

YouGov Survey Results

Attitudes to drugs

Prepared for Daily Telegraph

Sample Size: 2536

Fieldwork: 20-22 January 2004

	%
Which of these statements comes closest to your own view?	
There is not really a serious 'drugs problem' in this country	6
There is a serious drugs problem, but it is largely confined to certain neighbourhoods and certain kinds of people	42
There is a serious problem and it affects practically the whole country	51
Don't know	2
Which do you regard as the more serious social problem in Britain, the abuse of drugs or the abuse of alcohol?	
Abuse of drugs	63
Abuse of alcohol	32
Don't know	6
In your view, are all drugs much the same, or should a distinction be made between 'hard' drugs such as heroin and crack cocaine and 'soft' drugs such as cannabis?	
All drugs are much the same	41
Hard and soft drugs should be distinguished from each other	57
Don't know	2
From what you know, is it possible for some people to use hard drugs occasionally without becoming addicted, or does any use of hard drugs almost always lead to people becoming addicted?	
Possible for some to use hard drugs occasionally	27
Use of hard drugs always leads to addiction	62
Don't know	12
How much more likely are people who use cannabis, compared with those who do not, also to use hard drugs?	
A lot more likely	26
Somewhat more likely	32
Only a little more likely	22
No more likely	11
Don't know	9
Is that mainly because cannabis use creates a craving for harder drugs or mainly because some people who use cannabis find themselves part of a 'drug culture' with dealers pushing both hard and soft drugs?	
Cannabis creates craving	13
Cannabis users become part of 'drugs culture'	83
Don't know	4
Also from what you know, which of these drugs are seriously addictive? (Please tick all that apply)	
Heroin	96
Crack cocaine	94
Tobacco	92
Alcohol	75
Amphetamines	61
Coffee	46
LSD	46
Cannabis	44
Ecstasy	39
Don't know	1

Does the use of hard drugs...?

Cause harm to all users	59
Cause harm to most users	35
Cause harm to a minority of users	4
Does not cause harm to any users	0
Don't know	2

Does the use of soft drugs...?

Cause harm to all users	19
Cause harm to most users	28
Cause harm to a minority of users	45
Does not cause harm to any users	2
Don't know	6

From what you know, does the fact that drugs are illegal raise the price of drugs, or lower it, or does the fact that drugs are illegal not make much difference?

Raises it	68
Lowers it	2
Doesn't make much difference	22
Don't know	8

If the price of drugs were lower than it is now, do you think...?

Many more people would use drugs than do now	21
Some more people would use them than do now	34
Only a few more people would use them	26
No more people would use them	13
Don't know	6

Research shows that drugs addicts are more likely to commit crimes than non-addicts. From what you know, do addicts commit crimes primarily because they become mentally unstable when they are high on drugs, or primarily because they steal in order to get money to buy drugs?

They become mentally unstable when high on drugs	7
They steal to get money to buy drugs	91
Don't know	3

Do you think that those who are addicted to drugs should be dealt with mainly by the police and the courts or mainly through the National Health Service?

Mainly by police and courts	53
Mainly through the NHS	34
Don't know	13

With regard to hard drugs such as heroin and crack cocaine, which of these statements comes closest to your own view?

The sale and possession of such drugs should remain a criminal offence as now	89
The sale and possession of such hard drugs should remain illegal but should be regarded as a minor offence, such as parking in the wrong place, rather than a CRIMINAL offence (a policy sometimes called 'decriminalisation')	4
The sale and possession of such hard drugs should no longer be illegal (sometimes called 'legalisation')	5
Don't know	2

With regard to soft drugs such as cannabis, which of these statements comes closest to your own view?

The sale and possession of such drugs should remain a criminal offence as now	43
The sale and possession of such hard drugs should remain illegal but should be regarded as a minor offence, such as parking in the wrong place, rather than a CRIMINAL offence (a policy sometimes called 'decriminalisation')	28
The sale and possession of such hard drugs should no longer be illegal (sometimes called 'legalisation')	23
Don't know	6

From the beginning of next month, one of the so-called soft drugs, cannabis, will be downgraded from being a class B drug to a class C drug, meaning in practice that, although selling it and possessing it is still illegal, people who use it in private are unlikely to be prosecuted. Do you approve or disapprove of the change in the law?

Approve	52
Disapprove	39
Don't know	10

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

Many more people would use drugs than do now	28
Some more people would use them than do now	35
Only a few more people would use them	24
No more people would use them	9
Don't know	4

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 such crimes...?

Fall sharply	12
Fall a little	24
Neither increase nor fall	28
Increase a little	13
Increase sharply	15
Don't know	9

Do you have any children between the ages of 15 and 25?

Yes	26
No	74

So far as you know, have any of your children ever used either hard or soft drugs?

Yes	28
No	64
Don't know	8

How much does it worry you that they have used drugs?

A lot	57
A certain amount	32
Not very much	10
Not at all	1
Don't know	0

How much does it worry you that they may have used drugs or may use them in the future?

A lot	32
A certain amount	38
Not very much	18
Not at all	13
Don't know	0

Do you have any children aged 14 or younger?

Yes	28
No	72

So far as you know, have any of these children ever used either hard or soft drugs?

Yes	1
No	98
Don't know	1

How much does it worry you that they have used drugs?

A lot	97
A certain amount	0
Not very much	0
Not at all	3
Don't know	0

How much does it worry you that they may have used drugs or may use them in the future?

A lot	37
A certain amount	44
Not very much	12
Not at all	7
Don't know	0

How often have you yourself used either hard or soft drugs?

Often	4
Occasionally	13
Only once or twice	20
Never	63
Don't know	1