



## CRIME AND JUSTICE

# DRUG SEIZURES AND OFFENDER CHARACTERISTICS, 2016-17

This bulletin presents Official Statistics on drug seizures made by the police in Scotland and the characteristics of those found in possession of drugs. These statistics relate to drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which divides drugs into three classes, namely A, B and C. For the purpose of this bulletin, the drug classifications at the end of the reporting period, 31 March 2017, have been applied to the data.

## Key Points

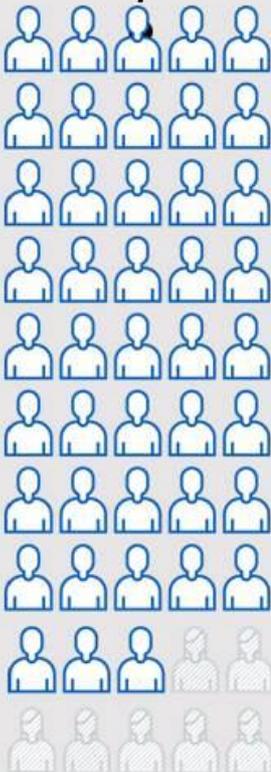
- The quantity of drugs seized can fluctuate considerably each year and does not necessarily move in line with the number of seizures made. Whilst most drug seizures consist of relatively small quantities (usually possession-related crimes), annual quantities of drugs seized can be greatly influenced by a small number of large seizures (usually from supply-related crimes).
- For crimes of drug supply, the main Class A drugs seized by Police Scotland in 2016-17 were heroin (54.1 kilograms), cocaine (120.3 kilograms) and crack cocaine (5.2 kilograms). Police Scotland also seized approximately 8,600 ecstasy-type tablets.
- Again for crimes of drug supply, the main Class B drugs seized by Police Scotland in 2016-17 were herbal cannabis (347.9 kilograms) and cannabis resin (322.1 kilograms). They also seized over 18,000 cannabis plants. For Class C drugs, the main drug seized was diazepam or other benzodiazepines (approximately 2.2 million tablets).
- A sample of drug possession crime for 2016-17 estimated that 60% of drug possession crimes involved herbal cannabis or cannabis resin, with 10% each for cocaine and diazepam.
- Over 2014-15 to 2016-17, the vast majority of drug possession offenders were male (86%). The median age of an offender was 29 years old, with almost two thirds (65%) being between 20 and 39 years old.

# DRUG POSSESSION CRIME IN SCOTLAND, 2014-15 to 2016-17



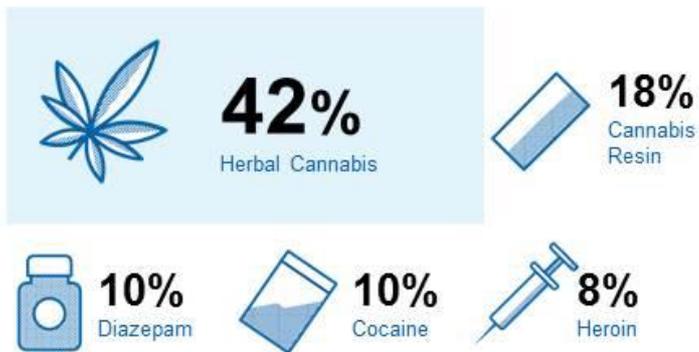
## Who were the offenders?

**86%**  
were male



Median age  
**29**

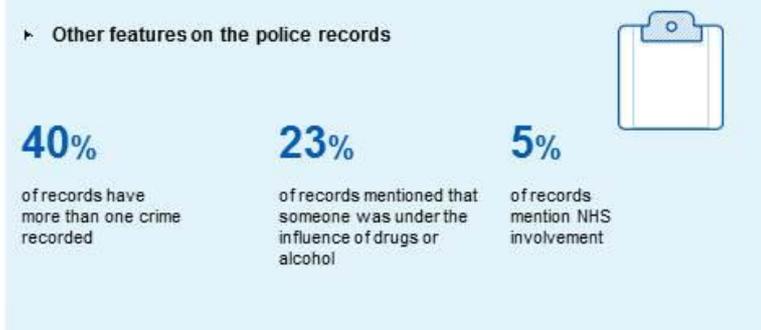
## WHAT TYPE OF DRUGS WERE SEIZED?



