IDRS Illicit Drug Reporting System

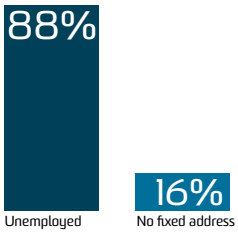
2021 SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS



In 2021, 888 people from all Australian capital cities participated in IDRS interviews.

45 years 65%

The mean age in 2021 was 45, and 65% identified as male.

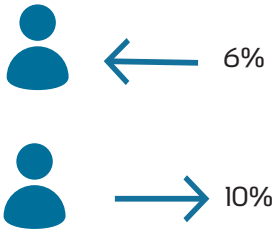


In the 2021 sample, 88% were unemployed and 16% had no fixed address.

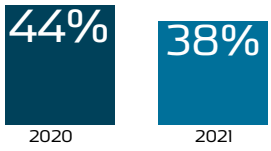
- Injected heroin
- Injected methamphetamine
- Injected other drug

Participants were recruited on the basis that they had injected drugs at least monthly in the previous 6 months.

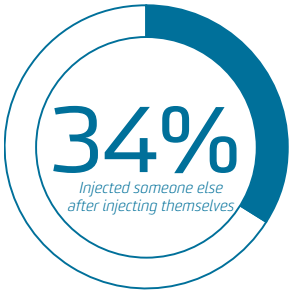
INJECTING RELATED RISKS AND HARMS



In 2021, 6% of the IDRS sample reported receptive needle sharing, and 10% reported distributive needle sharing.



The number of people who re-used their own needles reduced from 44% in 2020 to 38% 2021.

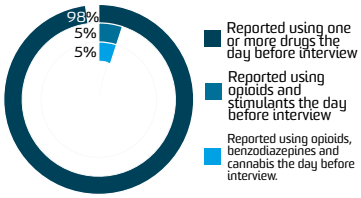


In the national sample, 34% of participants reported injecting someone else after injecting themselves.

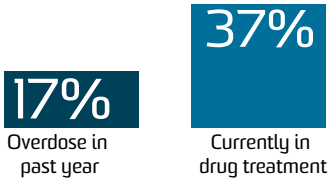


In 2021, 26% of the national sample reported having an injection-related health issue in the month preceding interview.

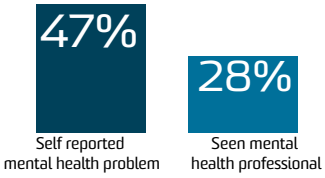
OTHER HARMS AND HELP-SEEKING



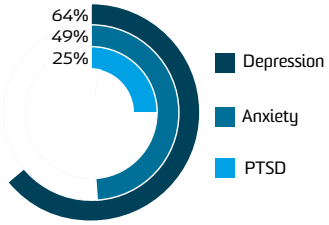
IDRS participants' use of drugs the day before interview participation, 2021.



In the 2021 sample, 17% had experienced a non-fatal overdose in the previous 12 months and 37% were currently in drug treatment.

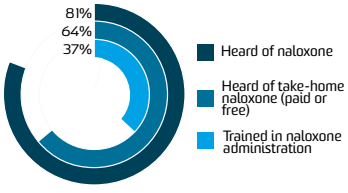


In the sample, 47% self reported a mental health problem in the six months prior to interview, and 28% had seen a mental health professional.



Of those who commented, the top three most common mental health issues reported were depression (64%), anxiety (49%) and PTSD (25%).

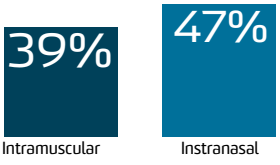
NALOXONE AND HARM REDUCTION



IDRS participants' knowledge of, and participation in, the take home naloxone program remained stable in 2021.



Of those who reported having heard of naloxone, 29% had used naloxone to resuscitate someone who had overdosed.



Of those who reported ever accessing naloxone, 39% received intramuscular naloxone and 47% intranasal naloxone.

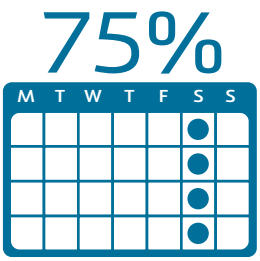


In 2021, 8% of the sample reported that they or someone else had tested the content and/or purity of their illicit drugs in Australia in the past year.

