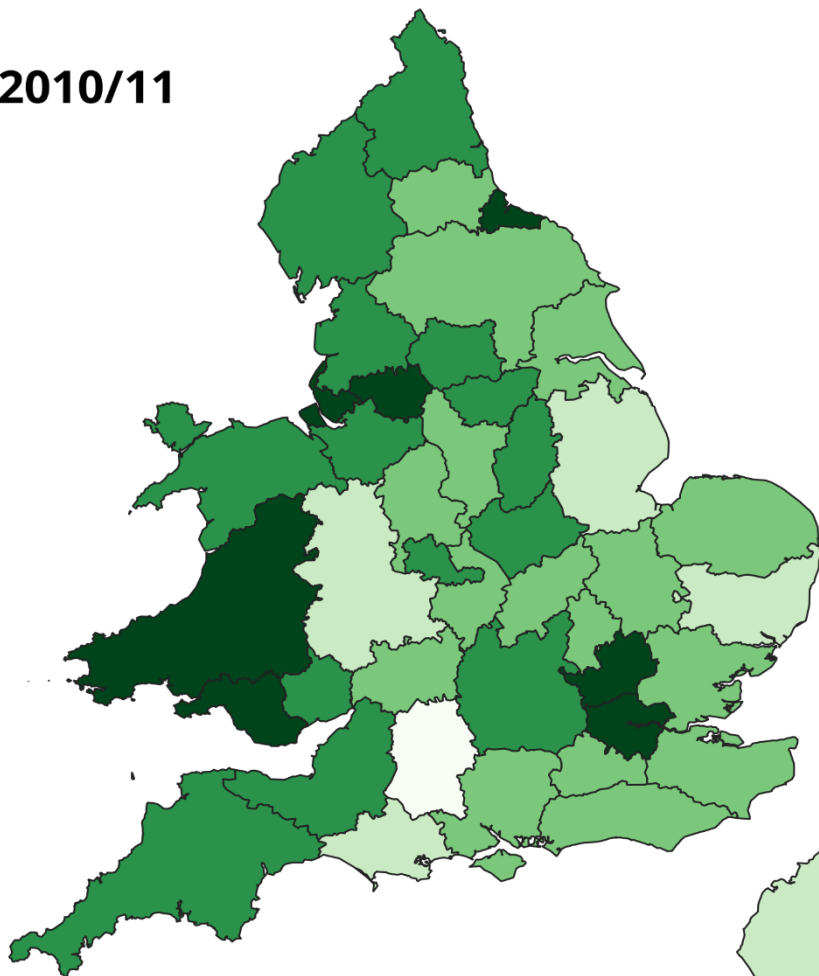


Source: ONS, Crime in England and Wales: [Police Force Area Data Tables](#) 2021 14 October 2021

# Drug offences recorded by the police

England and Wales, 2010/11 and 2020/21

## 2010/11



Rate of offences per 1,000 population

1.0 - 1.8

1.8 - 2.3

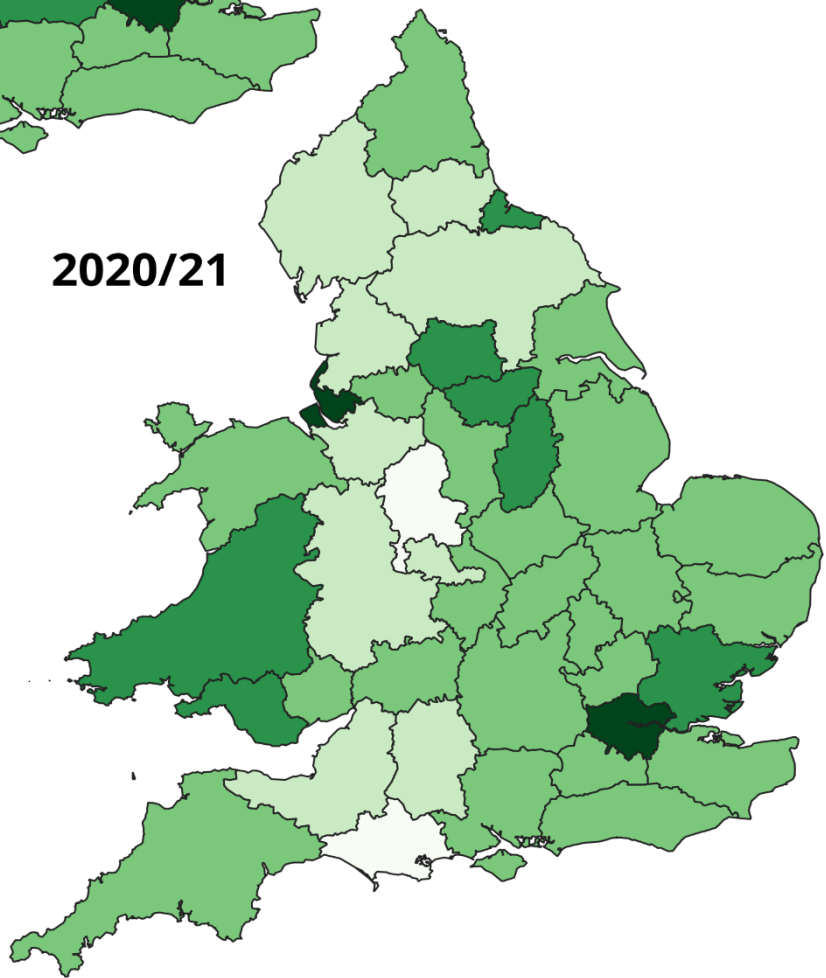
2.3 - 3.1

3.1 - 4.5

4.5 +

Data unavailable

## 2020/21



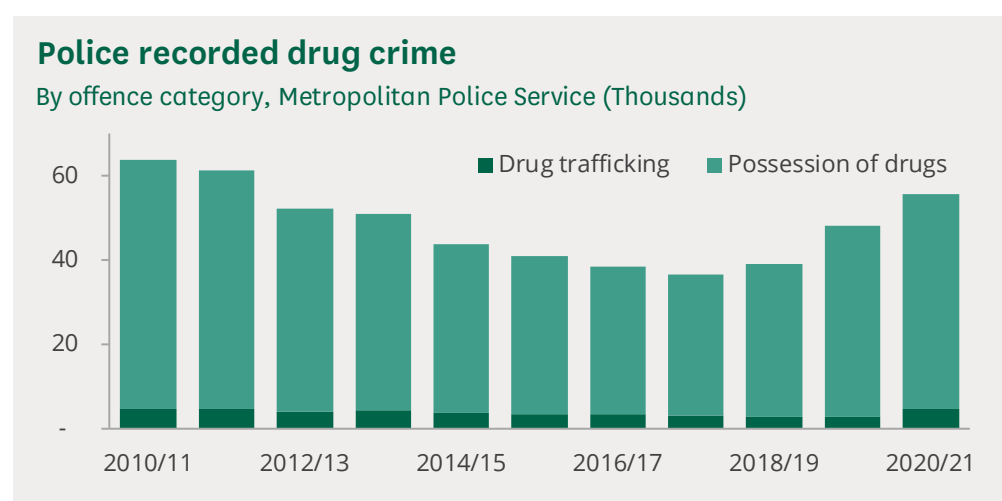
Note: Following the implementation of a new IT system in July 2019, Greater Manchester Police have been unable to supply data for the period July 2019 to March 2020. Figures for Greater Manchester are not included for 2019/2020.

## 3.6

## London

The number of drug offences recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is available from its [Crime Statistics 2020/21](#) dashboard. Note that comparisons to years before 2020/21 should be made with caution due to changes in the way crime is reported as a result of the pandemic.

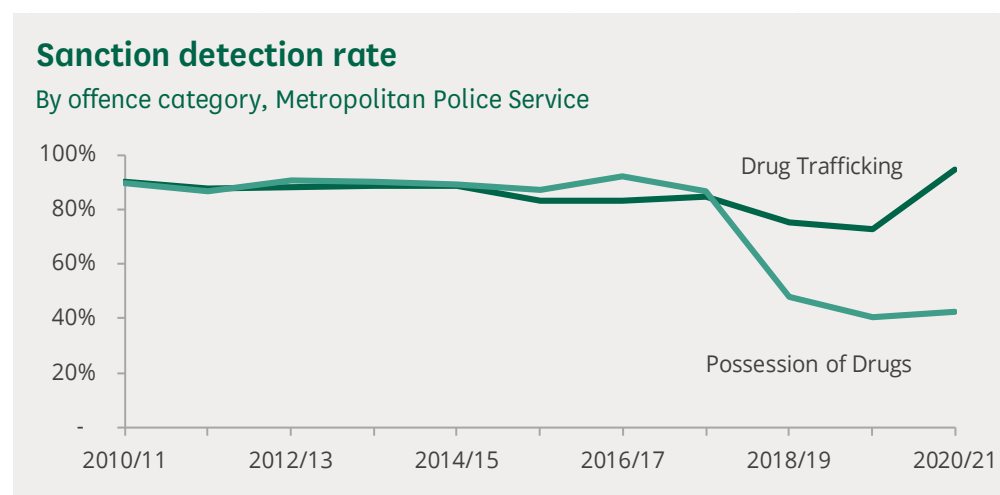
The chart below shows that drug offences declined from around 64,000 in 2010/11 to 37,000 in 2017/18. Numbers have since increased to approximately 56,000 in 2020/21. Most drug crime consists of possession offences. Drug possession fell from around 59,000 offences in 2010/11 to 51,000 in 2020/21, a decrease of 14%. Trafficking offences returned to 2010/11 levels of around 5,000 offences in 2020/21 after dropping to a low of 3,000 in 2018/19.



Source: Metropolitan Police Service, [Crime Statistics 2020/21](#), March 2021 (Accessed 14 October 2021)

The chart below shows that the annual Sanction Detection Rates (SDR) for crimes involving drug trafficking and possession had remained fairly level over the past decade, up until the last three years.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 'Sanction Detection' is the term used for police-generated detections as opposed to those resolved through administrative means. It is assumed that the accused receives a punishment or 'sanction' from the police. Sanction Detections include cases where an accused person is: charged, cautioned, summonsed, has offences taken in to consideration (TIC) or issued with a Fixed Penalty.



Source: Metropolitan Police Service, [Crime Statistics 2020/21](#), March 2021 (Accessed 14 October 2021)

Between 2017/18 and 2018/19, the SDR for possession of drugs fell from 87% to 48%. Over the same year, the SDR for drug trafficking also fell, but less dramatically, from 85% to 75%. Since then, the SDR for possession has fallen further to 43% in 2020/21, a small 2 percentage point rise on 2019/20. The SDR for trafficking recovered to 94% in 2020/21 – a record high.

The SDR for drug offences is significantly higher than that for all crimes combined, which in 2020/21 was 11%. This is largely due to the nature of the crime. Drug crime tends to be detected when the perpetrator is found in possession of drugs. Therefore, there is no need to identify a suspect and the police are already in possession of evidence. This increases the likelihood that the offence will be resolved through a formal sanction.

