

Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland

First Results from the 2006/2007 Drug Prevalence Survey

Bulletin 1

This bulletin presents key findings from the second drug prevalence survey of households in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. The survey sampled a representative number of people aged between 15 and 64 during late 2006 and early 2007. The survey was carried out according to standards set by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). Data relating to drug prevalence on a lifetime, last year (recent) and last month (current) basis for Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the Island of Ireland are presented in this bulletin. Statistically significant changes in prevalence rates between 2002/3 and 2006/7 are presented at the end of each results section.

Key Findings

- On the Island of Ireland one in four respondents aged 15-64 years (25%) reported taking any illegal drugs at some point in their life.
- Among all adults on the Island of Ireland, cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug; lifetime use was 23%, last year use was 7% and last month use was 3%.
- Lifetime cannabis use among all adults was 22% in Ireland and 25% in Northern Ireland; last year cannabis use was 6% in Ireland and 7% in Northern Ireland; last month use was 3% in both jurisdictions.
- In Ireland, 24% of respondents aged 15-64 years reported taking any illegal drugs in their lifetime. After cannabis (22%), the most commonly reported drugs ever used were: magic mushrooms (6%), ecstasy (5%), cocaine (5%), amphetamines (4%), poppers (3%), LSD (3%), solvents (2%), crack (0.6%) and heroin (0.4%).
- In Northern Ireland, 28% of respondents aged 15-64 years reported taking any illegal drugs at some point in their life. After cannabis (25%), the most commonly used illegal drugs were: poppers (8%), ecstasy (8%), magic mushrooms (7%), LSD (7%), amphetamines (6%), cocaine (5%), solvents (4%), heroin (0.5%) and crack (0.4%).
- Heroin and crack cocaine use were reported by less than 1% of the adult population in both jurisdictions.
- In Ireland, a higher proportion of men than women reported use of any illegal drugs, 29% compared to 19% for lifetime use, 10% compared to 5% for last year use and 4% compared to 1% for last month use.
- Similarly, in Northern Ireland illegal drug use is more common among men than women: 34% of men reported lifetime use compared to 22% of women; 14% of men reported last year use compared to 5% of women; and 5% of men reported last month use of any illegal drugs compared to 2% of women.
- In Ireland, young adults were more likely to use any illegal drugs across all time periods, lifetime, last year and last month. Lifetime use was highest among respondents aged 25-34 years (34%). Last year and last month use was highest for those aged 15-24 years, 15% and 6% respectively, thereafter use declined with age.
- A similar pattern was evident in Northern Ireland for the use of any illegal drugs. The lifetime use of respondents aged 25-34 years was highest (42%) followed by use among respondents aged 15-24 (38%). The prevalence rates for last year and last month use of any illegal drugs were highest for the youngest age band at 19% and 6%, respectively. Use also declined with age in Northern Ireland.

Comparisons between 2002/3 and 2006/7

All findings reported are statistically significant at least at the 5% level.

- In Ireland, lifetime use of any illegal drugs among all adults increased between 2002/3 and 2006/7 from 19% to 24%. Increases were observed for the lifetime use of the following drugs: cannabis (from 17% to 22%) cocaine (from 3% to 5%) and magic mushrooms (from 4% to 6%).
- In Northern Ireland, lifetime use of any illegal drugs among all adults increased between 2002/3 and 2006/7 from 20% to 28%. Increases were observed for the lifetime use of the following drugs: cannabis (from 17% to 25%), cocaine (from 2% to 5%), magic mushrooms (from 4% to 7%), poppers (from 6% to 8%), LSD (from 5% to 7%), ecstasy (from 6% to 8%) and amphetamines (from 4% to 6%).
- Overall, the gender and age differences observed in lifetime use of drugs in the 2002/3 survey were also observed in the 2006/7 survey. Men and younger age groups generally reported higher lifetime prevalence rates for any illegal drugs.

Contents

Key Findings (Ireland and Northern Ireland)	1
Introduction	3
Methodology	3
What is Prevalence?	4
Understanding the Results in this Bulletin	4
Results – Ireland	5
Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence	5
Ireland – Last Year Prevalence	5
Ireland – Last Month Prevalence	6
Ireland – Results Comparison 2002/3-2006/7	6
Results – Northern Ireland	8
Northern Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence	8
Northern Ireland – Last Year Prevalence	8
Northern Ireland – Last Month Prevalence	9
Northern Ireland – Results Comparison 2002/3-2006/7	9
Results – Island of Ireland	11
Island of Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence	11
Island of Ireland – Last Year Prevalence	11
Island of Ireland – Last Month Prevalence	12
Island of Ireland – Results Comparison 2002/3-2006/7	12

Prevalence Tables

Ireland

Table 1.1: Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (%) 2006/7	14
Table 1.2: Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (%) 2006/7	14
Table 1.3: Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (%) 2006/7	15

Northern Ireland

Table 2.1: Northern Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (%) 2006/7	15
Table 2.2: Northern Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (%) 2006/7	16
Table 2.3: Northern Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (%) 2006/7	16

Island of Ireland

Table 3.1: Island of Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (%) 2006/7	17
Table 3.2: Island of Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (%) 2006/7	17
Table 3.3: Island of Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (%) 2006/7	18

Introduction

The survey was commissioned by the National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) in Ireland and the Drug and Alcohol Information and Research Unit (DAIRU) within the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) in Northern Ireland.

The main focus of the survey was to obtain prevalence rates for key illegal drugs, such as cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine and heroin, on a lifetime (ever used), last year (recent use), and last month (current use) basis. Similar prevalence questions were also asked of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (e.g. tranquillisers); attitudinal and demographic information was also sought from respondents.

Methodology

The questionnaire and methodology for this survey were based on best practice guidelines drawn up by the EMCDDA. The questionnaires were administered through face-to-face interviews with respondents aged between 15 and 64 normally resident in households in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Thus persons outside these age ranges, or who do not normally reside in private households, have not been included in this survey. This approach is commonly used throughout the EU and because of the exclusion of those living in institutions (for example, prisons, hostels) this type of prevalence survey is usually known as a general population survey.

Fieldwork for the survey was carried out between October 2006 and May 2007 and the final achieved sample was 6,969 (4,967 in Ireland and 2,002 in Northern Ireland). The response rate for the survey was 65% in Ireland and 62% in Northern Ireland. Area based sampling was applied in Ireland. The first stage involved stratifying by Health Board¹ area in Ireland. Within the Health Board strata Electoral Divisions (EDs) were selected as areas. In Northern Ireland, the first stage involved stratifying by Health and Social Services Board areas and within the strata simple random sampling was used. The achieved sample was weighted by gender, age, former Health Board area in Ireland and Health and Social Services Board area in Northern Ireland, to maximise representativeness of the general population. The effects of stratification, clustering and weighting have been incorporated in the interval estimates (i.e. design effect adjusted). Details of the methodology have been

summarised in a paper published on the websites of the NACD (<http://www.nacd.ie/>) and the DHSSPS (<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/>) and comprehensive technical reports containing copies of the questionnaires used in each jurisdiction will be published separately.

