

Take Ket? Lets chat

**We are looking for pairs
and/or groups of friends
aged 16+ to discuss
ketamine use in party
spaces and beyond.**

**You will each receive a £10
Love2Shop voucher for your time.
Drinks and snacks will also be
provided.**

**Please sign up in Crew or
contact Karenza via 
Telegram @SaferPartying or
07596239113**

Your data will be confidential and anonymised. All names will be changed and all Telegram messages encrypted and deleted. Discussions will be arranged with you, either in person at CREW (Edinburgh City Centre) or on Zoom. The aim of Safer Partying is to learn more about how we look after each other when partying together. Safer Partying is a collaboration with Kira Weir at CREW and Dr Karenza Moore, Reader in Sociology, Newcastle University.



Students Organising for Sustainability UK Annual Drug and Alcohol Conference April 2025

Safer Partying (Ketamine) Ketamine Use in the Student Population

Dr Karenza Moore
Reader in Sociology
Newcastle University
clubresearch.org

Why Ketamine? The 'divisive' dissociative anaesthetic

Safer Partying/Crew project

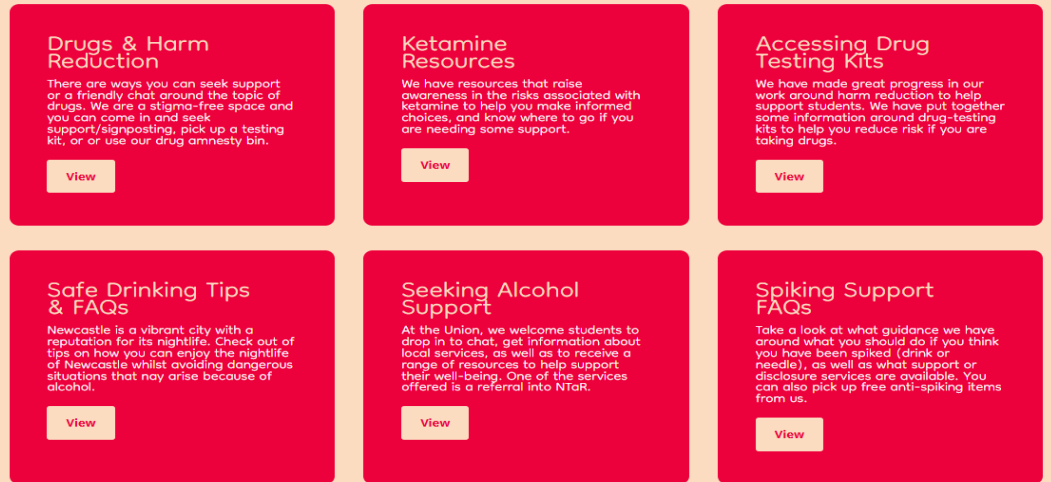
Take Ket? Let's Chat! Building harm reduction messaging with young people

Newcastle University/NUSU/CREW project

Evaluating and co-creating ketamine harm reduction resources for students

Motivations for taking ketamine in party spaces/times

Resources, references and questions



The Social and Cultural Uses of Ketamine

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Why Ketamine? The 'divisive' dissociative anaesthetic

Ketamine addict: 'I can't walk 50m without weeing'

19 April 2024

'Ketamine addiction left me crying in pain'

3 January

Coroner's ketamine warning after man's death

14 November 2024

Acute toxicity

Agitation, hallucinations, anxiety and psychosis

“Cardiovascular features (hypertension and tachycardia) occur less frequently and the risk of death from recreational use is low and is predominately due to the physical harm/trauma”

(Kalsi et al 2011, 7107; see also Corkery et al 2021)

Chronic long term 'heavy' use

Mental health issues, psychological dependence, development of tolerance, 'addiction'

Gastro-intestinal toxicity (liver function)

Urological disorders, ketamine-induced uropathy, *known colloquially as “K-cramps” and “Ket-bladder”*

Legal status

1. Ketamine classified as a **Class C** substance in **2005/6** under an amendment of the **Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA)1971**, this did not decrease its popularity (see prevalence trends)
2. Re-classified in **2014** to **Class B** substance under MDA 1971 (Home Office 2014); again, this did not decrease its popularity (see prevalence trends)
3. January **2025**: UK Labour government asked ACMD to consider reclassification of ketamine to **Class A**; an example of what Stevens and Measham (2014) call “the policy ratchet” (relating to NPS)

ACMD Technical Committee:

Report on Ketamine

Spring 2004

Possession of a Class A Drug

If ketamine becomes a Class A drug, the penalties for possession will increase. Currently, for Class A drugs like cocaine or heroin, the maximum punishment is:

- Up to **7 years' imprisonment**,
- An **unlimited fine**, or
- Both.

In most cases, sentencing depends on the quantity of the drug, its purity, one previous drug offending and the circumstances of possession.

Possession With Intent to Supply Class A Drugs

The penalties for possession with intent to supply are even more severe. For a Class A drug, the maximum punishment is:

- Up to **life imprisonment**,
- An **unlimited fine**, or
- Both.

ACMD

Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

Ketamine: a review of use and harm

10th December 2013

*“We know that criminalisation can prevent people from accessing the help that they need. One example is a recent higher education report that showed that **30% of students were not willing to come forward about their drug use for fear of punishment either by the police or by their own institution; 16% of those students—and these are young people, this is who the [UK Misuse of Drugs] Act [1971] is allegedly supposed to protect—describe being in a scary situation and they did not seek the help of emergency services because of that fear of prosecution”***

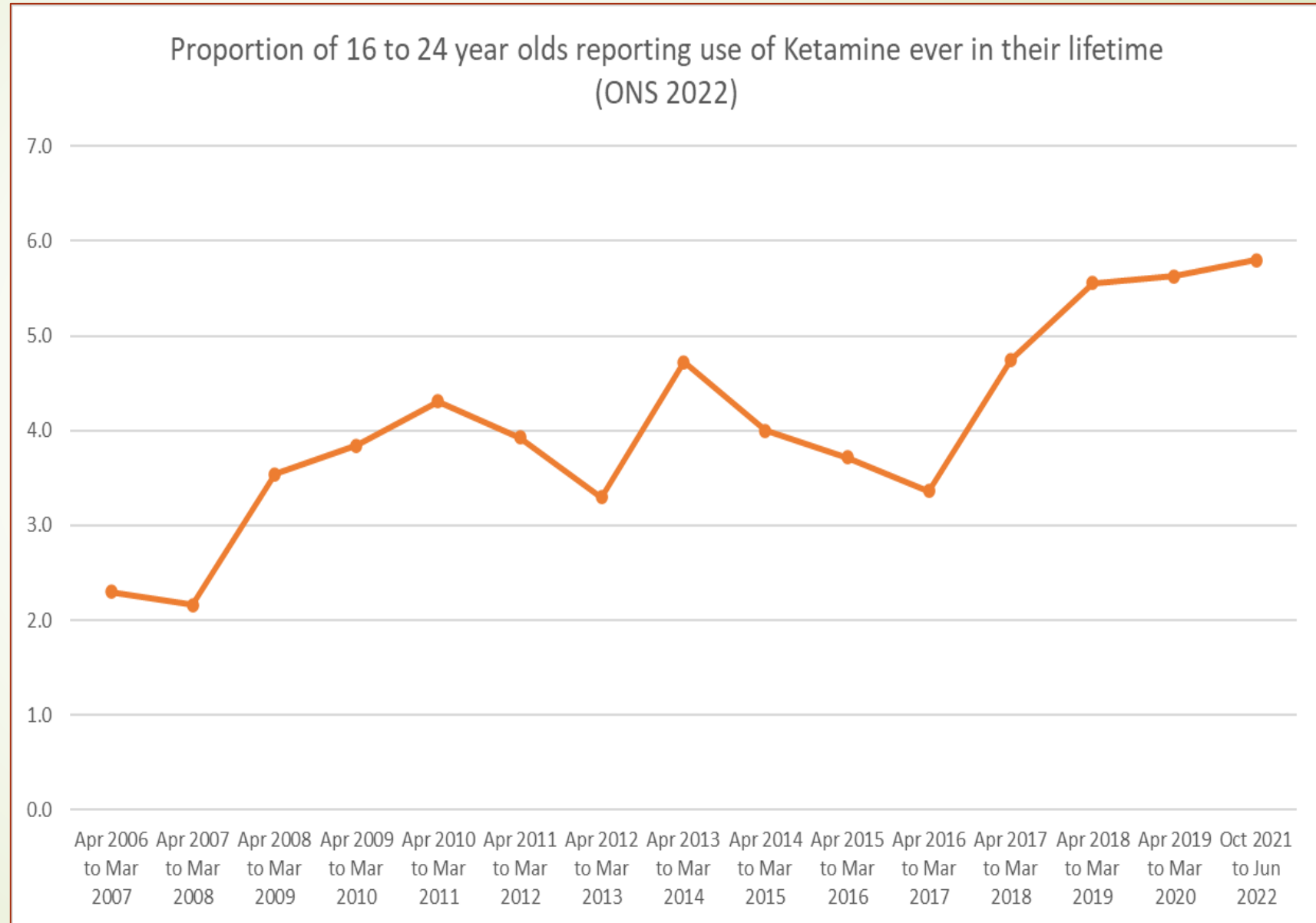
Niamh Eastwood, Head of Release drug charity, speaking at the Home Affairs Select Committee UK Parliament Drugs Inquiry into the MDA 1971, in April 2022, [oral transcripts](#)

