

E1 Drug-related offences and court proceedings

Key Points

Overview of drug related offences

- In 2003, there were 40 465 drug-related offences recorded by Scottish police forces, which is a rate of 800 per 100 000 population. (Table E1.1)
- In 2003, 77 per cent (31 141) of drug-related offences were for possession. A further 22 per cent (8 807) were for possession with intent to supply. (Table E1.2)
- The number of persons convicted of drug offences in Scottish Courts in 2002 was 5 763. Seventy-seven per cent were for possession (4 438) and 22 per cent were for possession with intent to supply (1 265). (Table E1.3)
- Just over three quarters (76%) of those persons convicted of possession received a fine, while half of those persons convicted of possession with intent to supply were given a custodial sentence. (Table E1.4)

5 year trends – 1999 to 2003 Drug-related offences

- Between 1999 and 2000, the annual number of drug-related offences remained stable at around 31 900 and 31 400. In 2001, the number of drug-related offences increased by 15 per cent to 36 175, and between 2001 and 2002 they rose by a further 12 per cent to 40 379. This has remained similar in 2003 with 40 465 offences recorded. This represents an overall increase of 27 per cent in the last 5 years. (Table E1.1)

5 year trends – 1998 to 2002 Drug-related court proceedings

- From 1998 to 2002 the number of persons convicted of drug offences in Scottish courts decreased from 6 929 to 5 763, representing a 17 per cent decrease in the past 5 years. (Table E1.3)
- Since 1998 the majority of persons convicted of drug offences were male (nearly 88%), with an average age of 27 years. (Table E1.3 and Table E1.4)

Geographical profile

- The rate of drug-related offences recorded per 100 000 population was highest in Glasgow City (1 750), Inverclyde (1 252) and West Dunbartonshire (1 207). (Table E1.1)
- The majority of council areas have experienced an overall rate increase per 100 000 population between 1999 and 2003; exceptions were Ayrshire South, Borders, Renfrewshire East and Shetland Islands which were either stable or showed slight reductions. (Table E1.1)

Background information

Recorded crime

Statistics on drug-related offences recorded by the police are available from quarterly statistical returns made by the Scottish police forces to the Scottish Executive Justice Department. For further information see: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/bulletins/00338-00.asp>

Criminal proceedings in Scottish Courts

Statistics on persons convicted for drug-related offences are available from the Scottish Executive Justice Department's court proceedings database. For further information see: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/bulletins/00312-00.asp>

The data is derived from information held on the police operational computer at the Scottish Criminal Record office (SCRO).

Offences are recorded in the year in which the offender was sentenced, which may not necessarily be the year in which the offence was committed. Where a person is proceeded against for more than one crime or offence, only the main charge is counted, (i.e. the one with the severest penalty). The drug related court proceeding figures for 2003 were not available at time of publication.

Table E1.1 : Drug-related offences recorded by Scottish police forces : 1998 - 2003

(mainly Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 offences) ; council area ¹ , number and rate per 100 000 population ²

	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Scotland	31 870	628	31 431	621	36 175	716	40 379	799	40 465	800
Aberdeen City	1 617	753	1 334	625	1 550	741	2 071	990	1 689	818
Aberdeenshire	717	316	724	319	787	346	757	333	741	323
Angus	458	418	306	281	401	371	489	452	520	484
Argyll & Bute	372	406	450	494	389	427	512	562	584	640
Ayrshire East	773	641	787	655	785	656	950	793	910	761
Ayrshire North	721	526	845	620	872	643	1 054	777	1 041	765
Ayrshire South	752	666	537	478	896	802	992	888	722	647
Borders	719	680	733	690	661	615	647	602	618	571
Clackmannanshire	232	481	234	486	295	615	351	732	336	705
Dumfries & Galloway	700	472	448	304	649	441	775	526	919	624
Dunbartonshire East	284	261	318	293	465	433	460	429	479	448
Dunbartonshire West	515	545	712	758	666	717	941	1 014	1 114	1 207
Dundee City	738	499	707	482	904	627	1 167	809	1 307	913
Edinburgh City	2 927	655	2 858	637	3 118	696	3 863	862	3 008	671
Eilean Siar	83	305	47	175	112	427	94	359	93	356
Falkirk	680	470	624	431	844	580	831	571	882	604
Fife	1 508	435	1 248	358	1 645	469	1 944	554	1 804	512
Glasgow City	7 791	1 336	8 845	1 533	9 388	1 626	9 330	1 616	10 100	1 750
Highland	1 296	620	926	443	1 370	658	1 434	689	1 605	768
Inverclyde	769	902	901	1 064	995	1 190	1 145	1 370	1 040	1 252
Lanarkshire North	2 175	675	1 817	565	2 197	684	3 105	966	2 960	920
Lanarkshire South	1 482	490	1 512	500	1 864	617	1 733	574	2 397	791
Lothian East	208	233	340	378	217	239	507	559	371	407
Lothian West	907	586	865	551	1 166	729	1 129	706	1 029	639
Midlothian	326	404	402	496	404	502	444	552	378	474
Moray	288	332	261	301	261	301	324	374	355	406
Orkney Islands	58	299	29	150	27	141	41	213	64	331
Perth & Kinross	784	580	611	453	745	551	959	710	1 071	788
Renfrewshire	1 198	687	1 073	618	1 224	712	1 212	705	1 205	705
Renfrewshire East	312	352	428	481	342	382	296	330	316	352
Shetland Islands	95	422	82	370	98	447	87	397	80	366
Stirling	385	451	427	496	838	973	735	853	727	842