The Research Advisory Group (RAG) decided to change from using a pen and paper interviewing technique to computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), where the interviewer records responses electronically. This technique has several advantages: interviews can be administered more quickly; human error is minimised yielding higher-quality data; and data input is managed more efficiently, thus cutting costs.²

Please Note:

- Prevalence rates for “any illegal drugs” refers to the reported use of one or more of the following: amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers or solvents – see table footnotes.
- Questions relating to Nubain® were asked only in Northern Ireland. To maintain comparability of overall illegal drug prevalence rates between Ireland and Northern Ireland, this drug is not included in the calculation of the prevalence rates for “any illegal drugs”. Prevalence rates for Nubain® are not reported in this bulletin but will be included in Bulletin 2.
- There was a change in the measurement of ‘other opiates’ in Ireland between 2002/3 and 2006/7. In 2002/3 ‘other opiates’ included 9 drugs: Opium, Temgesic®, Diconal®, Napps, MSTs®, Pethidine, DF118® (Dihydrocodeine), Buprenorphine and Morphine. In 2006/7 the category ‘other opiates’ was extended to be consistent with Northern Ireland, it included: Codeine, Kapake, Diffis, Dikes, Peach, Fentanyl (Durogesic®, Sublimaze®, Actiq®), Oxycodone (Oxycontin®, Oxynorm®), and Buprenorphine (Subutex®). The 2006/7 results for this drug category are reported in this bulletin but given the changes in measurement, comparative analysis between 2002/3 and 2006/7 is not appropriate.
- The measurement of the combined group of sedatives, tranquillisers and anti-depressants was changed between 2002/3 and 2006/7. In 2002/3 this drugs category was measured using one question while in 2006/7 two questions were used. Furthermore in 2006/7 a more expansive list of drug categories was used (see technical report for further details).
- A new weighting procedure has been applied to the Island of Ireland data to improve the quality. Therefore, some minor changes in previously published Island of Ireland prevalence rates have occurred. Revised prevalence rates for the 2002/3 Island of Ireland data together with confidence intervals will be published on the NACD website.

1 Since January 2005 the Health Boards in Ireland have undergone restructuring and are merged under one authority – the Health Service Executive. However for the purpose of comparison with 2002/3 data, we have continued to weight the data by the former Health Board areas as these correspond with the Regional Drug Task Force structures. The above reference relates to the Health Board structures detailed in: *Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland 2002/2003 Drug Prevalence Survey – Health Board (Ireland) & Health and Social Services Board (Northern Ireland) Results (Revised) Bulletin 2.*

2 EMCDDA Handbook on Population Surveys.

What is Prevalence?

The term prevalence refers to the proportion of a population who have used a drug over a particular time period. In general population surveys, prevalence is measured by asking respondents in a representative sample drawn from the population to recall their use of drugs. The three most widely used recall periods are: lifetime (ever used a drug), last year (used a drug in the last twelve months), and last month (used a drug in the last 30 days). Provided a sample is representative of the total population, prevalence information obtained from a sample can be used to infer prevalence in the population.

Lifetime prevalence refers to the proportion of the sample that reported ever having used the named drug at the time they were surveyed. A person who records lifetime prevalence may – or may not – be currently using the drug. Lifetime prevalence should not be interpreted as meaning that people have necessarily used a drug over a long period of time or that they will use the drug in the future.

Last year prevalence refers to the proportion of the sample that reported using a named drug in the year prior to the survey. For this reason, last year prevalence is often referred to as recent use.

Last month prevalence refers to the proportion of the sample that reported using a named drug in the 30 day period prior to the survey. Last month prevalence is often referred to as current use. A proportion of those reporting current use may be occasional (or first-time) users who happen to have used in the period leading up to the survey – it should therefore be appreciated that current use is not synonymous with regular use.

As with other European surveys, people over the age of 64 are excluded from this survey, as they grew up in an era when both the use and availability of illegal drugs were very limited. Therefore surveys with older people have, to date, shown very low rates of use even on a lifetime basis. This situation will change over time as the younger population grows older. Hence lifetime prevalence rates are likely to increase for a considerable period of time. When examining the data and comparing results over time, last year use is the best reflection of changes as it refers to recent use. Last month use is equally valuable as it refers to current use.

Understanding the Results in this Bulletin

Results (revised) from the first Drug Prevalence Survey were published in Bulletin 1 (2005) and gave lifetime, last year, and last month prevalence rates for key drugs for the Island of Ireland, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. This bulletin contains the same information for 2006/7 and also provides comparison information between 2002/3 and 2006/7. Results are given for all respondents, and are also presented by gender and by age. All prevalence rates presented in the accompanying tables are rounded to one decimal place and are rounded to whole numbers in the text (except for percentages less than 1%). Calculated percentage changes in prevalence rates between 2002/3 and 2006/7 are also rounded to one decimal place and reported in this format in the text. Where clarity is needed figures are reported to one decimal place for example when comparing data across jurisdictions.

As in all sample surveys, the greater the sample size the more statistically reliable are the results. Some of the differences in prevalence rates in the tables will be attributable to natural sample variations. Detailed confidence intervals for all of the figures contained in this bulletin can be found on the websites of the NACD and DHSSPS.

Invalid responses have been excluded from all analyses. Percentages may not always sum to 100 due to either the effect of rounding or where respondents could give more than one answer.

When the figure 0.0% appears it does not mean that no-one has used the drug, rather it means that in this category no respondent reported use. The confidence intervals will provide a prevalence rate for all categories of drug use.

The Island of Ireland data was derived by combining the two datasets from Northern Ireland and Ireland and calculating an independent prevalence rate for the entire island.

Statistical significance tests have been carried out on the drug prevalence data in this bulletin. These tests are used to establish the degree of confidence with which we can infer that observed changes in drug prevalence between 2002/3 and 2006/7 are not due to sampling error. In this bulletin, a significance level of 5% has been specified which means that the likelihood that sampling error accounts for the observed changes is less than 5%.

A population drug prevalence survey has limitations. The more problematic drug users may be underrepresented due to the complicated and problematic nature of their lives. Therefore population drug prevalence surveys are not used to estimate the prevalence of problem drug use (i.e. heroin or crack use). Whilst this survey includes some young people, it needs to be supplemented by a school survey of the teenage population such as the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) in Ireland or the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS) in Northern Ireland.

