Global Drug Survey 2017 – Information Sheet

We would like to invite you to participate in this year’s Global Drug Survey, the world’s largest online survey about drugs and drug use. Completing the survey is completely voluntary; you do not have to take part, and you can choose which sections you wish to answer should you participate. Please read the following information before continuing to the survey, and get in touch with the research team if anything is unclear or you have further questions.

About the Global Drug Survey

Global Drug Survey is the largest annual online survey exploring issues around drugs and drug use. Using information given to us by those who take part in the survey, we investigate such issues as emerging drugs of use, strategies for harm reduction and health outcomes, and compare findings with previous surveys to establish changes in trends and patterns. We have an open, honest and transparent approach to drug use, and by sharing our findings with the public – without government or funder interference – we seek to limit the harm that drug use may cause individuals and communities.

Global Drug Survey is an independent research organisation and we see our work as complementing other sources of drug use data around the world. We hope, therefore, that by cross-referencing our findings with other data sources, public health organisations will be better equipped to develop optimal strategies and policies to improve the health and wellbeing of those who use drugs.

What happens if I decide to participate?

If you choose to take part, you will be asked to tick a box to state that you are over 16 years of age and that you provide informed consent for the data you provide to be used in our research. Upon providing consent, you will be redirected to the start of the survey. The survey is comprised of different sections, not all of which will be applicable to you. Certain responses to questions will direct you to the differing sections, for example replying ‘yes’ to whether you have drunk alcohol last year will prompt more detailed questions about your alcohol use. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you are not required to answer every question or section you are shown. Your responses are continuously stored as you progress through the survey, but you are also able to withdraw your participation and any data you have submitted by clicking the ‘withdraw’ button at any time. Your answers will also remain completely anonymous; Global Drug Survey does not collect any information that may be used to identify you, such as your name, address or national insurance/social security number. Should you choose to share your contact details at the end of the survey, Global Drug Survey does not link your survey responses to any data that you consent to provide that could be used to identify you such as your name, telephone number or email or postal address.

What kind of questions will I be asked?

You will be asked about your use of alcohol, illegal and prescription drugs, how and why you use them and whether you have experienced any problems. We will also ask you questions about where you obtain your drugs from and whether or not you have tried any new drugs. To make this the shortest and most user friendly Global
Drug Survey to date, we are asking all participants to complete an initial core survey which should take 20-25
minutes for most people. At the end of this depending on your response you may be offered participation in one
of four specialist sections concerning the use of psychedelic drugs, drug vaping, medicinal cannabis and cannabis
law reform.

Are there any benefits or risks?

No incentives are offered for your participation, but the main benefit is your contribution to furthering the
understanding of drugs and associated societal drug trends and helping us inform drug policy and create a range of
free harm reduction resources to help people use drugs more safely.

There are no foreseeable risks in participating in the survey. Information you provide is totally anonymous, and
your answers cannot be traced back to you. We do not collect IP addresses. You are able to skip any sections or
questions that you do not wish to answer, and can withdraw your participation at any stage.

Will my information be confidential?

The Global Drug Survey is hosted on a third party survey platform (Survey Gizmo) which offers secure and
encrypted data capture. The link to the survey is in on our own website which is itself encrypted. All your
answers are anonymous answers and strictly confidential. At no point during the study – either data collection,
analysis nor publication of findings phases – will answers you provide be able to be traced back to you without
your prior consent. Those people who provide contact details to take part in future projects have their contact
details stored on separate encrypted database so that survey responses and contact details are always kept separate
and are only ever matched as part of GDS approved projects. In such cases your data is always kept anonymous.

A subset of the anonymous data collected assessing amounts of each drug used over the last month will be used to
support our normative feedback interventions drugs meter (www.drugsmeter.com) and Drinks Meter
(www.drinksmeter.com). If you do not wish the data you provide concerning amounts of drugs used in the last
month to be used in this way, you have the option to withdraw your consent for your information to be used in
these interventions.

The UK Data Protection Act 1988 will apply to all information collected during the study. Data is stored on
password-locked digital computer files and encrypted cloud based servers. Following completion of the study once
findings have been analysed and published, data will be encrypted and securely archived on secure Global Drug
Survey computers.

How is the Global Drug Survey funded?

Global Drug Survey is an independent research organisation, and annual surveys are self funded. The study has
been approved by the Psychiatry, Nursing and Midwifery (PNM) Research Ethics Subcommittee (RESC) at King’s
College London.

What will happen to the results of the study?

Reports of the main findings will be shared with will our global media partners (see
http://www.globaldrugssurvey.com/about/media-partners) for media publication in May/June 2017. Results from
further analyses will be published in peer-reviewed journals, presented at conferences and used in advisory
meetings and consultations.

A summary of the survey’s main findings will also be published on our website


Any further questions?

If you have any further questions or require more information about the Global Drug Survey, please get in touch using the following contact details:

Dr Adam Winstock  
Fergusson House  
124/128 City Road  
London  
EC1V 2NJ  
adam@globaldrugsurvey.com  
adam.winstock@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and considering taking part in the Global Drug Survey 2017.