



# 2014 Key Australian findings: psychostimulant drug market

Medicine

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

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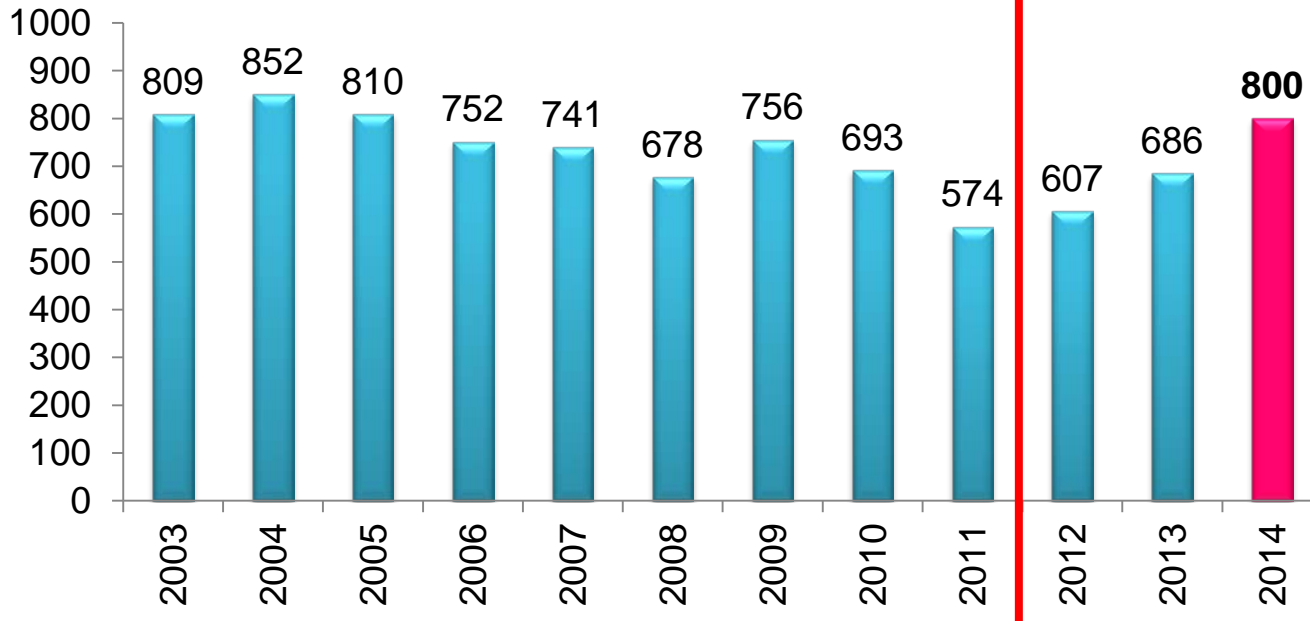
# TO THE POINT



- Recruitment and demographics
- Ecstasy Market
- NPS and Synthetic cannabis market
- Methamphetamine market
- Other drugs markets
- Summary of main points

# EDRS Recruitment 2003-2014

Number of EDRS participants 2003-2014



Source: EDRS interviews

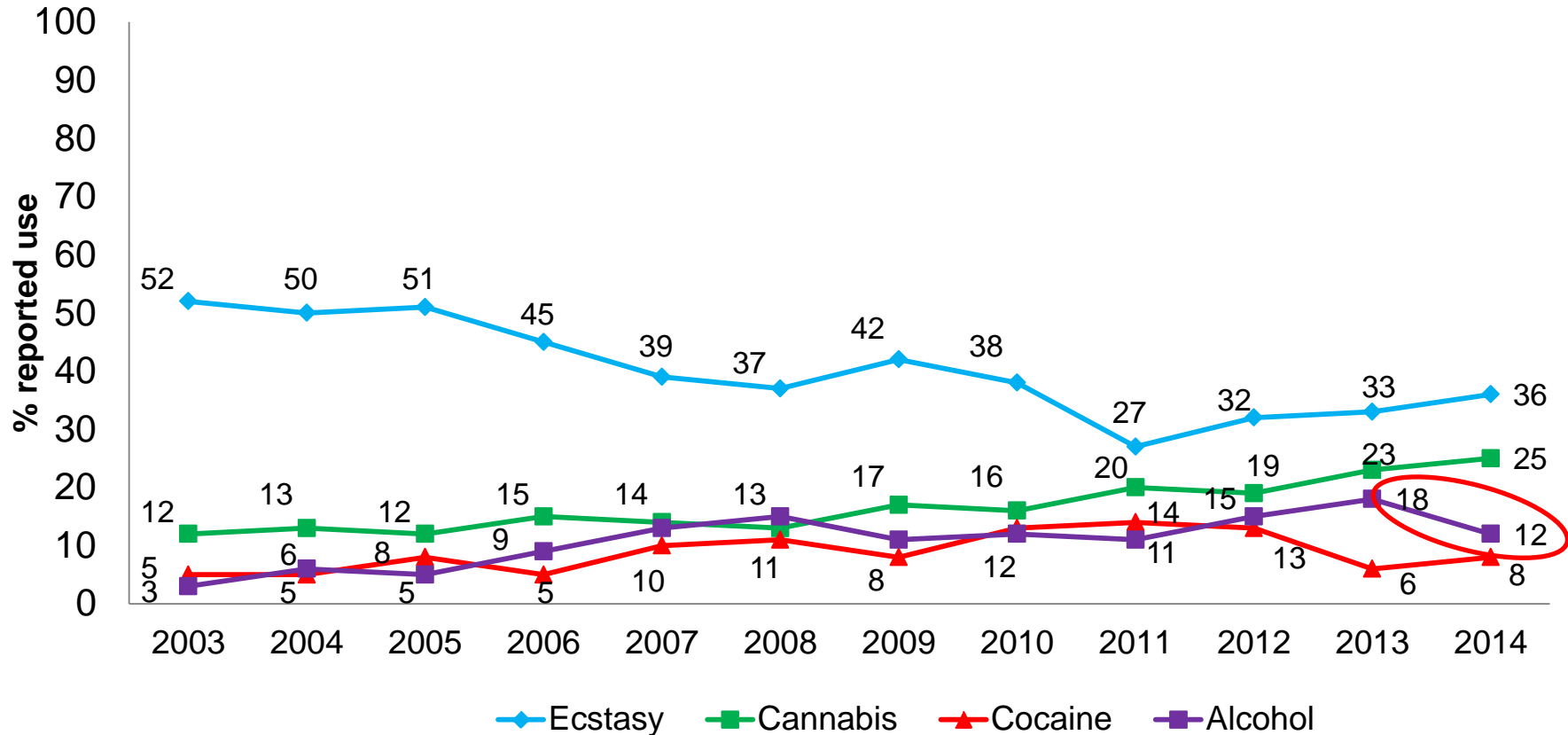
- NT criteria slightly differed in terms of how long resided in Darwin, reached 100
- Online became the most prominent way participants were recruited
- N=13 (2%) participants had not used ecstasy
- N=77 (10%) were not regular ecstasy users