Home Affairs Committee, Drugs, Third Report of Session 2022–23 Report:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/41147/documents/203039/default/>

Young people's lifetime ketamine use: A steady rise

- Steady rise in **ketamine** use, esp. among young people in **England & Wales**; since Class C classification in 2005/6 (ONS 2022)
- **6.6%** of 16-24 year olds in E&W (or over one in 20) have taken ketamine **in their lifetime**, data from year ending March (ONS 2023)
- 'Drug Misuse Declared' ONS data = an **under-estimation of prevalence**, including missing **1.5 million students** who are living away from home
- Generally reliable data set for trend analysis only



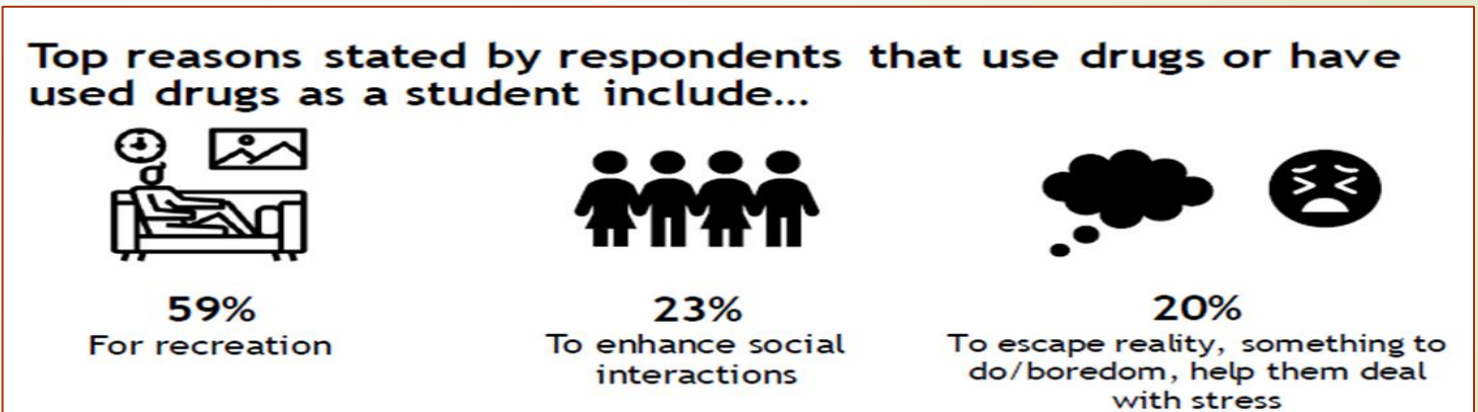
Youth ketamine use trends and concerns

- GMTrends and MANDRAKE in Greater Manchester research focus on ketamine in 2024 (image)
- Varied concerns among youth/drug professionals about ketamine such as reports that **age of onset** is decreasing (Team Leader, Assertive Outreach, Salford, and Trafford, GMTrends 2024, p.8)
- Rise in number of children and young people in region **presenting to treatment** services reporting **problems with ketamine**, from 512 (4.5%) in 2021/22 to 1,201 (8.4%) in 2023/4
- Also recent reports among general Manchester student population (*not* student-clubbers) of move away from benzodiazepines (ie. Xanax) towards **ketamine**



Student-specific ketamine use trends and concerns

- In the latest Students Organising for Sustainability UK (SOS-UK) alcohol and drugs survey, **nearly a third of students (29%)** reported current ketamine use
- Ketamine is one of the top three drugs used by UK students, with **4% taking it weekly**, whilst **1% took it daily** (p.22) (SOS-UK, 2023-24)
- 80% of respondents in European Drug Agency survey (2025) who take **ketamine** said they did so **to get 'high'/for fun**
- Reasons for drug use among students map onto those of young people more generally, with nearly 60% of students citing **'for recreation'** (SOS-UK 2024, p.4, image)

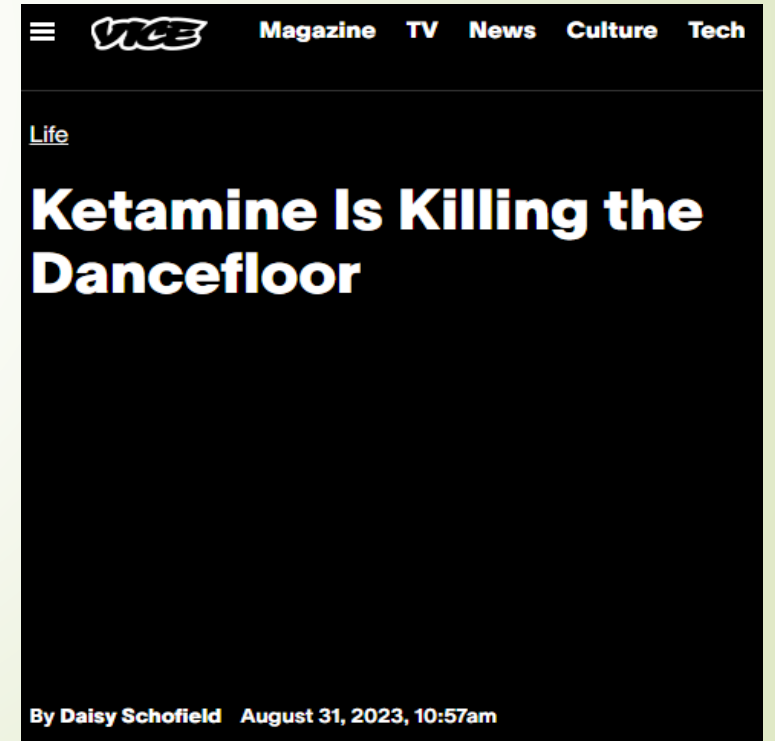


Ketamine and (hard) dance music scenes

- Ketamine has been part of clubbers/ravers' polydrug repertoires from early 1990s onwards
- Enduringly popular in **harder end of dance music genres** (Measham & Moore 2009; Muhs et al 2020; Moore & Moore 2025)
- Previously popular at **dance music post-event afterparties** (Moore & Measham 2008), not typically at 'main events', but this has changed)
- Student clubbers/ravers key user group in *Safer Partying* project; 24% of *Take Ket? Let's Chat* survey respondents attending dance music events across UK and Europe (mostly Italy and France) were **students (more on this in a bit!)**