Appendix table A3c shows the number of drug offences for each London Borough in 2019/20 and 2020/21. The map below provides a visual comparison of drug crime levels in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

**Note that offences in London boroughs are reported as totals rather than rates per head of population.**

In 2020/21, the highest number of drug offences in London was recorded in Westminster – 3,221. However, this was lower than the 3,568 cases recorded there in 2019/20.

## Drug crime 2020/21

London borough	Offences
Westminster	3,221
Tower Hamlets	3,209
Newham	3,048
Croydon	2,655
Lambeth	2,470
Southwark	2,467
Brent	2,413
Ealing	2,288
Greenwich	2,036
Camden	1,795
Hillingdon	1,793
Redbridge	1,792
Waltham Forest	1,768
Haringey	1,751
Hackney	1,728
Barking & Dagenham	1,711
Hounslow	1,653
Lewisham	1,575
Enfield	1,525
Islington	1,440
Wandsworth	1,422
Hammersmith & Fulham	1,278
Bromley	1,268
Kensington & Chelsea	1,247
Barnet	1,226
Havering	1,194
Harrow	1,171
Kingston upon Thames	1,129
Bexley	932
Merton	932
Sutton	794
Richmond upon Thames	627
Heathrow Airport	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>55,598</b>

The total number of drug offences in London increased by 16%, from 47,806 in 2019/20 to 50,901 in 2020/21. Of the 32 London boroughs, only 7 recorded a fall in drug offences since 2019/20.<sup>7</sup>

Drug offences in Richmond upon Thames increased from 384 in 2019/20 to 627 in 2020/21 (+63%). This was the highest proportional increase over the period. Overall Richmond upon Thames had the lowest number of drug offences, after Heathrow airport which reported only 40 offences in 2020/21. Heathrow Airport recorded the highest proportional decrease of 46% (from 74 offences in 2019/20 to 40 in 2020/21). Of the rest of the boroughs, Westminster had the next highest proportional decrease of 10% between 2019/20 and 2020/21.

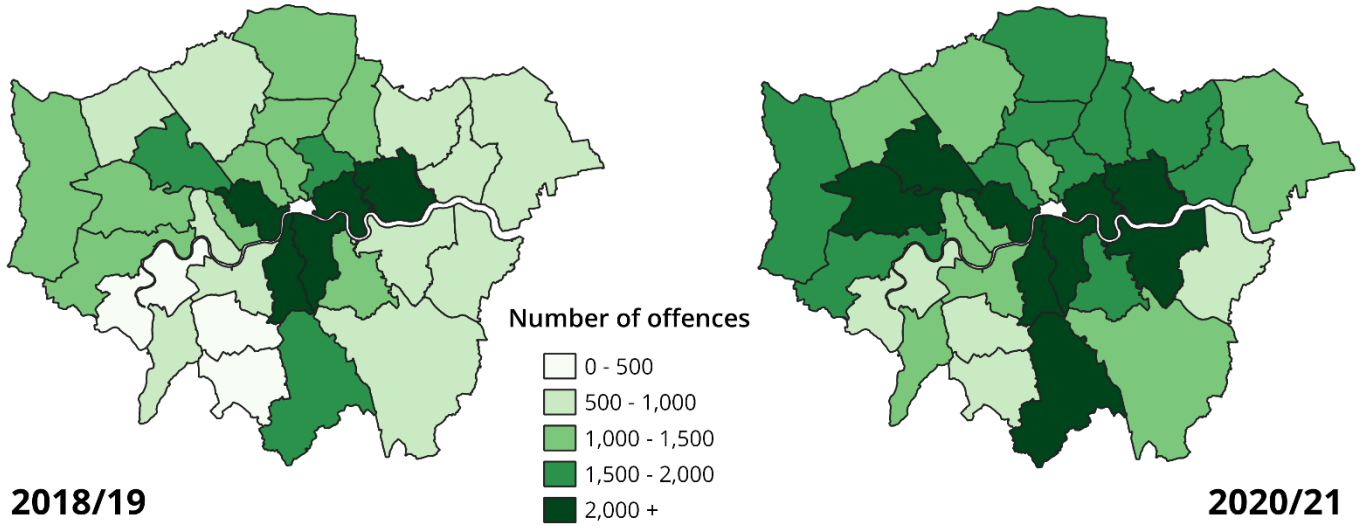
In all boroughs, most drug crime consisted of possession offences. The map below compares drug crime rates in London boroughs for 2018/19 and 2020/21.

Source: Metropolitan Police Service, [Crime Statistics 2020/21](#), March 2021 (Accessed 14 October 2021)

<sup>7</sup> Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth and Tower Hamlets.

# Drug offences recorded by the police

By London Borough, Metropolitan Police Service



Source: Metropolitan Police Service, [Crime Statistics 2020/21](#), March 2021 (Accessed 14/10/2021)



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## 4 Crime Survey of England and Wales

The Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) measures the amount of crime experienced by adults aged over 16 living in private households in England and Wales. The survey, which is of personal experience of crime and includes crimes which are not reported to the police, is seen as an important accompaniment to police records.

### 4.1 Drug Crime

There is no information for the perceived levels of drug crime in the 2021 Crime Survey for England and Wales. The most recent data available is for the financial year 2019/20.

The proportion of CSEW respondents that had personally experienced or witnessed 'people using or dealing drugs' in their local area increased from 9.0% in 2018/19 to 11% in 2019/20. This proportion has doubled from in 4% 2016/17.<sup>8</sup>

The CSEW also collects data on perceptions of the prevalence of anti-social behaviour. The chart below shows the proportion of respondents who perceived there to be a high level of drug use and drug dealing in their local area in each year that the survey has been conducted since 1992:

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<sup>8</sup> ONS, [Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables, 17 July 2020, Table F13A](#)

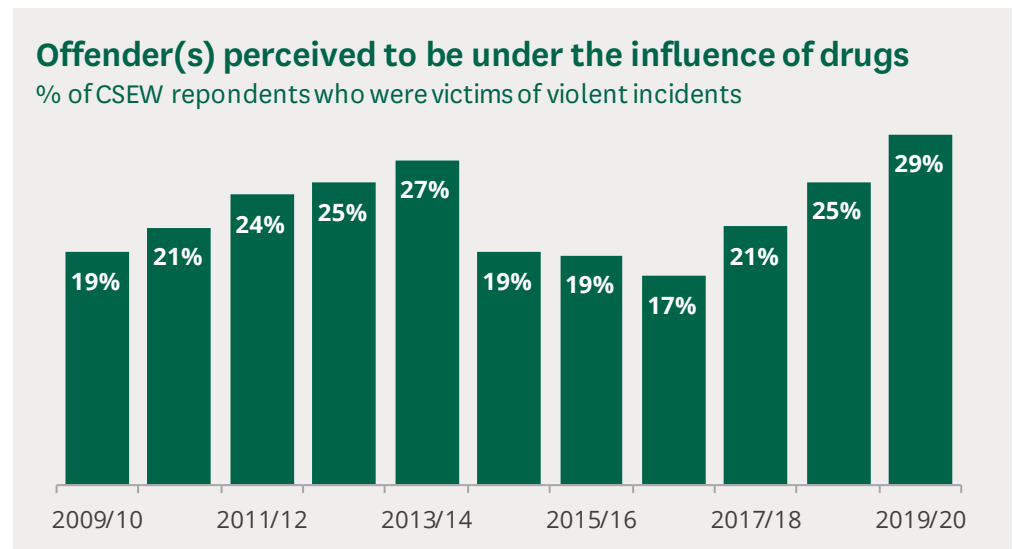


Notes: Up until December 2000, the CSEW covered 12 months prior ending 31st December. Since March 2002, it has covered 12 months ending 31st March.

Source: ONS, [Crime in England and Wales: Annual supplementary tables](#), 17 July 2020, Table S34.

In 2019/20, 22% of respondents perceived that there was a high level of people using or dealing drugs in their local area. This represents a three-percentage point increase since 2018/19. Overall, perceptions of people using or dealing drugs has seen a ten-percentage point decrease from a peak of 33% in 2000.

As part of the survey, victims of violent crime were asked whether they perceived the offender to have been under the influence of drugs. The chart below shows that in 29% (360,000) of violent incidents occurring in 2019/20, the victim believed that the perpetrator was under the influence of drugs. This is the highest proportion recorded in the past decade. This figure has fluctuated around 1 in 4, or 1 in 5, incidents.



Note: Questions asked only if the victim was able to say something about the offender(s), and if there was more than one offender, victims were asked if any of the offenders were perceived to be under the influence. Questions were not asked if any offender(s) were perceived to be under the age of 10.

Source: ONS, [Nature of crime tables, violence](https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/year-end-crime-statistics/), <https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/year-end-crime-statistics/> 7 February 2019, Table 11.

## 4.2

### Drug misuse

The CSEW is also used to provide information on the prevalence of drug misuse in England and Wales. An annual publication on [Drug Misuse Declared](#) is published by the Home Office and this allows tracking of trends since 1996.

Drug usage has decreased over this period. In 2019/20, 9.4% of adults aged 16-59 reported having used any drug in the past year, down from a peak of 12.2% in 2002/3. Drug use among 16-24 year-olds has seen a steeper decline; the proportion that had used any drug in the past year peaked at 32% in 1998 before reducing to 17 % in 2012/13.<sup>9</sup> This has since increased to 21% in 2019/20.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Data has been recorded by financial year since 2001/02.

<sup>10</sup> Home Office, [Drug misuse: findings from the 2018 to 2019 CSEW](#), 19 September 2019, Tables 1.02 and 1.06.

## 5 Proven offences and offenders

### 5.1 Out of Court Disposals

Out of court disposals are sanctions used by the police to address less serious instances of offending without the need for this to be dealt with at court. They include penalty notices for disorder ('on the spot fines'), cautions and cannabis/khat warnings, which are both issued and recorded by police forces. They can only be offered if the suspect admits to the offence.

#### Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs)

In 2020/21, 14,900 PNDs were issued for all offences. - 25% fewer than were issued in 2019/20 and over 60% fewer than 5 years ago. After drunk and disorderly, possession of cannabis was the second most common offence for which the offender received this sanction.

#### Cautions

Cautions data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 is not available due to issues in data collection caused by the pandemic. Further explanation for the omission of this data can be found in the notes of the [Criminal Statistics Quarterly 2021 data set](#). Analysis for caution data can therefore only be presented up to the financial year 2018/19.