Results – Ireland

Key Findings

- Of all adults in Ireland nearly one in four people (24%) reported using any illegal drugs in their lifetime. Seven percent reported using any illegal drugs in the year prior to the survey; and 3% reported last month use.
- Cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug with 22% of the adult population having ever used the drug; 6% reported using cannabis in the year prior to the survey and 3% reported current use.
- Lifetime prevalence of all other illegal drugs was considerably lower than cannabis. For example, 6% reported ever using magic mushrooms, followed by ecstasy and cocaine³ (each 5%), amphetamines (4%), poppers and LSD (each 3%), while the use of solvents was reported by 2% of the adult population, less than 1% reported use of crack (0.6%) and heroin (0.4%).
- The lifetime prevalence rate for any illegal drugs was highest among those aged 25-34 years (34%) followed by those aged 15-24 years (28%) and those aged 35-44 years (27%).
- A higher proportion of men than women continue to report lifetime, last year and last month use of any illegal drugs.
- Women and older adults continue to report higher levels of use of sedatives and tranquillisers. A similar pattern was found for anti-depressants.

Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (see Table 1.1)

Results from the survey indicated that nearly one in four (24%) of the population aged 15-64 years in Ireland have used any illegal drugs in their lifetime.

Drug Type

Cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug with 22% of the population having ever used the drug. After cannabis, lifetime prevalence rates for other drugs were substantially lower; magic mushrooms (6%); ecstasy and cocaine (each 5%); amphetamines (4%); poppers and LSD (each 3%); and solvents (2%). Less than one percent had ever used crack (0.6%), heroin (0.4%) and methadone (0.3%). Lifetime prevalence for other opiates was 6%. Approximately one in ten respondents reported lifetime use of sedatives and tranquillisers (11%), and anti-depressants (9%).

Age

The highest lifetime prevalence for use of any illegal drugs was amongst those aged 25-34 (34%) followed by the 15-24 (28%) and 35-44 (27%) age groups. Lower use was reported among those aged 45-54 (15%) and those aged 55-64 (7%). Last year and last month prevalence rates were highest among the youngest age band at 15% and 6%, respectively and declined with age thereafter.

Lifetime use of different drugs varied with age. For example, the lifetime use of solvents and poppers were highest among those aged 15-24 while lifetime use of cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine and magic mushrooms was highest among the 25-34 age group. Lifetime use of other opiates was highest among the 35-44 age group (8%). The highest prevalence rates for sedatives and tranquillisers (21%) and anti-depressants (12%) were found among the 55-64 age group.

Gender

Men reported more illegal drug use than women: 29% compared to 19% for lifetime use. Cannabis use was higher among men (27%) than women (17%). Lifetime use of ecstasy, LSD and magic mushrooms were two times higher among men than women. Conversely, women were more likely than men to report use of sedatives and tranquillisers (13% compared to 8%), other opiates (8% compared with 5%) and anti-depressants (13% compared to 6%).

Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (see Table 1.2)

Of the total sample, 7% reported using any illegal drugs in the last year.

Drug Type

In the twelve months preceding the 2006/7 survey, cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug with 6% of all adults aged 15-64 reporting use. After cannabis, cocaine (2%) and ecstasy (1%) were the next most widely used illegal drugs in Ireland. Less than one percent of those surveyed had used magic mushrooms, poppers, amphetamines and crack in the previous year.

3 The term 'cocaine' is used in place of 'cocaine powder' throughout all text for ease of reporting.

Age

Consistently, older adults were less likely to have used any illegal drugs in the last year (3%) compared to young adults (12%) in Ireland. Among those aged 15-24 use of any illegal drugs was highest (15%). This age group also reported the highest last year use of cannabis (13%), cocaine (3%), ecstasy (3%), magic mushrooms (2%), poppers (1%) and crack (0.4%). The use of LSD (0.5%) and heroin (0.2%) was marginally higher among those aged 25-34 while the use of amphetamines (0.8%) was the same in both age groups. The highest last year prevalence rates for sedatives and tranquillisers (7%), anti-depressants (5%) and other opiates (3%) were among older adults aged 35-64.

Gender

Overall in the last year, men (10%) reported more use of any illegal drugs when compared to women (5%) in Ireland. The greatest difference between men and women was in reported cannabis use, 9% and 4% respectively. The last year use of cocaine and ecstasy was also higher among men (2% each) than women (1% each). Conversely, women (6%) were more likely than men (4%) to report using sedatives and tranquillisers, in the last year. Women (6%) were twice as likely as men (3%) to report using anti-depressants. Last year use of other opiates was also higher among women (3%) than men (2%).

Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (see Table 1.3)

In the month preceding the survey, 3% of the population reported using any illegal drugs.

Drug Type

In Ireland, cannabis (3%) was the most commonly used illegal drug in the month preceding the survey. After cannabis, the most commonly used illegal drugs in the last month were cocaine (0.5%), ecstasy (0.3%), amphetamines and poppers (each 0.1%). Last month use of anti-depressants was 3%, sedatives and tranquillisers was 3%, current use of other opiates was 1% and methadone 0.1%.

Age

In Ireland the youngest age group, those aged 15-24 years, reported most use of any illegal drugs in the last month (6%). Last month use became lower in successive age groups. Last month use of cannabis, ecstasy and crack was also highest among those aged 15-24 years. Those aged 35-44 differed from other age groups in that heroin use was reported (0.1%). Methadone use in the last month was reported among those

aged 25-34 (0.2%) as well as among the 35-44 age groups (0.3%). The highest last month prevalence rates for sedatives and tranquillisers (7%), anti-depressants (5%) and other opiates (1%) were among the 55-64 age group.

Gender

Men were nearly four times more likely to report any illegal drug use (4%) than women (1%). This pattern was also evident for last month use of cocaine. A higher proportion of women (4%) than men (2%) reported last month use of sedatives and tranquillisers. Women (4%) were also twice as likely as men (2%) to report use of anti-depressants in the month prior to the survey.

Ireland – Results Comparison 2002/3-2006/7

All findings reported are statistically significant at least at the 5% level.

Significant Changes – Lifetime Prevalence

In Ireland, lifetime use of any illegal drugs increased from 18.5% in 2002/3 to 24% in 2006/7 among all adults (15-64 years). There were increases in the use of any illegal drugs among young adults aged 15-34 (from 26.0% to 31.4%) and older adults aged 35-64 (from 11.8% to 17.6%). There were increases in the use of any illegal drugs among both men (from 24.0% to 29.4%) and women (from 13.1% to 18.5%).

Among all adults aged 15-64, there were increases in the lifetime use of the following drugs in Ireland: cannabis (from 17.4% to 21.9%) cocaine (from 2.9% to 5.0%) magic mushrooms (from 3.9% to 5.8%) and ecstasy (from 3.7% to 5.4%).

Since the previous survey there was an increase in the lifetime use of cannabis among those aged 35-44 years (from 17.3% to 24.4%). The greatest increases in lifetime use of the following drugs were among the 25-34 age group: cocaine (from 4.2% to 9.2%) ecstasy (from 6.4% to 11.2%) and magic mushrooms (from 6.3% to 9.9%).

