

# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### Los Angeles, California

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

January 2004



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Los Angeles, California**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population (2002 Census): 3,678,625
- Race/Ethnicity (2002 Census): 59.73% white; 9.27% black/African American; 0.43% American Indian/Alaska Native; 10.17% Asian; 0.17% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 23.28% some other race; 3.96% two or more races; 49.92% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- The city of Los Angeles is located in Los Angeles County.

### **Politics**

- Mayor: James K. Hahn<sup>2</sup>
- City Council (Districts 1-15, respectively): Ed Reyes; Wendy Greuel; Dennis Zine; Tom LaBonge; Jack Weiss; Tony Cardenas; Alex Padilla; Bernard Parks; Jan Perry; Martin Ludlow; Cindy Miscikowski; Greig Smith; Eric Garcetti; Antonio Villaraigosa; Janice Hahn<sup>3</sup>
- Chief of Police, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD): William J. Bratton<sup>4</sup>
- Los Angeles County Sheriff: Lee Baca<sup>5</sup>

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)<sup>6</sup>  
Designated in 1990, the Los Angeles HIDTA is responsible for Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties.
- DARE + PLUS (Play and Learn Under Supervision)<sup>7</sup>  
This program, designed to help 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> graders stay involved in school and away from gangs, drugs, and violence, provides after-school activities in a safe and well-supervised campus setting.

### **Federal Funding**

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantees in Los Angeles:<sup>8</sup>
  - FY 2003: no grantees
  - FY 2002: no grantees
  - FY 2001: \$64,559 to the Dunbar Economic Development Corporation
  - FY 2000: no grantees
  - FY 1999: \$100,000 to the Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention/Treatment
- FY 2002 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Discretionary Funds received in Los Angeles:<sup>9</sup>
  - Center for Mental Health Services: \$8,846,100
  - Center for Substance Abuse Prevention: \$450,000
  - Center for Substance Abuse Treatment: \$3,054,766
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed<sup>10</sup>

Three areas in Los Angeles have been designated official Weed and Seed sites, including Southcentral, Pico Union, and Southeast.

- FY 2002-2003 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program recipients in Los Angeles:
  - FY 2002: no grantees<sup>11</sup>
  - FY 2003: no grantees<sup>12</sup>
- FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received in Los Angeles:<sup>13</sup>
  - \$45,872,302 in formula funds
  - \$14,500,708 in discretionary funds
- FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Drug Elimination Grant amount received in Los Angeles:<sup>14</sup>
  - \$130,000 awarded to Skid Row Housing Trust.
- Los Angeles Impact received \$250,000 in methamphetamine funding in FY 2002 from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.<sup>15</sup>
- Los Angeles did not receive methamphetamine funding in FY 2003 from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.<sup>16</sup>

**Crime and Drug Related Crime**

- During 2003, there were 25,095 part one arrests in Los Angeles.<sup>17</sup>

Number of Arrests, Selected Offenses, Los Angeles, 2000-2003

Offense Type	2001	2002	2003
Homicide	498	514	436
Rape	337	266	260
Robbery	3,722	3,123	3,448
Aggravated assault	5,641	4,581	4,783
Burglary	3,715	3,148	3,418
Larceny	10,191	8,487	8,642
Motor vehicle theft	3,948	3,872	4,108
Total part one arrests	28,052	23,991	25,095

- During 2001, there were 7,090 drug arrests for heroin in Los Angeles. This number increased to 8,729 during 2002.<sup>18</sup>

Drug Arrests by Drug Type, Los Angeles, 2001-2002

Drug Type	2001	2002
Amphetamines	113	152
Cocaine	3,406	3,040
Heroin	7,090	8,729
Marijuana	4,880	4,818
PCP	149	165
Other narcotics	7,409	7,708
All drug arrests	23,059	24,621

- During 2002, 36.4% of male arrestees and 35.7% of female arrestees tested positive for marijuana at the time of arrest in Los Angeles.<sup>19</sup>

Percent of Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, Los Angeles, 2002

Drug Type	Male	Female
Methamphetamine	14.8%	14.3%
Marijuana	36.4	35.7
Cocaine	32.1	21.4
Opiates	5.8	14.3