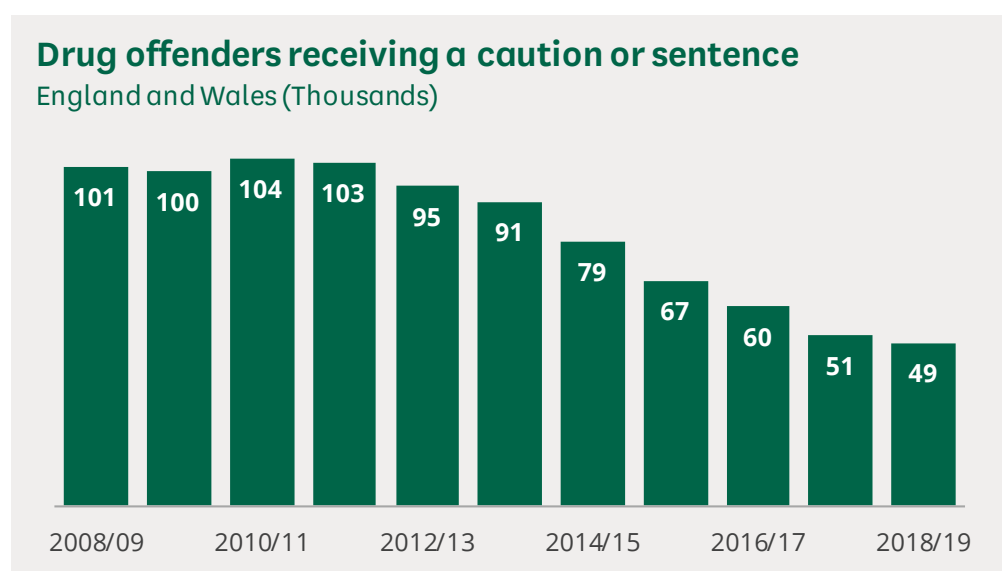
Around 67,000 cautions were issued in 2018/19. Drug offences were the most common indictable offence for which the offender received a caution (accounting for 40% of all cautions for indictable offences). The overall cautioning rate for all offences (among those cautioned or convicted excluding summary motoring offences) was 9%. This has seen a reduction from 28% in 2008/09. Drug offences have the highest cautioning rate (29% in 2018/19).

### 5.2 Proven Offenders

Data on the outcomes of proven offenders is routinely published as part of the [Criminal Justice Statistics quarterly](#) briefing. The series shows the number of drug offenders receiving a caution or sentence. Taken from the Police National Computer (PNC), the data is provisional and subject to change as

more information is recorded by the police.<sup>11</sup> This data is given in appendix table A4.

The chart below shows that the number of proven drug offenders fell by more than half between 2010/11 and 2018/19 from just over 100,000 to just under 50,000.<sup>12</sup> This reflects a decline in the number of police recorded drug offences, as detailed in Chapter 1.

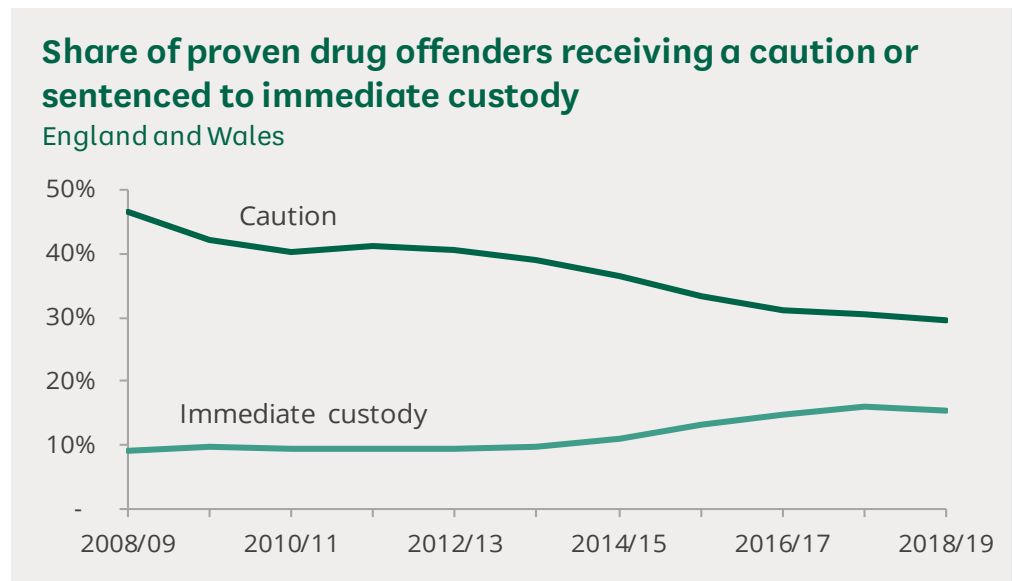


Source: Ministry of Justice, [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: March 2019](#), 15 August 2019, Tables Q2.2 and Q5.3.

The chart below shows that between 2008/09 and 2019/20, the proportion of drug offenders receiving a caution has fallen (from 46% to 30%) while the proportion receiving a custodial sentence has increased (from 9% to 16%). This contrasts to the general trend for all offences whereby the number of people sentenced to immediate custody is falling.

<sup>11</sup> Police forces tend to record cautions more promptly on the PNC than court sentences. The latest caution figures are likely to be revised less than the sentencing figures.

<sup>12</sup> Publication of MoJ data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 has been [delayed due to the pandemic](#).



Source: Ministry of Justice, [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: March 2019](#), 15 August 2019, Tables Q2.2 and Q5.3.

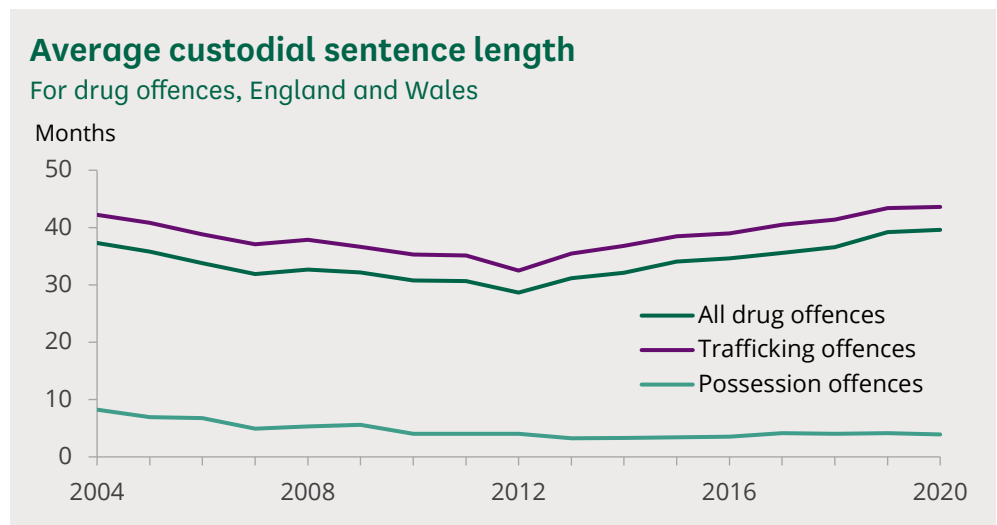
Offenders found guilty of drug possession offences are more likely to receive a caution than those found guilty of drug trafficking offences, who are more likely to be sentenced to immediate custody. In 2018/19, 36% of those cautioned or sentenced for possession offences received a caution, whilst 3% were sentenced to immediate custody.<sup>13</sup> Of those cautioned or sentenced for trafficking offences, 13% received a caution whilst 51% were sentenced to immediate custody.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The publishing of more recent cautions data has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2019, Outcomes by Offence data tool, 25 June 2020](#)

## 5.3 Custodial Sentences

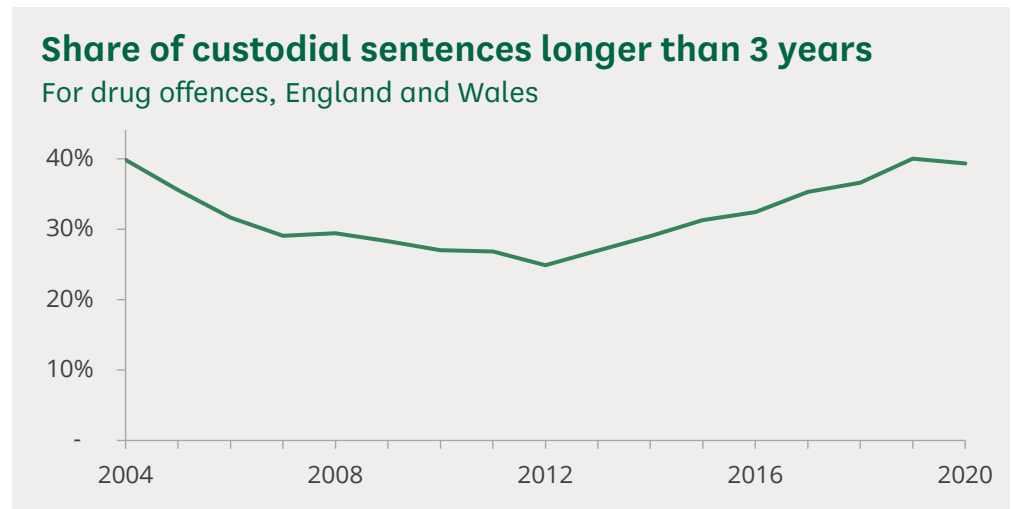
The chart below shows that the average custodial sentence length (ACSL) for all drug offences decreased from 37.3 months in 2004 to 28.7 months in 2012. The ACSL has since increased again to 39.6 months in 2020. The ACSL for drug offences is higher than that for all indictable offences, which in 2020 was 21.1 months.



Source: Ministry of Justice, Criminal Justice system Statistics quarterly: December 2020, [Outcomes by offence data tool](#), Accessed 13 October 2021

Drug trafficking offences receive considerably longer sentences than possession offences. In 2020, the ACSL for trafficking offences was 43.6 months, compared to 3.9 months for possession offences.

The chart below shows that in 2004, 40% of offenders were sentenced to custody of at least three years. This figure declined to 25% in 2012 before increasing again to 40% in 2020.



Source:: Ministry of Justice, *Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2020*, [Outcomes by Offence data tool](#), 25 June 2020

Full data on the number of people proceeded against and sentenced in courts, and the lengths of the custodial sentences received, is given in appendix table A5.

At 30 June 2021 (the most recent data available), there were just under 14,000 persons in prison for drug offences, accounting for 16% of the overall prison population.<sup>15</sup>

## 5.4 Mandatory Drug Testing

The level of drug use in prisons in England and Wales is measured by the Random Mandatory Drug Testing programme (RMDT). The aim of RMDT is to test a random sample of 5% or 10% of prisoners each month (depending on prison capacity) and to monitor and deter drug use. Statistics on RMDT are published annually in Chapter 7 of [HM Prison and Probation Service Annual Digest](#).

There has been no data published for the year ending March 2021 for RMDT, the latest available data is from the financial year ending March 2020. In the year 2019/20 there were 54,047 tests administered in prisons in England and Wales. 13.5% (7,275) of the test results were positive (10.2% for traditional drugs and 4.1% for psychoactive substances).<sup>16</sup> Since 1998/99 (the first year of RMDT data available), the percentage of positive tests for traditional drugs

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Offender management statistics quarterly: January to March 2021](#), Prison population data tool, 30 July 2021.

<sup>16</sup> The positive rate for traditional drugs and psychoactive substances combined does not equal the total rate of positive tests because a number of samples test positive for both traditional drugs and psychoactive substances.



fell from 18.1% to a low of 6.9% in 2014/15. It subsequently rose again to the current level, where it has remained since 2017/18.

Data on testing for psychoactive substances was first published in 2017/18. These are 'new' synthetic drugs, including the drugs known as Spice and Black Mamba. Positive results for psychoactive substances have fallen considerably over this period, down from 9.0% in 2018/19 and 12.9% in 2017/18.