Perceptions of ketamine

- Ketamine/K contested substance or **'divisive dissociative'** in free-party spaces in Bristol in mid-2000s (Riley et al 2008), as it **'disrupts sociability'** held dear by attendees
- "Techno smack" framing replicated in "zombie ravers" narratives ([Linnell 2016](#); Vice 2023)
- GMTrends (2024) suggests ketamine **'de-stigmatised'** among under 18s, and so has moved **'beyond a club drug'** (ie. no longer 'niche' to raves)
- Student perceptions of ketamine vary; drug services in NCL notes it is highly stigmatised, especially in comparison to powder cocaine

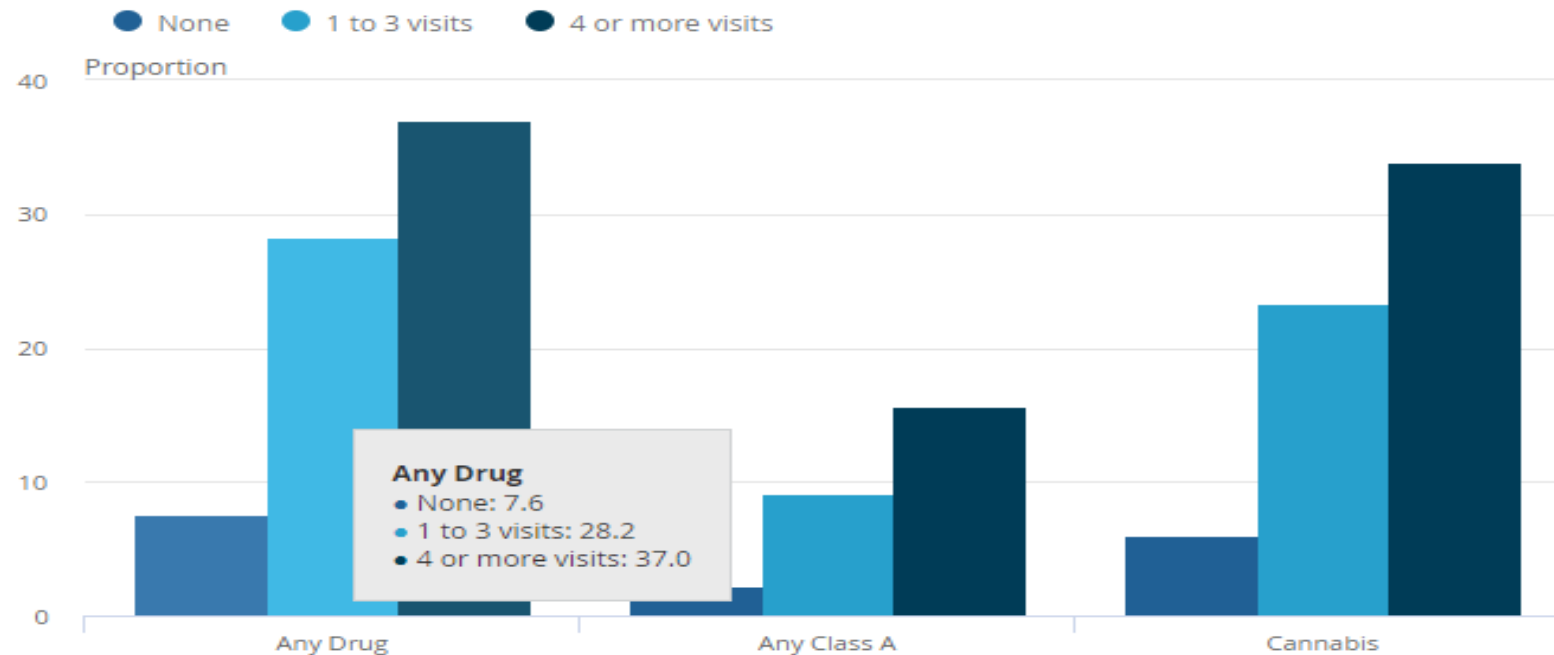


You are more likely to report taking any illegal drug if you visited 'nightclubs' at least once in the last year

(Drug Misuse Declared ONS 2022 [2024, question not available])

Figure 5: Levels of drug use were higher in those who more frequently visited nightclubs

Proportion of adults aged 16 to 59 years who reported using a drug in the last year by frequency of nightclub visits, England and Wales, year ending June 2022



Partyscapes:

Situating ketamine use in student leisure spaces/times

Formal NTE (licensed)	Semi-public	Restaurants, pubs, bars, gig-spaces, nightclubs	Inside sex markets (saunas)	Dance music clubs (occasional or purpose built)	Licensed raves (repurposed, warehouse), afterhours venues
Informal NTE (unlicensed)	Public/semi-public	Night-time streets, alleys, car parks, parks	Taxi ranks, takeaways, dessert cafes, shisha bars, street sex markets	Illegal raves/pay parties/free- parties/block parties	
Evening – Dusk – Night – Dawn - Day					
Formal Non- NTE (licensed)	Semi-public	Festivals	Organised street parties	Dance music festivals	
Informal Non- NTE (unlicensed)	Private/domestic	House/flat parties including student house parties, 'Pres and Afters'		Post-dance event afterparties	

Safer Partying: Take Ket? Let's Chat!

Aims

1. Reflect on ketamine 20+ years after its criminalisation in UK (2004/5 to 2025), in context of increased use globally (ie. Global Drug Survey)
2. Understand recent and *visible* rises in ketamine use among young people in the UK, with a focus on post-pandemic 'partyscapes'
3. Develop sociological understandings of ketamine use in dance music (sub)scenes ie. Magic 7 model of motivations for polydrug use in UK dance music (sub)scenes
4. Co-produce harm reduction resources with Crew 2000 about ketamine *with* young people in UK (and Europe, drawing on **youth-centred research principles** (Public and professional/practitioner engagement, and wider impact))

“It’s the most fun you can have for twenty quid”: Motivations, Consequences and Meanings of British Ketamine Use

KARENZA MOORE & FIONA MEASHAM

Department of Applied Social Science, University of Lancaster, Lancaster, United Kingdom

(Received in final form 1 February 2008)

Abstract

Whilst ketamine use in clubbing contexts has recently been the focus of British media attention, little quantitative or qualitative data is available on its use amongst those young people participating in Britain’s contemporary post-rave electronic dance music (EDM) ‘scenes’ as clubbers. Drawing on data from in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 current regular ketamine users, this article explores user accounts of their motivations for taking ketamine within EDM clubbing contexts, the consequences (both positive and negative) of use and the broader meanings of use. Each issue is considered in relation to two key emergent themes: ‘intensity’ and ‘sociability’ in the drug experience. Participants attempted to optimise the possibility of pleasurable intoxication. This primarily involved participants controlling the quantity, quality and frequency of dose, along with various aspects of the setting of their use, in the hope of producing their individual favoured level of intensity and level of sociability during the ketamine experience. Relatedly, participants drew on discourses of uncontrolled hedonism, compulsion, ‘inappropriate to occasion’ and ‘inappropriate for purpose’ usage to make sense of negative consequences and to firmly position themselves as ‘sensible’ ‘recreational’ users in light of conflicting, largely negative meanings of ketamine produced by other (non-ketamine using) clubbers, the media and ‘official’ responses to use. The article concludes by considering how pleasure is understood and acquired by participants through a pleasure nexus of intersecting axes of intensity and sociability, with users attempting to manage their own intoxication in accordance with individual preferences and previous experiences.