1 Where the offence was detected or reported.

2 GRO population estimates were used to calculate the rate per 100 000 population

Source : The Scottish Executive Justice Department.

Table E1.2 : Drug-related offences recorded by Scottish police forces ; type of offence : 2003

(mainly Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 offences) , council area¹

	Number				Rate per 100 000 population ²			
	Possession with intent to supply	Possession	Other ³	Total	Possession with intent to supply	Possession	Other ³	Total ⁴
Scotland	8 807	31 141	517	40 465	174	616	10	800
Aberdeen City	412	1 262	15	1 689	199	611	7	818
Aberdeenshire	128	605	8	741	56	264	3	323
Angus	114	400	6	520	106	372	6	484
Argyll & Bute	87	493	4	584	95	540	4	640
Ayrshire East	233	662	15	910	195	554	13	761
Ayrshire North	191	835	15	1 041	140	614	11	765
Ayrshire South	144	575	3	722	129	515	3	647
Borders	196	395	27	618	181	365	25	571
Clackmannanshire	131	200	5	336	275	419	10	705
Dumfries & Galloway	404	504	11	919	274	342	7	624
Dunbartonshire East	122	349	8	479	114	326	7	448
Dunbartonshire West	253	833	28	1 114	274	902	30	1 207
Dundee City	223	1 076	8	1 307	156	752	6	913
Edinburgh City	850	2 132	26	3 008	190	476	6	671
Eilean Siar	20	72	1	93	77	276	4	356
Falkirk	183	689	10	882	125	472	7	604
Fife	501	1 270	33	1 804	142	361	9	512
Glasgow City	1 933	8 002	165	10 100	335	1 387	29	1 750
Highland	271	1 319	15	1 605	130	631	7	768
Inverclyde	222	794	24	1 040	267	956	29	1 252
Lanarkshire North	448	2 487	25	2 960	139	773	8	920
Lanarkshire South	311	2 074	12	2 397	103	684	4	791
Lothian East	121	247	3	371	133	271	3	407
Lothian West	245	772	12	1 029	152	479	7	639
Midlothian	110	257	11	378	138	322	14	474
Moray	68	282	5	355	78	322	6	406
Orkney Islands	25	35	4	64	129	181	21	331
Perth & Kinross	377	688	6	1 071	277	506	4	788
Renfrewshire	291	908	6	1 205	170	531	4	705
Renfrewshire East	26	288	2	316	29	321	2	352
Shetland Islands	15	64	1	80	69	293	5	366
Stirling	152	572	3	727	176	662	3	842

1 Where the offence was detected or reported.

2 GRO population estimates were used to calculate the rate per 100 000 population

3 Includes illegal importation of drugs, production and manufacture of drugs, money laundering related offences and other drugs-related offences.

4 Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

-(zero); 0 (>0.0 & <0.5)

Source : The Scottish Executive Justice Department.

Table E1.3 : Persons convicted of drug offences in Scottish Courts¹ : 1990 - 2002