Since the previous survey, in Ireland increases were found among young adults aged 15-34 in lifetime use of cannabis (from 24.0% to 28.6%), cocaine (from 4.5% to 7.8%) and magic mushrooms (from 5.9% to 8.4%). Among older adults (35-64 years) increases were found in lifetime use of cannabis (from 11.4% to 16.1%) cocaine (from 1.4% to 2.6%) amphetamines (from 1.3% to 2.1%) ecstasy (from 0.7% to 2.3%) magic mushrooms (from 2.0% to 3.5%) solvents (from 0.2% to 0.8%) and poppers (from 0.7% to 1.4%).

Since the last survey, there were increases among men in lifetime use of cannabis (from 22.4% to 27.0%) cocaine (from 4.1% to 6.7%) ecstasy (from 4.9% to 7.2%) and magic mushrooms (from 5.7% to 7.7%).

Among women in Ireland, there were increases in the lifetime use of any illegal drugs (from 13.1% to 18.5%) cannabis (from 12.3% to 16.6%) cocaine (from 1.6% to 3.3%) magic mushrooms (from 2.0% to 3.8%) and poppers (from 1.3% to 2.4%) since the last survey.

Significant Changes – Last Year Prevalence

Last year use of any illegal drugs increased from 5.6% in 2002/3 to 7.2% in 2006/7 among all adults aged 15-64 in Ireland. The greatest increase occurred among those aged 25-34 (from 6.6% to 9.2%) and among women (from 3.4% to 4.7%).

Since the previous survey in Ireland, there was an increase in the last year use of ecstasy among older adults aged 35-64, (from 0.0% to 0.2%).

Significant Changes – Last Month Prevalence

There was a significant, albeit small increase in last month use of cocaine (from 0.0% to 0.2%) among women in Ireland since the previous survey.

Among older adults aged 35-64, there was an increase in the last year use of ecstasy (from 0.0% to 0.1%) since the previous survey in Ireland.

Results – Northern Ireland

Key Findings

- More than one in four people surveyed (28%) reported ever having used any illegal drugs; one in eleven (9%) reported using any illegal drugs in the year prior to the survey; and less than one in twenty (4%) reported using any illegal drugs in the month prior to the survey.
- Cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug with one in four respondents (25%) reporting ever having used it; 7% reported use in the year before the survey and 3% in the month before the survey.
- Lifetime prevalence rates for other illegal drugs were considerably lower than for cannabis: poppers and ecstasy (each 8%); magic mushrooms and LSD (each 7%); amphetamines (6%); cocaine (5%); solvents (4%); heroin (0.5%); and crack (0.4%).
- Use of any illegal drugs generally declined with age. Forty percent of young adults aged 15-34 reported ever using any illegal drugs whereas the corresponding figure for older adults aged 35-64 was 19%.
- Use of any illegal drugs was more common amongst men than women, with 5% of males reporting use in the month prior to the survey compared to 2% of females.
- Women and older age groups showed higher levels of use of sedatives and tranquillisers. A similar gender and age pattern was also found for anti-depressants.

Northern Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (see Table 2.1)

Results from the survey suggested that more than a quarter (28%) of the Northern Ireland adult population aged 15-64 have ever used any illegal drugs.

Drug Type

Cannabis was by far the most commonly used illegal drug with one quarter of respondents (25%) reporting lifetime use. Cannabis use was higher among young adults with more than one in three (35%) of those aged 15-34 reporting use. Lifetime prevalence rates for other illegal drugs were substantially lower: poppers and ecstasy (each 8%); magic mushrooms and LSD (each 7%); amphetamines (6%); cocaine (5%); and solvents (4%). Less than one percent of respondents reported ever using heroin (0.5%), crack (0.4%) and methadone (0.1%). Approximately one fifth of those surveyed reported lifetime use of other drugs: anti-depressants (21%), sedatives and tranquillisers (20%) and other opiates (20%).

Age

Overall lifetime prevalence rates for the use of any illegal drugs were highest among younger age groups, with two in five young adults aged 15-34 (40%) reporting use: there was little difference in lifetime prevalence rates between those aged 15-24 (38%) and those aged 25-34 (42%). For older age groups prevalence rates were lower: 28% for those aged 35-44 falling to 6% for those aged 55-64.

Lifetime prevalence rates for different drugs varied with age. For example, lifetime rates for the use of cannabis, ecstasy, poppers, LSD, amphetamines, cocaine, magic mushrooms and solvents were highest among those aged 25-34. In contrast, respondents aged 45-54 reported the highest lifetime prevalence rate for sedatives and tranquillisers. This was also the case for anti-depressants. The highest prevalence rate for other opiates was among those aged 35-44.

Gender

Male respondents usually reported higher prevalence rates than females: 34% of men compared to 22% of women reported ever using any illegal drugs.

Cannabis prevalence was higher amongst males (30%) than females (19%); other illegal drugs showed an even more exclusively male profile, for example, magic mushrooms use was reported by 11% of men and 2% of women. Women reported higher lifetime prevalence rates than men for anti-depressants (28% compared to 13%), other opiates (23% compared to 17%), and sedatives and tranquillisers (22% compared to 18%).

Northern Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (see Table 2.2)

The overall prevalence rate for the use of any illegal drugs in the year preceding the survey was 9%.

Drug Type

In the 12 months preceding the survey, cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug with one respondent in fourteen (7%) reporting use. After cannabis, the most widely used illegal drugs were cocaine, ecstasy (each 2%), poppers and amphetamines (each 1%). All other illegal drugs had been used by less than one percent of the population surveyed. Just under one in ten respondents reported last year use of sedatives and tranquillisers (9%), anti-depressants (9%) and other opiates (8%).

Age

The highest last year prevalence rate for many of the illegal drugs was amongst those aged 15-24. Of this age group, 19% reported using any illegal drugs in the last year with 14% using cannabis and 4% using ecstasy. The use of any illegal drugs decreased with age: less than one in five young adults aged 15-34 (17%) reported use in the last year compared to less than one in twenty older adults aged 35-64 (4%). However, the highest prevalence rates for sedatives and tranquillisers (17%) and anti-depressants (16%) were found among those aged 45-54.

Gender

Use of any illegal drugs in the last year was considerably more prevalent among males (14%) than females (5%). In particular, prevalence rates for cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy, poppers, amphetamines, solvents and crack were higher amongst men – for example, cocaine use amongst males in the last year (3%) was three times higher than amongst females (0.9%). In contrast, twice the proportion of women (12%) than men (6%) reported the use of anti-depressants in the last year. The use of other opiates was similar for both men and women (8% and 9% respectively).

Northern Ireland – Last Month Prevalence

(see Table 2.3)

Less than one in twenty respondents (4%) reported taking any illegal drugs in the month before the survey.

