

# English summary

## Persons convicted of drug offences

In 2004, slightly less than 17,700 persons were convicted of drug offences in Sweden. By comparison with the year 2003, the number of convicted persons has increased by three per cent (slightly over 500 individuals). Over the course of the last ten years, the number of persons convicted of drug offences has increased by between 100 and 1,000 each year. The year 2002 constituted an exception, when this number increased by almost 2,000 persons.

## Type of offence<sup>4</sup>

Consumption and possession of drugs constituted the two most common offence types among those convicted of drug offences in 2004, accounting for 40 and 31 per cent of these convictions respectively. Drug smuggling and the supply<sup>5</sup> of drugs each accounted for four respectively six per cent of drug convictions.

By comparison with the year 1995, the number of persons convicted for the consumption of drugs has increased almost over three-fold, whereas changes in the numbers of other drug offences show only minor changes. It should be added, however, that possession + consumption, a combination that was not registered prior to 1995, almost doubled between 1995 and 2004.

## Offence seriousness

The altered crime structure has also affected the distribution between drug offences, minor drug offences and serious drug offences. Between 1995 and 2000, minor drug offences increased both in terms of the *number* of convictions and

their *proportion* among the total number of drug convictions. Thereafter, the number of convictions for minor drug offences continued to increase, but they nonetheless accounted for a somewhat smaller proportion of the total number of drug convictions. Of all those convicted of drug offences in 2004, approximately 78 per cent were convicted of minor drug offences. In 1995, the corresponding proportion was 79 per cent. Over the period between 1995 and 2004, the *proportion* of serious drug offences has been the same. The *number* of convictions for serious drug offences on the other hand has increased by eighty per cent.

## Sanctions and types of conviction<sup>6</sup>

The increase in the number of persons convicted of drug offences has meant that there has been an increase in the number of more or less all the forms of sanction associated with these offences. Fines constitute the most common form of sanction for those convicted of drug offences, either by means of summary fines or fines issued by the courts. Of those convicted of drug offences in 2004, 54 per cent were issued with fines by one of these means.

Over the period 1995–2004 the number of persons sentenced to prison in connection with drug offences has increased. By contrast, the *proportion* of drug offenders sentenced to prison has remained relatively constant, and stood at eighteen per cent of all those convicted of drug offences in 2004. The most common length of prison sentence awarded in connection with drug offences lay at between two and six months. Just over one-third of those sentenced to prison received a prison term within this range.

<sup>4</sup> This section relates only to findings of guilt in the form of summary fines and court adjudications since it is not possible to identify separate offence types for findings of guilt issued in the form of waivers of prosecution.

<sup>5</sup> Includes the supply of drugs in combination with possession.

<sup>6</sup> This section relates to those cases where drug offences constituted the principal offence included in the conviction.

## Substances

Amphetamines and cannabis still constitute the two most common substances found in the statistics relating to drug convictions. In 2004, these two substances accounted for 33 and 35 per cent respectively of the substances referred to in these convictions.

## Regional distribution

In relation to county population size, the metropolitan counties account for a larger proportion of drug convictions than other counties. The metropolitan counties of Sweden, which include half of the country's population, account for 60 per cent of the country's drug convictions. This proportion was slightly higher in 1995 (65 per cent).

## Age distribution

In 2004, youths aged between eighteen and twenty years were convicted of the highest number of drug offences per capita of population. By contrast, in 1995 it was persons aged between 30 and

39 years who accounted for the largest number of per capita drug convictions. Between the years 1995 and 2004, the largest increase in the number of per capita drug convictions has been noted among young people aged between eighteen and twenty. Over this period, the number of per capita drug convictions within this group has increased by 230 per cent.

## Sex distribution

Women comprised approximately fourteen per cent of all those convicted of drug offences in 2004. The *number* of women convicted of drug offences has increased by 69 per cent over the course of the last ten years. The *proportion* of the total number of drug convictions accounted for by women has remained more or less stable however. Between the years 2003 and 2004, the *number* of women convicted of drug offences increased by four per cent, whereas the *number* of men convicted of drug offences increased by almost three per cent.