## 5.5

### Drug Finds

Statistics on drug finds in prison are also published in the [HM Prison and Probation Service Annual Digest](#) (Chapter 9). In 2020/21, there were 21,931 incidents in which drugs were found in prisons in England and Wales. These incidents have more than doubled (102%) since 2016/17, when there were 10,666. Data prior to this is not comparable due to a change in data collection methods.

In 2020/21, psychoactive substances were the most common type of drug found, being found in 45% of incidents. This was followed by Class B drugs (found in 25% of incidents) and Class A drugs (found in 14% of incidents).

## 6 Reoffending Rates

Reoffending rates (or recidivism) serve as a measure of the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Reduced reoffending tends to mean lower overall crime levels.

The Ministry of Justice publishes [proven reoffending statistics](#) on a quarterly basis.<sup>17</sup> Almost a quarter (24%) of adult drug offenders convicted between July and September 2019 reoffended within a year. This figure is slightly lower than the previous 12 month average of 25.1%<sup>18</sup> and lower than the adult reoffending rate for all offences (25.6%). Amongst juvenile drug offenders, the reoffending rate was considerably higher at 36 % (compared to 33% of juvenile offenders convicted of all offences).<sup>19</sup>

Data on the offending histories of people convicted of crimes is also published as part of the [Criminal Justice Statistics quarterly](#) briefing. In 2018/19, 57% of people cautioned for drug offences were re-offenders, compared to 49% cautioned for all crimes. In contrast, 85% of people sentenced to immediate custody for drug offences were reoffenders, compared to 90% of people sentenced for all crimes. Reoffending rates for drug offences have remained relatively stable over the past decade.<sup>20</sup> 2018/19 is the latest available data on cautioning of drug offenders due to limited data collection as a result of the pandemic<sup>21</sup>

The table below shows the first primary offence that reoffenders cautioned or convicted for drug crimes in 2019/20 were convicted of. This was most commonly drug offences, followed by theft and summary offences (excluding motoring offences). These three offence categories made up three quarters of first primary offences.

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<sup>17</sup> A proven reoffence is defined as any offence committed in a one-year follow-up period that leads to a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning in the one-year follow-up or within a further six-month waiting period to allow the offence to be proven in court.

<sup>18</sup> Data prior to this is not directly comparable.

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Proven reoffending statistics: July to September 2019](#), Proven reoffending tables (3 monthly), 30 January 2020, Tables A1, A4a and A4b.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: March 2019, Offending History Data Tool, 15 August 2019](#).

<sup>21</sup> For full explanation see Ministry of Justice [Statement](#)

## Criminal history of drug crime reoffenders 2019/20

First primary offence, England and Wales

Offence Category	Number	%
Drug offences	17,292	36.7%
Theft Offences	9,006	19.1%
Summary offences (excluding motoring)	8,918	18.9%
Violence against the person	1,972	4.2%
Possession of weapons	1,945	4.1%
Miscellaneous crimes against society	1,748	3.7%
Summary motoring offences	1,723	3.7%
Criminal damage and arson	1,711	3.6%
Robbery	1,226	2.6%
Public order offences	570	1.2%
Fraud offences	500	1.1%
Sexual offences	225	0.5%
Offences outside England & Wales	138	0.3%
Unknown	94	0.2%
<b>All offences</b>	<b>47,068</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2020*, [Offending History Data Tool: previous offence statistics 20 May 2021](#)

The following table shows all previous primary offences that drug crime reoffenders in 2019/20 have ever been convicted of:

## Criminal history of drug crime reoffenders 2019/20

All previous primary offences, England and Wales

Offence category	Number	%
Theft offences	98,956	23.3%
Summary offences (excluding motoring)	78,514	18.5%
Drug offences	65,096	15.3%
Breach offences	31,838	7.5%
Miscellaneous crimes against society	26,752	6.3%
Summary motoring offences	21,088	5.0%
Violence against the person	15,087	3.6%
Possession of weapons	10,824	2.5%
Public order offences	8,789	2.1%
Criminal damage and arson	7,881	1.9%
Robbery	6,894	1.6%
Fraud offences	3,974	0.9%
Offences outside England & Wales	1,682	0.4%
Sexual offences	1,001	0.2%
Unknown	690	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>424,801</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2020*, [Offending History Data Tool: previous offence statistics](#)

Theft offences were most common, followed by summary offences (excluding motoring) and drug offences. That the most common of all previous offences were the same as the most common first primary offences suggests that drug reoffenders tend to continue committing the same types of crime after their first offence.

24% of convicted drug offenders in 2019/20 had long criminal histories (more than 15 previous cautions or convictions), compared to 7% of those cautioned for drug offences.<sup>22</sup>

Research has also shown drug misuse and reoffending to be linked. A [Ministry of Justice report](#), published in 2017, found that people with a history of drug misuse, particularly injecting drugs, were more likely to reoffend. However, those who successfully completed treatment for drug dependency were less likely to reoffend.

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<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Justice, *Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: March 2021*, [Offending History Data Tool](#). Published 20 May 2021

## 7

## Misuse of Illegal Drugs

## 7.1

### Hospital Data

**Finished admission episode (FAE)**

A finished admission episode (FAE) is the first period of inpatient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of inpatients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Drug misuse is often accompanied by mental and physical ill-health, making it a public health concern.

Data on the number of drug related hospital admissions gives an indication of the prevalence of illegal drugs in society and their potency. This is useful in presenting a more rounded view on drug crime, as police and courts crime data is limited by its dependence on offences coming to the attention of the authorities.

NHS England publish administrative data on drug related hospital admissions in [Statistics on drug misuse](#). Figures for Wales are published in Public Health Wales' [Annual Profile for Substance Misuse](#). These figures are for admissions only and do not include people who attend A&E departments but are not subsequently admitted to hospital. A hospital admission refers to a finished admission episode (see left).

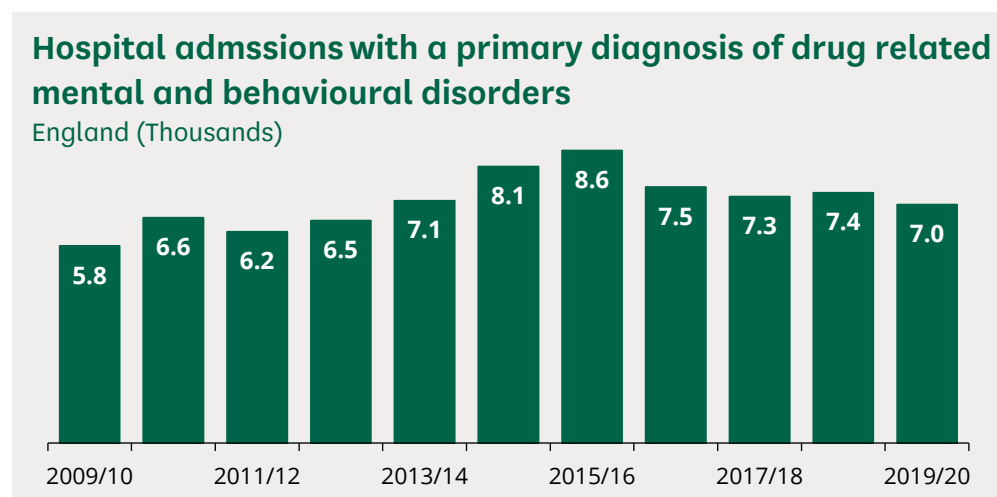
### England

When a patient is admitted to hospital, a diagnosis of their condition is recorded. Each admission episode will have one primary diagnosis (the main reason for admission). In addition, up to 19 secondary diagnoses can be recorded for relevant co-morbidities and external causes, if these have been identified.

#### Drug related mental and behavioural disorders

The chart below shows the number of hospital admissions with a primary diagnosis of drug-related mental and behavioural disorders. In 2019/20, there were 7,027 admissions (a rate of 12 per 100,000 population).<sup>23</sup> This figure has remained relatively stable compared to the previous two years but represents a 18% decrease from 2015/16 when the number of admissions peaked (8,621). Prior to this, admissions had increased in almost every year from 2008/09 (5,668).

<sup>23</sup> Rate per 100,000 population calculated using ONS mid-2018 population estimate.



Source: NHS Digital, *Statistics on drug misuse, Drug related hospital admission 2019-20: Excel data tables, Table 2.1*. Accessed 13/10/2021

The largest proportion of those admitted with a primary diagnosis of drug related mental and behavioural disorders in 2019/20 were aged between 25 to 34 (31%). Those aged 65 to 74 and 75 and over were the least likely to be admitted, with each age group accounting for just 1% of hospital episodes.<sup>24</sup>

### Poisoning by drug misuse

The chart below shows that there were 16,994 hospital admissions with a primary diagnosis of poisoning by drug misuse in 2019/20 (30 per 100,000 population). This is a 6% increase from 2018/19 and 10% higher than 2012/13. In April 2012, drug poisoning definitions were revised to include the drug Tramadol for the first time. This resulted in a significant number of additional admissions, and so data from 2012/13 is not directly comparable with data prior to then.

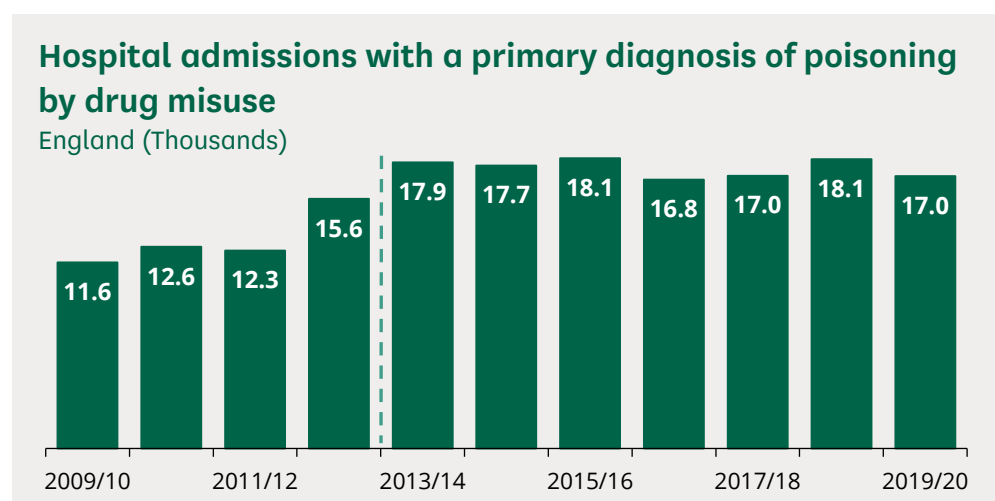
Although admissions among older people are lower, numbers are rising for primary diagnoses of both drug poisoning and mental and behavioural disorders (see appendix tables A6a and A6b). Between 2012/13 and 2019/20, admissions for drug poisoning increased by 29% for those aged 45 and over, compared to 1.4% for those under the age of 45.<sup>25</sup>

More men than women were admitted to hospital for drug related mental and behavioural disorders (74% male), but similar proportions of each sex were admitted due to poisoning by drug misuse (51% male).<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See appendix table 6a.