Drug Type

Cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug, reported by 3% of respondents. The next most common illegal drug used was ecstasy which was reported by less than one percent (0.8%) of respondents. Eight percent of those surveyed used anti-depressants in the last month, 7% used sedatives and tranquillisers and 5% used other opiates.

Age

Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to report using any illegal drugs in the last month. Six percent of those aged 15-34 reported taking any illegal drugs in the last month compared to 2% of older adults aged 35-64. Of those aged 15-24, 4% reported using cannabis in the last month and 2% reported using ecstasy. The highest last month prevalence rates for anti-depressants (14%), sedatives and tranquillisers (13%) and other opiates (6%) were found among the 45-54 age group.

Gender

Men (5%) were more than twice as likely as women (2%) to report using any illegal drugs in the last month. Conversely, women (11%) were more than twice as likely as men (4%) to report using anti-depressants in the last month. Also, a higher proportion of women than men (8% compared to 6%) used sedatives and tranquillisers.

Northern Ireland – Results Comparison 2002/3-2006/7

All findings reported are statistically significant at least at the 5% level.

Significant Changes – Lifetime Prevalence

Lifetime use of any illegal drugs increased from 20% in 2002/3 to 28% in 2006/7 among all adults (15-64 years). There were increases in lifetime use of any illegal drugs among young adults aged 15-34 (from 30.9% to 40.2%) and older adults aged 35-64 (from 11.5% to 19.3%) as well as among females (from 13.5% to 22.1%) and males (from 26.7% to 33.9%). The greatest increase in the lifetime use of any illegal drugs (from 8.9% to 19.6%) occurred among those aged 45-54.

Among all adults aged 15-64, lifetime use of the following drugs increased since the previous survey: cannabis (from 16.8% to 24.7%); cocaine (from 1.6% to 5.1%); magic mushrooms (from 4.3% to 6.7%); poppers (from 5.5% to 7.8%); LSD (from 4.5% to 6.6%); ecstasy (from 5.8% to 7.7%); and amphetamines (from 4.0% to 5.8%).

The greatest increases since the previous survey in lifetime use of the following drugs were among the 25-34 age group: cannabis (from 26.2% to 37.3%), cocaine (from 3.1% to 10.8%), poppers (from 11.1% to 16.7%), LSD (from 9.5% to 14.9%), amphetamines (from 8.0% to 12.9%), and ecstasy (from 12.4% to 16.9%). However, the greatest increases in lifetime use of magic mushrooms (from 5.9% to 11.3%) and solvents (from 2.0% to 4.0%) were among those aged 35-44.

Across the age groups, increases since the previous survey were found among young adults aged 15-34 in lifetime use of cannabis (from 25.1% to 35.0%) and cocaine (from 2.9% to 9.1%). Increases among older adults (35-64 years) were found in lifetime use of cannabis (from 10.3% to 17.3%), magic mushrooms (from 2.7% to 5.6%), LSD (from 1.9% to 4.5%), poppers (from 1.3% to 3.4%), amphetamines (from 1.5% to 3.4%), cocaine (from 0.6% to 2.2%), ecstasy (from 1.4% to 2.9%), and solvents (from 1.0% to 2.1%).

Among males, increases since the previous survey were found in lifetime use of cannabis (from 23.3% to 30.1%), magic mushrooms (from 6.3% to 11.2%), cocaine (from 2.7% to 7.3%), and poppers (from 7.3% to 10.9%).

Among females, lifetime use of the following drugs increased since the previous survey: cannabis (from 10.5% to 19.3%), amphetamines (from 1.8% to 4.4%), cocaine (from 0.5% to 2.9%), ecstasy (from 3.3% to 5.5%), LSD (from 2.0% to 3.5%), heroin (from 0.0% to 0.4%) and crack (from 0.1% to 0.4%).

Significant Changes – Last Year Prevalence

Last year use of any illegal drugs increased from 6.4% in 2002/3 to 9.4% in 2006/7 among all adults (15-64 years). There were increases in last year use of any illegal drugs among those aged 15-34 (from 11.7% to 17.3%) and 35-64 (from 2.2% to 3.7%) as well as among males (from 9.7% to 13.7%) and females (from 3.1% to 5.2%). The greatest increase in last year use of any illegal drugs (from 8.9% to 15.5%) occurred among those aged 25-34.

Among all adults aged 15-64, increases since the previous survey, were found in last year use of cannabis (from 5.4% to 7.2%), cocaine (from 0.5% to 1.9%) and poppers (from 0.5% to 1.3%). The greatest increase in last year use of cocaine (from 0.7% to 5.0%) occurred among the 25-34 age group whereas the greatest increases in last year use of cannabis (from 2.2% to 4.1%) and poppers (from 1.1% to 2.7%) were found among females and those aged 15-34 respectively.

Among young adults (15-34 years), there was also an increase in last year use of cocaine (from 0.9% to 3.5%) since the previous survey. Increases were found among older adults (35-64 years) in last year use of cannabis (from 2.0% to 3.3%), cocaine (from 0.1% to 0.7%) and LSD (from 0.0% to 0.3%).

Significant Changes – Last Month Prevalence

Across the age groups, there was a *decrease* since the previous survey in last month use of cannabis (from 7.9% to 3.5%) among those aged 15-24. Increases were found in last month use of cocaine (from 0.1% to 1.2%) among 25-34 year olds and amphetamines (from 0.0% to 0.7%) among those in the 35-44 age group.

Among females, increases since the previous survey were found in last month use of any illegal drugs (from 1.1% to 2.4%) and ecstasy (from 0.1% to 0.7%).

Results – Island of Ireland

Key Findings

- On the Island of Ireland 25% of all adults (15-64 years) reported ever having used any illegal drugs; 8% reported using any illegal drugs in the year prior to the survey; and 3% reported using any illegal drugs in the month prior to the survey.
- Cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug with 23% of all adults reporting ever having used it; 7% reported cannabis use in the year prior to the survey and 3% in the month prior to the survey.
- Lifetime prevalence rates for other illegal drugs on the Island of Ireland were considerably lower than for cannabis: ecstasy and magic mushrooms (each 6%), cocaine and poppers (each 5%), amphetamines and LSD (each 4%) and solvents (2%).
- Lifetime use of any illegal drugs was highest among young adults aged 15-34 years (34%) whereas the corresponding figure for older adults (aged 35-64) was 18%.
- Use of any illegal drugs was more common among men than women, with 5% of men reporting use in the month prior to the survey compared to 2% of females.
- Higher levels of lifetime use of sedatives and tranquillisers were found among women and younger adults. Lifetime use of anti-depressants was higher among women and the older age groups.

Island of Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (see Table 3.1)

On the Island of Ireland 25% of all adults (15-64 years) reported the use of any illegal drugs at some point in their lifetime.

