

YouGov / RSA Survey Results - general public

Sample Size: 2938

Fieldwork: June 21-26, 2006

Weighted N Unweighted N		Gender		Social Grade		Year of birth		
	Total	Male	Female	ABC1	C2DE	Before 1945	1945 - 1960	After 1960
	2938	1412	1526	1583	1355	444	1014	1481
	2938	1404	1534	1446	1492	312	809	1817
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?

There is not really a serious 'drugs problem' in this country	5	6	3	5	5	1	3	7
There is a serious drugs problem, but it is largely confined to certain neighbourhoods and certain kinds of people	39	44	33	42	35	32	29	47
There is a serious problem and it affects practically the whole country	53	46	61	51	56	66	66	41
Don't know	3	3	3	2	4	0	2	5

So far as you can tell, is there a serious 'drugs problem' in your neighbourhood or near where you live?

Yes, there is	43	39	47	40	47	47	49	38
No, there is not	40	47	34	45	34	33	35	46
Don't know	17	14	20	15	19	20	17	16

In your view, are all illegal drugs much the same, or should distinctions be made between illegal drugs that are more and less harmful?

All illegal drugs are much the same	48	45	51	46	51	67	55	38
Distinctions should be made between more and less harmful illegal drugs	48	52	45	52	44	31	42	58
Don't know	3	3	4	2	5	2	3	4

From what you know, which ONE of the following do you think causes most harm to the largest number of people and their families?

The consumption of alcohol	45	47	44	49	41	42	46	46
The smoking of tobacco	22	24	21	24	20	16	19	27
The taking of illegal drugs	27	25	30	23	33	39	30	22
Don't know	5	4	6	4	6	3	5	6

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	

And which causes the next most harm?

The consumption of alcohol	33	31	34	32	35	34	31	34
The smoking of tobacco	38	41	34	40	35	34	37	39
The taking of illegal drugs	28	26	30	28	29	31	30	26
Don't know	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1

The following is a list of different substances that people use. Please indicate, from what you know, the amounts of harm that each is likely to cause to individuals and their families and friends. If you are unfamiliar with any particular substance, feel free to respond 'Don't know'.

Prescribed tranquillizers such as valium

A great deal of harm	10	8	11	8	11	10	9	10
Some harm	45	43	46	47	41	43	48	43
Only a little harm	28	30	26	29	27	32	27	27
No harm at all	6	6	7	6	7	5	7	6
Don't know	12	12	12	10	14	10	9	14

Cannabis

A great deal of harm	20	18	22	18	23	32	22	15
Some harm	44	42	45	46	40	46	46	41
Only a little harm	28	31	25	28	28	15	25	34
No harm at all	5	6	4	5	5	3	4	6
Don't know	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4

Tobacco

A great deal of harm	55	55	54	58	51	54	58	52
Some harm	35	35	36	35	37	36	35	36
Only a little harm	7	8	7	5	9	7	5	8
No harm at all	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	2

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%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
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Solvents such as glue or lighter fluid

A great deal of harm	68	66	70	66	69	68	77	61
Some harm	25	25	24	26	23	24	19	28
Only a little harm	4	6	3	4	4	4	2	6
No harm at all	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Don't know	3	3	4	3	4	5	2	4

Coffee

A great deal of harm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Some harm	10	7	12	10	9	11	11	8
Only a little harm	46	44	48	48	43	44	47	45
No harm at all	41	46	37	40	43	42	39	43
Don't know	3	3	3	2	4	2	2	4

LSD

A great deal of harm	56	51	61	55	57	54	61	53
Some harm	30	34	27	31	29	30	29	31
Only a little harm	7	10	4	7	6	7	5	8
No harm at all	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
Don't know	6	5	7	6	7	7	4	7

Crack cocaine that people smoke

A great deal of harm	89	87	91	89	89	91	92	86
Some harm	7	8	5	7	6	5	4	9
Only a little harm	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
No harm at all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4

Powder cocaine that people sniff or 'snort'

A great deal of harm	82	77	86	81	83	90	87	76
Some harm	12	16	9	14	11	6	9	16
Only a little harm	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	4
No harm at all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4

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%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
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Ecstasy

A great deal of harm	70	62	77	66	74	76	74	65
Some harm	22	27	16	25	17	17	20	23
Only a little harm	5	7	3	5	5	3	3	7
No harm at all	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Don't know	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	3

