

# Drug Treatment Demand

Evidence from the National Drug Treatment Reporting System

Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use

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# How do we measure drug treatment demand?

- National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS)
- We collect data on individual **cases**
- New cases and returning cases
- The type of data we collect includes: age, gender, living arrangements, employment status, drug types used, treatment type and where it is provided.

# Service type



**69%**  
outpatient



**12%**  
inpatient



**10%**  
low  
threshold



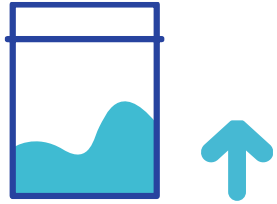
**6%**  
prison



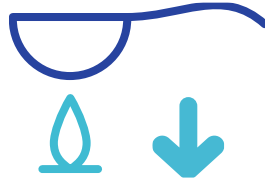
**3%**  
GP



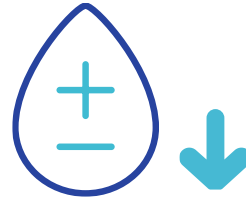
# Key trends over time (2016-2022)



Increase in  
**cocaine** cases



Decrease in the  
proportion of  
**opioid** cases



Decrease in  
the numbers  
reporting  
**injecting**



Mixing drugs  
(**polydrug use**)  
is common

# Drug treatment demand 2022

Total number of cases treated

**12,009**

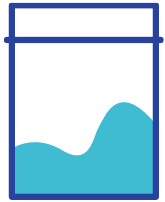


**37%**  
new cases

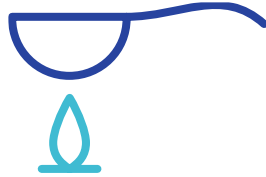


**57%**  
previously  
treated cases

# Main problem drug



**34%**  
cocaine



**33%**  
opioids



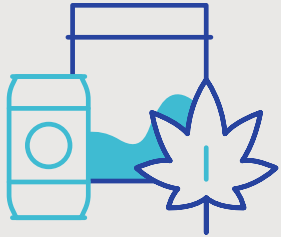
**19%**  
cannabis



**11%**  
benzodiazepines



# Polydrug use



**57%**  
of cases use  
more than  
one drug

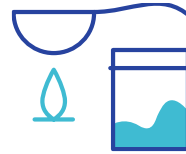
Drugs most  
commonly used  
together



**1st**  
cocaine plus  
alcohol



**2nd**  
cocaine plus  
cannabis



**3rd**  
opioids plus  
cocaine

# Injecting



**21%**  
ever  
injected



All  
cases



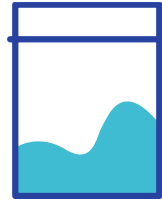
New  
cases

# Main problem drug by age

Age started treatment



19 years  
or younger  
**cannabis**



20–34 years  
**cocaine**



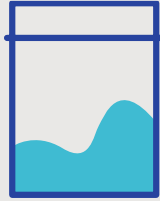
35 years  
or older  
**opioids**



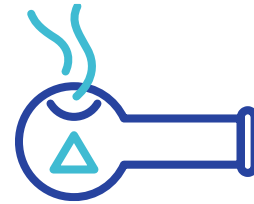
# Cocaine

**4,048**

cocaine  
cases



**78%**  
powder



**22%**  
crack

# Powder cocaine



**54%**  
Never  
treated  
before



**30 yrs**  
Age



**79%**  
Male  
**21%**  
Female



**41%**  
Employed



**5%**  
Homeless



**59%**  
Polydrug  
Use  
Powder cocaine  
most commonly  
used with alcohol  
and cannabis

# Crack cocaine



**12%**  
Never  
treated  
before

**70%**  
Previously  
treated



**39 yrs**  
Age



**58%**  
Male

**42%**  
Female



**6%**  
Employed



**25%**  
Homeless



**62%**  
Polydrug  
Use

Crack cocaine  
most commonly  
used with opioids,  
benzodiazepines  
and cannabis



**30%**  
Ever  
injected

# Opioids



**15%**  
Never  
treated  
before

**79%**  
Previously  
treated



**38 yrs**  
Age



**69%**  
Male

**31%**  
Female



**69%**  
Unemployed



**22%**  
Homeless



**60%**  
Polydrug  
Use

Opioids most  
commonly used  
with cocaine,  
benzodiazepines  
and cannabis



**45%**  
Ever  
injected

# Cannabis



**65%**  
Never treated  
before

**32%**  
Previously  
treated



**23 yrs**  
Age



**76%**  
Male

**24%**  
Female



**21%**  
Student



**6%**  
Homeless



**39%**  
Polydrug  
Use

Cannabis most commonly used with cocaine (joint 1<sup>st</sup>), alcohol (joint 1<sup>st</sup>) and benzodiazepines

# Benzodiazepines



**29%**  
Never  
treated  
before

**64%**  
Previously  
treated



**33 yrs**  
Age



**70%**  
Male

**30%**  
Female



**13%**  
Employed

**72%**  
Unemployed



**15%**  
Homeless



**65%**  
Polydrug  
Use

Benzodiazepines  
most commonly  
used with  
cannabis, opioids  
and alcohol

# First drug ever used

Main problem	First drug used	Age first used drugs
Powder cocaine	59% cannabis 27% cocaine	16 years
Crack cocaine	55% cannabis 9% cocaine	15 years
Opioids	56% cannabis	15 years
Cannabis	95% cannabis	14 years
Benzodiazepines	60% cannabis 18% benzodiazepines	15 years

# Special groups



# Parental status

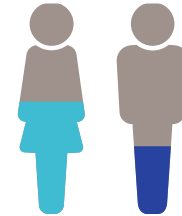


**47%**  
of treated cases were  
**parents who  
had children**

Of cases with children  
aged 17 or younger

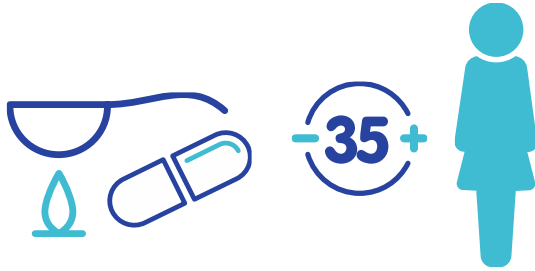


**40%**  
of cases  
lived with  
children



**53%**  
females  
**32%**  
males

# Travellers



## Female Travellers

high rates of problem opioid  
and benzodiazepine use



## Male Travellers

high rates of problem  
cocaine and opioid use

# Key messages

- Over 12,000 cases treated by more than 350 service providers in 2022
- Cocaine, opioids, cannabis and benzodiazepines are the most common drugs generating treatment demand
- Profiles of those treated and their needs differ depending on drugs used
- Problem use of several drugs (polydrug use) is common
- Downward trend for injecting and polydrug use