# Demographics of EDRS participants

- Mean age 23 years
  - Male (66%)
  - English speaking back ground (97%)
  - Heterosexual (89%)
  - Tertiary educated (46%)
  - Unemployed (15%)
  - Currently in drug treatment (2%)
- 
- Proportions similar to previous years



# Drug of choice, 2003-2014



- Preference for ecstasy is steady at 36% as the drug of choice
- Preference for alcohol has significantly decreased from 18% to 12%, still in 3<sup>rd</sup> place

# Ecstasy (MDMA) use and Market



99 Ecstasy Tablets (2007)  
Image by Erowid, © 2007 Erowid.org

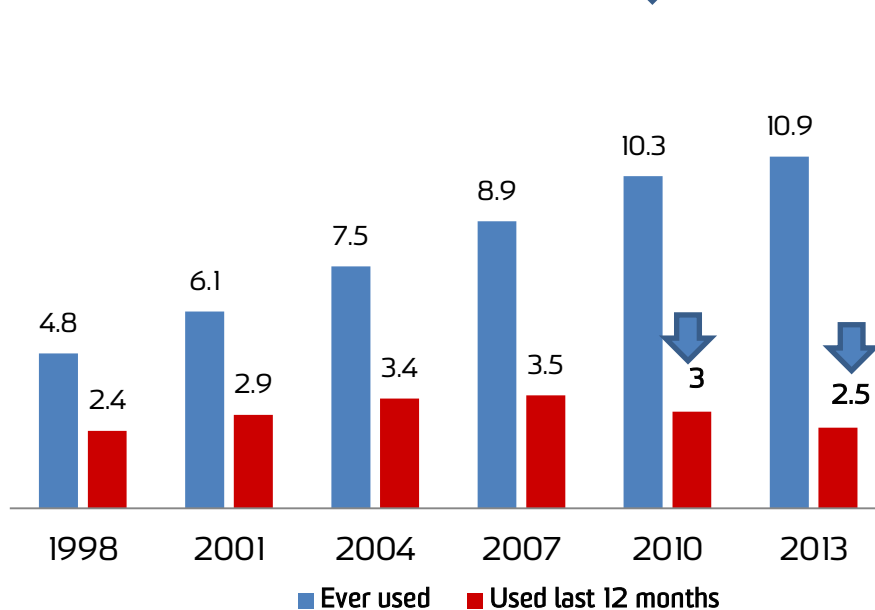


MDMA Crystals  
Photo by Neil Marshall, © 2011 Erowid.org



# Domestic trends for ecstasy, 2014

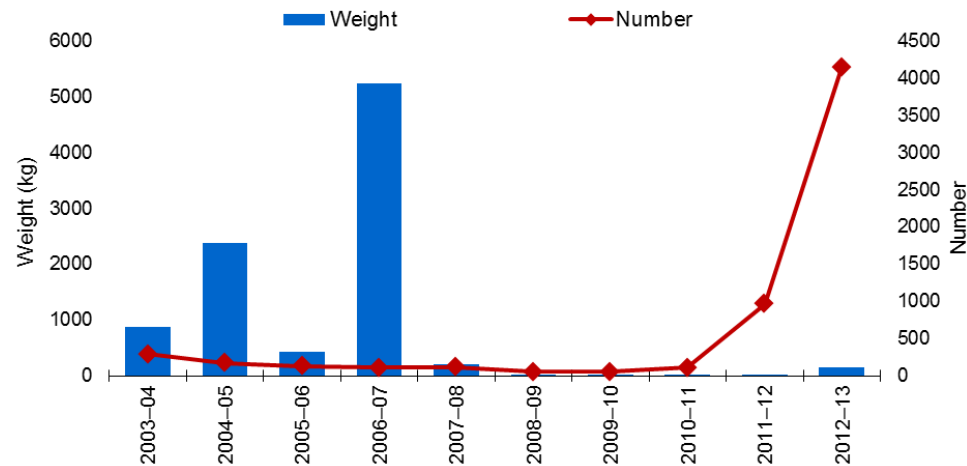
General population ecstasy use, 1998-2013



Source: AIHW, 2014

- Australian population use has decreased

Number and weight of MDMA detections at the Australian border, 2003/04 - 2012/13



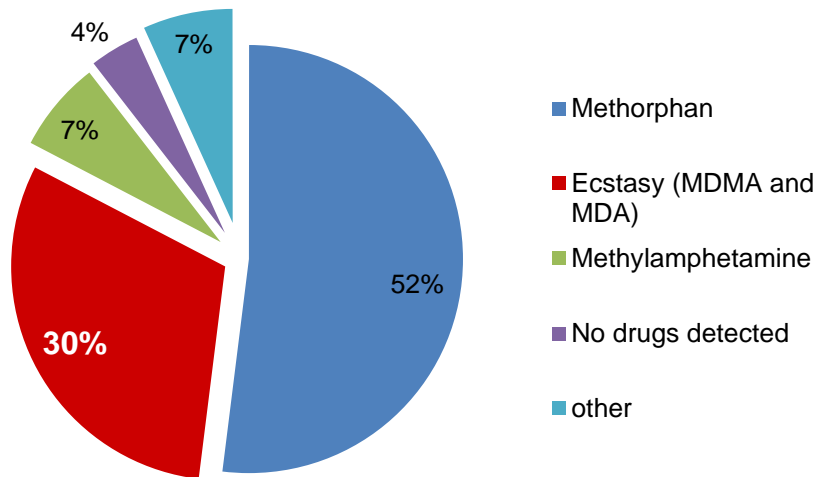
Source: Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