Drug Type

Cannabis (23%) was the most commonly used illegal drug among all adults in their lifetime. Lifetime use of other drugs on the Island of Ireland, in decreasing order were ecstasy (6%), magic mushrooms (6%), cocaine (5%), poppers (5%), amphetamines (4%), LSD (4%) and solvents (2%). Less than one percent reported ever using crack (0.5%), heroin (0.4%) and methadone (0.3%). Just over 10% of all adults said they had ever used other opiates. Lifetime prevalence rates for sedatives and tranquillisers (13%) and anti-depressants (13%) were very similar on the Island of Ireland.

Age

Use of any illegal drugs on the Island of Ireland was highest among younger age groups with 36% of the 25-34 and 31% of the 15-24 age groups reporting lifetime use. Among older adults, lifetime use of any illegal drugs declined with age: 35-44 years (27%), 45-54 years (16%) and 55-64 years (7%). Cannabis use was most prevalent among the two youngest age groups. Lifetime use of the following drugs was highest among the 25-34 age group: ecstasy (13%), magic mushrooms (11%), cocaine (10%), amphetamines (9%) and LSD (8%). Those aged 35-44 years reported the highest lifetime use of other opiates (14%) on the Island of Ireland.

Gender

On the Island of Ireland lifetime use of any illegal drugs was higher among men (31%) than women (20%).

Cannabis use was higher among men (28%) than women (17%). Other illegal drugs showed a similar profile. For example ecstasy was reported by 8% of men compared to 4% of women, poppers reported by 6% of men and 3% of women and cocaine by 7% of men and 3% of women. Lifetime use of certain drugs was about three times higher among men than women: LSD use was reported by 6% of men and 2% women and use of magic mushrooms was reported by 9% men and 3% of women. On the Island of Ireland more women (12%) than men (8%) had ever used other opiates. Lifetime use of sedatives and tranquillisers was also higher among women (16%) than men (11%) and this pattern was also evident for anti-depressants (17% among women compared to 8% among men).

Island of Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (see Table 3.2)

Results from the survey suggested that 8% of all adults (15-64 years) had used any illegal drugs in the year prior to the survey.

Drug Type

Nearly 7% of all adults reported using cannabis in the year prior to the survey. Of all adults on the Island of Ireland 2% said they had used cocaine and 1% had used ecstasy in the last year. Less than 1% of respondents had used poppers, amphetamines, magic mushrooms and LSD in the last year. Nearly 4% of all adults had used other opiates. Nearly 6% reported using sedatives and tranquillisers, and anti-depressants in the year prior to the survey.

Age

On the Island of Ireland, last year use of any illegal drugs was highest among young adults aged 15-34 years (14%). Lifetime rates for the use of cannabis, ecstasy and poppers were highest among those aged 15-24.

Young adults (15-34 years) reported slightly lower last year use (3%) of other opiates when compared to older adults (4%) (35-64 years). However, the highest prevalence rate for sedatives and tranquillisers (10%) was among those aged 55-64 years and the highest prevalence rate for last year use of anti-depressants (8%) was among the 45-54 age group.

Gender

For many of the illegal drugs, last year use was reported twice as often by men than women on the Island of Ireland: cannabis was used by 9% of men and 4% of women; cocaine use in the last year was reported by more men (2%) than women (1%). Ecstasy use in the last year was also 2% among men and 1% among women. Differences between men and women also occurred with respect to amphetamines and magic mushrooms (0.7% compared to 0.4%). However, women reported higher last year prevalence than men for other opiates (5% compared to 3%), sedatives and tranquillisers (7% compared to 5%) and anti-depressants (8% compared to 4%).

Island of Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (see Table 3.3)

The overall prevalence rate for the use of any illegal drugs in the month preceding the survey was 3%.

Drug Type

In the month preceding the survey cannabis was the most commonly used drug with 3% of all adults reporting use. Last month prevalence for cocaine use was 0.5%. Very few adults reported any last month use of the remaining drugs.

Age

The highest last month prevalence rate was amongst the 15-24 age group reported the most use of any illegal drugs (6%), followed by those aged 25-34 years (4%). The most commonly used drugs among young adults (15-34 years) in the month prior to the survey were cannabis (4%) and cocaine and ecstasy (each 1%). Last month use of other opiates was highest among those aged 55-64 years (3%). Respondents aged 55-64 also reported the highest lifetime use of sedatives and tranquillisers (8%). The 45-54 year age group reported the highest last month use of anti-depressants (7%).

Gender

A higher proportion of men (5%) than women (2%) reported the use of any illegal drugs in the last month. Last month use was higher among men than women for cannabis (4% compared to 1%), cocaine (0.7% compared to 0.2%) and ecstasy (0.6% compared to 0.3%).

Island of Ireland – Results Comparison 2002/3-2006/7

All findings reported are statistically significant at least at the 5% level.

Significant Changes – Lifetime Prevalence

On the Island of Ireland, lifetime use of any illegal drugs increased from 19.0% in 2002/3 to 25.1% in 2006/7 among all adults aged 15-64 years. Since the previous survey, there were increases in the use of any illegal drugs among younger adults aged 15-34 (from 27.4% to 33.9%) and increases among both men (from 24.8% to 30.7%) and women (from 13.2% to 19.5%).

Among all adults on the Island of Ireland, there were increases in the lifetime use of many illegal drugs since the last survey: cannabis (from 17.2% to 22.7%) cocaine (from 2.5% to 5.1%) magic mushrooms (from 4.0% to 6.0%) ecstasy (from 4.3% to 6.0%) amphetamine (from 3.3% to 4.2%) and poppers (from 3.5% to 4.6%).

The largest increases since the last survey in the lifetime use of many illegal drugs were reported by those aged 25-34 years: cannabis (from 25.5% to 33.4%) cocaine (from 3.7% to 9.6%) ecstasy (from 8.2% to 12.8%) magic mushrooms (from 6.7% to 10.7%) and amphetamine (from 6.1% to 8.5%).

Examining age differences on the Island of Ireland, there were increases in the lifetime use of many drugs among young adults aged 15-34: cannabis (from 24.3% to 30.4%) cocaine (from 4.1% to 8.2%) ecstasy (from 8.8% to 10.5%) and magic mushrooms (from 6.1% to 8.4%). Increases among older adults aged 35-64 were found for cannabis (from 11.1% to 16.4%) magic mushrooms (from 2.2% to 4.1%), ecstasy (from 0.9% to 2.4%) cocaine (from 1.3% to 2.5%) amphetamine (from 1.3% to 2.5%) LSD (from 1.4% to 2.9%) and poppers (from 0.9% to 2.0%).

