

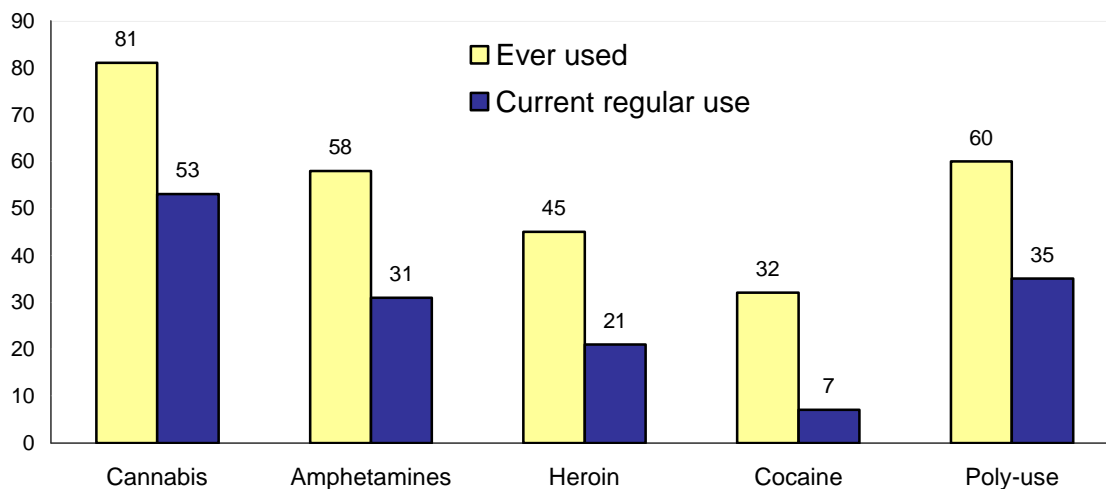


• From the Australian Institute of Criminology •

Key findings from the Drug Use Careers of Offenders (DUCO) study

The Drug Use Careers of Offenders (DUCO) study released by the Australian Institute of Criminology examined the lifetime offending and drug use careers of over 2000 adult male inmates incarcerated in mid-2001. This project is funded by the Australian Government Attorney General's Department under the National Illicit Drugs Strategy. The study found that the majority of offenders reported using illegal drugs, and poly-drug use was common. More than 80 per cent had used any of the four main drug types – cannabis, heroin, amphetamines and cocaine. Current regular use in the six months prior to arrest was reported by 62 per cent of offenders. In terms of the types of drugs, regular use was reported by: 53 per cent for cannabis; 31 per cent for amphetamines; 21 per cent for heroin; 7 per cent for cocaine; and 35 per cent for two or more illegal drugs. Analysis by offender category reveals significant differences in the type and frequency of drug use over the lifetime criminal career. Regular property offenders and regular fraud offenders consistently reported a greater lifetime prevalence of illegal drug use than did homicide offenders, violent offenders and non-regular offenders.

Lifetime prevalence and current regular use of illegal drugs (per cent)



SOURCE: Makkai T & Payne J 2003. Key findings from the drug use careers of offenders (DUCO) study. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* no 267 Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

Full report available on AIC web site: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi267.html>
See also: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/52/index.html>