type of offence and age of convicted person

	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
All convicted persons (=100%)	3 021	5 599	6 929	6 438	5 424	5 731	5 763
	<i>percentage</i>						
Under 16 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16 - 20 years	29	27	23	22	21	22	22
21 - 25 years	36	34	30	28	27	27	27
26 - 30 years	20	19	23	22	23	21	22
31 - 35 years	9	10	13	15	15	15	15
36 - 40 years	4	5	6	7	8	8	8
Over 40 years	3	4	5	5	6	6	7
Unknown	-	-	-	0	-	-	-
Average age	25	25	26	27	27	27	27
Possession with intent to supply (=100%)	491	1 064	1 539	1 501	1 262	1 330	1 265
	<i>percentage</i>						
Under 16 years	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
16 - 20 years	16	18	17	17	17	13	14
21 - 25 years	37	33	27	25	22	23	24
26 - 30 years	24	24	24	22	23	23	21
31 - 35 years	11	11	16	17	17	19	19
36 - 40 years	5	6	7	9	10	11	12
Over 40 years	5	7	8	9	10	11	11
Unknown	-	-	-	0	-	-	-
Average age	27	27	28	29	29	30	30
Possession (=100%)	2 497	4 420	5 292	4 844	4 099	4 344	4 438
	<i>percentage</i>						
Under 16 years	0	0	-	0	0	-	-
16 - 20 years	32	30	25	24	22	25	24
21 - 25 years	36	35	31	29	29	29	28
26 - 30 years	19	18	22	22	22	21	22
31 - 35 years	8	9	12	14	14	14	13
36 - 40 years	4	4	6	6	7	7	7
Over 40 years	2	4	4	4	5	4	5
Average age	24	25	26	26	27	26	27
Other² (=100%)	33	115	98	93	63	57	60
	<i>percentage</i>						
Under 16 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16 - 20 years	9	10	5	3	8	4	10
21 - 25 years	30	26	17	12	10	16	8
26 - 30 years	27	23	21	22	24	16	20
31 - 35 years	15	20	27	23	19	18	13
36 - 40 years	9	9	14	20	16	11	22
Over 40 years	9	13	15	20	24	37	27
Average age	29	30	32	34	34	36	35

1 Where main offence.

2 Includes illegal importation of drugs, production and manufacture of drugs, money laundering related offences and other drug offences.

- (zero); 0 (>0.0 & <0.5)

Source : The Scottish Executive Justice Department court proceedings database.

Table E1.4 : Persons convicted of drug offences in Scottish courts¹ : 1990 - 2002

type of offence and sentence

	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
All convicted persons (=100%)	3 021	5 599	6 929	6 438	5 424	5 731	5 763
	<i>percentage</i>						
Male	91	91	88	87	87	88	87
Female	9	9	12	13	13	12	13
Possession with intent to supply (=100%)	491	1 064	1 539	1 501	1 262	1 330	1 265
	<i>percentage</i>						
Admonition/ Caution	5	2	3	2	3	3	3
Absolute discharge/ No order made	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Community Service	18	19	21	21	18	15	18
Probation	7	8	11	14	14	11	13
Fine	27	19	14	13	13	12	12
Custody - Less than 6 months	6	9	14	13	10	11	12
Custody - 6 months to 2 years	21	26	21	18	21	25	22
Custody - Over 2 years	17	16	15	19	21	21	16
Drug Treatment and Testing Order	-	-	0	0	-	1	2
Other ²	-	-	0	0	-	-	1
Possession (=100%)	2 497	4 420	5 292	4 844	4 099	4 344	4 438
	<i>percentage</i>						
Admonition/ Caution	11	9	8	10	11	11	12
Absolute discharge/ No order made	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Service	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
Probation/ SAO	2	2	4	5	4	5	5
Fine	82	84	81	78	79	76	76
Custody - Less than 6 months	3	3	4	4	3	4	4
Custody - 6 months to 2 years	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Custody - Over 2 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drug Treatment and Testing Order	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other ²	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
Other³ (=100%)	33	115	98	93	63	57	60
	<i>percentage</i>						
Admonition/ Caution	3	4	4	5	2	-	5
Absolute discharge/ No order made	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community Service	12	11	16	18	21	23	18
Probation	-	3	7	11	10	9	3
Fine	82	64	51	53	54	51	60
Custody - Less than 6 months	3	3	8	4	5	-	2
Custody - 6 months to 2 years	-	12	8	6	2	5	7
Custody - Over 2 years	-	2	5	2	8	12	5
Drug Treatment and Testing Order	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other ²	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

1 Where main offence.

2 Other outcomes consist of remits to childrens' hearings, hospital and guardianship orders, insanity and compensation orders.

3 Includes illegal importation of drugs, production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs, money laundering related offences and other drug offences.

- (zero); 0 (>0.0 & <0.5)

Source : The Scottish Executive Justice Department court proceedings database.

