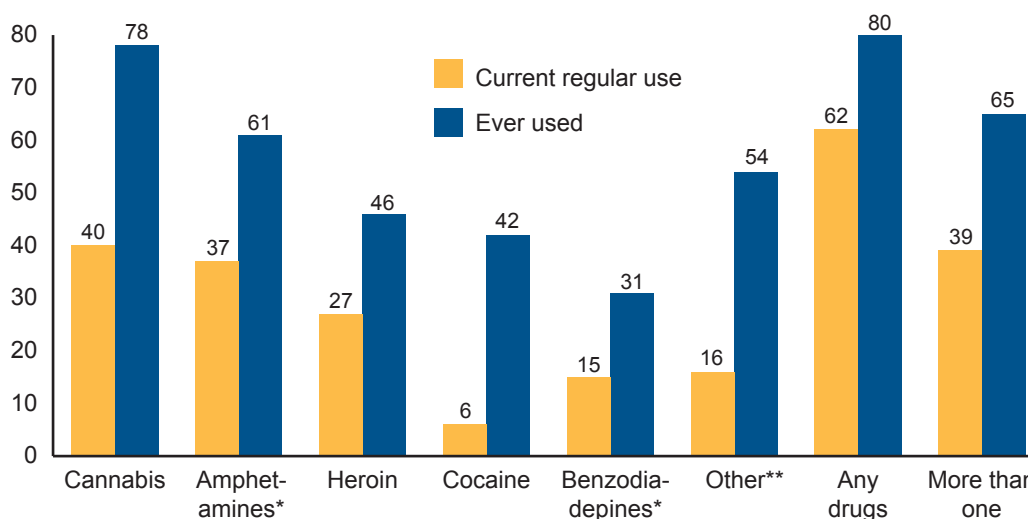


Key findings from the Drug use careers of female offenders (DUCO) study

The Drug use careers of female offenders study, recently released by the Australian Institute of Criminology, is the latest addition to the DUCO project which has previously examined over 2,000 male offenders. In the female study, 470 women incarcerated in prisons in six jurisdictions were interviewed. The project was funded by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department under the National Illicit Drug Strategy. The study found that a majority (80%) of the female offenders reported having ever used any illegal drugs. In particular, cannabis was the most common drug ever used (78%), followed by amphetamines (61%) and heroin (46%). A large percentage of offenders indicated having used more than one drug (65%). Following a similar pattern, the percentage of female offenders indicating current regular use of any drug was also high (62%). The most common drugs associated with current regular use were cannabis (40%), amphetamines (37%) and multiple drug use (39%). Current regular use of cocaine was reported by only six per cent of female offenders.

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



*Illegal use only

**Includes hallucinogens, ecstasy, street methadone and illegal use of morphine

SOURCE: Johnson H 2004. Key findings from the drug use careers of female offenders study. *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice* no 289. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

Full report available on the AIC web site: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi289.html>

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 ISSN 1445-7288 Visit online: <http://www.aic.gov.au>