<sup>25</sup> NHS Digital, *Statistics on drug misuse*, 28 January 2021.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*



Source: : NHS Digital, *Statistics on drug misuse, Drug related hospital admission 2019-20: Excel data tables, Table 2.1, Accessed 13 October 2021*

## Treatment

Statistics on drug treatment in England are collected and published by the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS). These figures cover adults and young people accessing drug treatment in community settings and in the prison system: [NDTMS Alcohol and drug misuse and treatment statistics](#).

The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) collects data on individuals receiving treatment for alcohol and drug misuse in England. This shows that in 2019/20, there were 132,124 adults in treatment for drug misuse. This figure has remained stable since the previous year. Prior to this, it saw a 40% decrease from a peak of 225,751 in 2009/10.<sup>27</sup> NDTMS data for children and young people shows that in 2007/08 there were 15,316 under 18's in treatment for drug misuse.<sup>28</sup> This figure remained fairly stable until 2014/15 and has since declined to 14,291 in 2019/20.<sup>29</sup>

## Wales

### Drug related mental and behavioural disorders

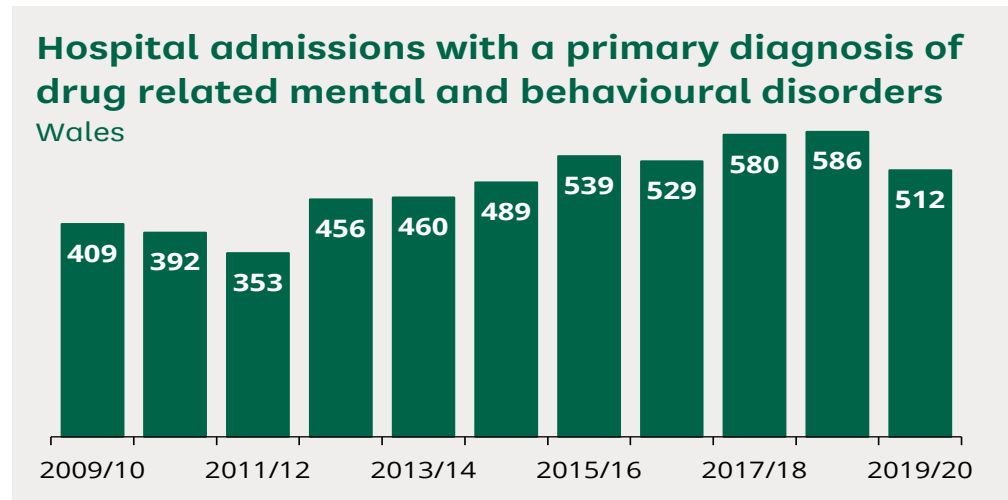
The chart below shows the number of hospital episodes with a primary diagnosis of drug related mental and behavioural disorders in Wales.

<sup>27</sup> PHE, *Adult substance misuse statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS)*, Table 11.1, 7 November 2019

<sup>28</sup> Figure calculated by subtracting the number in treatment with alcohol as the primary substance from the total number in treatment.

<sup>29</sup> PHE, *Young People's Statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS)*, 29 January 2021

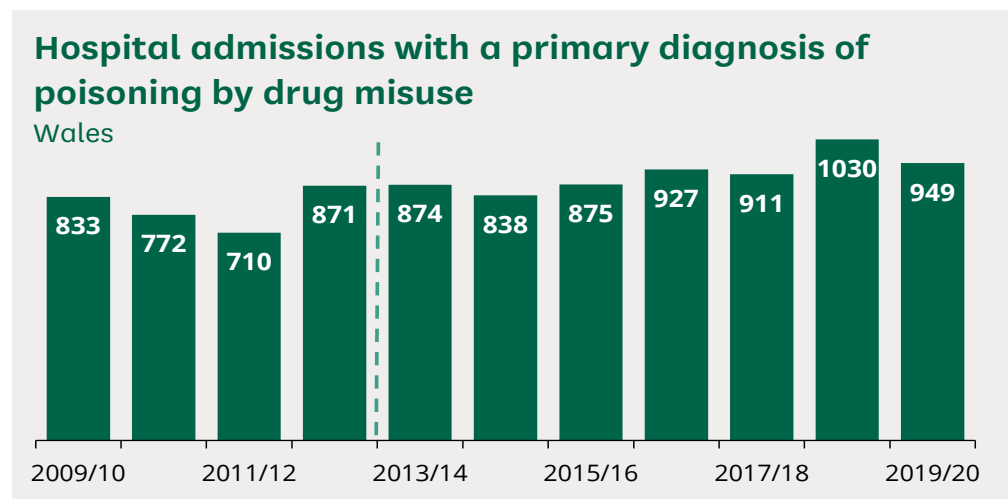
Hospital episodes have increased by 43% since 2008/09, to a peak of 586,000 in 2018/19 (a rate of 19 per 100,000 population). Hospital episodes fell slightly in 2019/20 to 512,000 a 12% decrease



Source: NHS Wales Information Service, [Primary Diagnosis, Welsh residents 2019/20](#). Accessed 18/10/2021

### Poisoning by drug misuse

The chart overleaf shows the number of hospital admissions with a primary diagnosis of poisoning by drug misuse in Wales. This data also features the same break in the time series as England due to the classification of Tramadol as a controlled substance. Since 2012/13, hospital episodes have increased by 10% to 949 (30 per 100,000 population).



Source: NHS Wales Information Service, [Primary Diagnosis, Welsh residents 2019/20](#). Accessed 18/10/2021

### Treatment

The most recent figures on general drug treatment programmes are available from the Welsh Government's publication [Substance misuse in Wales 2018 to 2019: treatment data](#). In 2018/19, the most recently available data, there were



7,791 clients commencing treatment for drugs in Wales, up 2.8% from 7,579 in 2017/18. However, this figure has seen a decrease of 5.6% since 2014/15, when there were 8,249 drug clients.

In addition, Wales has a National Naloxone Programme. Naloxone is a medicine known as an 'opioid antagonist' that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. In Wales, take-home naloxone kits are given to eligible individuals who have been in contact with drug treatment services in the community or in prisons, as well as to some family members, carers and professionals working with people who are at risk of opioid poisoning.

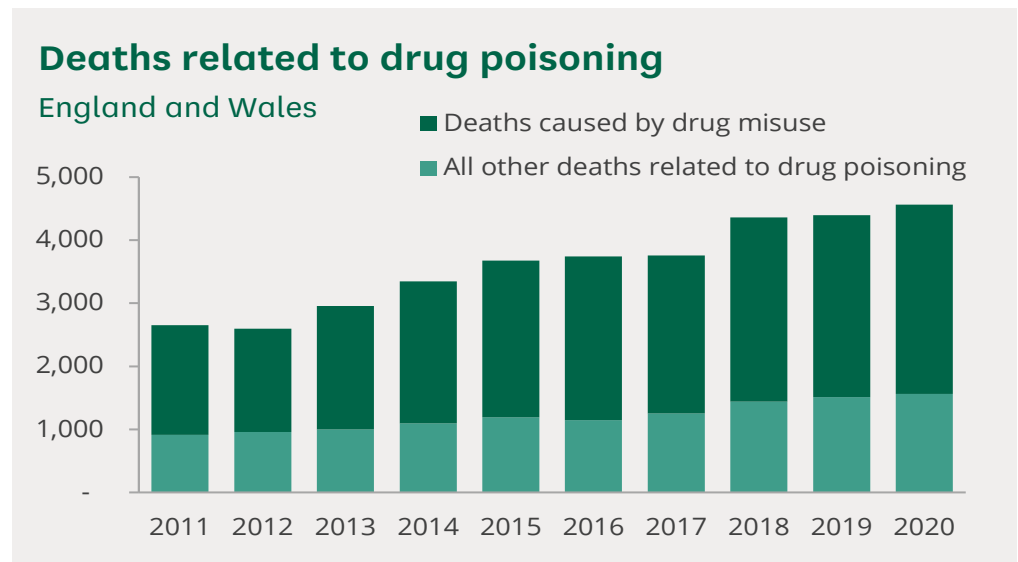
The [Wales Naloxone Programme monitoring report](#) gives information on the number of take-home naloxone kits issued by the programme up until 2017/18 (the most recent data available). Since 1 July 2009, 19,159 take-home naloxone kits have been issued to 7,674 individuals. In 2017/18, 1,372 new individuals were supplied with kits and 1,689 existing take-home naloxone kit holders were re-supplied. Of recorded incidents when take-home naloxone was used in 2017/18, less than 1% were fatal.

## 7.2 Drug related deaths

The Office for National Statistics publishes a consistent time-series of drug related deaths in England and Wales from 1993 onwards: [Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales](#).

While drug crime and drug misuse have decreased over recent years, deaths related to drugs have increased to their highest level since 1993. However, data prior to 2011 is not directly comparable.

The chart below shows that the number of deaths related to drug poisoning have increased year on year from 2,652 in 2011 to 4,561 in 2020. This represents a 72% increase. 2020 saw a 4% increase in deaths compared to 2019.

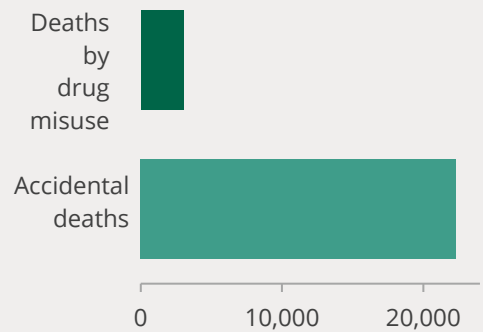


Note: The definition of a drug misuse death is one where either the underlying cause is drug abuse or drug dependence, or the underlying cause is drug poisoning and any of the substances controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 are involved.

Source: ONS [Deaths registered in England and Wales](#), Table 1, 2020, Accessed 18 October 2021

The chart distinguishes between deaths resulting from drug misuse, and all other deaths related to drug poisoning. Deaths caused by drug misuse have seen an increase over this period, both in terms of the number of deaths and as a proportion of total deaths related to drug poisoning. In 1993, deaths related to drug misuse accounted for 38% of deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales (831 deaths); in 2020, this had increased to 66% (2,996).

### Drug misuse accounted for 13% of accidental deaths in 2020



See appendix table A7 for full data on drug related deaths in England and Wales, broken down by country.

Source: ONS [Deaths registered in England and Wales](#), Table 1, 2020

The chart to the right compares the number of deaths caused by drug misuse to the total number of accidental deaths in 2020 (the most recent data available).<sup>30</sup> In 2020, 13% of accidental deaths were the result of drug misuse.

<sup>30</sup> Accidental death refers to death caused by injury, poisoning and other external causes (as categorised by the ONS).