Since the last survey, increases in the lifetime use of many illegal drugs were found among men and women on the Island of Ireland: among men there were increases in the lifetime use of cannabis (from 22.7% to 27.6%) cocaine (from 3.6% to 6.9%) magic mushrooms (from 5.9% to 8.7%) and ecstasy (from 5.9% to 8.0%). Among women there were increases in lifetime use of cannabis (from 11.6% to 17.4%) cocaine (from 1.3% to 3.2%) ecstasy (from 2.8% to 4.1%) magic mushrooms (from 2.1% to 3.4%) amphetamines (from 1.9% to 3.0%) and poppers (from 2.0% to 3.1%).

Significant Changes – Last Year Prevalence

Among all adults aged 15-64 last year use of any illegal drugs increased from 5.8% in 2002/3 to 7.8% in 2006/7. The greatest significant increase was among those aged 25-34 (from 7.3% to 11.0%). Comparing men and women on the Island of Ireland, the increase in last year use of any illegal drugs was greater among men (from 8.3% to 10.7%) than women (from 3.3% to 4.9%).

Since the last survey there was an increase in the last year use of cocaine (from 1.7% to 3.1%) among young adults aged 15-34 years.

On the Island of Ireland last year use of cannabis among older adults aged 35-64 years increased (from 1.9% to 2.8%) since the last survey.

Significant Changes – Last Month Prevalence

On the Island of Ireland, there the changes in last month use of illegal drugs were relatively small. The following are the statistically significant changes:

There was a small increase in last month use of cocaine among those aged 25-34 years (from 0.4% to 1.0%).

Since the last survey changes in the last month use among women were found for cocaine (from 0.0% to 0.2%) and ecstasy (from 0.1% to 0.3%).

Table 1.1: Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults		Older Adults				
	15-64	Males	Females	15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Any illegal drugs*	24.0	29.4	18.5	31.4	17.6	28.5	34.0	26.7	15.0	6.8
Cannabis	21.9	27.0	16.6	28.6	16.1	24.8	31.9	24.4	13.6	6.4
Heroin	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.3
Methadone	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.2
Other Opiates**	6.2	4.7	7.8	4.6	7.6	2.8	6.3	8.3	7.0	7.1
Cocaine (total including crack)	5.3	7.0	3.5	8.2	2.7	7.0	9.3	4.5	2.4	0.3
Crack	0.6	0.8	0.4	1.0	0.2	1.5	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.0
Cocaine Powder	5.0	6.7	3.3	7.8	2.6	6.3	9.2	4.4	2.4	0.3
Amphetamines	3.5	4.6	2.5	5.1	2.1	3.2	6.8	3.4	1.6	0.9
Ecstasy	5.4	7.2	3.6	9.0	2.3	6.5	11.2	4.9	0.7	0.1
LSD	2.9	4.0	1.7	3.6	2.2	1.0	5.9	3.3	1.9	0.9
Magic Mushrooms	5.8	7.7	3.8	8.4	3.5	6.7	9.9	5.8	2.8	0.7
Solvents	1.9	2.3	1.4	3.2	0.8	4.2	2.2	1.6	0.3	0.1
Poppers***	3.3	4.2	2.4	5.5	1.4	5.9	5.1	2.6	0.9	0.2
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	10.5	8.0	13.2	5.9	14.6	4.8	6.8	10.8	14.6	20.5
Anti-depressants	9.2	5.9	12.5	7.1	11.0	4.8	9.1	10.8	10.1	12.4

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 1.2: Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults		Older Adults				
	15-64	Males	Females	15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Any illegal drugs*	7.2	9.6	4.7	12.1	2.9	15.4	9.2	4.9	2.4	0.3
Cannabis	6.3	8.5	3.9	10.4	2.6	13.1	8.0	4.6	2.0	0.3
Heroin	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
Methadone	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	2.1	1.5	2.8	1.8	2.5	0.9	2.5	2.8	2.2	2.3
Cocaine (total including crack)	1.7	2.3	1.0	3.1	0.5	3.8	2.4	1.0	0.2	0.0
Crack	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	1.6	2.2	0.9	2.9	0.5	3.4	2.4	1.0	0.2	0.0
Amphetamines	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.1	0.8	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.0
Ecstasy	1.2	1.8	0.6	2.4	0.2	2.8	2.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
LSD	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Magic Mushrooms	0.6	0.9	0.4	1.2	0.2	1.9	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.0
Solvents	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Poppers***	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.1	1.2	0.7	0.2	0.0	0.0
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	4.7	3.7	5.7	2.6	6.5	1.9	3.2	4.0	7.3	9.3
Anti-depressants	4.3	3.0	5.6	3.2	5.2	2.9	3.5	4.8	5.1	5.9

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

1.3: Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults		Older Adults				
	15-64	Males	Females	15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
	Any illegal drugs*	2.9	4.3	1.4	4.8	1.2	6.3	3.5	2.0	1.0
Cannabis	2.6	4.0	1.1	4.2	1.2	5.3	3.2	1.9	1.0	0.2
Heroin	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Methadone	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	1.0	0.9	1.1	0.8	1.1	0.3	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.4
Cocaine (total including crack)	0.5	0.8	0.2	1.0	0.0	1.1	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Crack	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	0.5	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Amphetamines	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ecstasy	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.1	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
LSD	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Magic Mushrooms	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Solvents	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Poppers***	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	3.0	2.4	3.5	1.3	4.4	0.8	1.7	2.6	4.8	6.8
Anti-depressants	3.1	2.3	3.9	2.2	3.9	1.5	2.7	3.6	3.7	4.7

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 2.1: Northern Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults		Older Adults				
	15-64	Males	Females	15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
	Any illegal drugs*	28.0	33.9	22.1	40.2	19.3	38.4	42.1	28.1	19.6
Cannabis	24.7	30.1	19.3	35.0	17.3	33.0	37.3	24.7	17.9	6.2
Heroin	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.9	0.2
Methadone	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	20.2	17.4	23.0	14.4	24.7	8.4	21.1	26.9	23.8	22.6
Cocaine (total including crack)	5.2	7.4	2.9	9.1	2.3	7.7	10.8	4.3	1.4	0.5
Crack	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	5.1	7.3	2.9	9.1	2.2	7.7	10.8	4.1	1.4	0.5
Amphetamines	5.8	7.3	4.4	9.1	3.4	5.7	12.9	6.2	2.1	1.2
Ecstasy	7.7	9.9	5.5	14.3	2.9	12.0	16.9	6.2	0.8	0.5
LSD	6.6	9.7	3.5	9.4	4.5	4.6	14.9	7.9	2.9	1.8
Magic mushrooms	6.7	11.2	2.4	8.3	5.6	4.4	12.6	11.3	3.7	0.0
Solvents	3.5	5.1	2.0	5.5	2.1	4.0	7.1	4.0	1.2	0.7
Poppers***	7.8	10.9	4.9	14.0	3.4	11.6	16.7	6.8	1.7	0.6
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	20.2	18.1	22.3	11.7	26.5	10.1	13.6	22.9	30.5	26.7
Anti-depressants	21.0	13.4	28.4	13.6	26.6	9.8	17.8	26.0	28.8	24.8