- At the border seizure numbers are the highest on record 2012-13

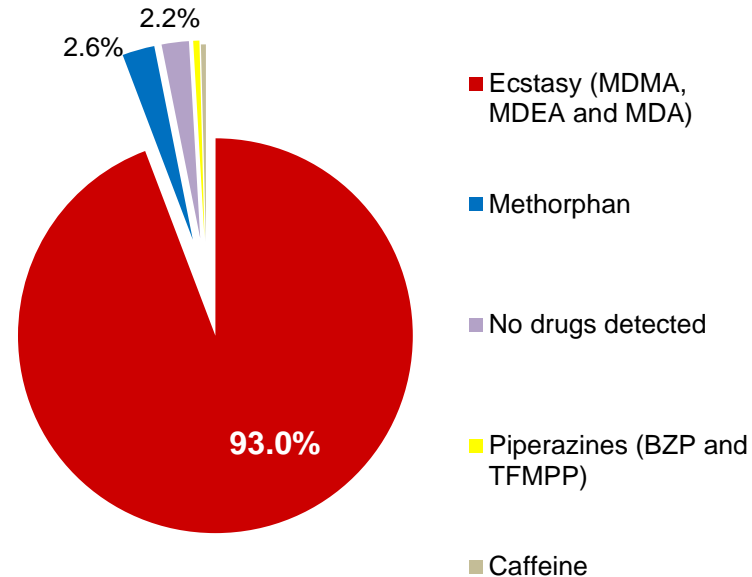
# Illicit tablets seized by major drug type

## Forensic purity and availability

July 2012- June 2013



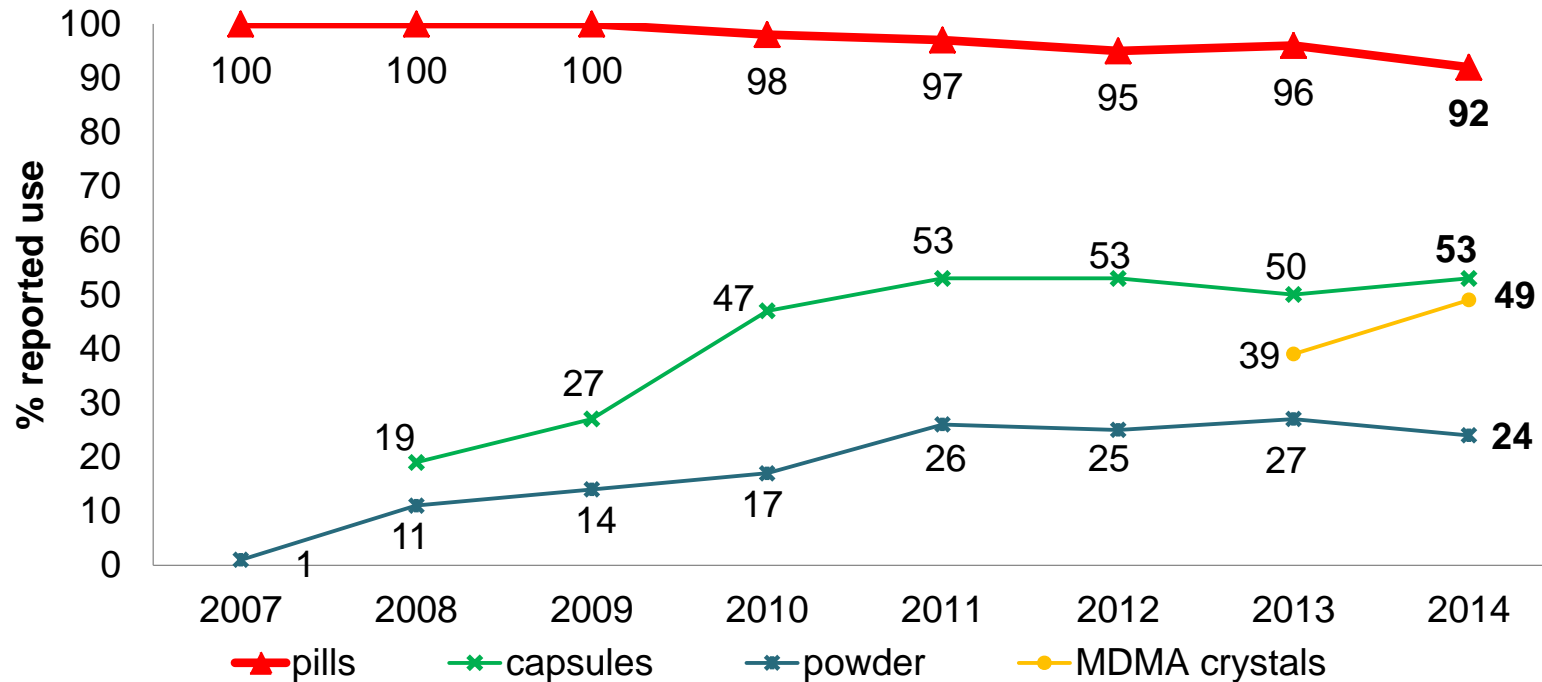
July 2013- June 2014



- Ecstasy is clearly the major drug type in illicit tablets seized
- Ecstasy pills are considered 'medium' (36%)



# Ecstasy forms, 2014



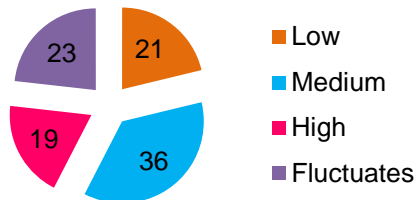
- Increasing use of MDMA crystals



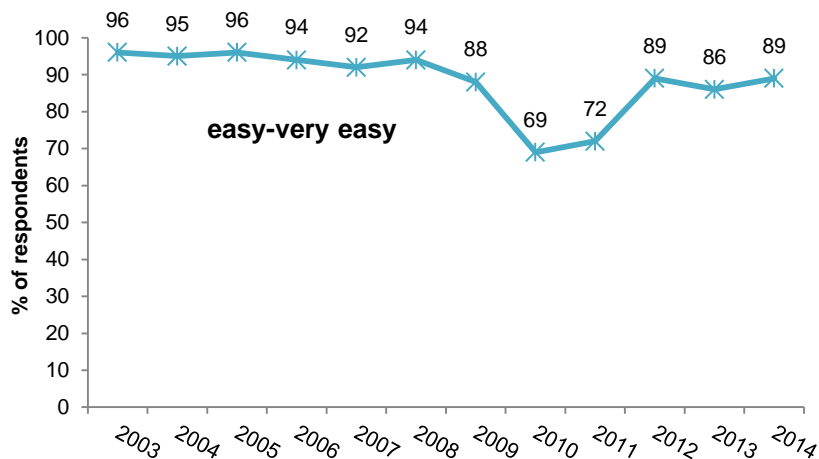
# Ecstasy pills, powder, capsules

Price: \$25 per pill

Purity:



