

# E2 Seizures of controlled drugs

## Key Points

### Overview of seizures of controlled drugs

- In 2002, there were 20 960 seizures of controlled drugs in Scotland, 15 per cent of all seizures in the UK (137 340). (Table E2.1)
- The number of seizures, however, is not necessarily reflective of the quantity of drugs recovered. The quantity of cocaine seized more than doubled between 2001 and 2002. The quantities of heroin and methadone decreased between 2001 and 2002. The quantity of crack cocaine seized in 2002 was nearly six times the amount seized in 2001 (from 0.8kg to 5kg). (Table E2.3)
- The number of Class A seizures in Scotland (4 520) made up 13 per cent of the total UK Class A seizures while the number of Class B drug seizures in Scotland (16 770) comprised of 16 per cent of all UK Class B seizures. However, the number of Class C drug seizures in Scotland (1 780) made up 57 per cent of all UK Class C seizures. (Table E2.2)
- In Scotland, 95kg of heroin were seized in 2002, three per cent of all seizures in the UK. In contrast, the quantity of LSD seized in Scotland accounted for 65 per cent of the total quantity of UK seizures of the drug. (Table E2.2)

### Trends – 1998 to 2002

- Between 2001 and 2002, the number of drug seizures in Scotland increased by 12 per cent, from 18 740 to 20 960. This compares with an increase of five per cent (131 190 to 137 340) across UK police forces (including HM Customs & Excise) and reverses the recent decreases between 1998 and 2000. (Table E2.1)
- After recent increases between 1998 and 2001, the number of Class A seizures by Scottish police decreased by seven per cent between 2001 and 2002 (4 860 to 4 520). (Table E2.3)
- The number of Class B seizures increased by 11 per cent between 1998 and 2002 (15 150 to 16 770). The number of Class C seizures almost halved between 1998 and 2000 (1 210 to 640) before rising by 278 per cent between 2000 and 2002 (1 780). (Table E2.3)

### Drugs Recorded

- In Scotland, there were increases in the number of seizures of cocaine and crack cocaine between 1998 and 2002, from 250 to 650 seizures for cocaine and 20 to 80 seizures for crack cocaine. (Table E2.3)
- Of the 6 640 seizures of cocaine in the UK, 10 per cent were from Scotland. This compares to 2 per cent of the crack cocaine seizures in the UK. (Table E2.2)
- For heroin the number of seizures increased between 1998 and 2001 (2 420 to 3 120 seizures) but then fell between 2001 and 2002 (3 120 to 2 640 seizures). (Table E2.3)

### Geographical profile

- Of the 95 kg of heroin seized in Scotland in 2002, 52 per cent (49 kg) were seized in Strathclyde, 27 per cent (26 kg) in Tayside and 13 per cent (12 kg) in Grampian. (Table E2.2)
- Of the 80 seizures of crack cocaine, 70 were made by Grampian Police; all other Scottish police force areas had less than 5 seizures each of crack cocaine. (Table E2.2)

## Background information

This section provides a selection of information on seizures of drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 by both Police and Customs & Excise. The source of statistics concerned with seizures of controlled drugs is from a range of bulletins published annually by the Home Office under the general title "Drug seizure and offender statistics".

It is important to note that large seizures can disproportionately affect the quantities seized, leading to large changes from year to year. Also, the number of seizures of different drug types does not appear to be necessarily related to the number of inhabitants in a police force area.

In January 2004, Cannabis was reclassified from Class B to Class C.

**Table E2.1 : Seizures<sup>1</sup> of controlled drugs : 1985, 1990, 1995, 1998 - 2002**

police force area or other organisation<sup>2</sup>

	1985	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
<i>Police and other authorities</i>								
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>3 240</b>	<b>5 990</b>	<b>12 660</b>	<b>17 810</b>	<b>17 200</b>	<b>15 860</b>	<b>18 740</b>	<b>20 960</b>
Central	80	280	630	830	610	360	810	670
Dumfries & Galloway	50	120	410	510	420	280	350	410
Fife	100	240	530	660	540	450	540	620
Grampian	220	320	1 130	1 680	1 470	1 150	1 290	1 460
Lothian & Borders	550	810	730	2 420	2 770	2 560	2 680	2 880
Northern	190	250	460	400	670	490	710	790
Strathclyde	1 850	3 460	7 940	10 050	9 640	9 700	11 250	12 810
Tayside	210	490	840	1 260	1 080	870	1 110	1 310
Other authorities	**	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
England	21 770	45 190	88 120	113 760	99 980	93 210	96 400	98 620
Wales	1 450	2 100	5 570	9 570	7 740	7 670	8 250	8 980
Northern Ireland	220	170	850	1 510	2 110	1 790	1 530	1 520
British Transport Police	**	380	800	1 010	1 710	1 520	1 150	1 500
National Crime Squad (E & W)	**	**	**	70	160	160	140	30
Force missing, not recorded <sup>3</sup>	**	**	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>UK Total</b>	<b>26 680</b>	<b>53 450</b>	<b>108 000</b>	<b>144 000</b>	<b>128 890</b>	<b>120 210</b>	<b>126 210</b>	<b>131 600</b>
HM Customs & Excise	3 790	7 410	6 340	7 750	5 210	4 870	4 980	5 740
<b>Total - all seizures</b>	<b>30 466</b>	<b>60 860</b>	<b>114 340</b>	<b>151 750</b>	<b>134 100</b>	<b>125 080</b>	<b>131 190</b>	<b>137 340</b>