Alcohol

A great deal of harm	33	27	38	33	33	31	36	31
Some harm	50	51	49	51	49	51	51	49
Only a little harm	14	19	10	14	15	16	10	16
No harm at all	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
Don't know	2	2	1	1	2	0	1	2

Injected heroin

A great deal of harm	94	92	96	94	94	95	96	92
Some harm	3	5	1	3	2	2	1	4
Only a little harm	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
No harm at all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	3

Smoked heroin

A great deal of harm	90	87	92	90	90	89	93	87
Some harm	6	9	4	7	5	7	4	8
Only a little harm	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
No harm at all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4

Methamphetamine or 'crystal meth'

A great deal of harm	82	80	84	82	82	77	85	81
Some harm	8	9	7	9	7	8	6	9
Only a little harm	1	2	0	1	1	2	1	1
No harm at all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	9	9	9	8	10	13	7	9

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Thinking only of what are sometimes called 'hard' drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?

It is possible for some people to use some so-called 'hard drugs' quite safely, without doing themselves and those around them any more harm than drinking alcohol or smoking in moderation	17	21	12	18	14	12	11	21
Using so-called hard drugs almost always causes a lot of harm to the users and those around them – more harm than is caused by drinking alcohol or smoking in moderation	76	72	79	75	77	81	83	70
Don't know	7	6	9	7	8	6	6	9

Thinking only of what are sometimes called 'soft' drugs, such as cannabis, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?

It is possible for some people to use some so-called 'soft drugs' quite safely, without doing themselves and those around them any more harm than drinking alcohol or smoking in moderation	64	67	62	65	63	50	61	71
Using so-called 'soft drugs' almost always causes a lot of harm to the users and those around them – more harm than is caused by drinking alcohol or smoking in moderation	28	27	29	28	28	43	31	22
Don't know	7	6	9	6	9	7	8	6

Earlier we asked about the amounts of HARM that different substances may cause. Now we want to ask a different question: namely, how ADDICTIVE different substances are, in the sense that people become heavily dependent on them either physically or psychologically. Please indicate, from what you know, how addictive each of these substances is likely to be.

Prescribed tranquillizers such as valium

Highly addictive	47	39	54	46	47	39	48	48
Somewhat addictive	39	42	36	42	37	46	43	35
Only slightly addictive	6	8	4	6	6	10	5	5
Not at all addictive	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
Don't know	8	10	5	6	9	4	3	11

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Cannabis

Highly addictive	29	24	34	27	33	37	30	27
Somewhat addictive	41	42	41	42	40	43	43	39
Only slightly addictive	19	22	15	21	16	10	16	23
Not at all addictive	5	7	4	5	6	2	6	6
Don't know	5	5	6	5	6	7	5	5

Tobacco

Highly addictive	79	76	82	79	79	77	81	79
Somewhat addictive	17	19	15	18	17	20	16	17
Only slightly addictive	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
Not at all addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	3

Solvents such as glue or lighter fluid

Highly addictive	46	38	53	42	50	56	55	36
Somewhat addictive	31	32	29	33	27	27	30	32
Only slightly addictive	8	10	6	9	7	3	4	12
Not at all addictive	2	2	1	1	2	0	0	3
Don't know	14	17	12	14	14	13	11	17

Coffee

Highly addictive	13	10	16	12	15	5	11	17
Somewhat addictive	37	31	42	39	35	35	37	37
Only slightly addictive	36	42	30	37	34	39	37	34
Not at all addictive	11	15	9	10	13	19	14	7
Don't know	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	4

LSD

Highly addictive	39	32	46	35	44	45	46	33
Somewhat addictive	25	28	22	26	23	30	28	21
Only slightly addictive	11	12	9	13	8	7	8	13
Not at all addictive	8	10	6	9	6	1	6	11
Don't know	18	18	17	17	19	17	12	22

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Crack cocaine that people smoke

Highly addictive	85	84	87	85	86	91	88	82
Somewhat addictive	8	9	7	9	6	5	7	9
Only slightly addictive	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Not at all addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	6	7	5	5	7	4	4	8

Powder cocaine that people sniff or 'snort'

Highly addictive	80	76	84	79	81	89	85	74
Somewhat addictive	13	16	10	14	11	7	9	17
Only slightly addictive	2	2	1	2	1	0	1	2
Not at all addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Don't know	5	6	5	5	6	3	5	6

Ecstasy

Highly addictive	41	34	46	35	47	52	45	34
Somewhat addictive	28	29	28	31	25	29	30	27
Only slightly addictive	14	18	11	17	11	8	11	18
Not at all addictive	5	7	4	6	5	2	4	7
Don't know	11	12	11	10	12	9	10	13