## 8 Appendix

### A1. Stop & search

By reason for search, England and Wales

period	Reason for search										Total
	Drugs		Offensive weapons		Stolen property		Going equipped		Other		
	Number	of total	Number	of total	Number	of total	Number	total	Number	total	
<b>Year ending March</b>											
2006/07	406,451	39%	96,320	9%	213,694	20%	117,608	11%	216,365	21%	<b>1,050,438</b>
2007/08	486,226	39%	99,223	8%	213,425	17%	120,900	10%	313,434	25%	<b>1,233,208</b>
2008/09	541,294	36%	139,047	9%	211,110	14%	133,045	9%	495,065	33%	<b>1,519,561</b>
2009/10	568,578	40%	120,764	9%	213,779	15%	149,995	11%	352,869	25%	<b>1,405,985</b>
2010/11	598,223	46%	122,523	9%	236,967	18%	156,501	12%	189,326	15%	<b>1,303,540</b>
2011/12	575,350	48%	101,212	9%	240,317	20%	152,784	13%	120,219	10%	<b>1,189,882</b>
2012/13	516,760	51%	74,369	7%	215,995	21%	141,696	14%	68,722	7%	<b>1,017,542</b>
2013/14	477,195	53%	60,630	7%	188,642	21%	122,012	13%	55,559	6%	<b>904,038</b>
2014/15	317,970	59%	38,175	7%	94,304	17%	59,411	11%	31,284	6%	<b>541,144</b>
2015/16	233,409	61%	35,573	9%	59,178	15%	37,853	10%	17,582	5%	<b>383,595</b>
2016/17	188,817	62%	32,860	11%	40,553	13%	27,094	9%	14,808	5%	<b>304,132</b>
2017/18	168,384	60%	39,050	14%	35,334	13%	24,010	9%	15,602	6%	<b>282,380</b>
2018/19	225,366	59%	60,091	16%	38,968	10%	30,317	8%	28,887	8%	<b>383,629</b>
2019/20	350,894	63%	89,450	16%	57,169	10%	40,392	7%	21,068	4%	<b>558,973</b>
<b>% Change</b>											
2019/20	+55.7%		+48.9%		+46.7%		+33.2%		-27.1%		+45.7%
2019/20	-13.7%		-7.1%		-73.2%		-65.7%		-90.3%		-46.8%

### Resultant Arrests

Year	Number	% of searches	Number	% of searches	Number	% of searches	Number	% of searches	Number	% of searches	Total
2006/07	33,030	8%	10,498	11%	25,099	12%	7,085	6%	37,544	17%	<b>113,256</b>
2007/08	44,075	9%	12,553	13%	30,147	14%	8,739	7%	28,204	9%	<b>123,718</b>
2008/09	41,159	8%	12,785	9%	27,748	13%	8,030	6%	29,047	6%	<b>118,769</b>
2009/10	39,928	7%	12,146	10%	26,323	12%	8,452	6%	24,267	7%	<b>111,116</b>
2010/11	42,166	7%	12,955	11%	29,235	12%	9,328	6%	22,045	12%	<b>115,729</b>
2011/12	43,292	8%	12,213	12%	30,259	13%	9,152	6%	13,959	12%	<b>108,875</b>
2012/13	43,325	8%	11,924	16%	29,350	14%	9,116	6%	12,111	18%	<b>105,826</b>
2013/14	44,875	9%	12,269	20%	30,710	16%	9,559	8%	10,938	20%	<b>108,351</b>
2014/15	35,072	11%	8,416	22%	18,635	20%	6,150	10%	6,527	21%	<b>74,800</b>
2015/16	31,079	13%	7,639	21%	13,010	22%	5,405	14%	3,155	18%	<b>60,288</b>
2016/17	27,223	14%	7,098	22%	9,785	24%	4,519	17%	3,291	22%	<b>51,916</b>
2017/18	21,849	13%	6,927	18%	8,268	23%	2,393	10%	8,876	57%	<b>48,313</b>
2018/19	27,364	12%	8,435	14%	8,705	22%	3,216	11%	11,156	39%	<b>58,876</b>
2019/20	34,734	10%	10,048	11%	11,361	20%	3,784	9%	13,496	64%	<b>73,423</b>
<b>% Change</b>											
2019/20	+26.9%		+19.1%		+30.5%		+17.7%		+21.0%		+24.7%
2019/20	+5.2%		-4.3%		-54.7%		-46.6%		-64.1%		-48.0%

Source: Police powers and procedures England and Wales year ending 31 March 2020 [Stop and search open data tables](#)

**A2: Police recorded drug crime**

By offence category, England and Wales (year ending March)

Time period	Trafficking in controlled drugs	Possession of controlled drugs	<i>Of which: Possession excluding cannabis</i>	<i>Of which: Possession of cannabis</i>	<i>Of which: Other drug offences</i>	<b>Total drug offences</b>
2004/05	24,190	121,647	32,603	88,263	781	<b>145,837</b>
2005/06	25,276	153,203	32,685	119,917	601	<b>178,479</b>
2006/07	26,550	167,683	36,608	130,395	680	<b>194,233</b>
2007/08	28,323	201,590	42,519	158,254	817	<b>229,913</b>
2008/09	29,885	213,651	44,578	167,950	1,123	<b>243,536</b>
2009/10	33,223	202,361	38,439	162,800	1,122	<b>235,584</b>
2010/11	32,336	200,586	38,711	160,733	1,142	<b>232,922</b>
2011/12	31,316	197,783	36,453	160,203	1,127	<b>229,099</b>
2012/13	29,746	178,257	34,596	142,627	1,034	<b>208,003</b>
2013/14	29,348	168,868	34,066	133,604	1,198	<b>198,216</b>
2014/15	27,368	143,321	32,245	110,297	779	<b>170,689</b>
2015/16	26,048	123,571	29,382	93,595	594	<b>149,619</b>
2016/17	25,928	113,235	27,413	84,737	1,085	<b>139,163</b>
2017/18	27,055	111,314	27,770	82,736	808	<b>138,369</b>
2018/19	28,288	120,174	29,969	89,446	759	<b>148,462</b>
2019/20	31,960	143,185	32,340	110,085	760	<b>175,145</b>
2020/21	42,461	166,500	31,645	133,805	1,050	<b>208,961</b>
<b>% Change</b>						
2019/20-2020/21	+32.9%	+16.3%	-2.1%	+21.5%	+38.2%	+19.3%

Note: Following the implementation of a new IT system in July 2019, Greater Manchester Police have been unable to supply data for the period July 2019 to March 2020. Figures for Greater Manchester are not included for the years ending March 2019 and 2020

Source: ONS, Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables, 15/10/2021 Table 4a

**A3a: Police recorded drug crime**

By police force area, England and Wales

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		Change per 1,000 population
	Number	Offences per 1,000 population	Number	Offences per 1,000 population	Number	Offences per 1,000 population	change 2019/20 - 2020/21
Cleveland	1,333	2.4	1,797	3.2	2,445	4.3	+1.1
Durham	1,344	2.1	1,461	2.3	1,490	2.3	+0.0
Northumberland	3,236	2.2	3,285	2.3	3,525	2.4	+0.2
<b>North East</b>	<b>5,913</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>6,543</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>7,460</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>+0.3</b>
Cheshire	2,084	2.0	1,991	1.9	2,034	1.9	+0.0
Cumbria	1,007	2.0	922	1.8	1,144	2.3	+0.4
Greater Manchester	5,435	1.9	-	-	8,714	3.1	-
Lancashire	2,211	1.5	2,539	1.7	3,118	2.1	+0.4
Merseyside	8,639	6.1	11,804	8.3	13,177	9.2	+0.9
<b>North West</b>	<b>19,376</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>17,256</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>19,473</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>-0.0</b>
Humberside	1,440	1.5	1,649	1.8	2,285	2.4	+0.7
North Yorkshire	1,588	1.9	1,648	2.0	1,900	2.3	+0.3
South Yorkshire	2,733	2.0	3,564	2.5	4,544	3.2	+0.7
West Yorkshire	6,538	2.8	7,723	3.3	8,900	3.8	+0.5
<b>Yorkshire and the Humber</b>	<b>12,299</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>14,584</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>17,629</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>+0.5</b>
Derbyshire	2,293	2.2	2,321	2.2	2,693	2.5	+0.3
Leicestershire	1,880	1.7	2,984	2.7	3,453	3.1	+0.4
Lincolnshire	1,905	2.5	1,842	2.4	1,791	2.4	-0.1
Northamptonshire	1,675	2.3	1,853	2.5	1,873	2.5	+0.0
Nottinghamshire	3,754	3.3	4,835	4.2	4,385	3.8	-0.4
<b>East Midlands</b>	<b>11,507</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>13,835</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>14,195</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>+0.1</b>
Staffordshire	1,920	1.7	2,005	1.8	1,610	1.4	-0.4
Warwickshire	895	1.6	928	1.6	1,394	2.4	+0.8
West Mercia	2,091	1.6	2,309	1.8	2,743	2.1	+0.3
West Midlands	4,790	1.7	5,855	2.0	6,250	2.1	+0.1
<b>West Midlands Region</b>	<b>9,696</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>11,097</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>11,997</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>+0.1</b>
Bedfordshire	1,432	2.2	1,511	2.3	1,887	2.8	+0.5
Cambridgeshire	1,349	1.6	1,663	2.0	2,168	2.5	+0.6
Essex	4,111	2.3	6,077	3.3	7,261	3.9	+0.6
Hertfordshire	3,082	2.6	2,993	2.5	3,038	2.6	+0.0
Norfolk	2,421	2.7	2,741	3.0	2,772	3.1	+0.0
Suffolk	1,344	1.8	1,796	2.4	1,857	2.4	+0.1
<b>East of England</b>	<b>13,739</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>16,781</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>18,983</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>+0.3</b>
City of London	485	-	725	-	609	6.1	-
Metropolitan Police	37,765	4.3	47,985	5.4	54,723	6.1	-5.4
<b>London</b>	<b>38,250</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>48,710</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>55,332</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>+0.7</b>
Hampshire	3,895	2.0	4,615	2.3	6,069	3.0	+0.7
Kent	3,059	1.7	3,890	2.1	4,491	2.4	+0.3
Surrey	2,992	2.5	3,028	2.5	3,500	2.9	+0.4
Sussex	3,658	2.2	4,191	2.5	4,912	2.9	+0.4
Thames Valley	5,021	2.1	6,025	2.5	7,495	3.1	+0.6
<b>South East</b>	<b>18,625</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>21,749</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>26,467</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>+0.5</b>
Avon and Somerset	2,816	1.7	3,590	2.1	3,757	2.2	+0.1
Devon and Cornwall	4,180	2.4	4,224	2.4	5,084	2.9	+0.5
Dorset	1,604	2.1	1,438	1.9	1,390	1.8	-0.1
Gloucestershire	1,036	1.6	1,280	2.0	1,616	2.5	+0.5
Wiltshire	1,151	1.6	1,570	2.2	1,589	2.2	+0.0
<b>South West</b>	<b>10,787</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>12,102</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>13,436</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>+0.2</b>
Dyfed-Powys	1,880	3.6	2,005	3.9	2,186	4.2	+0.3
Gwent	1,469	2.5	1,518	2.6	1,829	3.1	+0.5
North Wales	1,369	2.0	1,607	2.3	1,856	2.7	+0.4
South Wales	4,256	3.2	4,552	3.4	5,423	4.0	+0.6
<b>WALES</b>	<b>8,974</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>9,682</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>11,294</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>+0.5</b>
<b>British Transport Police</b>	2,305	-	2,806	-	-	-	-
<b>ENGLAND AND WALES</b>	<b>151,471</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>175,145</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>196,266</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>+0.4</b>

Notes: Total rate for England and Wales includes offences recorded by British Transport Police. However, no rates are given for British Transport Police as their data are not provided for specified geographical areas.