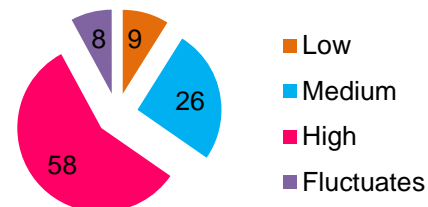
Availability:



# MDMA crystal/rock

Price: \$25 per point, \$250 per gram

Purity:



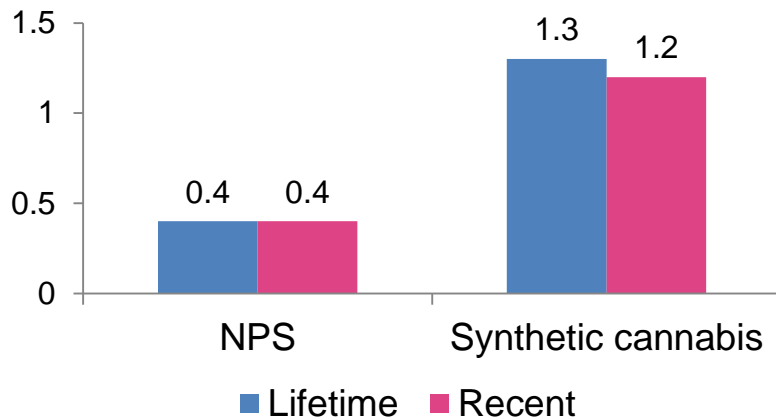
Availability: easy-very easy 68%



- Dark web found most ecstasy for sale was crystal/rock MDMA (44-49%) Agora & Silk Road 2.0
- Last use venue for both forms was nightclubs followed by live music venue/concert

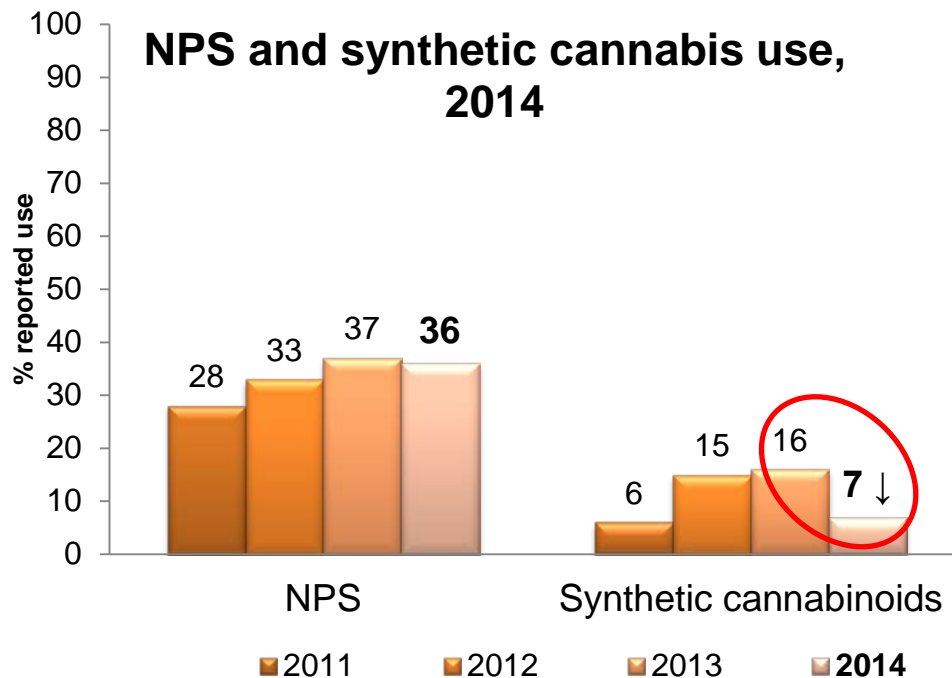
# New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