## WHERE WERE THE DRUGS SEIZED?



## Other features on the police records



## Contents

<b>Key Points</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Number of seizures and quantities of drugs seized</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Drug supply crimes .....	6
Drug possession crimes .....	10
Overall quantity of drugs seized .....	12
<b>Analysis of the characteristics of drug possession crimes</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Characteristics of offenders, 2014-15 to 2016-17 .....	15
How Police Scotland became aware of the drug possession crime .....	16
Other information about the drug seizure .....	16
<b>Annexes</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Data Quality Statement.....	17
Police Scotland Management Information.....	17
Other notes .....	17

# Background

This bulletin presents Official Statistics on the number and type of drug seizures made by Police Scotland during 2016-17. It does not include information on drugs seized by the UK Border Force or British Transport Police, or as a result of Police Scotland activity which led to drugs being seized out-with Scotland.

The data collection process for this bulletin is split into two parts, looking at seizures relating to drug supply and drug possession crimes separately. Police Scotland manually check drug supply-based crimes each year, with these records accounting for the clear majority of drugs seized in terms of quantity. This is supplemented by a sample led by Scottish Government statisticians of the remaining and far more numerous crimes of drug possession. The sample consists of a random selection of 400 crime records per year, stratified by police division to reflect the distribution of drug possession crimes across Scotland. This sample-based approach avoids the need to manually extract data for every crime record relating to a drugs possession crime, which would be a very resource intensive process. The information from the sample is then used to estimate the number of seizures and quantities seized in relation to possession crimes for the most commonly identified drug types for Scotland as a whole. This is done by multiplying the average quantity seized per crime by the estimated total number of seizures for that drug type.

For the drug types where quantities seized from possession-related crimes can be estimated, a figure for total amount seized has been produced by adding the quantity seized from supply crimes to the estimated quantity seized from possession crimes. For those drug types where the possession amount cannot be reliably estimated, only the quantity seized from supply crimes is available. However, as these drug types only appear in very small numbers within the sample, it can be assumed that the quantity seized from possession crimes is relatively low.

As well as using the sample to record information on the drugs seized from crimes of possession, information about the offender and the circumstances of the crime has also been recorded so that additional analysis on offender characteristics can be presented. As this is the second bulletin which has included this information, data from 2014-15 to 2016-17 has been combined to give a more accurate account of offender and crime characteristics.

It should be noted that care must always be taken when making comparisons on this topic as there can be very large fluctuations in the quantity of drugs seized from one year to the next. Data on the quantities of drugs seized prior to 2014-15 can be found in the [2013-14 publication](#).

There are two statutory requirements for the UK to provide data on drug seizures, which are managed by the [UK Focal Point on Drugs](#), based at Public Health

England. The UK Focal Point on Drugs collate drug seizures statistics from England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland for the UK Focal Point's annual report. This is then submitted to the [European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction](#) (EMCDDA) and the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](#) (UNODC). These data inform the EMCDDA's annual report and the UNODC's annual World Drugs Report.

The minimum data requirements to satisfy these two obligations are to submit data on the number of drug seizures and the quantity of drugs seized for each of the following types of drugs: cocaine, crack, ecstasy-type substances, heroin, LSD, methylamphetamine, amphetamines, herbal cannabis, cannabis resin and cannabis plants. In addition to these ten drugs, this bulletin contains seizures data on methadone, morphine, barbiturates, ketamine, mephedrone, anabolic steroids, diazepam, GHB, temazepam and other benzodiazepines.

The statistics on drug seizures are used to inform [National Outcome 9](#) – 'we live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger' as well as the Scottish Government's [Justice Vision and Priorities](#). These statistics are also used by a wide range of stakeholders to monitor trends, for policy research and development, and for research purposes.

The 'Drug Seizures and Offender Characteristics' annual statistical bulletin series forms part of a series of bulletins produced by the Scottish Government on the criminal justice system which can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/Publications>.