**Drugs**

- Cocaine<sup>20</sup>

Crack cocaine is widely available and is considered to contribute to the most serious consequences in Los Angeles. Crack cocaine is 80-85% pure and an ounce sells for \$600-\$700. A rock, which is 0.2 grams, sells for \$10. Adolescents, along with young adults, are the primary crack cocaine abusing population in Los Angeles. Powder cocaine is considered not very available in Los Angeles. A gram of powder cocaine sells for \$100 and is an average of 80% pure.
- Heroin

Heroin is associated with the most serious consequences in Los Angeles. Mexican black tar and Mexican brown heroin are increasing in availability in the area. A “Mexican ounce,” which is 25 grams, costs \$600-\$700 and a “balloon,” which is 0.1 grams, costs \$20. Methamphetamine is often used in combination with heroin.<sup>21</sup> Heroin prices from 2001 to 2002 range from \$80-\$100 per gram; \$18,000-\$22,000 per kilogram for wholesale quantities and \$32,000-\$60,000 per kilogram for retail quantities. Average heroin purity levels in Los Angeles range from 16-18%.<sup>22</sup>
- Marijuana<sup>23</sup>

Marijuana is widely available in Los Angeles. BC bud is increasing in availability. Mexican commercial grade marijuana sells for \$10 per gram and Mexican mid-grade marijuana sells for \$25 per gram. An ounce of Mexican commercial grade marijuana sells for \$60-\$80 and a dime bag sells for \$10. The number of younger marijuana users is increasing in Los Angeles.
- Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine availability is increasing in Los Angeles. An ounce of methamphetamine costs \$500-\$700 and an eightball, which is 1/8 ounce, costs \$100-\$120. A “teener,” which is 1/16 an ounce, sells for \$60-\$125. Adolescents are the predominate users. Newer users tend to smoke methamphetamine, although injecting still predominates.<sup>24</sup> Ice is frequently encountered in the LA area.<sup>25</sup>
- Club Drugs<sup>26</sup>

Ecstasy was considered an emerging drug in Los Angeles during 2002. An ecstasy pill costs between \$25-\$40. More adolescents are selling ecstasy than in the past in Los Angeles. Ecstasy is used in combination with GHB, ketamine, and prescription drugs. Ecstasy use is becoming more prevalent in private settings such as residences and parties and is no longer just available in the club scene. GHB is widely available in Los Angeles. A capful of GHB costs \$20.
- Diverted Pharmaceuticals<sup>27</sup>

OxyContin is not considered to be a significant problem in the Los Angeles area.

**Juveniles**

- During 2000, there were 1,819 juvenile arrests for drug law violations in Los Angeles.<sup>28</sup> The number of juvenile arrests for drug law violations in Los Angeles decreased to 1,531 in 2001.<sup>29</sup>

Number of Juvenile Arrests, Selected Offenses, Los Angeles, 2000-2001

Offense	2000	2001
Homicide	42	49
Rape	30	29
Robbery	735	791
Aggravated assault	797	707
Burglary	886	773
Larceny	1,998	1,743
Motor vehicle theft	876	859
Narcotic drug laws	1,819	1,531
Liquor laws	70	93
Drunkenness	23	27
DUI	40	31

- In Los Angeles during 2001, 41.2% of high school students surveyed reported using marijuana within their lifetime.<sup>30</sup>

Percentage of Students Reporting Drug Use, Los Angeles, 2001

	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana use	36.8%	45.5%	41.2%
Current marijuana use	18.6	26.2	22.5
Lifetime cocaine use	10.4	9.5	10.1
Current cocaine use	6.2	5.8	5.9
Lifetime inhalant use	17.5	17.0	17.2
Current inhalant use	4.7	4.6	4.6
Lifetime heroin use	1.8	1.7	1.8
Lifetime methamphetamine use	7.7	7.4	7.6
Lifetime illegal steroid use	4.9	3.6	4.4
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	1.0	1.9	1.5
Tried marijuana before age 13 years	7.7	15.6	11.7

- During 2000, 8.5% of juvenile male detainees and 2.1% of juvenile female detainees tested positive for methamphetamine at the time of arrest. 1% of juvenile male detainees and 2.1% of juvenile female detainees tested positive for PCP at the time of arrest.<sup>31</sup>

**Enforcement**

- As of October 31, 2002, there were 12,178 full-time law enforcement employees in Los Angeles (9,056 officers and 3,122 civilians).<sup>32</sup>
- Narcotics Division, Los Angeles Police Department<sup>33</sup>  
The Los Angeles Police Department’s Narcotics Division is the largest drug enforcement entity in Southern California. It is responsible for enforcing local, State, and Federal narcotic laws throughout the City of Los Angeles. This division often works in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies to investigate narcotic related violations in neighboring communities, cities, and counties.