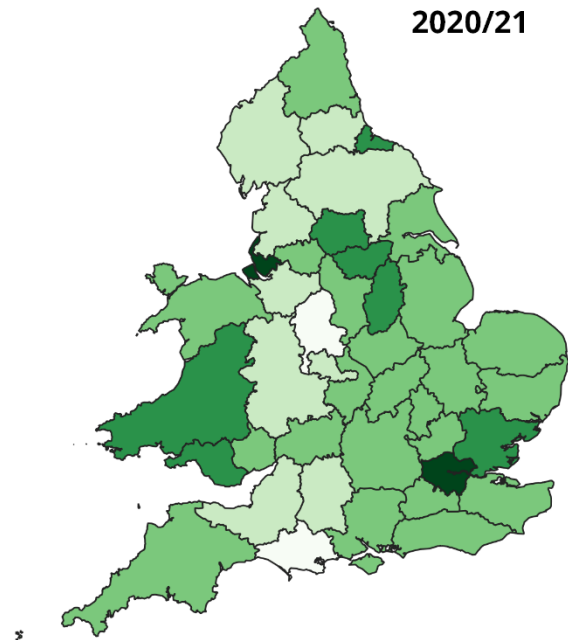
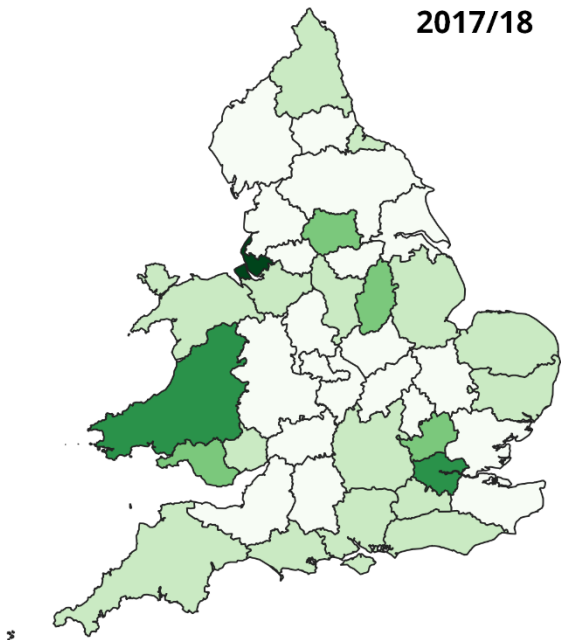
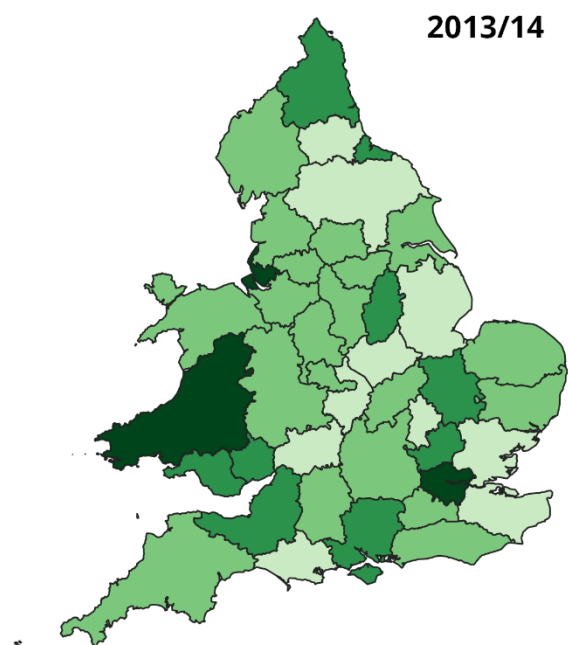
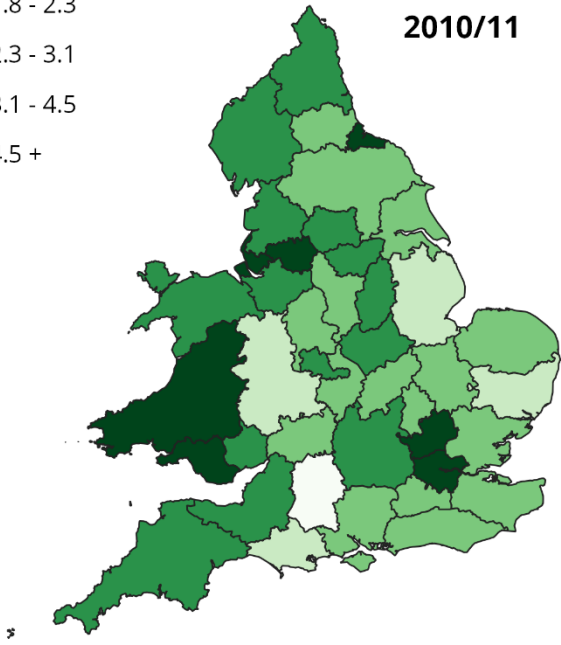
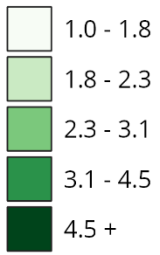
Rates for London include 'City of London'. Rates for City of London have been suppressed due to the small population size of the police force area.

Following the implementation of a new IT system in July 2019, Greater Manchester Police have been unable to supply data for the period July 2019 to March 2020. Figures for Greater Manchester are not included in the National and Regional totals for 2019/20.

# A3b. Drug offences recorded by the police

2010/11 - 2019/20, England and Wales

Rate of offences  
per 1,000 population



## A3c. Police recorded drug crime by London Borough

London Borough	2019/20			2020/21			Changes in Total from 2019/20
	Total	Drug Trafficking	Possession	Total	Drug Trafficking	Possession	
Westminster	3,568	116	3,452	3,221	306	2,915	-10%
Tower Hamlets	2,353	94	2,259	3,209	441	2,768	+36%
Newham	3,061	162	2,899	3,048	232	2,816	-0%
Croydon	2,524	149	2,375	2,655	177	2,478	+5%
Lambeth	2,157	114	2,043	2,470	207	2,263	+15%
Southwark	2,474	115	2,359	2,467	126	2,341	-0%
Brent	1,724	81	1,643	2,413	168	2,245	+40%
Ealing	1,668	94	1,574	2,288	236	2,052	+37%
Greenwich	1,373	78	1,295	2,036	118	1,918	+48%
Camden	1,981	75	1,906	1,795	146	1,649	-9%
Hillingdon	1,327	73	1,254	1,793	159	1,634	+35%
Redbridge	1,396	104	1,292	1,792	201	1,591	+28%
Waltham Forest	1,785	82	1,703	1,768	106	1,662	-1%
Haringey	1,597	105	1,492	1,751	269	1,482	+10%
Hackney	1,632	80	1,552	1,728	132	1,596	+6%
Barking & Dagenham	1,183	86	1,097	1,711	157	1,554	+45%
Hounslow	1,613	100	1,513	1,653	173	1,480	+2%
Lewisham	1,408	246	1,162	1,575	136	1,439	+12%
Enfield	1,075	149	926	1,525	181	1,344	+42%
Islington	1,386	84	1,302	1,440	84	1,356	+4%
Wandsworth	1,160	84	1,076	1,422	106	1,316	+23%
Hammersmith & Fulham	1,095	35	1,060	1,278	65	1,213	+17%
Bromley	1,112	43	1,069	1,268	88	1,180	+14%
Kensington & Chelsea	1,301	30	1,271	1,247	46	1,201	-4%
Barnet	829	93	736	1,226	147	1,079	+48%
Havering	792	53	739	1,194	87	1,107	+51%
Harrow	807	57	750	1,171	99	1,072	+45%
Kingston upon Thames	942	115	827	1,129	83	1,046	+20%
Bexley	681	27	654	932	74	858	+37%
Merton	774	44	730	932	67	865	+20%
Sutton	570	26	544	794	47	747	+39%
Richmond upon Thames	384	25	359	627	29	598	+63%
Heathrow Airport	74	1	73	40	4	36	-46%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>47,806</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>44,986</b>	<b>55,598</b>	<b>4,697</b>	<b>50,901</b>	<b>16%</b>

Source: [Metropolitan Police, 2020/21 Crime Statistics](#) Accessed 12 October 2021



## A4. Number of drug offenders receiving a caution or sentence

### England and Wales

	Total England and Wales	Caution <sup>1,8</sup>	Sentence <sup>2,3</sup> <sup>4,5</sup>	Immediate custody	Suspended sentence	Community sentence	Fine <sup>6</sup>	Absolute discharge	Conditional discharge	Compen- sation	Otherwise dealt with <sup>7</sup>
2008/09	<b>101,480</b>	47,180	54,300	9,384	2,857	12,879	19,033	377	7,696	1	2,073
2009/10	<b>100,037</b>	42,120	57,917	9,625	3,337	13,534	21,404	371	7,601	0	2,045
2010/11	<b>103,994</b>	41,749	62,245	9,716	3,963	13,369	23,926	423	8,701	3	2,144
2011/12	<b>102,773</b>	42,330	60,443	9,809	4,342	12,490	22,929	429	8,164	1	2,279
2012/13	<b>95,464</b>	38,860	56,604	8,857	4,265	10,987	20,624	389	9,163	4	2,315
2013/14	<b>90,952</b>	35,591	55,361	8,997	5,291	8,790	20,725	341	9,026	4	2,187
2014/15	<b>79,046</b>	28,807	50,239	8,611	5,680	6,949	19,079	320	8,019	0	1,581
2015/16	<b>67,358</b>	22,378	44,980	8,846	5,514	6,386	15,815	395	7,018	0	1,006
2016/17	<b>59,562</b>	18,505	41,057	8,706	4,870	5,540	14,814	184	5,516	0	1,427
2017/18	<b>51,068</b>	15,514	35,554	8,107	3,966	4,414	12,897	208	4,603	0	1,359
2018/19	<b>48,877</b>	14,400	34,477	7,636	3,027	4,377	13,270	184	4,673	0	1,310
2019/20 <sup>9</sup>	-	-	39,039	9,499	3,814	4,370	14,632	200	4,960	0	1,564
2020/21 <sup>9</sup>	-	-	34,964	8,456	4,274	3,230	13,272	195	4,017	0	1,520

#### Notes:

1. The cautions statistics relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When an offender has been cautioned for two or more offences at the same time the principal offence is the more serious offence.
2. Persons sentenced at all courts; excludes other offenders, i.e. companies, public bodies, etc.
3. Data relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.
4. Data are given on a principal disposal basis - i.e. reporting the most severe sentence for the principal offence.
5. Excludes data for Cardiff magistrates' court for April, July and August 2008.
6. Due to limitations in data supply, fine data from magistrates' courts has been omitted from Ministry of Justice data since 2009 of values between £10,000 and £99,999.
7. Including restriction orders, hospital orders, guardianship orders, police cells, and other disposals.
8. Due to issues caused by the pandemic preventing collection of data my MoJ analysts, Caution data is not available for the FY 2019/20, 2020/21
9. Due to no data for cautions being available for 19/20 and 20/21 totals for England and Wales are not provided as they are simply equivalent to the sentence data. Totals are therefore incomparable with any time period before 2019/20

Source: Ministry of Justice, [Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly March 2021](#), 3 September 2021,.