# Number of seizures and quantities of drugs seized

- The quantity of drugs seized can fluctuate considerably each year and does not necessarily move in line with the number of seizures made. Whilst most drug seizures consist of relatively small quantities (usually possession-related crimes), annual quantities of drugs seized can be greatly influenced by a small number of large seizures (usually supply-related crimes).

## Drug supply crimes

- Intelligence-led operations against known drug dealers tend to result in a low number of seizures, but conversely the quantity of drugs seized and their value will be high. These high profile operations may result in greater disruption to the illicit drugs trade which, whilst having a positive effect, may reduce the number of seizures made. As such, care should be taken when comparing quantities of drugs seized over time.
- A significant proportion of drugs seized in terms of quantity come from seizures related to supply crimes, despite making up a relatively small proportion of the overall number of seizures.
- This section covers drugs seized where the crime was one of drug supply, drug production or illegal importation of drugs.

## Class A drugs seized from drug supply crimes

- [Table 1](#) shows that in 2016-17, Police Scotland reported that they seized 54.1 kilograms (kg) of heroin, 120.3 kg of cocaine and 5.2 kg of crack cocaine from drug supply crimes. This is compared to 74.0 kilograms (kg) of heroin, 82.7 kg of cocaine and 4.2 kg of crack cocaine in 2015-16.
- Approximately 8,600 ecstasy-type tablets were seized in 2016-17, compared to 13,400 in 2015-16.
- 1.1 litres of methadone was seized by Police Scotland in 2016-17, compared to 4.3 litres in 2015-16.
- Compared to other types of Class A Drugs, relatively small amounts of LSD and morphine were seized in 2016-17.
- In addition to the information in Table 1, there were 47 supply-based seizures of 'Other' Class A drugs in 2016-17, including 1 seizure of methylamphetamine.

**Table 1: Class A drugs seized by Police Scotland from drug supply crimes, by drug type, 2014-15 to 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

<b>2014-15</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Cocaine Powder	kg	366	75.7
Crack Cocaine	kg	3	0.0
Ecstasy-type Substances	tablets (000s)	89	15.1
Heroin	kg	553	106.1
LSD	tablets/other units (000s)	3	0.1
Methadone	litres	34	8.1
Morphine	litres	3	0.1
<b>2015-16</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Cocaine Powder	kg	506	82.7
Crack Cocaine	kg	25	4.2
Ecstasy-type Substances	tablets (000s)	148	13.4
Heroin	kg	737	74.0
LSD	tablets/other units (000s)	6	0.0
Methadone	litres	11	4.3
Morphine	litres	18	0.0
<b>2016-17</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Cocaine Powder	kg	488	120.3
Crack Cocaine	kg	85	5.2
Ecstasy-type Substances	tablets (000s)	150	8.6
Heroin	kg	815	54.1
LSD	tablets/other units (000s)	9	0.1
Methadone	litres	12	1.1
Morphine	litres	3	0.6

1. Data for 2014-15 is based on an estimated 85% of all drug supply-related crimes, compared to 92% for 2015-16 and 100% for 2016-17.

### **Class B drugs seized from drug supply crimes**

- [Table 2](#) shows the quantities of Class B drugs seized in 2016-17.
- The quantity of cannabis-related drug seizures from drug supply crimes in 2016-17 included 347.9 kg of herbal cannabis, 322.1 kg of cannabis resin and 18,310 cannabis plants. This is compared to 413.9 kg of herbal cannabis, 570.4 kg of cannabis resin and almost 31,400 cannabis plants in 2015-16.

- There was 14.6 kg of mephedrone seized from drug supply crimes in 2016-17, compared to 0.9 kg in 2015-16. There was 10.0 kg of ketamine seized in 2016-17, compared to very small quantities (less than a kilogram) in 2014-15 and 2015-16. There were 109.9 kg of amphetamines seized in 2016-17, compared to 71.8 kg seized in 2015-16.
- In addition to the information in Table 2, there were 17 supply-based seizures of 'Other' Class B drugs in 2016-17.