**Trafficking and Seizures**

- The trafficking of cocaine is a significant problem in the Los Angeles area.<sup>34</sup>
- Los Angeles is a major transportation and distribution hub for Mexican black tar and brown powered heroin.<sup>35</sup>
- Russian and Israeli drug trafficking organizations smuggle the majority of MDMA into California and transport it to Los Angeles using couriers on commercial air flights.<sup>36</sup>
- Los Angeles based African American street gangs produce and distribute PCP.<sup>37</sup>
- Mexican marijuana distributors in Los Angeles purchase B.C. bud and mix it with Mexican produced marijuana. They later market this combination as B.C. bud.<sup>38</sup>
- Customs officials at the Los Angeles International airport often intercept Khat smuggled in quantities of up to 100 pounds.<sup>39</sup>
- The U.S. Customs Service reported a seizure of 2,100,000 tablets/pills of ecstasy in Los Angeles during July 2000. The tablets originated from Europe.<sup>40</sup>
- During 2001, the Los Angeles Police Department seized more than 12,000 pounds of marijuana. From January to December 2002, there were 11,101 pounds of marijuana seized in Los Angeles.<sup>41</sup>

Amount of Drugs Seized (in Pounds), Los Angeles, 1998-December 2002

Drug Type	Full Year 1998	Full Year 1999	Full Year 2000	Full Year 2001	Jan.-Dec. 2002
Heroin	144	89	47	365	61
Cocaine	3,416	4,344	2,375	1,031	893
PCP	241	40	33	27	187
Marijuana	26,450	31,951	19,316	12,705	11,101
Methamphetamine	2,598	1,012	404	264	446

- The street value of marijuana seized during 2001 was more than \$115 million. From January to December 2002, the street value of marijuana seized in Los Angeles was over \$50 million.<sup>42</sup>

Street Value of Drugs Seized, Los Angeles, 1998-December 2002

Drug Type	Full Year 1998	Full Year 1999	Full Year 2000	Full Year 2001	Jan.-Dec. 2002
Heroin	\$16,120,463	\$9,963,342	\$5,843,555	\$47,015,559	\$3,159,071
Cocaine	155,079,568	197,208,912	75,493,387	29,595,802	44,295,563
PCP	4,623,103	767,320	1,239,688	1,435,491	6,893,767

Marijuana	240,139,550	290,083,129	175,392,298	115,466,248	50,750,479
Meth.	117,949,200	45,944,800	20,474,900	11,937,118	20,203,595
Total	533,911,884	543,967,503	278,443,828	205,450,218	125,302,474

### Courts

#### ➤ Drug Courts<sup>43</sup>

As of November 2003, there were 2 drug courts in Los Angeles that had been in existence for over two years. No other drug courts were recently implemented or being planned.

- During FY 2001, approximately 42.2% of the Federally sentenced defendants in Southern California committed drug offenses. Approximately 76.8% of the Federal drug cases involved marijuana.<sup>44</sup>

#### Federally-Sentenced Drug Defendants, Southern California, FY 2001

Drug Type	Number	Percent
Crack cocaine	5	0.3%
Powder cocaine	183	10.4%
Heroin	38	2.2%
Marijuana	1,350	76.8%
Methamphetamine	165	9.4%
Other	17	1.0%

- According to the Los Angeles County Sheriff, there were 23,741 total felonies filed and 39,901 total misdemeanors filed in the county during 2001. Narcotics offenses represented 36% of felonies filed and 14% of misdemeanors filed.<sup>45</sup>

### Corrections

- During FY 2000-2001, there were 4,185 inmates in the California State prison in Los Angeles County.<sup>46</sup>