Alcohol

Highly addictive	37	30	43	34	39	32	37	38
Somewhat addictive	43	45	41	44	41	47	45	40
Only slightly addictive	16	21	12	18	15	19	13	18
Not at all addictive	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2
Don't know	2	2	2	2	3	0	2	3

Injected heroin

Highly addictive	92	91	94	93	92	95	94	90
Somewhat addictive	3	4	2	3	3	1	3	4
Only slightly addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not at all addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	4	5	4	4	5	4	3	6

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Smoked heroin

Highly addictive	87	85	89	87	87	90	89	85
Somewhat addictive	6	7	5	7	5	4	6	7
Only slightly addictive	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Not at all addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	6	7	6	5	7	5	5	8

Methamphetamine or 'crystal meth'

Highly addictive	72	67	78	71	74	73	78	69
Somewhat addictive	9	11	8	11	7	9	7	11
Only slightly addictive	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	2
Not at all addictive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	17	20	14	16	17	18	14	19

It is sometimes said that people 'move on' from using soft drugs to using hard ones. From what you know, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to the truth?

Most people who use soft drugs go on to use hard drugs	12	12	12	10	15	18	13	9
A lot of people who use soft drugs go on to use hard ones	49	47	50	49	48	60	52	43
Only a few people who use soft drugs go on to use hard ones	30	32	29	33	28	16	26	38
Almost no one who uses soft drugs goes on to use hard ones	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1
Don't know	8	8	9	8	9	6	9	9

Why do you think those people who do move on from soft drugs to hard ones do that? [Please tick either ONE or TWO of the following]

Because using soft drugs has given them a craving for harder drugs	31	31	32	30	32	37	30	30
Because they have become part of a 'drugs culture' with dealers pushing and selling both hard and soft drugs	62	61	62	65	58	65	66	58
Because those who 'move on' to hard drugs are just the sorts of people who – even if they had never used soft drugs – would probably use hard ones sooner or later: it's largely a matter of their personality and background	31	33	28	31	30	20	25	38
Don't know	2	3	2	2	3	1	2	3

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Which ONE of the following statements, do you believe, comes closer to the truth?

Most people who use hard drugs have used or are still using soft drugs	71	77	66	73	70	73	69	72
Quite a lot of people who use hard drugs have never used soft drugs	18	14	21	18	18	18	20	17
Don't know	11	9	13	10	12	10	11	11

Some research shows that people who use drugs are more likely to commit crimes than those who do not. From what you know, do drug users commit more crimes primarily because they are under the influence of drugs or primarily because they steal in order to g

Because they are under the influence of drugs	6	5	6	6	6	6	3	7
Because they steal to get money to buy drugs	89	91	87	90	88	92	94	85
Don't know	5	4	6	4	6	2	3	7

From what you know, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?

A majority of the people who use so-called soft drugs such as cannabis never become involved in other crimes at all	43	46	40	48	36	35	40	47
A majority of the people who use so-called soft drugs become, as a result of using the drugs, involved in committing other crimes	30	30	31	29	32	42	33	25
A majority of the people who use so-called soft drugs are the sorts of people who would become involved in committing other crimes even if they did not use these drugs	11	12	10	9	13	11	9	12
Don't know	16	12	19	13	18	13	18	15

And which ONE of these statements comes closest to your view?

A majority of the people who use so-called hard drugs such as heroin and cocaine never become involved in other crimes at all	4	5	4	4	4	2	3	6
A majority of the people who use so-called hard drugs become, as a result of using the drugs, involved in committing other crimes	72	72	72	73	71	78	77	66
A majority of the people who use so-called hard drugs are the sorts of people who would become involved in committing other crimes even if they did not use these drugs	13	14	12	13	14	12	9	16
Don't know	11	9	12	10	11	8	10	12

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Which of the following do you think is the MORE REALISTIC view?

It is possible to eliminate drugs completely from our society: that is, to stop everyone, or almost everyone, from using drugs	7	9	5	6	8	7	6	8
Whether we like it or not, there will always be people who use drugs, and the aim should be to reduce the amount of harm they cause themselves and others.	89	87	90	91	86	91	91	86
Don't know	4	4	5	3	6	3	3	6

At the moment different illegal drugs are classified from A to C, roughly according to how much harm they are thought to cause individuals and society. For the guidance of the public, do you think different alcoholic drinks and different forms of tobacco s

Yes, alcohol and tobacco, even if they remain legal, should also be classified according to how much harm they can cause	62	60	65	65	59	60	66	61
No, they should not	29	34	25	29	29	33	28	29
Don't know	9	6	11	6	12	7	6	11

As you probably know, different illegal drugs are classified from A to C, roughly according to how much harm they cause to individuals and society. If you think you know, please indicate how each of the following drugs is currently classified, whether as A, B or C.