**Table 2: Class B drugs seized by Police Scotland from drug supply crimes, by drug type, 2014-15 to 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

<b>2014-15</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Herbal Cannabis	kg	731	165.4
Cannabis resin	kg	268	153.4
Cannabis plants	plants	594	13,022
Amphetamines	kg	124	118.4
Barbiturates	tablets (000s)	-	-
Ketamine	kg	2	0.0
Mephedrone	kg	2	0.0
<b>2015-16</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Herbal Cannabis	kg	905	413.9
Cannabis resin	kg	400	570.4
Cannabis plants	plants	655	31,398
Amphetamines	kg	135	71.8
Barbiturates	tablets (000s)	-	-
Ketamine	kg	2	0.0
Mephedrone	kg	11	0.9
<b>2016-17</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Herbal Cannabis	kg	849	347.9
Cannabis resin	kg	329	322.1
Cannabis plants	plants	683	18,310
Amphetamines	kg	151	109.9
Barbiturates	tablets (000s)	-	-
Ketamine	kg	7	10.0
Mephedrone	kg	22	14.6

1. Data for 2014-15 is based on an estimated 85% of all drug supply-related crimes, compared to 92% for 2015-16 and 100% for 2016-17.

## Class C drugs seized from drug supply crimes

- [Table 3](#) shows the quantities of Class C drugs seized from drug supply crimes.
- Most Class C seizures were of diazepam and other benzodiazepines, with almost 2.2 million tablets seized in 2016-17. This is compared to 1.3 million tablets seized in 2015-16 and 1.2 million seized in 2014-15. Whilst it is not possible to present figures for these two drug types separately, the vast majority of tablets seized are likely to have been diazepam.
- Approximately 12,100 tablets of anabolic steroids were seized in 2016-17, compared to 300 in both 2014-15 and 2015-16. Approximately 34,200 tablets of temazepam were seized in 2016-17, compared to approximately 1,300 in 2015-16.
- In addition to the information in Table 3, there were 42 supply-based seizures of 'Other' Class C drugs in 2016-17.

**Table 3: Class C drugs seized by Police Scotland from drug supply crimes, by drug type, 2014-15 to 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

<b>2014-15</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Anabolic Steroids	tablets (000s)	3	0.3
GHB	litres	0	0.0
Temazepam	tablets (000s)	2	0.0
Diazepam and other Benzodiazepines	tablets (000s)	419	1,182.7
<b>2015-16</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Anabolic Steroids	tablets (000s)	5	0.3
GHB	litres	2	0.0
Temazepam	tablets (000s)	4	1.3
Diazepam and other Benzodiazepines	tablets (000s)	382	1,276.1
<b>2016-17</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Number of Seizures</b>	<b>Quantity Seized</b>
Anabolic Steroids	tablets (000s)	52	12.1
GHB	litres	-	0.0
Temazepam	tablets (000s)	2	34.2
Diazepam and other Benzodiazepines	tablets (000s)	316	2,165.4

1. Data for 2014-15 is based on an estimated 85% of all drug supply-related crimes, compared to 92% for 2015-16 and 100% for 2016-17.

## Drug possession crimes

- The majority of seizures of controlled drugs are from drug possession crimes (in terms of numbers of seizures), however by their nature these incidents involve a relatively small quantity of drugs being seized. As a result, drug possession crimes account for only a small proportion of all drugs seized in terms of quantity, despite accounting for the vast majority of seizures.
- The data presented below for drug possession crimes is based on a sample of 400 records per year. As this analysis is drawn from a sample of records, users should treat the following information as a broad indication of the characteristics of drug possession rather than as an exact measure. All figures are presented at a national level as the sample size is too small to provide robust estimates for geographies below this.

### Number of drug possession crimes by drug classification

- Recorded crime statistics show that in total, there were 27,766 drug possession crimes recorded by the police in 2016-17, compared to 31,632 drug possession crimes in 2014-15 and 29,929 in 2015-16. Further information can be found in [Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2016-17](#).
- [Table 4](#) shows the distribution of the classification of drugs seized in the sample for 2014-15 to 2016-17. There is also a resulting estimate of the total number of possession crimes involving each class of drug.
- In 2016-17, 62.5% of all drug possession crimes were estimated to involve Class B drugs. A further 22.5% of all drug possession crimes were estimated to involve Class A drugs, whilst 14.0% involved a Class C drug.
- Although there are some differences in the proportions of the classes of drugs seized from 2014-15 to 2016-17, none of these differences were found to be statistically significant.