Population estimates of NPS and synthetic cannabis use, 2013



Source: AIHW, 2014

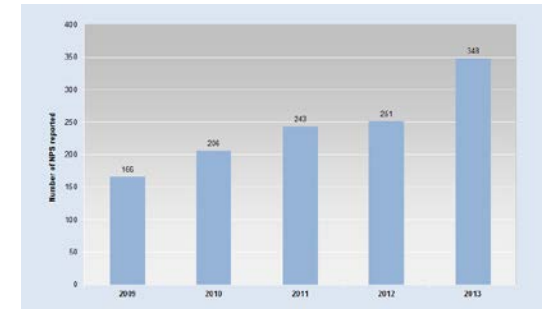
NPS and synthetic cannabis use, 2014



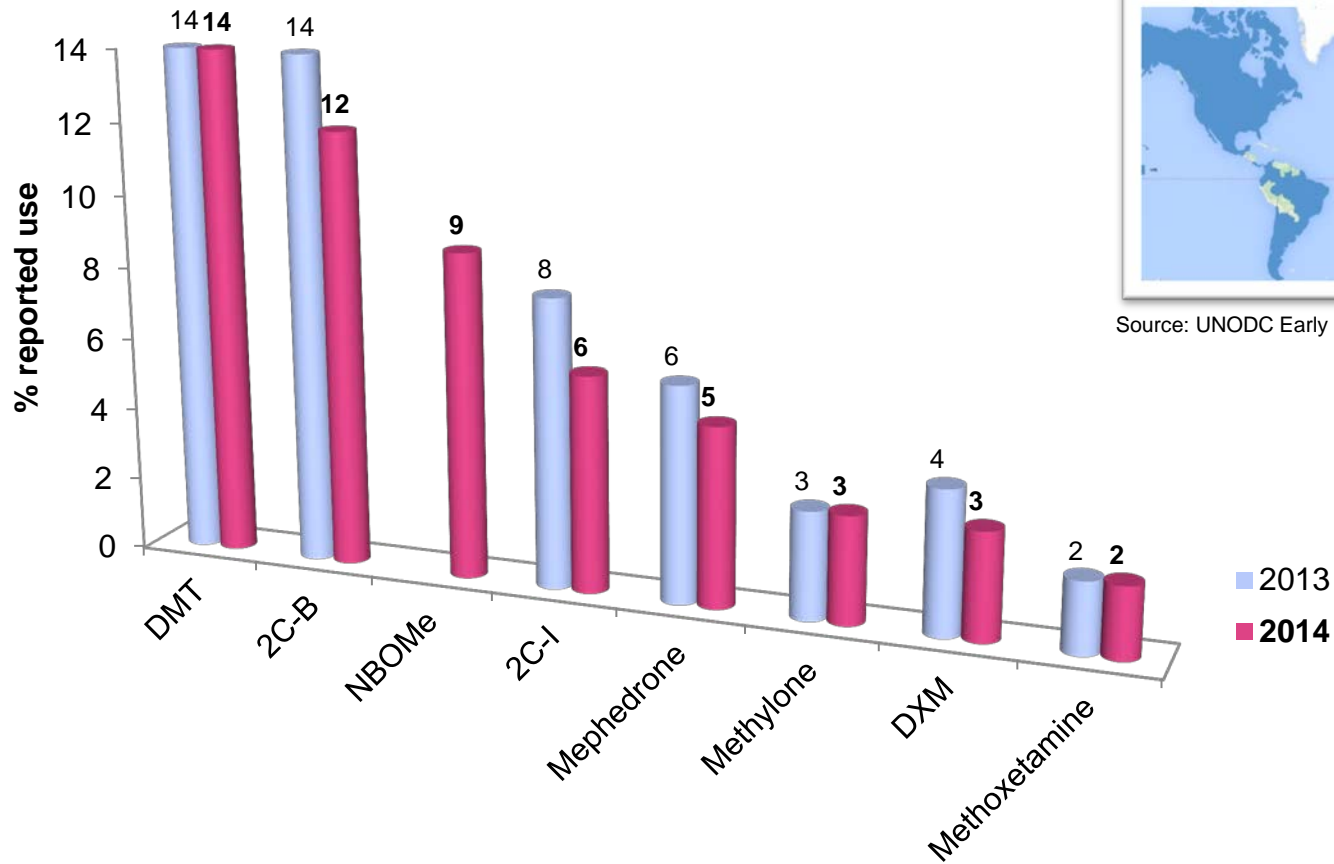
Source: EDRS interviews

- Population estimates for NPS and synthetic cannabis is low
- NPS stabilised and synthetic cannabis has decreased

# NPS recent use, 2013-2014



Source: UNODC Early Warning Advisory on NPS, 2014





DMT can produce powerful psychedelic experiences including intense visuals, euphoria and hallucinations

Life time: 27%, Recent use 14%

Days of use: 1 day (VIC, WA, QLD)

- Comes in crystals or pills
- 93% smoked, 7% swallow, 3% snorted



49% sought DMT, 51% were offered DMT

Sourced mainly from friends (65%), dealers (15%), given as a gift (9%), and online (8%)

# NBOMe



MDMA, 25I-NBOMe,  
Caffeine, MSM

- designed to mimic or produce similar effects to common illicit drugs such as LSD
- Implicated in the deaths of Henry Kwang and Preston Bridge

13% Lifetime use, 9% recent use  
2 days (SA, WA, QLD)

91% swallowed, 4% smoked and 3% snorted

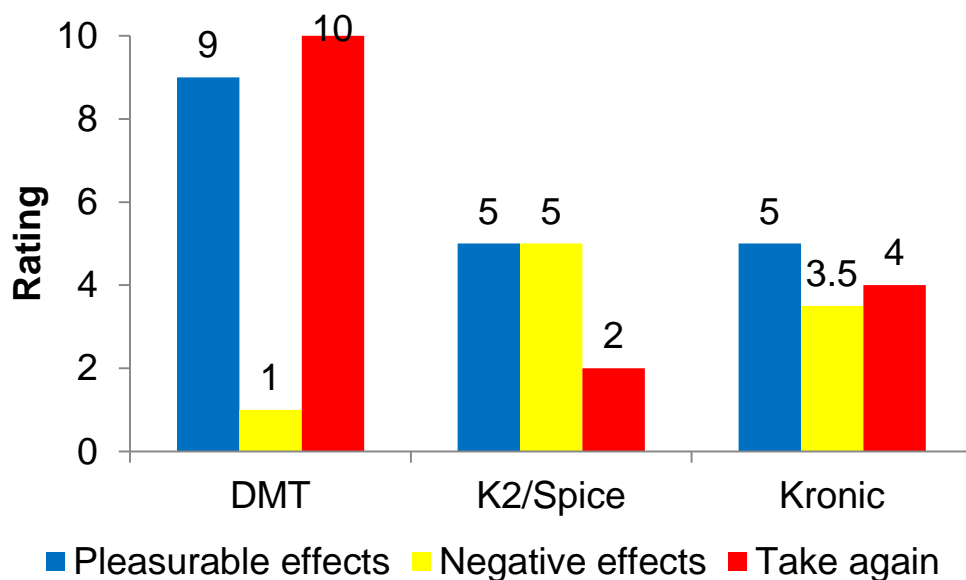
It was sought by 54% of participants and offered to 46% of participants

\$15-\$30 per blotter, \$20-\$25 per pill

Last source included: friend (53%), dealer (28%) and online (17%)