HEROIN



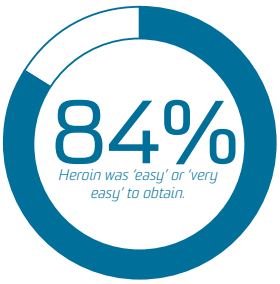
Past 6 month use of heroin decreased to 50% in the 2021 IDRS sample (63% 2020).



Of those who had recently consumed heroin, 75% used it weekly or more often, a decrease from 80% in 2020.

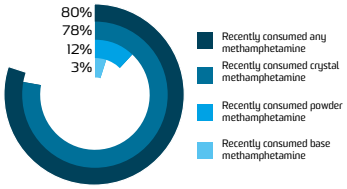


The median reported price for a point of heroin was $80 in 2021, an increase from $70 in 2020.

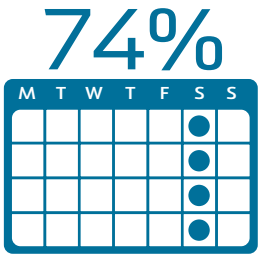


Of those who could comment 84% perceived heroin to be 'easy' or 'very easy' to obtain, up from 77% in 2020.

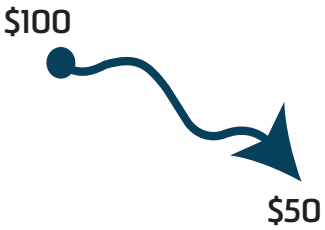
METHAMPHETAMINE



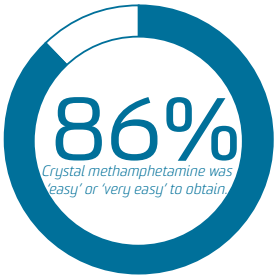
Past 6 month use of any (80%) and crystal (78%) methamphetamine increased since 2020, while recent use of powder (12%) and base (3%) decreased.



Of those who had recently used any form of methamphetamine, 74% used it at least weekly, an increase from 68% in 2020.



The median reported price for a point of methamphetamine was $50 in 2021, a decrease from $100 in 2020.



Of those who could comment, 86% perceived crystal methamphetamine to be 'easy' or 'very easy' to obtain in 2021, an increase from 48% in 2020.

OTHER DRUGS

Non-prescribed morphine



Past 6 month use of non-prescribed morphine was stable at 15% in the 2020 IDRS sample and 16% in 2021.

Non-prescribed fentanyl



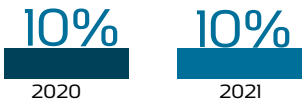
Past 6 month use of non-prescribed fentanyl was stable at 6% in the 2020 IDRS sample and 6% in 2021.

Non-prescribed pregabalin



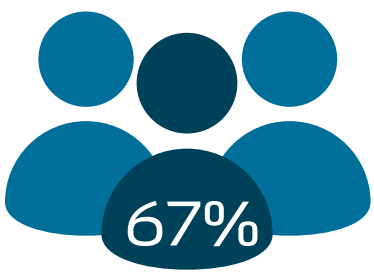
Past 6 month use of non-prescribed pregabalin was stable at 14% in the 2020 IDRS sample and 16% in 2021.

GHB/GBL/1,4-BD

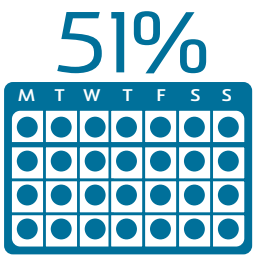


Past 6 month use of GHB/GBL/1,4-BD was stable at 10% in the 2020 IDRS sample and 10% in 2021.

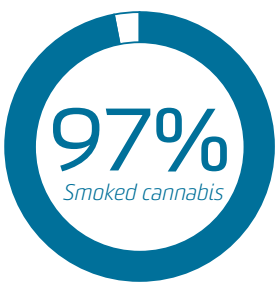
CANNABIS



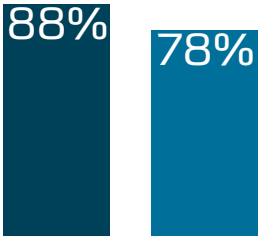
Past 6 month use of any cannabis was stable at 67% in the 2020 IDRS sample and 67% in 2021.



Of those who had consumed cannabis recently, half reported daily use (51%).



Of people who had consumed cannabis in the last 6 months, 97% had smoked it.



Of those who could comment 88% perceived hydro and 78% perceived bush to be 'easy' or 'very easy' to obtain.