**Table 4: Estimated number of drug possession crimes by drug classification, 2014-15 to 2016-17**

<b>2014-15</b>		
<b>Drug Class</b>	<b>Percentage of records in the sample</b>	<b>Estimated total number of crimes<sup>1</sup></b>
Class A	15.8%	5,000
Class B	68.0%	21,500
Class C	15.8%	5,000
Unclassified <sup>2</sup>	0.5%	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>31,632</b>
<b>2015-16</b>		
<b>Drug Class</b>	<b>Percentage of records in the sample</b>	<b>Estimated total number of crimes<sup>1</sup></b>
Class A	17.5%	5,200
Class B	67.5%	20,200
Class C	14.5%	4,300
Unclassified <sup>2</sup>	0.5%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29,929</b>
<b>2016-17</b>		
<b>Drug Class</b>	<b>Percentage of records in the sample</b>	<b>Estimated total number of crimes<sup>1</sup></b>
Class A	22.5%	6,200
Class B	62.5%	17,400
Class C	14.0%	3,900
Unclassified <sup>2</sup>	1.0%	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>27,766</b>

1. As these figures are estimates they have been rounded to the nearest 100
2. In a small number of cases the drug type could not be classified due to lack of information or no controlled drugs were seized.

### **Quantity of drugs seized from drug possession Crimes**

- In 2016-17, cocaine, heroin, herbal cannabis, cannabis resin and diazepam accounted for 87.7% of all drug possession seizures.
- Herbal cannabis is the most commonly seized drug by a considerable margin, with cannabis resin the second most commonly seized drug. In 2016-17, 60.1% of all possession-related seizures involved these two drug types.
- [Table 5](#) provides estimates of the quantity of drugs seized from 2014-15 to 2016-17 for particular drug types. Estimates of the quantity seized from drug possession crimes have only been calculated where there were at least 15 observations of that drug being seized in the sample.

- The quantity has been estimated by multiplying the average quantity seized in the sample by the estimated number of drug possession seizures involving that drug.

**Table 5: Quantity of drugs seized by Police Scotland from drug possession crimes, by drug type, 2014-15 to 2016-17**

<b>2014-15</b>				
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Percentage of sample</b>	<b>Estimated number of crimes<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Estimated quantity seized</b>
Cocaine	kg	7.8%	2,500	4.1
Heroin	kg	4.8%	1,500	0.8
Herbal Cannabis	kg	43.0%	13,600	36.2
Cannabis Resin	kg	21.0%	6,600	14.8
Diazepam	tablets (000s)	14.5%	4,600	151.3
<b>2015-16</b>				
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Percentage of sample</b>	<b>Estimated number of crimes<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Estimated quantity seized</b>
Cocaine	kg	8.3%	2,500	6.1
Heroin	kg	6.0%	1,800	2.1
Herbal Cannabis	kg	46.8%	14,000	36.8
Cannabis Resin	kg	16.8%	5,000	17.6
Diazepam	tablets (000s)	12.3%	3,700	63.2
<b>2016-17</b>				
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Percentage of sample</b>	<b>Estimated number of crimes<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Estimated quantity seized</b>
Cocaine	kg	10.3%	2,900	5.2
Heroin	kg	7.5%	2,100	2.1
Herbal Cannabis	kg	41.8%	11,600	39.6
Cannabis Resin	kg	18.3%	5,100	32.6
Diazepam	tablets (000s)	9.8%	2,700	71.8

1. As these figures are estimates they have been rounded to the nearest 100

## Overall quantity of drugs seized

- [Table 6](#) shows the total quantity of drugs seized for the drug types where an estimate of the quantity seized from possession crimes has been made. The figures shown in the table are the sum of the quantities seized from supply-related crimes and the estimated quantity seized from possession crimes.
- For those drug types not shown in Table 6, there were fewer than 15 observations in the sample of possession crimes for each year, and therefore the total quantity seized from possession crimes is likely to be very small.