Prescribed tranquillizers such as valium

Class A	5	6	4	4	6	4	4	6
Class B	13	12	13	12	13	8	11	15
Class C	21	23	20	22	21	18	23	21
Not classified	31	32	30	34	28	35	32	29
Don't know	30	27	33	28	32	35	30	29

Power cocaine that people 'sniff' or 'snort'

Class A	71	75	67	72	69	68	66	75
Class B	11	10	12	11	11	8	12	11
Class C	2	2	3	3	2	4	2	2
Not classified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	16	13	18	14	17	19	19	12

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Heroin

Class A	86	88	85	88	84	83	84	89
Class B	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Class C	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Not classified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	12	10	14	10	14	14	14	9

Ecstasy

Class A	46	47	45	44	49	42	41	51
Class B	31	31	31	35	26	26	31	32
Class C	5	7	4	5	6	9	7	4
Not classified	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0
Don't know	17	15	19	16	19	22	21	13

LSD

Class A	49	49	48	48	50	39	51	50
Class B	27	29	25	30	24	30	22	30
Class C	5	4	5	4	5	8	5	4
Not classified	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
Don't know	19	17	21	17	21	22	22	16

Cannabis

Class A	7	8	7	6	10	13	7	6
Class B	21	21	21	21	21	28	23	17
Class C	56	58	54	60	52	42	51	64
Not classified	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3
Don't know	13	10	16	12	15	16	17	10

Crack cocaine that people smoke

Class A	79	84	76	81	78	77	77	82
Class B	6	4	7	6	6	6	6	6
Class C	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Not classified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	14	11	16	12	15	17	16	11

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Methamphetamine or 'crystal meth'

Class A	58	60	56	58	58	53	58	59
Class B	14	14	13	14	13	15	12	15
Class C	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	2
Not classified	2	2	2	3	1	0	2	2
Don't know	24	21	27	22	26	29	26	21

How would you respond to the idea of creating a new 'class D', which might include some of the less harmful drugs that are now illegal and also alcohol and tobacco (to indicate to people that alcohol and tobacco, as well as drugs, can cause harm)?

I would be broadly in favour of creating a 'class D' along these lines	55	51	59	57	53	50	56	56
I would be broadly opposed of creating a 'class D' along these lines	30	37	24	31	29	38	32	27
Don't know	15	12	17	12	17	11	12	17

Thinking about hard drugs such as heroin and cocaine, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?

Not only the sale of such drugs but the possession of them for personal use should remain a criminal offence as now	73	72	74	72	74	82	78	67
The possession of such drugs for personal use should remain illegal but should be regarded as a lesser offence, like speeding or parking illegally, rather than as a criminal offence	17	17	16	19	15	11	15	20
The possession of such drugs for personal use should no longer be illegal	6	8	4	6	5	4	5	7
Don't know	5	3	6	3	6	2	3	7

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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Thinking about soft drugs such as cannabis, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?

Both the sale of such drugs and possessing them for personal use should be treated as criminal offences	38	39	36	36	40	51	37	34
Selling such drugs should remain a criminal offence as now, but possessing them for personal use should be regarded as a lesser offence, like speeding or parking illegally	30	28	31	32	27	29	33	28
Selling such drugs should remain a criminal offence as now, but possessing them for personal use should no longer be treated as an offence at all	13	12	14	14	13	11	12	14
Both the sale and the possession of soft drugs such as cannabis should no longer be against the law: they should both be legalised	15	18	12	15	14	8	13	18
Don't know	5	3	7	3	7	2	5	6

Suppose people use illegal drugs but have not committed any other crime. In your opinion, should such people be treated as criminals and brought before the courts, or should they be treated as people who may need medical treatment and other forms of support?

They should be treated as criminals and brought before the courts	30	36	25	30	31	36	31	28
They should be treated as people who may need treatment and other forms of support	62	57	67	64	60	63	63	62
Don't know	7	7	8	6	9	1	6	10

If one or more drugs were either 'decriminalised' or legalised completely, what do you think would be the effect on the number of people using those drugs?