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 2.2: Northern Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults		Young Adults	Older Adults	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	
	15-64	Males								Females
Any illegal drugs*	9.4	13.7	5.2	17.3	3.7	19.0	15.5	5.8	3.1	1.4
Cannabis	7.2	10.3	4.1	12.4	3.3	13.7	11.0	5.5	2.5	1.3
Heroin	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0
Methadone	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	8.4	8.0	8.7	7.1	9.3	4.6	9.9	9.2	9.4	9.4
Cocaine (total including crack)	1.9	2.8	0.9	3.5	0.7	2.3	5.0	1.2	0.5	0.0
Crack	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	1.9	2.8	0.9	3.5	0.7	2.3	5.0	1.2	0.5	0.0
Amphetamines	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.7	0.4	1.9	1.5	1.2	0.0	0.0
Ecstasy	1.8	2.4	1.2	3.4	0.6	3.7	3.1	0.9	0.2	0.5
LSD	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0
Magic mushrooms	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Solvents	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0
Poppers***	1.3	2.3	0.3	2.7	0.2	3.6	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.6
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	9.2	8.2	10.2	4.6	12.6	3.4	6.0	9.2	16.5	12.8
Anti-depressants	9.1	5.8	12.4	5.8	11.7	4.1	7.7	9.6	16.3	9.0

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 2.3: Northern Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults		Young Adults	Older Adults	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	
	15-64	Males								Females
Any illegal drugs*	3.6	4.9	2.4	5.9	2.0	6.3	5.5	3.0	1.8	0.7
Cannabis	2.6	3.7	1.6	3.7	1.8	3.5	4.0	3.0	1.4	0.7
Heroin	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0
Methadone	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	4.9	5.1	4.7	3.6	5.8	1.7	5.7	5.1	6.4	6.3
Cocaine (total including crack)	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.5	0.0
Crack	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.5	0.0
Amphetamines	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.0
Ecstasy	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.4	0.3	2.2	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.5
LSD	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Magic mushrooms	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Solvents	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Poppers***	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.9	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	7.1	5.7	8.4	2.3	10.7	1.1	3.6	7.8	13.0	12.0
Anti-depressants	7.5	4.2	10.7	4.2	10.0	1.5	7.1	8.0	13.9	8.2

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 3.1: Island of Ireland – Lifetime Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults		Older Adults				
	15-64			15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
	Males	Females								
Any illegal drugs*	25.1	30.7	19.5	33.9	18.0	31.3	36.3	27.1	16.3	6.7
Cannabis	22.7	27.9	17.4	30.4	16.4	27.1	33.4	24.5	14.8	6.4
Heroin	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.2
Methadone	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.1
Other Opiates**	10.1	8.3	12.0	7.4	12.4	4.4	10.4	13.6	11.7	11.5
Cocaine (total including crack)	5.2	7.1	3.3	8.5	2.6	7.2	9.7	4.5	2.1	0.3
Crack	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.9	0.2	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.0
Cocaine Powder	5.1	6.9	3.2	8.2	2.5	6.7	9.6	4.3	2.1	0.3
Amphetamines	4.2	5.3	3.0	6.2	2.5	3.9	8.5	4.2	1.7	1.0
Ecstasy	6.0	8.0	4.1	10.5	2.4	8.1	12.8	5.3	0.8	0.2
LSD	3.9	5.6	2.2	5.3	2.9	2.0	8.4	4.6	2.2	1.2
Magic mushrooms	6.0	8.7	3.4	8.4	4.1	6.1	10.7	7.3	3.0	0.5
Solvents	2.4	3.1	1.6	3.8	1.2	4.2	3.6	2.3	0.5	0.2
Poppers***	4.6	6.1	3.1	7.9	2.0	7.5	8.4	3.8	1.2	0.3
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	13.2	10.8	15.7	7.5	17.9	6.3	8.7	14.2	19.1	22.2
Anti-depressants	12.5	8.0	17.0	8.9	15.3	6.2	11.5	15.0	15.3	15.8

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 3.2: Island of Ireland – Last Year Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults		Older Adults				
	15-64			15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
	Males	Females								
Any illegal drugs*	7.8	10.7	4.9	13.6	3.1	16.4	11.0	5.2	2.6	0.6
Cannabis	6.5	9.0	4.0	11.0	2.8	13.3	8.8	4.9	2.2	0.6
Heroin	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Methadone	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	3.9	3.3	4.5	3.3	4.4	1.9	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.3
Cocaine (total including crack)	1.7	2.5	1.0	3.2	0.5	3.4	3.1	1.0	0.3	0.0
Crack	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	1.7	2.4	0.9	3.1	0.5	3.1	3.1	1.0	0.3	0.0
Amphetamines	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.2	1.1	1.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
Ecstasy	1.4	2.0	0.7	2.7	0.3	3.1	2.3	0.6	0.1	0.1
LSD	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0
Magic mushrooms	0.5	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.1	1.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0
Solvents	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Poppers***	0.7	1.1	0.3	1.4	0.1	1.9	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.2
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	5.9	5.0	6.9	3.1	8.2	2.3	4.0	5.5	9.9	10.3
Anti-depressants	5.6	3.8	7.5	3.9	7.0	3.2	4.7	6.2	8.2	6.8

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

** A change in the measurement of 'other opiates' occurred in the 2006/7 survey. Please see Methodology section for further details.

*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

Table 3.3: Island of Ireland – Last Month Prevalence (%) 2006/7

Drug	All Adults			Young Adults	Older Adults					
				15-34	35-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
	15-64	Males	Females							
Any illegal drugs*	3.1	4.5	1.7	5.1	1.4	6.3	4.1	2.3	1.2	0.3
Cannabis	2.6	3.9	1.3	4.1	1.3	4.8	3.4	2.2	1.1	0.3
Heroin	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Methadone	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Other Opiates**	2.1	2.0	2.1	1.6	2.4	0.7	2.5	2.1	2.5	2.8
Cocaine (total including crack)	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.8	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Crack	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cocaine Powder	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.7	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Amphetamines	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Ecstasy	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.8	0.1	1.4	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.1
LSD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Magic mushrooms	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Solvents	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Poppers***	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
Sedatives & Tranquillisers	4.1	3.3	4.9	1.6	6.2	0.9	2.2	4.0	7.1	8.3
Anti-depressants	4.3	2.8	5.8	2.7	5.6	1.5	4.0	4.8	6.5	5.7

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest decimal place

* For this study, "any illegal drugs" refers to amphetamines, cannabis, cocaine powder, crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, poppers and solvents.

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*** Poppers ie amyl or butyl nitrite.

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