Table E1.5 : Persons convicted of drug offences¹ in Sheriff Courts : 2002

	Possession with intent to supply				Possession				Other ²
	Number	Percentage custodial sentence	Percentage aged under 21	Percentage aged over 21	Number	Percentage custodial sentence	Percentage aged under 21	Percentage aged over 21	Number
Scotland	1 026	43	17	83	2 877	6	19	81	56
Aberdeen	58	22	29	71	195	5	19	81	-
Airdrie	29	28	21	79	70	-	20	80	-
Alloa	12	67	17	83	25	12	16	84	-
Arbroath	8	38	25	75	27	-	33	67	-
Ayr	30	67	17	83	138	9	20	80	1
Banff	4	75	25	75	46	13	15	85	-
Campbeltown	1	-	-	100	11	-	36	64	-
Cupar	6	17	17	83	13	-	-	100	2
Dingwall	1	-	100	-	26	4	31	69	2
Dornoch	2	50	50	50	11	-	36	64	-
Dumbarton	20	75	5	95	46	4	11	89	-
Dumfries	16	56	31	69	24	13	8	92	1
Dundee	35	29	11	89	99	4	15	85	1
Dunfermline	14	29	14	86	32	-	22	78	7
Dunoon	3	-	-	100	19	-	26	74	-
Duns	1	-	-	100	7	14	-	100	-
Edinburgh	79	35	18	82	175	11	14	86	6
Elgin	5	20	-	100	29	10	14	86	2
Falkirk	44	45	36	64	86	3	22	78	-
Forfar	5	20	-	100	27	11	11	89	-
Fort William	8	63	-	100	11	-	27	73	-
Glasgow	248	46	13	87	568	7	15	85	10
Greenock	33	67	12	88	163	2	20	80	1
Haddington	1	100	-	100	30	3	23	77	-
Hamilton	61	31	18	82	230	5	18	82	2
Inverness	15	40	7	93	76	1	18	82	1
Jedburgh	5	60	20	80	12	-	33	67	1
Kilmarnock	57	49	19	81	121	8	15	85	1
Kirkcaldy	29	7	17	83	39	5	15	85	4
Kirkcudbright	3	100	-	100	6	33	33	67	-
Kirkwall	-	-	-	-	4	-	50	50	1
Lanark	5	60	-	100	32	6	41	59	-
Lerwick	8	75	-	100	12	-	33	67	-
Linlithgow	27	37	22	78	38	8	26	74	1
Lochmaddy	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	100	-
Oban	5	40	20	80	38	8	32	68	-
Paisley	19	63	16	84	83	13	22	78	3
Peebles	1	-	-	100	3	-	33	67	-
Perth	50	38	12	88	82	5	17	83	2
Peterhead	15	27	13	87	28	4	7	93	-
Portree	1	-	-	100	12	-	-	100	-
Rothesay	-	-	-	-	3	-	33	67	-
Selkirk	8	13	25	75	14	7	21	79	2
Stirling	21	52	10	90	72	8	21	79	1
Stonehaven	2	50	50	50	4	25	-	100	-
Stornoway	5	60	40	60	21	-	29	71	-
Stranraer	18	72	6	94	32	13	28	72	-
Tain	6	50	17	83	30	13	27	73	-
Wick	2	50	-	100	5	20	40	60	4

1 Where main offence.

2 Includes illegal importation of drugs, production and manufacture of drugs, money laundering related offences and other drug offences.

Source : The Scottish Executive Justice Department court proceedings database.

Table E1.6 : Persons convicted of drug offences¹ in District Courts : 2002

	Possession			Other ²	
	Number	Percentage custodial sentence	Percentage aged under 21	Percentage aged over 21	Number
Scotland	1 556	0	34	66	2
Aberdeen City	86	-	27	73	-
Aberdeenshire	38	-	37	63	-
Angus	28	-	32	68	-
Argyll & Bute	8	-	25	75	-
Ayrshire East	32	6	34	66	-
Ayrshire North	35	-	31	69	-
Ayrshire South	76	1	43	57	-
Borders	48	-	29	71	1
Clackmannanshire	6	-	33	67	-
Dumfries & Galloway	24	-	38	63	-
Dunbartonshire East	20	-	40	60	-
Dunbartonshire West	33	-	33	67	-
Dundee City	102	-	30	70	1
Edinburgh City	48	2	38	63	-
Eilean Siar	2	-	50	50	-
Falkirk	58	-	40	60	-
Fife	34	-	41	59	-
Glasgow City	239	-	35	65	-
Highland	106	-	25	75	-
Inverclyde	48	-	48	52	-
Lanarkshire North	169	-	33	67	-
Lanarkshire South	141	1	39	61	-
Lothian East	3	-	-	100	-
Lothian West	15	-	27	73	-
Midlothian	8	-	50	50	-
Moray	6	-	17	83	-
Perth & Kinross	24	-	33	67	-
Renfrewshire	26	4	38	62	-
Renfrewshire East	14	-	29	71	-
Stirling	37	-	35	65	-
Stipendiary magistrates	42	-	24	76	-

1 Where main offence.

2 Includes possession with intent to supply, illegal importation of drugs, production and manufacture of drugs, money laundering related offences and other drug offences.

Source : The Scottish Executive Justice Department court proceedings database.