

Minor drug offences sentenced in Victoria

This factsheet contains data from *Trends in Minor Drug Offences Sentenced in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria*.

What are minor drug offences?

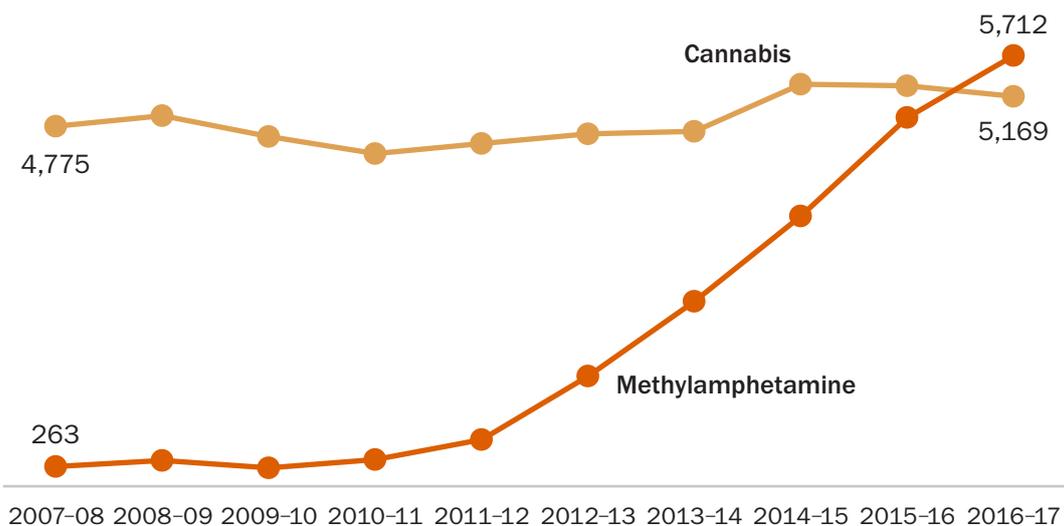
Minor drug offences are the possession and use of small quantities of illicit substances. The possession or use does not relate to drug trafficking.

Minor drug offences have increased substantially

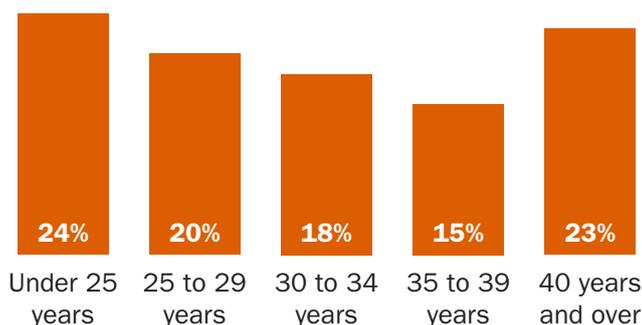
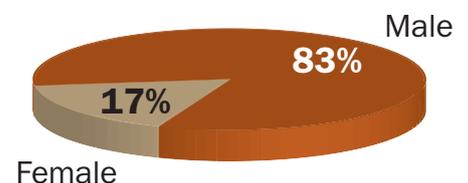
In the 10 years to June 2017, the annual number of charges of a minor drug offence sentenced in the Magistrates' Court increased by 91%.

Cannabis was most commonly involved in minor drug offences each year until 2016–17, when it was surpassed by methylamphetamine.

Number of charges involving cannabis and methylamphetamine



In the 10 years, minor drug offenders were mostly male...

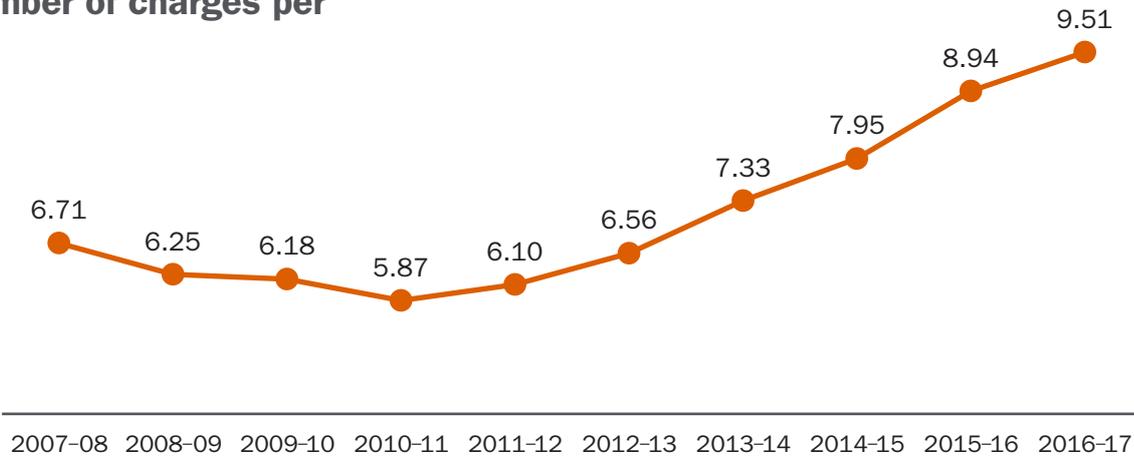


...and almost one-quarter were aged under 25

Cases with a minor drug offence became more complex over time...

By 2016–17, cases with a minor drug offence contained an **average of almost 10 charges**.

The average number of charges per case increased



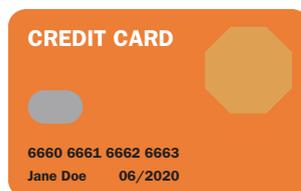
...and usually involved other offences

80% of cases with a minor drug offence included charges of other offences. This affects the sentence for someone caught possessing or using illicit drugs.

The most common co-sentenced offences



Condition breaches
(32% of cases)



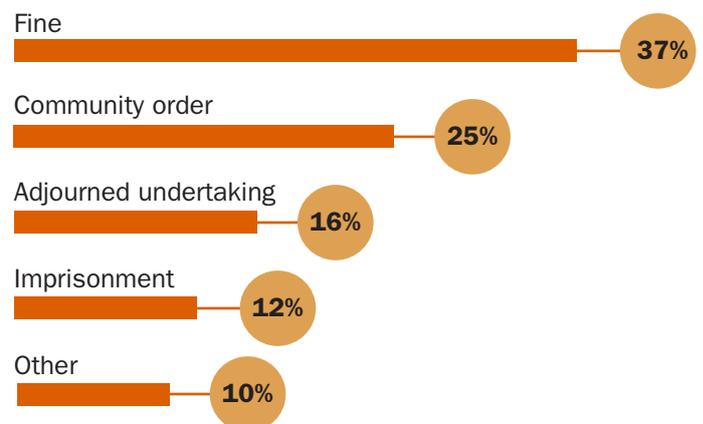
Deception
(30% of cases)



Road safety offences
(29% of cases)

A fine was the most common sentence imposed on charges of a minor drug offence...

...but offenders did not always go to court



25% of offenders charged by police were given a warning instead of being arrested. These people avoided court and a possible conviction.