Due to this the quantity seized from supply-related crimes shown in [Tables 1, 2 and 3](#) should provide a reasonable estimate of the total quantity seized.

- For all of these drug types the quantity of drugs seized from possession crimes is relatively small when compared to the quantity seized from supply crimes.
- In 2016-17, 125.5 kg of cocaine was seized in total compared to 88.8 kg in 2015-16. There were also 56.2 kg of heroin seized in 2016-17, compared to 76.1 kg in the previous year and 106.8 kg in 2014-15.
- In total, 387.2 kg of herbal cannabis was seized in 2016-17 compared to 450.7 kg in 2015-16. The quantity of cannabis resin seized in 2016-17 was 354.7 kg compared to 588.0 kg in 2015-16.
- Approximately 2.2 million diazepam tablets were seized in 2016-17, compared to 1.3 million in each of 2014-15 and 2015-16.

**Table 6: Estimated total quantity of drugs seized by Police Scotland, by drug type, 2014-15 to 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

<b>2014-15</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Drug Class</b>	<b>Estimated quantity seized</b>
Cocaine	kg	A	79.9
Heroin	kg	A	106.8
Herbal Cannabis	kg	B	201.6
Cannabis Resin	kg	B	168.2
Diazepam <sup>2</sup>	tablets (000s)	C	1,334.0
<b>2015-16</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Drug Class</b>	<b>Estimated quantity seized</b>
Cocaine	kg	A	88.8
Heroin	kg	A	76.1
Herbal Cannabis	kg	B	450.7
Cannabis Resin	kg	B	588.0
Diazepam <sup>2</sup>	tablets (000s)	C	1,339.3
<b>2016-17</b>			
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Drug Class</b>	<b>Estimated quantity seized</b>
Cocaine	kg	A	125.5
Heroin	kg	A	56.2
Herbal Cannabis	kg	B	387.2
Cannabis Resin	kg	B	354.7
Diazepam <sup>2</sup>	tablets (000s)	C	2,237.2

1. For the element of this which applies to supply based crimes there was an estimated coverage of 85% of crimes in 2014-15, and 92% of crimes in 2015-16 and 100% in 2016-17.

2. For the element of this which applies to supply based crimes a small proportion of these will be other benzodiazepines.

# Analysis of the characteristics of drug possession crimes

- Information about the offenders of drug possession crimes and how they came to the attention of the police was also recorded in the sampling process. For the purposes of increased accuracy, sample data for 2014-15 to 2016-17 has been combined, resulting in a sample of 1,200 records.

## Characteristics of offenders, 2014-15 to 2016-17

- The vast majority of drug possession crimes were committed by one offender, with only 3% of crimes having multiple offenders (these situations can occur where offenders collectively admit to ownership of the seized drugs, or if no one admits to ownership).
- The vast majority of drug possession crimes were committed by males or all male groups (86%).
- The median age of a drug possession offender was 29 years old. [Table 7](#) shows the age distribution of the offenders in the sample.
- Almost two thirds (65%) of offenders are in the 20-29 and 30-39 years age groups. Offenders are far more likely to come from these two age groups than would be expected based solely on their size within the general population (26%).
- In 23% of drug possession crimes there was a reference to someone being either under the influence of alcohol or drugs or having consumed alcohol or drugs. In the majority of these cases it refers to the offender, however in a small number of cases it is in reference to another party.

**Table 7: Age distribution of the offenders of drug possession crime 2014-15 to 2016-17**

Age group of offender	Percentage of offenders	Percentage of total population <sup>1</sup>
0-19	15.9%	21.4%
20-29	37.1%	13.7%
30-39	28.0%	12.6%
40-49	14.4%	13.5%
50+	4.6%	38.8%

1. Population figures are based on an average of the National Records of Scotland mid-year estimates from 2014-2016

## **How Police Scotland became aware of the drug possession crime**

- The circumstances leading to a drug possession seizure have been recorded based on the details of the event within the crime record. As crime records have not been created specifically for this purpose, it has been necessary on occasion to make assumptions around certain aspects of what happened. As such this information should be seen as a broad illustration, rather than a precise measure.
- From 2014-15 to 2016-17, it is estimated that approximately half (49%) of drug possessions in the sample were detected by police while on routine patrol. The majority of these were cases where police officers on patrol had a suspicion or observed that the offender was in possession of drugs, with this category accounting for 37% of all records reviewed. A further 13% of records involved police on patrol dealing with another crime, offence or incident and finding drugs while doing this.
- 28% of drug possessions were assessed to be found as a result of police responding to a report of a crime, offence or another reported incident, either in relation to the drugs offence or for another matter (either criminal or non-criminal). A further 21% of drug possession seizures were made by police during investigations into an earlier crime, offence or incident.