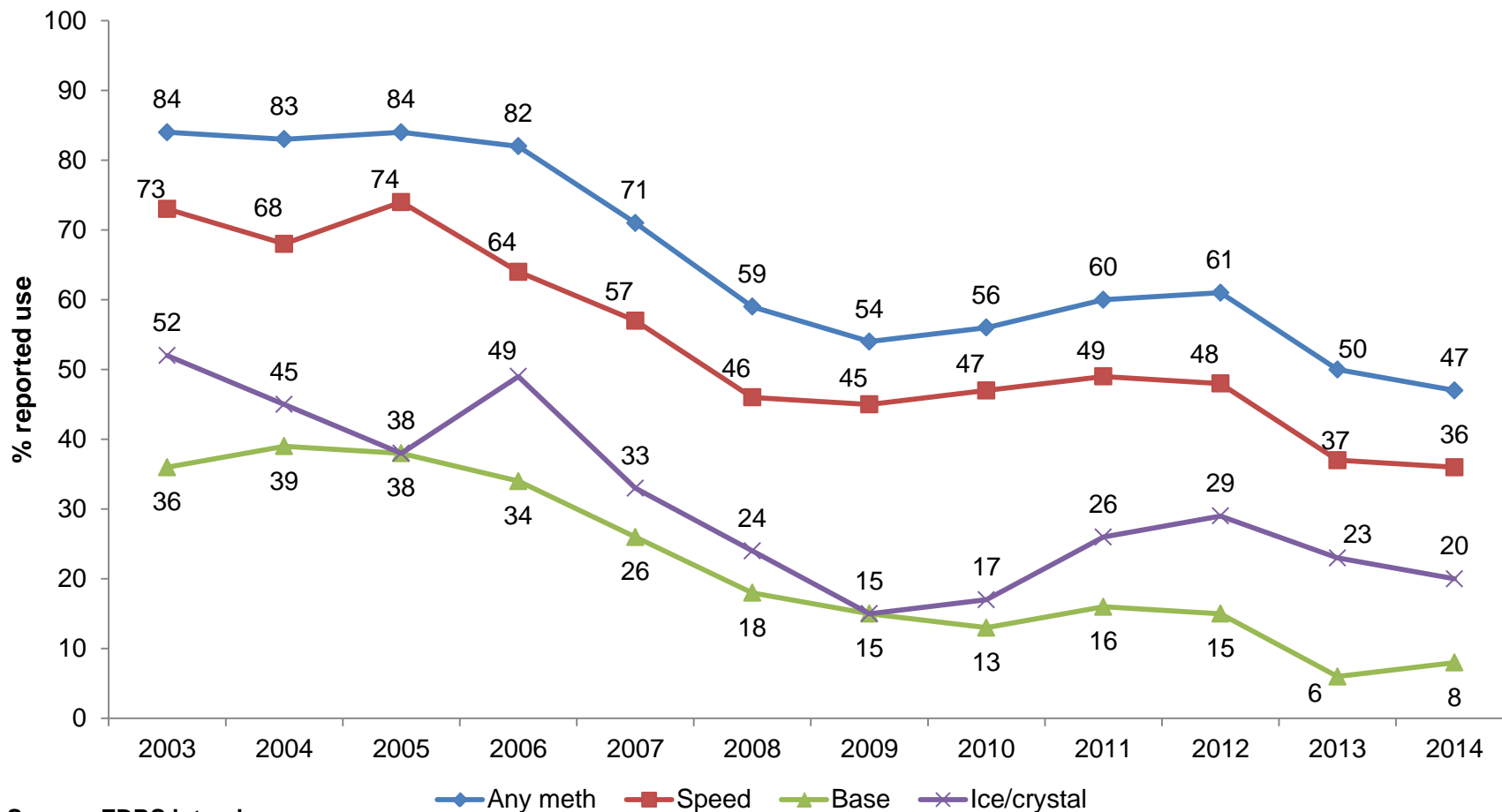
# Synthetic cannabis

- Decrease in use particularly of Kronic
- Days of use still low at 2.5 days (last 6 months)
- Likeability ratings were low for synthetic cannabis in 2013
- Despite passing of law in October 2013, manufacturers still trying to get around it



'Pure Sin 3g':  
FUB-144 detected,  
MSM indicated.  
Packaging states:  
Lab certified, no  
banned chemicals,  
does not contain  
JWH-018, JWH-073,  
JWH-200, CP-47,  
497, C8-Homologue,  
AM2201, and  
MAM2201.