Keywords: *Ketamine, intoxication, intensity, sociability, pleasure, pleasure nexus*

AN INTRODUCTION TO
YOUTH-CENTRED RESEARCH METHODS



RESEARCHING_

WITH
YOUNG

PEOPLE

FRANCES HOWARD, BENJAMIN HANCKEL, KARENZA
MOORE, JANINA SUPPERS & SOPHIE ATHERTON

B L O O M S B U R Y

Methods/data

- I. 10 **expert interviews** with heads of UK voluntary/statutory youth services, drug services
- II. 15 **paired interviews** with ‘young’ ketamine users (ie. 30 Y-PWUDs under 30 years of age)
- III. **Participant-observations** at 30 (hard) techno events in UK over 3 years post-pandemic (July 2021 – July 2024)
- IV. **Digital data** ie. social media, rave flyers etc, to capture social and cultural aspects of ketamine in UK youth culture (Fashion)
- V. **Online TPS** of $n=527$ lifetime ketamine users (93% current, 7% desist) in UK and Europe, recruited via dance music events and & SM (Insta, Snapchat)

next slides = whole sample findings+ HR messaging

SURVEY ANALYSIS

Sample demographics (rounded):

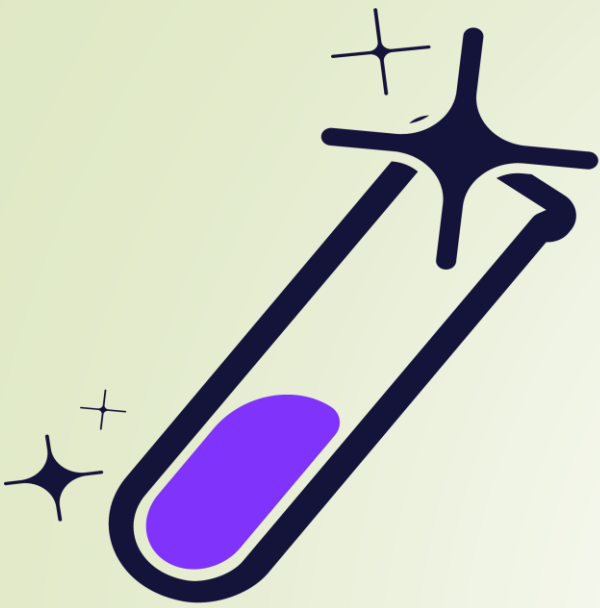
All reported lifetime ketamine use (93% current, 7% desist)

Mean age: 29 years

Gender: 49% men, 32% women, 11% trans*, 7% prefer not to say, 1% self-describe

Ethnicity: 85% white, 4% mixed, 2% black or asian, 8% prefer not to say, 2% 'other' (multiple)

I am currently: 22% university or college students, 2% in 'other' education. 59% full or part time working. 10% prefer not to say. 7% unemployed.



Check your drugs

The majority (**69%**) of survey participants did not check their 'ketamine' using either a test service or home kit. Of those that do, over **90%** found it contained what they expected

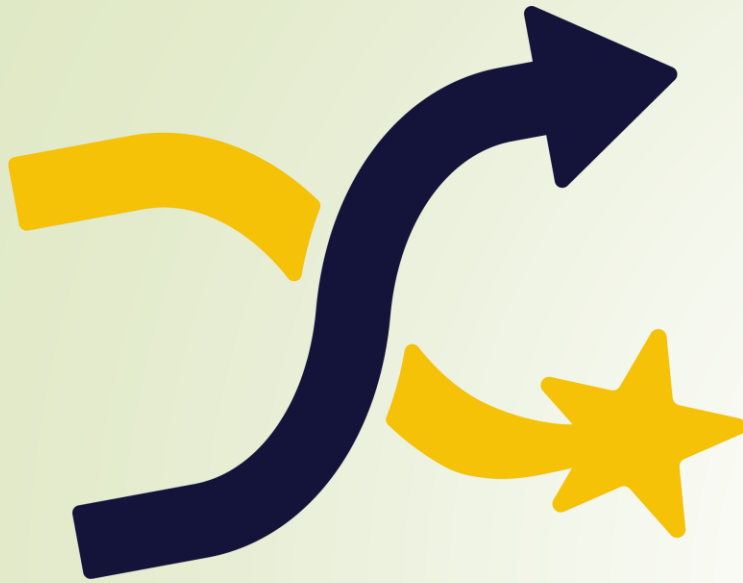
Frequency of use

43% had taken ketamine in the last week, **18%** in the last two to three weeks, **26%** over a month ago, and **8%** over a year ago. A significant minority (**45%**) said they only take ketamine "*on special occasions*".

Dosage control

Most participants (**61%**) did not plan or weigh ketamine doses in advance. **54%** "measure by eye" and **28%** "measure by key"





Ket and...?

Only **6%** of participants did not mix ketamine.

Common combinations reported by respondents included ketamine plus alcohol (**48%**) cocaine (**43%**) MDMA/E pills (**40%**) cannabis (**40%**), LSD or mushrooms (**35%**) and NOS Gas (**20%**) [polydrug repertoires]

Wobble or K-hole?

The most popular effect sought from ketamine was an “individual psychedelic experience, but not a K-hole” (**62%**)



Unwanted side effects

91% of respondents agreed ketamine can cause problems for some people, including “K-cramps”

Is ketamine ‘normalised’?

65% of respondents said ketamine is “a normal part of party, rave or festival scenes”

[but still **differentiated** normalisation]





First Aid (situated safety)

Where and with who ketamine use occurs is crucial for harm reduction and emergency messaging:

A similar proportion of participants took ketamine at afterparties (**64%**) as at festivals (**64%**) and nightclubs (**63%**)

**but European Drug Agency survey 2025 found 'at home' was more common than in (semi)public spaces*

Ketamine peer education opportunities?

Over **70%** said they know more than 10 people who take ketamine



Need help?

9% of respondents had sought help for ketamine-related physical and mental health issues

Safer Partying (ketamine) provides further evidence of widespread need for more help and support around youth ketamine use in UK and Europe.

Four tiers of ketamine response (GMTrends 2024), including **T1** signposting to services and **harm reduction information** available online and *in-situ* eg. on university campuses, at licensed raves etc

Take Ket? Let's Chat! harm reduction resources are free

A5 flyers (digital and print format) are available for download here or at www.crew.scot

A5 flyers and social media campaign is available at clubresearch.org/ketamine/

Co-created using **youth-centred research principles** (Howard et al 2025)

Take Ket? Let's Chat!

Practical harm reduction strategies for people who take ketamine from people who know. We do not condone or condemn drug-taking.

What is in your ketamine?
Check your drugs where possible, using Wedinos.org or a reagent test.

#1key2key3key...FLOOR!
Remember, all those little bumps add up! Start low, go slow.

Use your own clean equipment to avoid rave-flu + other nasties.

Best not to mix ket with other drugs, including alcohol. If you do, avoid mixing it all up in one dose.