## A5. Number of defendants proceeded against/sentenced for drug offences and length of custodial sentence received

Proceeded against at magistrates' courts, found guilty and sentenced at all courts

	Cautions	Proceeded against	Found guilty	Total sentenced <sup>(5)</sup>	Immediate custody		Length of immediate custodial sentence							Average custodial sentence length (months)	Of which: for trafficking offences	Of which: for possession offences
					Number	% of total proven offenders <sup>(6)</sup>	Up to 3 months	Over 3 months up to 6 months	Over 6 months up to 1 year	Over 1 year up to 2 years	Over 2 years up to 3 years	Over 3 years up to 5 years	Over 5 years <sup>7</sup>			
2004	32,621	44,120	39,198	39,147	7,981	11.1%	813	528	773	1,355	1,329	2,082	1,101	37.3	42.2	8.2
2005	34,390	43,382	39,091	38,899	7,783	10.6%	825	648	714	1,479	1,346	1,602	1,169	35.8	40.8	6.9
2006	37,426	43,985	39,582	39,478	7,532	9.8%	901	566	711	1,593	1,376	1,424	961	33.8	38.8	6.8
2007	43,050	48,923	44,565	44,500	8,186	9.4%	1070	535	881	1,821	1,497	1,444	938	31.9	37.1	4.9
2008	47,038	56,953	52,943	52,911	9,488	9.5%	1,257	524	874	2,313	1,726	1,649	1,145	32.7	37.9	5.3
2009	43,808	61,685	56,831	56,656	9,426	9.4%	1,147	458	936	2,476	1,739	1,590	1,080	32.1	36.7	5.6
2010	40,721	67,772	61,979	61,435	9,693	9.5%	1,293	514	998	2,538	1,730	1,657	963	30.7	35.3	4.0
2011	43,056	67,650	61,657	61,094	9,788	9.4%	1,301	596	1,193	2,388	1,684	1,575	1,051	30.7	35.1	4.0
2012	39,783	63,618	58,125	57,601	9,011	9.3%	1,144	608	1,155	2,134	1,725	1,439	806	28.7	32.5	4.1
2013	36,386	63,766	57,012	56,323	9,024	9.7%	1,127	518	1,169	1,911	1,865	1,508	926	31.2	35.5	3.2
2014	30,825	57,562	51,814	51,297	8,756	10.7%	1,126	511	1,059	1,574	1,945	1,510	1,031	32.1	36.8	3.3
2015	23,330	51,030	46,810	46,242	8,618	12.4%	990	449	1,029	1,471	1,979	1,558	1,142	34.1	38.5	3.4
2016	19,457	45,458	42,632	41,831	8,860	14.5%	971	416	911	1,414	2,273	1,714	1,161	34.6	39.0	3.5
2017	15,956	42,072	38,111	37,221	8,342	15.7%	961	369	687	1,230	2,150	1,824	1,121	35.6	40.5	4.2
2018	14,523	38,797	35,133	34,080	7,766	16.0%	857	316	651	1,033	2,066	1,777	1,066	36.6	41.4	4.0
2019	-	43,918	39,332	38,219	8,899	-	851	295	680	1,161	2,349	2,092	1,471	39.2	43.4	4.1
2020	-	43,240	35,426	34,226	8,388	-	616	297	721	1,084	2,368	1,887	1,415	39.6	43.6	3.9

Notes: The publishing of more cautions data for 2019 has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The figures given in the pivot table relate to defendants for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

Source: Ministry of Justice, Criminal Justice system Statistics quarterly: December 2020, [Outcomes by offence data tool](#), Accessed 13/10/2021

## A6a. Finished admission episodes with a primary diagnosis of drug related mental and behavioural disorders

by age, England

Year	All ages <sup>6</sup>	% Under 16	% 16 to 24	% 25 to 34	% 35 to 44	% 45 to 54	% 55 to 64	% 65 to 74	75 and over
2008/09	<b>5,668</b>	1%	21%	39%	28%	8%	2%	1%	1%
2009/10	<b>5,809</b>	2%	21%	38%	27%	9%	2%	1%	1%
2010/11	<b>6,640</b>	1%	22%	35%	29%	10%	2%	1%	1%
2011/12	<b>6,227</b>	2%	23%	34%	27%	11%	3%	1%	1%
2012/13	<b>6,549</b>	2%	25%	33%	26%	10%	3%	1%	1%
2013/14	<b>7,139</b>	2%	25%	32%	25%	11%	2%	1%	1%
2014/15	<b>8,149</b>	2%	25%	32%	24%	12%	3%	1%	1%
2015/16	<b>8,621</b>	2%	26%	33%	23%	11%	2%	1%	1%
2016/17	<b>7,545</b>	2%	23%	33%	26%	11%	2%	1%	1%
2017/18	<b>7,258</b>	3%	24%	33%	24%	11%	3%	1%	1%
2018/19	<b>7,376</b>	2%	23%	31%	25%	12%	3%	1%	1%
2019/20	<b>7,027</b>	3%	23%	31%	25%	12%	4%	1%	1%

Notes: The data is based on the tenth revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), Codes F11-F16, F18, F19.

Data excludes patients resident outside of England.

All ages admissions total may include a small number of records where the age was unknown.

## A6b. Finished admission episodes with a primary diagnosis of poisoning by drug misuse

by age, England

Year	All ages <sup>6</sup>	% Under 16	% 16 to 24	% 25 to 34	% 35 to 44	% 45 to 54	% 55 to 64	% 65 to 74	% 75 and over
2008/09	<b>11,090</b>	6%	25%	25%	23%	11%	5%	2%	3%
2009/10	<b>11,618</b>	6%	25%	24%	22%	13%	6%	2%	3%
2010/11	<b>12,586</b>	6%	26%	23%	21%	13%	5%	3%	3%
2011/12	<b>12,346</b>	6%	24%	23%	21%	14%	6%	3%	4%
2012/13	<b>15,580</b>	5%	22%	22%	22%	15%	6%	3%	4%
2013/14	<b>17,864</b>	6%	22%	23%	21%	16%	6%	3%	3%
2014/15	<b>17,658</b>	6%	21%	23%	21%	16%	7%	3%	4%
2015/16	<b>18,128</b>	5%	20%	23%	21%	16%	6%	4%	4%
2016/17	<b>16,791</b>	6%	18%	23%	21%	17%	8%	4%	4%
2017/18	<b>17,031</b>	6%	19%	23%	20%	16%	8%	4%	4%
2018/19	<b>18,053</b>	6%	19%	22%	20%	17%	8%	4%	4%
2019/20	<b>16,994</b>	6%	18%	22%	20%	17%	8%	4%	4%

Notes: On the April 1st 2012 the ICD-10 code T40.4 'poisoning by other synthetic narcotics' was reclassified to include the drug Tramadol, which has since been classified as a controlled substance. This resulted in a significant number of additional admissions being recorded against the code T40.4, and so data from 2012/13 will not be directly comparable with data prior to then. See the Data Quality Statement for more information

Source: NHS Digital, *Statistics on drug misuse*, [Drug related hospital admission 2019-20: Excel data tables, Table 2.1](#). Accessed 13/10/2021

**A7: Deaths relating to drug poisoning**

## England and Wales

	All drug poisoning			of which: Drug misuse			Drug misuse as % of Deaths			% change on prev. year
	England & Wales	England	Wales	England & Wales	England	Wales	England & Wales	England	Wales	
1993	<b>2,178</b>	2,069	94	831	787	33	38%	38%	35%	-
1994	<b>2,350</b>	2,226	111	967	926	36	41%	42%	32%	+8%
1995	<b>2,540</b>	2,388	127	1,089	1,026	47	43%	43%	37%	+8%
1996	<b>2,618</b>	2,478	120	1,166	1,107	46	45%	45%	38%	+3%
1997	<b>2,817</b>	2,644	145	1,320	1,240	61	47%	47%	42%	+8%
1998	<b>2,976</b>	2,811	149	1,474	1,405	57	50%	50%	38%	+6%
1999	<b>3,110</b>	2,932	158	1,662	1,569	76	53%	54%	48%	+5%
2000	<b>2,932</b>	2,758	152	1,654	1,557	81	56%	56%	53%	-6%
2001	<b>3,093</b>	2,884	187	1,851	1,735	99	60%	60%	53%	+5%
2002	<b>2,830</b>	2,624	183	1,669	1,558	91	59%	59%	50%	-9%
2003	<b>2,623</b>	2,425	181	1,480	1,358	111	56%	56%	61%	-7%
2004	<b>2,787</b>	2,606	161	1,565	1,479	73	56%	57%	45%	+6%
2005	<b>2,762</b>	2,589	156	1,675	1,567	95	61%	61%	61%	-1%
2006	<b>2,570</b>	2,396	157	1,637	1,523	102	64%	64%	65%	-7%
2007	<b>2,640</b>	2,433	189	1,809	1,668	125	69%	69%	66%	+3%
2008	<b>2,928</b>	2,734	161	2,004	1,862	115	68%	68%	71%	+11%
2009	<b>2,878</b>	2,675	184	1,976	1,826	137	69%	68%	74%	-2%
2010	<b>2,747</b>	2,509	224	1,903	1,734	162	69%	69%	72%	-5%
2011	<b>2,652</b>	2,425	215	1,737	1,582	148	65%	65%	69%	-3%
2012	<b>2,597</b>	2,367	214	1,636	1,492	135	63%	63%	63%	-2%
2013	<b>2,955</b>	2,734	208	1,957	1,812	135	66%	66%	65%	+14%
2014	<b>3,346</b>	3,156	168	2,248	2,120	113	67%	67%	67%	+13%
2015	<b>3,674</b>	3,416	238	2,479	2,300	168	67%	67%	71%	+10%
2016	<b>3,744</b>	3,450	271	2,596	2,386	192	69%	69%	71%	+2%
2017	<b>3,756</b>	3,482	260	2,503	2,310	185	67%	66%	71%	+0%
2018	<b>4,359</b>	3,983	327	2,917	2,670	208	67%	67%	64%	+16%
2019	<b>4,393</b>	4,115	240	2,883	2,685	165	66%	65%	69%	+1%
2020	<b>4,561</b>	4,312	224	2,996	2,830	149	66%	66%	67%	+4%

Notes: The definition of a death by drug misuse is one where either the underlying cause is drug abuse or drug dependence, or the underlying cause is drug poisoning and any of the substances controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 are involved.

In January 2011 and January 2014 ONS introduced new versions of ICD-10. The change in January 2011 affected the assignment of underlying cause of death for drug-related deaths, so figures for 2011 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years

Source: ONS [Deaths registered in England and Wales, 2020](#) Table 1 Accessed 18/10/2021

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