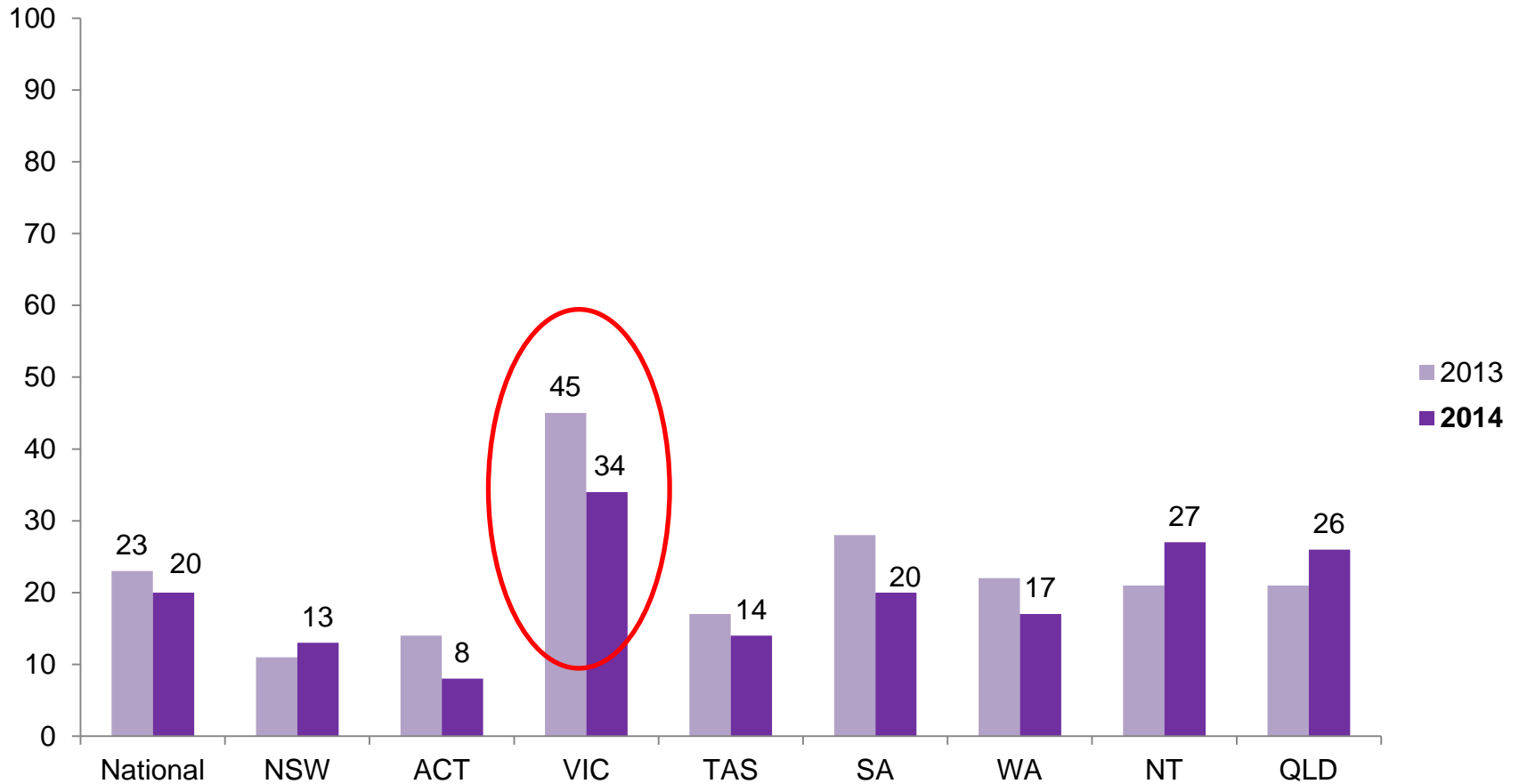
# Recent Methamphetamine use, 2003-2014



- Median days: ice/crystal 6 days, speed 3 days, base 5 days

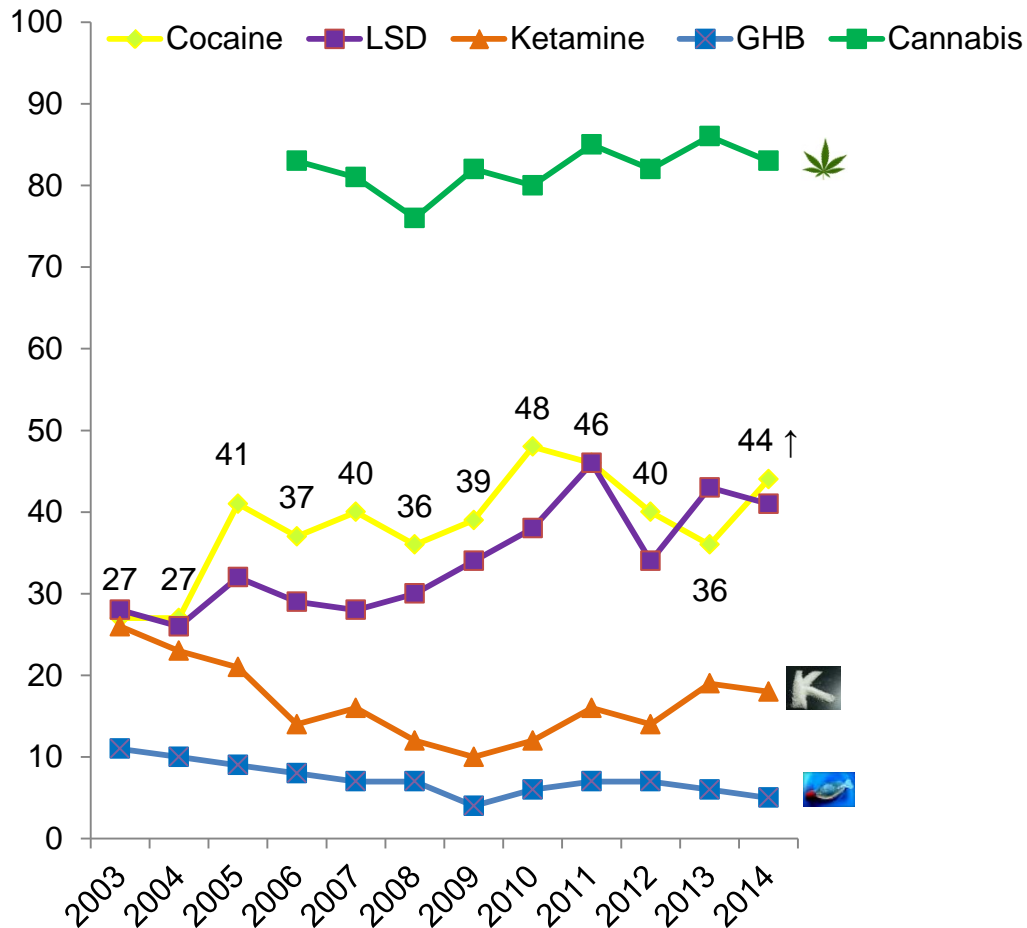


# Ice/Crystal recent use by jurisdiction, 2013-2014



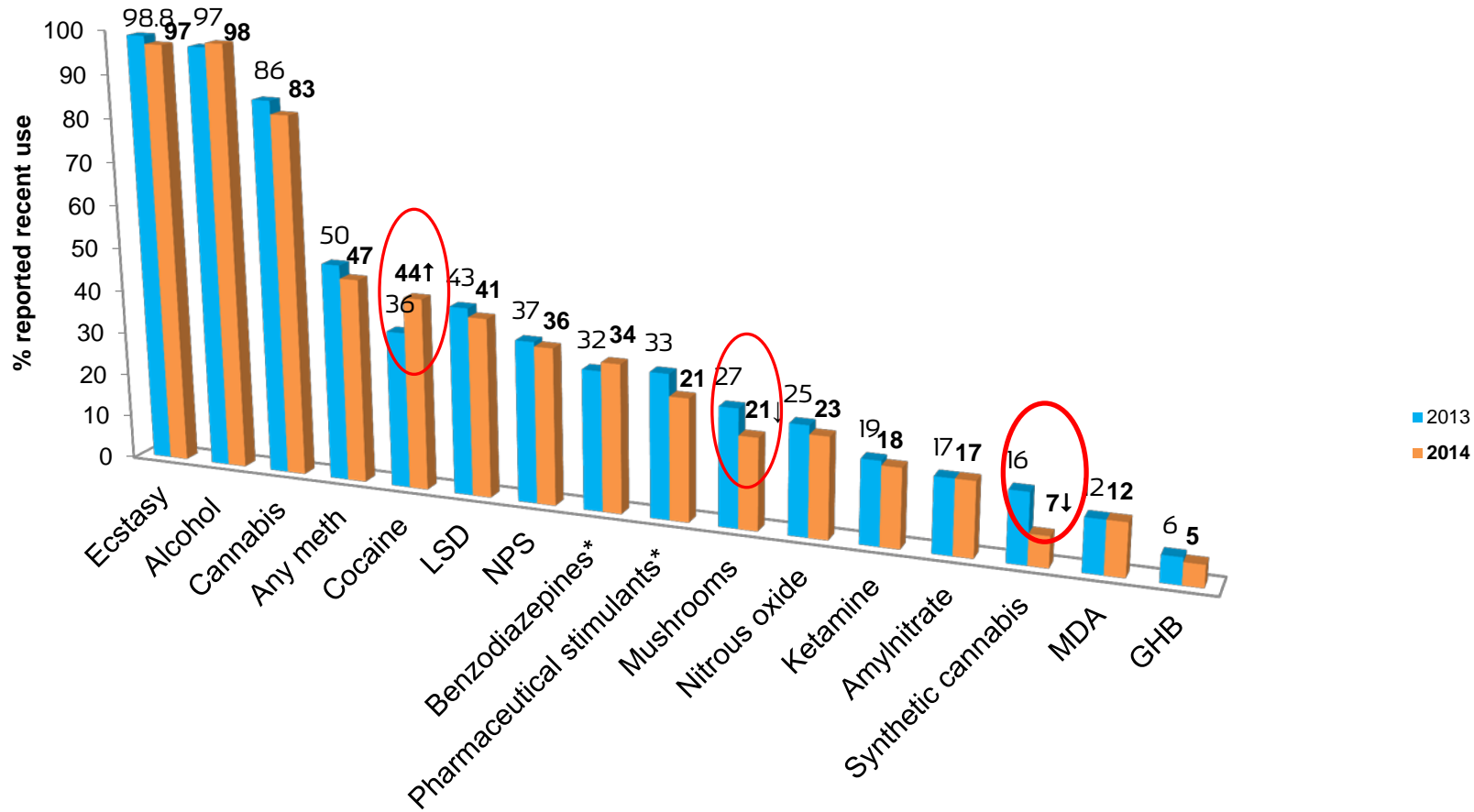
**Days of use:** QLD (12 days), ACT (8 days) , VIC (8 days)

# Related drug use trends, 2014



- Cannabis stable on all fronts