Take Ket? Let's Chat!

Sesh-proof where you are before you start eg. avoid open water + shut any windows!

K-cramps? Waterworks gone weird? Try reducing your ket use + get medical help to prevent further damage.

Call 999 in an emergency + be honest about what you or your friend has taken.

You can become dependent on ketamine + build tolerance. Try your GP or seek help from drug services if that happens to you or a friend. Access free + anonymous services including [With You, Change Grow Live](#), [Bristol Drug Project](#) + [Turning Point](#) across the UK, or Crew.scot in Scotland.

Find out about our research here:

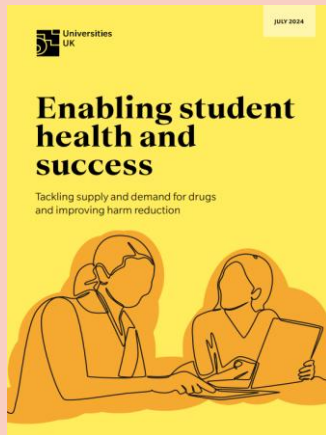
Find out more about Crew here:

Newcastle University

CREW
www.crew.scot

Take Ket? Let's Chat! NCL/NUSU ketamine campaign

- ▶ Student-focused ketamine harm reduction project funded by NCL, in collab with NUSU & Crew 2000; in part our response to [UUK report 2024](#)



- ▶ Some urgency for campaign given high levels of ketamine use among students (ie. SOS-UK 2023/4)
 - ▶ Also concerns around ketamine (+alcohol) presentations in student NTE, good relationship with dance clubs/nights

HOME / TAKE KET? LET'S CHAT.

TAKE KET? LET'S CHAT.

All drug use carries risk – the safest way to avoid these risks is to avoid taking drugs.

The 23-24 SOS-UK survey showed that nationally, ketamine is a drug that students are taking and some are combining ketamine with other drugs (including alcohol).

We want to raise awareness in the risks associated with ketamine to help students make informed choices and in knowing where to get support.

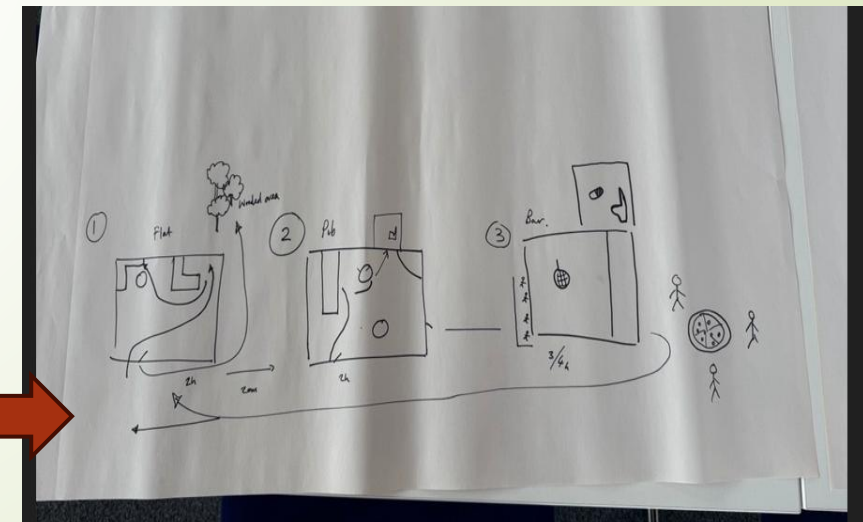
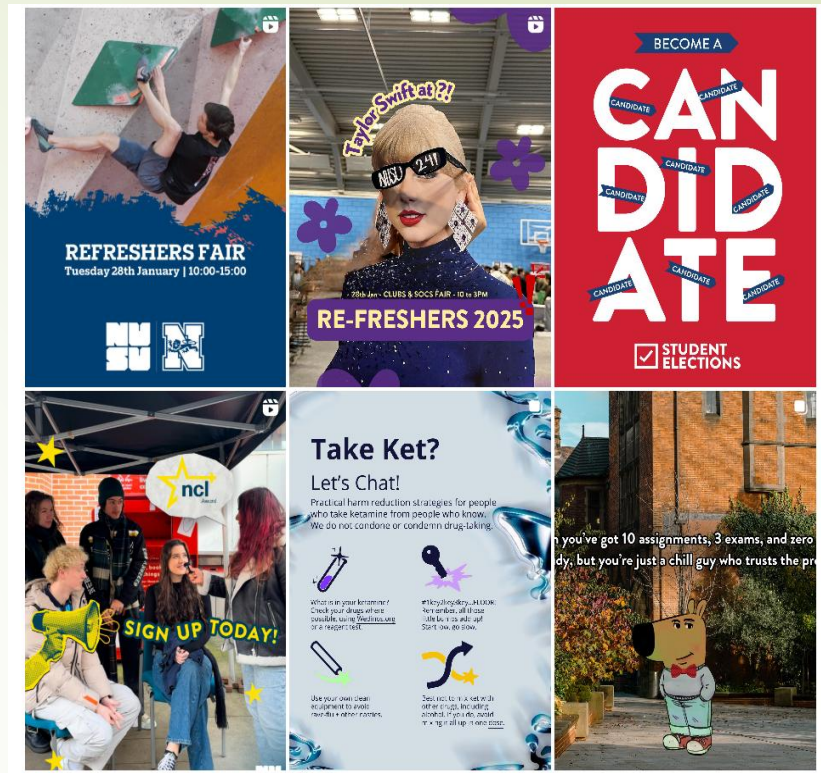
Take Ket? Let's Chat.

The information below has been produced by [Crew](#) and Dr Karenza Moore who teamed up as part of the Safer Partying research project on ketamine within the Clubbing Research work. This offers practical harm reduction strategies for people who take ketamine from people who know. We would love to hear from you on whether you feel this resource has benefitted you!

[Feedback on Flyer](#)

Take Ket? Let's Chat! NCL/NUSU ketamine harm reduction campaign

1. Original *Take Ket? Let's Chat* materials used for campus-wide and socials campaign, Insta campaign on NUSU had 311 ❤️ and 46 shares
2. Evaluation results currently being analysed
 - *In-situ* feedback via outreach + online feedback survey (next slide)
 - Creative workshops with NCL students and (later) staff
 - Aim IS to help co-produce student-focused material for future alcohol/drug harm reduction campaigns
 - ie. creative map task focusing on student safety “on your night out”



TAKE KET? LET'S CHAT!



Student Gender:
 Staff Age:
 Other

RESOURCE EVALUATION

Newcastle University Students' Union and Crew 2000 do not condone or condemn drug-taking. All drug use carries risk - the safest way to avoid these risks is to avoid taking drugs. Head to the pages on the SU website for more information and support on campus and in the city. NUSU.co.uk/support. Crew's FREE and ANONYMOUS text service is available at 07860047501 or visit crew.scot for more information.

BEFORE VIEWING THE RESOURCE...

Had you heard of 'drug harm reduction' for students before?



Were you aware there are free drug testing kits available via the student union on campus?



Did you know where to go to get support if you or a friend were experiencing issues with drugs, including ketamine?



AFTER VIEWING THE RESOURCE...

Have you learnt anything new?



Do you know more about the risks of ketamine?



Do you know more about how to reduce the risks of ketamine?



Will you share this information with others e.g. friends, colleagues?



FOR ALL RESPONDENTS: How would you improve the resource? And any other comments:

IF YOU TAKE KETAMINE...