1 Rounded to the nearest 10 so totals may not always add up.

2 Seizures from joint operations involving HM Customs & Excise and the police are generally recorded against HM Customs & Excise. Seizures made by the Scottish Crime Squad are recorded by the appropriate police force.

3 Among English and Welsh police forces ; not recorded before 1993.

\*\* Not available.

0 less than a specified amount (i.e. 0<number of seizures<5)

Source : Home Office.



Table E2.3 : Number and quantity<sup>1</sup> of seizures<sup>2</sup> of class A, B and C drugs, Scotland 1985, 1990, 1995, 1998 - 2002

drug type

	Number of seizures <sup>7</sup>							
	1985	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
<b>All class A</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>1 490</b>	<b>3 250</b>	<b>3 650</b>	<b>4 400</b>	<b>4 860</b>	<b>4 520</b>
Cocaine	40	30	70	250	330	410	520	650
Crack cocaine	**	**	0	20	30	30	50	80
Heroin	390	110	740	2 420	2 510	2 810	3 120	2 640
LSD	50	170	110	80	50	40	10	10
Ecstasy-type <sup>3</sup>	-	10	520	470	750	1 210	1 340	1 320
Methadone	10	20	40	120	110	110	130	120
Other Class A	40	90	50	90	80	90	60	60
<b>All Class B</b>	<b>3 000</b>	<b>5 320</b>	<b>11 350</b>	<b>15 150</b>	<b>14 040</b>	<b>12 580</b>	<b>14 640</b>	<b>16 770</b>
Amphetamines	370	350	1 530	2 100	1 610	670	740	1 020
Cannabis (herbal)	300	110	590	450	500	410	550	944
Cannabis plants <sup>(4)</sup>	130	40	270	130	110	80	90	144
Cannabis resin	2 530	5 210	9 900	13 500	12 680	12 330	14 310	15 620
Other Class B	0	100	120	360	250	270	240	240
<b>All Class C</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1 210</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>1 780</b>
Benzodiazepines	**	240	290	650	660	540	640	1 630
Temazepam	**	**	340	570	280	100	150	180

	Quantity seized (kgs)							
	1985	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
<b>Class A</b>								
Cocaine	0.4	0.9	0.8	27.4	33.4	22.8	22.8	49.0
Crack cocaine	**	**	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.8	5.0
Heroin	6.6	2.6	9.1	40.2	203.9	43.0	110.7	95.0
LSD <sup>5</sup>	0	2 041	1 414	281	533	2 984	170	31
Ecstasy-type <sup>3,5</sup>	0	413	126 473	56 553	91 912	236 788	337 498	347 521
Methadone	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.1	2.0	11.6	13.5	10.0
Other Class A	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.5	0.1	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	1.8	0.4	0.0 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Class B</b>								
Amphetamines	5.0	6.0	31.0	113.0	53.0	37.1	108.6	113.0
Cannabis(herbal)	708.7	103.1	18.4	813.9	14.8	16.4	11.5	113.0
Cannabis plants <sup>4</sup>	718	175	2 519	52 906	1 790	1 261	2 016	4 162
Cannabis resin	71.8	104.2	353.6	11 940.1	1 126.4	638.1	937.1	1 655.0
<b>Class C</b>								
Benzodiazepines	**	0.4	0.2	0.6	1.9	2.3	4.5	5.0
Temazepam	**	**	0.3	58.6	0.4	0.0 <sup>6</sup>	0.1	0.0 <sup>6</sup>

1 Drugs are seized in a variety of forms but where possible, for the purpose of this table, amounts have been converted to weights.

Seizures of unspecified quantities are not included.

2 As a seizure can involve more than one drug, figures for individual drugs cannot be added together to produce totals.

3 MDMA up until 1995.

4 Number of plants

5 Number of doses. Data for 1985 are in kilos; from 1990, data refer to number of doses.

6 Less than 50 grams.

7 Number of seizures rounded to the nearest 10 so totals may not always add up.

\*\* Not available.

0 less than a specified amount (0<number of seizures<5 and 0<quantity of seizures<0.5)

Source : Home Office.