## **Other information about the drug seizure**

- 5% of crime records for drug possession made reference to the involvement of NHS services. This involvement was not necessarily for the offender of the drug possession crime, and will not necessarily be linked to the use of drugs.
- More than one crime was recorded in 40% of records in the sample. The additional crimes recorded are not necessarily committed by the same person responsible for the drug possession crime, but would have related to the same incident. In 60% of the records where another crime was recorded, at least one of the other crimes was also in relation to drug possession or supply.
- Drug seizures were more common over the weekend, with Fridays and Saturdays accounting for 20% and 19% respectively.
- The most common location for drugs to be seized from an offender was the street, with 49% of records reviewed having this locus. Dwellings were the next most common locus, with 28% of seizures.

# Annexes

## Data Quality Statement

- To produce this annual release on drug seizures, the Scottish Government requests data on drug supply-related crimes from Police Scotland's Analysis and Performance Unit (APU). APU, in turn, requests this information from divisions across Police Scotland which still maintain aspects of their own Crime Management Systems defined by the previous legacy force areas.
- Data from drug possession crimes is collected via a random sample of 400 drug possession crime records per year. This sample is stratified by police division so that the sample's geographic distribution reflects the distribution of drug possession crimes across Scotland. These records are reviewed by Scottish Government statisticians.
- As part of the sampling process, the quality of the recording of drug possession crimes was checked and found to be very good, with nearly 100% of records classified correctly across 2016-17.
- We always welcome feedback on the content of our statistical bulletins and users are welcome to submit their comments to: [JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot](mailto:JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot).

## Police Scotland Management Information

- In addition to the Official Statistics on drug seizures, Police Scotland publish management information on drug crimes recorded by the police (including the number of recorded crimes of drug supply & production, possession of drugs and other drug crimes). This is presented within their Quarterly Management Information Reports, which are available from the 'Our Performance' section of Police Scotland's website: <http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/our-performance/>
- These reports are produced to demonstrate Police Scotland's commitment to transparency (alongside other regular reporting activity to the Scottish Police Authority). The information within these reports is presented on a cumulative quarterly basis, with the first quarter of a reporting year containing 3 months of data (from April to June), the second containing 6 months of data (from April to September) etc. The reports are typically published within 2 months of the period to which they refer.

## Other notes

- In addition to drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the Psychoactive Substance Act 2016 made it an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, possess on custodial premises,

import or export psychoactive substances. A small amount of these types of drugs were seized in 2016-17. We will consider how seizures of these types of drugs can be included in future bulletins.

- Justice Analytical Services publishes a work plan each year detailing the programme of work planned over the current financial year period. The work of the division covers both an agreed forward programme of analytical priorities, and routine analytical work particularly related to the compilation of National and Official Statistics, ongoing project management and knowledge transfer activity.
- Analytical planning to develop a programme for the financial year 2017-18 followed a structured process of engagement with policy colleagues which was designed to closely align our analysis with current policy priorities and to the delivery of outcomes. The work plan is available via the following link, with an updated plan for 2018-19 due for publication later in the year:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/JAS-Programme-2017-18>
- Clearly, only a limited selection of tables can be included in any statistical bulletin. Further analysis of Drug Seizures in Scotland can be supplied on request. In certain cases a fee is charged. For details of what can be provided, please contact Debbie Kyle on [JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot](mailto:JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot).

## **An Official Statistics publication for Scotland**

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### **How to access background or source data**

The data collected for this statistical bulletin

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available on the Scottish Government website
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact [JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot](mailto:JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot) for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

### **Complaints and suggestions**

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail [statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot).

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