Do you now feel informed to make any changes to the way you take ketamine, to reduce risk of harm?

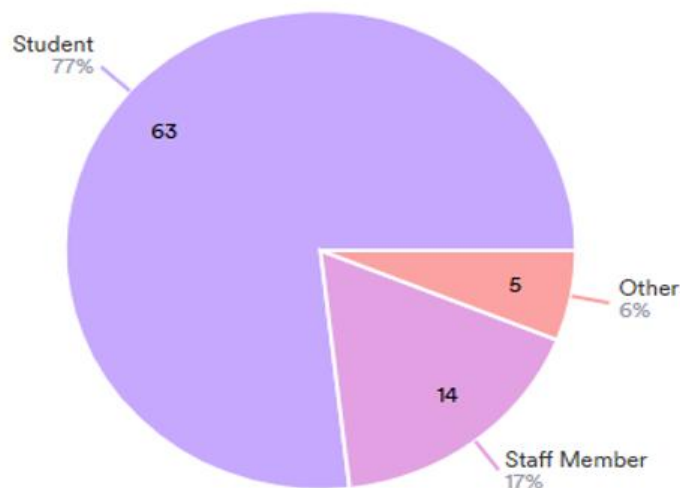


If so, what changes do you intend to make (tick all that apply):

- I will stop taking ketamine.
- I will take a lower dose.
- I will plan doses in advance.
- I will avoid mixing ketamine with other drugs, including alcohol.
- I will test my ketamine.
- I will do research to learn more about ketamine, including how to respond to an emergency.
- I already follow all the harm reduction strategies discussed.
- Anything else...?

I am a...

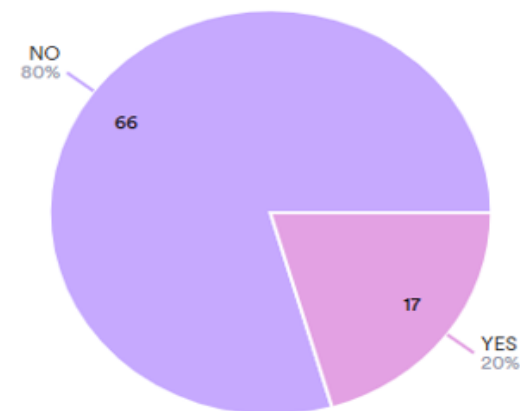
82 Responses- 1 Empty



● Student ● Staff Member ● Other

Do you take ketamine?

83 Responses



● NO ● YES

If you do feel informed to make any changes to the way you take ketamine (to reduce the risk of harm), what changes do you intend to make?

27 Responses- 69 Empty



The Magic 7: Motivations

Motivations for 'party-drug use' including ketamine mapped onto wider youth drug research literature

1. **Friendships**
2. **'Fashion' (music, drugs, clothing)***
3. Situated fun (party-drug use spaces/times)
4. Function (*specific* effects)
5. Polydrug repertoires (*combined* effects)
6. **Lifecourse**
7. **Markets**

*'Fashion' includes (media, digital) representations of party-drugs



More likely to say that they have made new friends as a result of drug use

36% < 47%
2022-23 2023-24

**IT'S NOT
THE SAME
GETTING
HIGH
WITHOUT
YOU**

#1: Friendships

► Over 70% of TKLC TPS respondents said they take ketamine with friends also taking it:

“best with good mates at Afters”


“just me and her, or sometimes with close friends”

► 86% of TPS respondents saw benefits to ketamine use related to **friendships**, including *“opening up to friends”*, esp. young men (see for eg. Farrugia 2015)

► **SOS-UK 2023/4**: Student drug users also highlight centrality of **friends** and (creating) **friendship groups** through (any) drug use (47%)

► **Friendships** emerged as central to ketamine use in paired interviews

► Young people reported **looking after each other** on ketamine when at parties, nightclubs and festivals; also apparent in our POs ie. “the ketty warehouse” early 2024



A post-pandemic ketamine ‘encounter’ from *Safer Partying* (July 2021-July 2024)

Ethnographic vignette: **The “ketty techno warehouse”**

It reminded us of the SLAM techno party pre-pandemic, when we helped the lad in a K-hole at the Skate Park [before the pandemic]. We didn’t think of that until after. In the ‘ketty techno warehouse’ (as we later named it), **Z helped a small friendship group (2 women, 3 lads), 2 ‘holding up’ their mate, apparently in a K-hole.** Z says *“Has he had too much ket?”* Friends look purposively blank. *“Let’s go with he has had too much ket. Would you like to take him to the medics?”* Friends all nod sheepishly. The crowd parts to let them through. I carry on dancing, Z returns 5 mins later. We dance some more. An hour or so later, we spot the 3 lads re-entering the dancefloor. **K-hole lad is a bit wobbly but seemingly unscathed.** *“Aw look, he’s been released back into the wild”* we say. When we are collecting our coats at the end, the 2 lasses come up to Z, and I recognize them from before. *“Thank so much for helping our mate!”* they beam in unison, then disappear off into the freezing night.

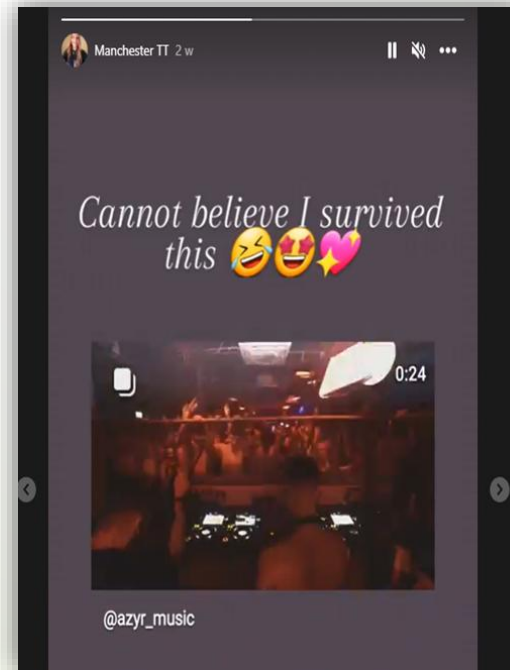
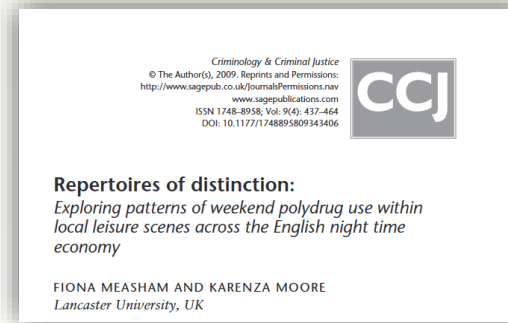
Hard techno day-to-night warehouse rave in the North of England, 10,000 capacity, February 2023, with co-researcher Z.

#2: Fashion (**music**, drugs, clothing)

Harder and faster?

“In normal times, people gradually fall in love with clubbing, partying and electronic music just as others tail away...“My whole take on the faster, harder side of things is that **people turned 18 over the pandemic**,” he continues. “They’d heard about techno, but they’d never experienced a club [and] they were listening to stuff in the house, coming from maybe hard dance, or hardcore or ravey happy hardcore stuff. Then **they burst into a club and want to hear things at 100 miles per hour** because they haven’t heard anything different.”