### Consequences of Use

- Injection-related AIDS cases in Los Angeles were 39% black, 31% white, and 28% Hispanic. Hepatitis B cases declined in Los Angeles by 29% during the first half of 2001 compared to the first half of 2000.<sup>47</sup>
- There were 176 emergency department (ED) MDMA mentions in Los Angeles during 2002.<sup>48</sup>

#### Number of ED Drug Mentions, Selected Drugs, Los Angeles, 1998-2002

Drug Type	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Alcohol-in-combination	6,129	8,195	10,993	10,907	10,049
Cocaine	5,779	6,768	9,094	9,999	9,364
Heroin	2,601	2,923	3,177	2,878	2,525

Marijuana	3,422	5,472	5,846	5,729	5,593
Amphetamines	541	866	1,072	1,261	1,667
Methamphetamine	786	910	1,375	1,517	1,713
MDMA (Ecstasy)	30	52	177	142	176
Ketamine	--	7	15	14	32
LSD	162	229	217	175	--
PCP	605	731	823	990	991
Miscellaneous hallucinogens	33	42	88	86	53
Rohypnol	0	--	--	--	--
GHB	48	130	149	83	100
Inhalants	30	36	35	--	40
Combinations not tabulated above	--	2	8	7	18
Total drug abuse episodes	17,103	20,677	25,286	24,669	24,592
Total drug abuse mentions	29,805	36,945	45,015	44,670	44,475

- In Los Angeles during 2000, medical examiners (ME) in the Drug Abuse Warning Network reported 1,192 drug-related deaths.<sup>49</sup>

Number of ME Drug Mentions, Los Angeles, 1996-2000

Drug Type	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Alcohol-in-combination	425	316	405	500	395
Cocaine	546	450	425	544	471
Heroin/morphine	554	425	444	644	473
Marijuana	9	12	17	24	32
Amphetamines	93	122	78	102	61
Methamphetamine	146	172	111	147	155
Club drugs	--	2	6	18	27
Hallucinogens	38	20	13	25	22
Inhalants	13	12	28	70	--
Narcotic analgesics	341	292	315	530	407
Other analgesics	32	34	58	95	115
Benzodiazepines	155	132	182	213	142
Antidepressants	244	191	248	441	293
All other substances	339	361	506	1,175	392
Total drug deaths	1,154	982	1,134	1,887	1,192
Total drug mentions	2,935	2,541	2,836	4,528	2,985

**Treatment**

- During 2002 in Los Angeles, 23.3% of all treatment admissions were for cocaine.<sup>50</sup>

Percent of Treatment Admissions by Drug Type, Los Angeles, 2002

Drug Type	Number of Admissions
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Methamphetamine	18.5%
Marijuana	14.2
Cocaine	23.3
Heroin	38.4
PCP	1.0

- During 2000, there were 49,651 substance abuse treatment admissions in Los Angeles.<sup>51</sup> During 2001, there were 46,127 substance abuse treatment admission in Los Angeles.<sup>52</sup>

#### Number of Treatment Admissions, Los Angeles, 2001

Primary Substance	2000	2001
Alcohol	9,206	8,184
Alcohol with other drugs	Unknown	Unknown
Cocaine/crack	8,951	8,703
Heroin	22,975	17,560
Marijuana	3,553	4,286
Stimulants	4,288	5,589
Other drugs	678	1,805
Total	49,651	46,127

#### Sources

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<sup>2</sup> Los Angeles Mayor's Web site: <http://www.lacity.org/mayor/>

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<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles Police Department Web site: <http://www.lapdonline.org>

<sup>5</sup> Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Web site: <http://lasd.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Los Angeles High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_la.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_la.html)

<sup>7</sup> Los Angeles Police Department Web site, DARE + PLUS section:

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<sup>8</sup> Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site, California Grantees:

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<sup>9</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, FY 2002 Formula and Discretionary Grant Allotments, California: <http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/funding.html>

<sup>10</sup> Executive Office for Weed and Seed Data Center, California:

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<sup>11</sup> Office of Justice Programs, FY 2002 Drug Court Grants:

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<sup>15</sup> Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, FY 2002 COPS Methamphetamine Grant Announcement, November 14, 2002: [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/GrantAnnounce/meth\\_grantees.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/GrantAnnounce/meth_grantees.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, FY 2003 COPS Methamphetamine Grant Announcement: <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/mime/open.pdf?Item=951>

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This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues contact:

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