Many more people would use those drugs than they do now	30	32	28	28	32	40	33	24
Some more people would use them than they do now	32	33	30	33	30	33	31	32
Only a few more people would use them	21	21	22	23	20	15	19	25
No more people would use them	9	8	10	10	9	6	9	11
Don't know	8	6	10	6	10	5	8	9

Weighted N Unweighted N		Gender		Social Grade		Year of birth		
	Total	Male	Female	ABC1	C2DE	Before 1945	1945 - 1960	After 1960
	2938	1412	1526	1583	1355	444	1014	1481
	2938	1404	1534	1446	1492	312	809	1817
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

If drugs were either legalised or decriminalised, what do you think would be the effect on the number of street crimes and burglaries associated with drugs? Would the number of such crimes . . .?

Fall sharply	10	13	7	12	9	9	11	10
Fall a little	20	22	17	22	17	17	17	22
Neither increase nor fall	27	24	29	25	28	28	26	26
Increase a little	13	13	12	13	13	11	13	13
Increase sharply	18	18	18	16	20	27	20	14
Don't know	13	9	16	12	14	9	11	15

People often talk about 'treatment' in connection with drugs. From what you know, how EFFECTIVE do you think treatment can be?

With proper treatment and support, even confirmed drug users can be weaned off drugs so that they become clean and remain clean	42	40	45	43	42	37	40	46
With proper treatment and support, confirmed users can start to lead more normal, crime-free lives even if they are not entirely free of drugs	37	37	36	39	34	40	39	34
Even if they are given proper treatment and support, it is virtually impossible for confirmed users to lead normal lives or become free of drugs	9	11	7	8	10	11	9	8
Don't know	12	12	12	10	14	12	12	12

In the case of heroin users who do not respond to other forms of treatment, which of the following do you think is the MORE appropriate course of action?

Doctors should be encouraged to prescribe maintenance doses of methadone or possibly even heroin itself so that the heroin user's health can be monitored and he or she is less likely to steal in order to get money to pay for drugs	48	49	47	53	41	49	51	45
Doctors should NOT be encouraged to prescribe maintenance doses of any substance and the heroin user should be brought before the courts and either fined or sent to prison or required to undergo additional treatment	36	38	34	32	40	39	34	36
Don't know	17	14	19	15	18	12	16	18

Weighted N Unweighted N		Gender		Social Grade		Year of birth		
	Total	Male	Female	ABC1	C2DE	Before 1945	1945 - 1960	After 1960
	2938	1412	1526	1583	1355	444	1014	1481
	2938	1404	1534	1446	1492	312	809	1817
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Do you yourself have any friends or relatives who seriously harm themselves or their families by their misuse of illegal drugs?

Yes, I do: I know a lot of people who harm themselves and their families	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3
Yes, I do know such people – but only a few	7	8	7	7	8	5	7	9
Yes, I do know such people – but only one or two	18	17	20	19	18	12	21	19
No, I do not know of any such people	68	67	68	69	66	81	68	64
Don't know	4	4	4	3	5	1	3	5

Do you yourself have any friends or relatives who use illegal drugs but do NOT seriously harm themselves or their families?

Yes, I do	29	32	27	30	29	13	20	40
No, I don't	63	59	66	64	62	80	71	52
Don't know	8	9	7	7	10	8	9	8

Do you yourself have any friends or relatives who seriously harm themselves or their families by their misuse of alcohol?

Yes, I do	33	30	35	34	31	28	32	34
No, I don't	62	64	60	62	62	69	64	59
Don't know	5	6	5	4	7	3	5	7

Have you yourself ever used so-called hard drugs such as heroin or cocaine?

Yes, and I still do	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	2
Yes, but not now - in the past I tried them a few times but then stopped	5	6	4	5	4	0	3	8
Yes, but not any longer - I used to use them quite a lot but then broke the habit	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	2
No, I have never used hard drugs	90	87	92	91	89	99	95	84
Don't know	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1
I would prefer not to answer this question	2	2	2	2	2	0	1	3

Have you yourself ever used so-called soft drugs such as cannabis?

Yes, and I still do	5	6	4	4	6	1	3	8
Yes, but not now - in the past I tried them a few times but then stopped	22	22	21	22	21	7	17	29
Yes, but not any longer - I used to use them quite a lot but then broke the habit	5	7	4	5	6	1	4	7
No, I have never used soft drugs	64	60	69	66	63	90	72	51
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
I would prefer not to answer this question	3	4	2	3	3	0	2	4