Darren Quail, Animal Farm/Need for Speed promoter, <https://mixmag.net/feature/hard-dance-music-got-harder-faster-hor-berlin-hard-techno-rave-music-interview-investigation>



UK & Italian student-raver TPS responses: Preferred ketamine effects eg. music enhancement

*“Blow off some steam and relax, and enjoy some **dancing** with my friends”*

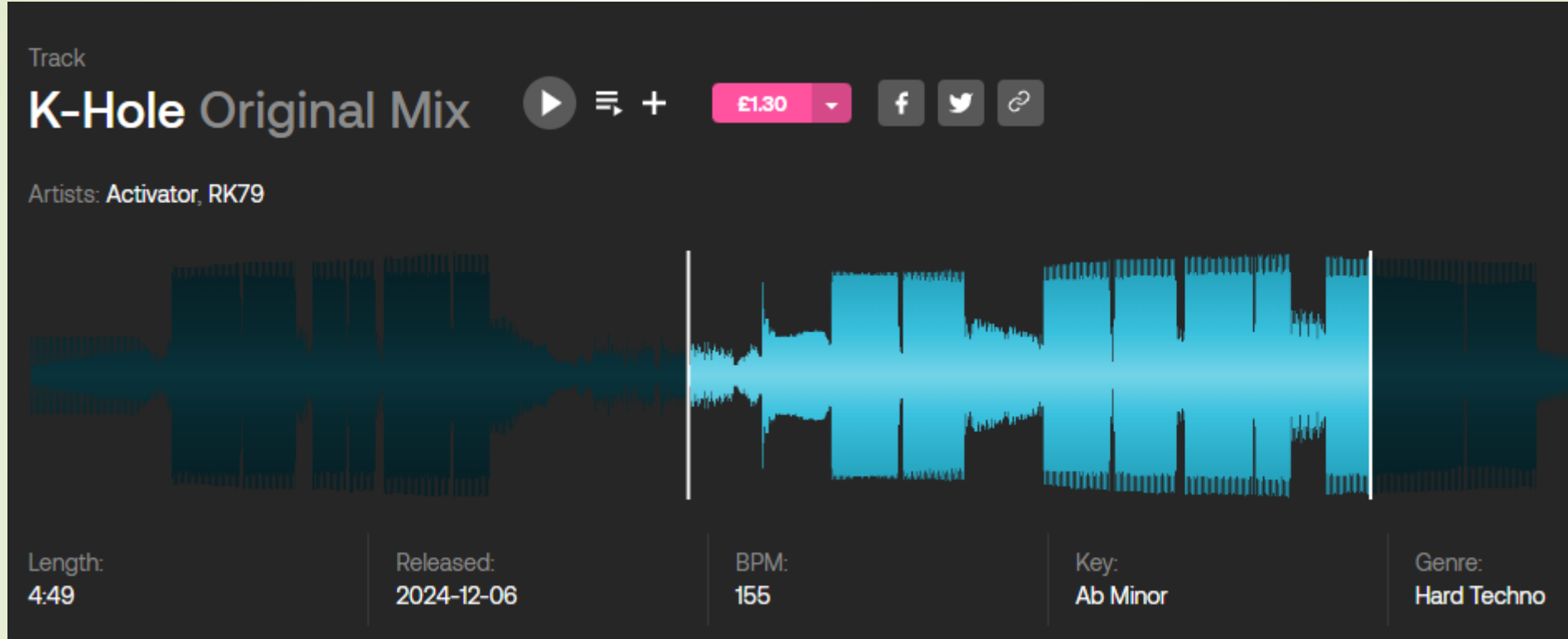
*“Euphoria, **energy**, connecting with **music**, relaxing, connecting thoughts”*

***Wobbly waves** feeling when dancing which makes you connect more deeply to the **music** and not care about how weird ur skanking [dancing] looks”*

*“Less inhibited, **enjoy music even more**. I like it when my brain feels **wonky**. **Don't want to k-hole** or be too out of it”*

*“I want to **K-hole to music** in a dark room which causes me to travel to another place while my body and mind remain in that room.”*

#2: Fashion (**music**, drugs, clothing)



Track
K-Hole Original Mix ▶ ≡ + £1.30 f 🐦 🔗

Artists: **Activator, RK79**

Length: 4:49 | Released: 2024-12-06 | BPM: 155 | Key: Ab Minor | Genre: Hard Techno

The image shows a digital music player interface. At the top, it displays the track name 'K-Hole Original Mix' in a large, bold font. To the right of the track name are several icons: a play button, a menu icon, a plus sign, a price tag of £1.30, and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and a share link. Below the track name, the artists 'Activator, RK79' are listed. The main part of the interface is a waveform visualization of the audio track, with a vertical white line indicating the current playback position. At the bottom, there are five columns of metadata: Length (4:49), Released (2024-12-06), BPM (155), Key (Ab Minor), and Genre (Hard Techno).

<https://www.beatport.com/track/k-hole/19786968>

“Depending on how much you do, you may fall into what is known as a K-hole....”

When co-creating drug education resources for young people/students frequenting leisure spaces such as festivals and (licensed) raves, we need a strong social and cultural understanding of the ‘contested status’ that party drugs such as MDMA/E and **ketamine** have in youth music sub(scenes).

#6: Lifecourse

Lifecourse, identities and youth transitions

Most young people, including students, **'mature out' of illicit drug use (well) before 30 years of age**, ie. drug use statistics and lifecourse literature within (youth) drug research

This is especially true of university-educated (middle class) women ie. marriage, mortgage and motherhood (Measham et al 2011)

Youth transitions and identities research helps explain relationship between youth transitions, youth identities (ie. "studenthood") and wider transitions in/out of school/college/uni, into work, going travelling etc

16-30 years crucial 'stage' for LGBTQ+ young people's intersectional identity formation, UK queer clubbing enables self-exploration within music spaces/times, including among students (Moore & Moore 2025)



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Commentary

Marriage, mortgage, motherhood: What longitudinal studies can tell us about gender, drug 'careers' and the normalisation of adult 'recreational' drug use

Fiona Measham ^a, Lisa Williams ^b, Judith Aldridge ^b

#7: Markets

Increasingly cheap and (for a long time) easily accessible product

Retail price average £15-20 per 0.8g in UK markets in 2024/5, but many buying (bulk) for less than that (ie. £8 gram)

Average price 23€ per 1.0g across EU (EMCDDA & Europol, 2019)

High purity of Ketamine (Wedinos data), although some cathinones found in 2023, and xylazine found in 2024 (Mandrake/GM Trends)

Darknet & social media dealing normalised, although our ketamine TPS respondents mostly bought in-person from *'dealer known to me'*

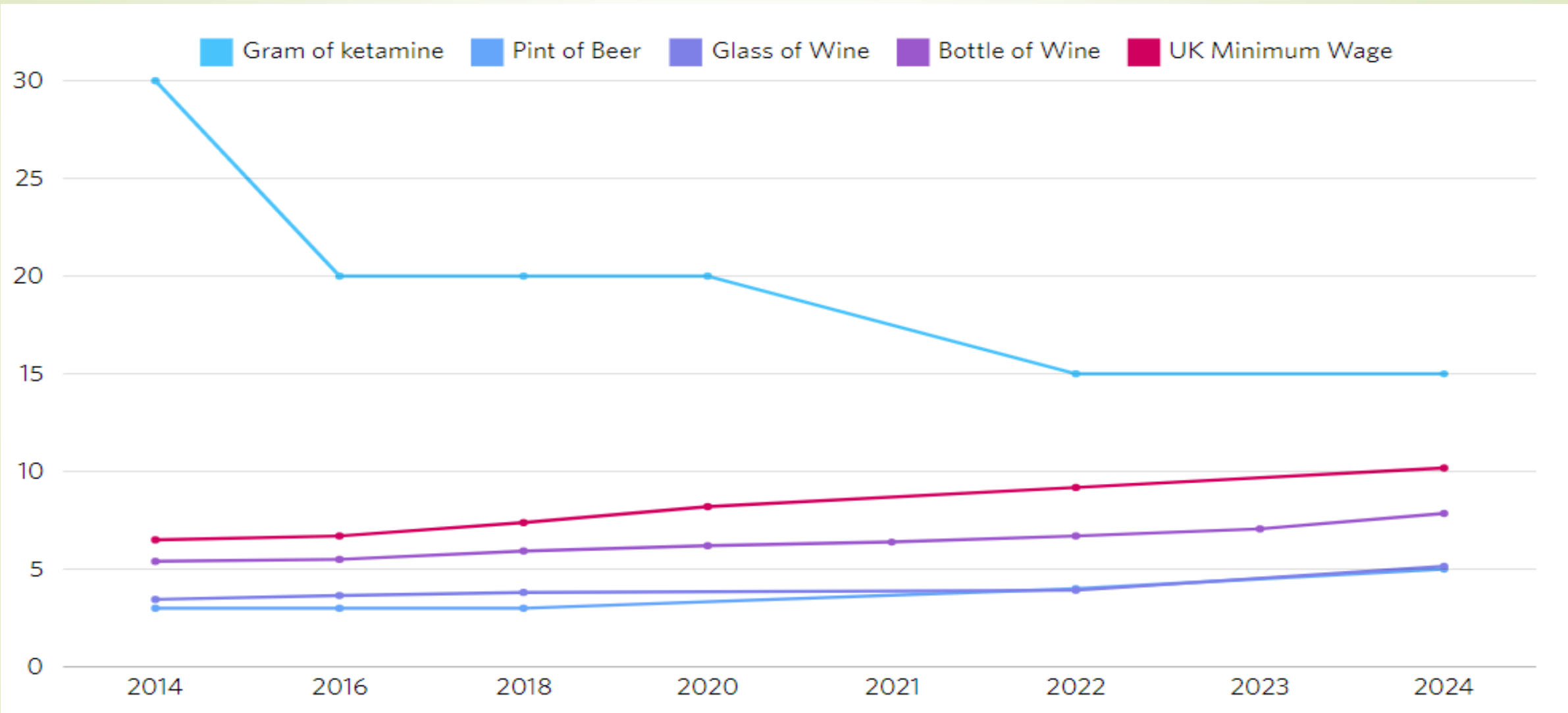


SCREENSHOTS OF TELEGRAM DRUG MARKETS. PHOTO: VICE NEWS

Ketamine is perceived to be affordable, 'pure', easily accessible (as above) and fashionable (cool, goat, lit, fire etc)

GMTrends (2024) de-stigmatisation of ketamine, although still stigma in dance club attendees ie. *"grimy drug"* (PO #17)

UK market since K's reclassification (to Class B) in 2014: Cheaper, 'stronger', more easily accessible



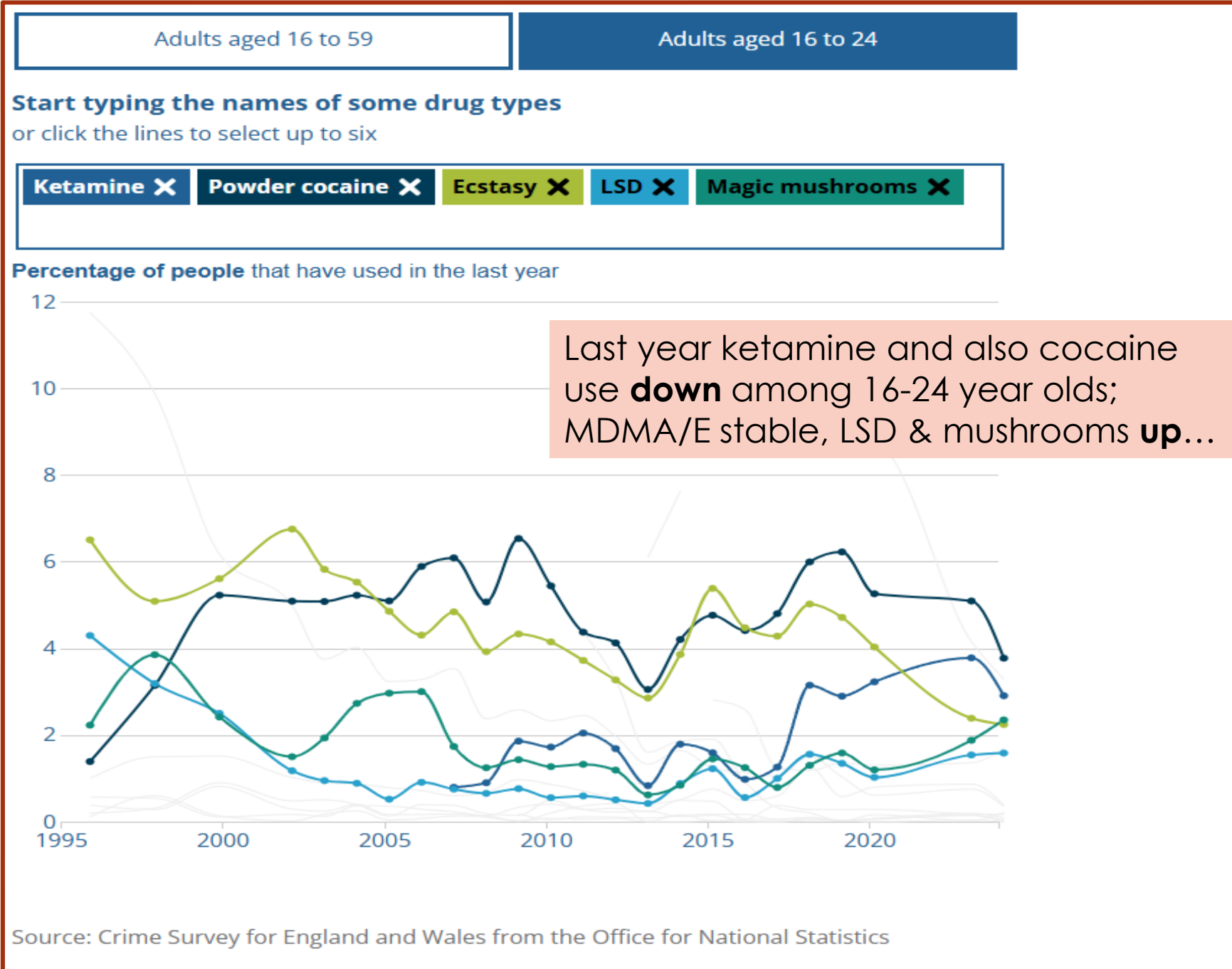
Ketamine: What next?

Last year ketamine use among 16–24 year olds hit high of 3.8% (ONS 2023) compared to 1% in 2016

However, reported ketamine use among this age group dipped to 2.9% (ONS 2024)

This means it has returned to pre-pandemic levels (trend)

Reduction in *visible* ketamine use in UK hard techno scene, but may simply be people managing their public use better



A surreal collage with a warm, yellowish-green tint. In the center, a panda wearing a red bandana and a black shirt acts as a DJ behind a wooden booth with two large speakers. To the left, a boombox sits on the ground with a chicken nearby. In the foreground, a rooster and a bulldog wearing sunglasses are visible. In the background, a monkey is shown jumping to shoot a basketball into a hoop, and a giraffe stands on the right. The scene is set in a desert-like environment with palm trees and cacti.

Thank you for listening!

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