- Cocaine has increased in recent use, no change in frequency or market characteristics. Indicators appear stable (values marked)
- LSD issue of mistaken identity with NBOME and harms associated. QLD highest use, days of use low.
- Ketamine recent use nationally stable – recent use in VIC is high. Days of use low.
- GHB recent use still low, highest in VIC and NSW. Days of use low.

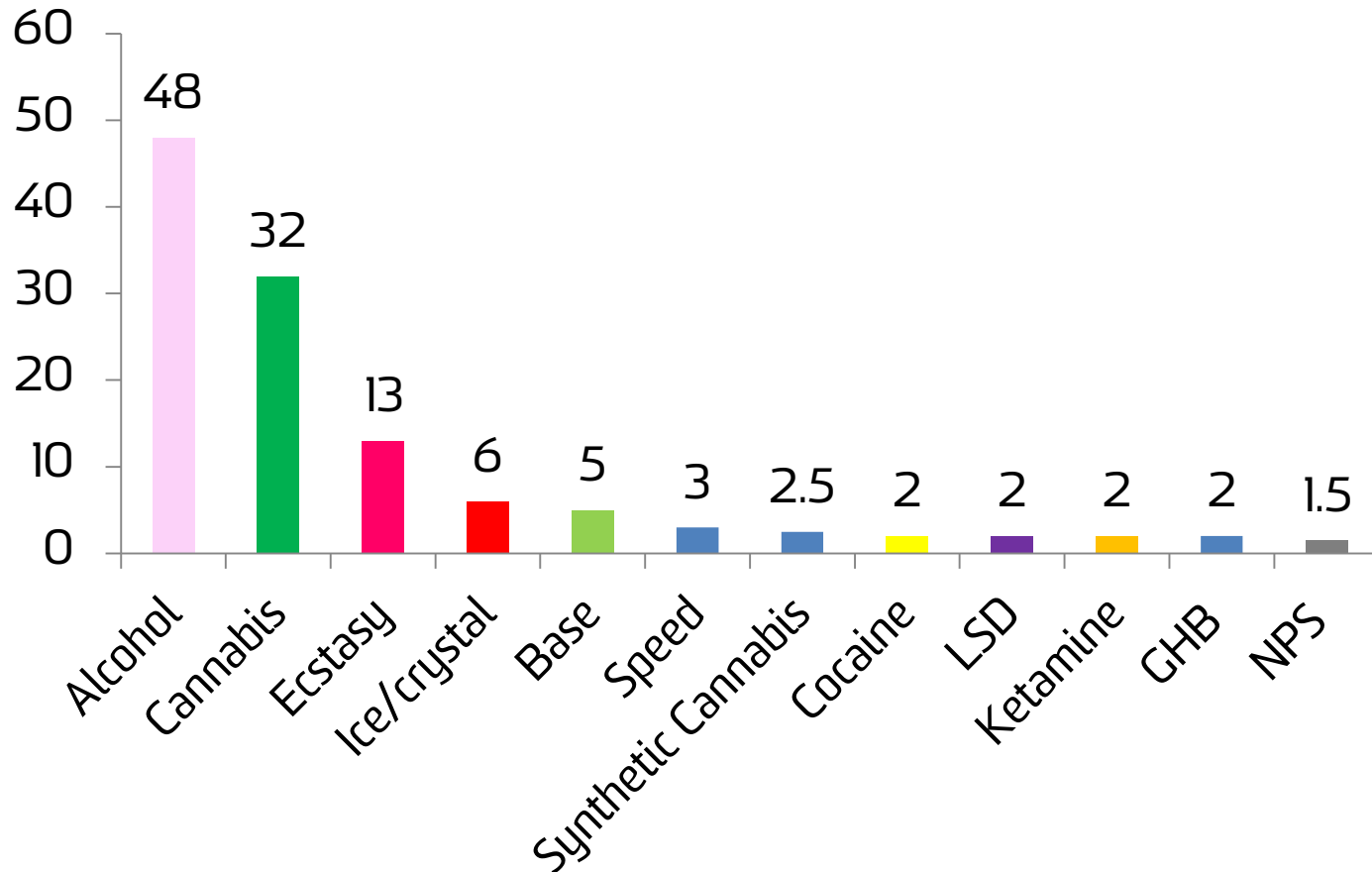
# Snapshot summary of recent use, 2013-2014



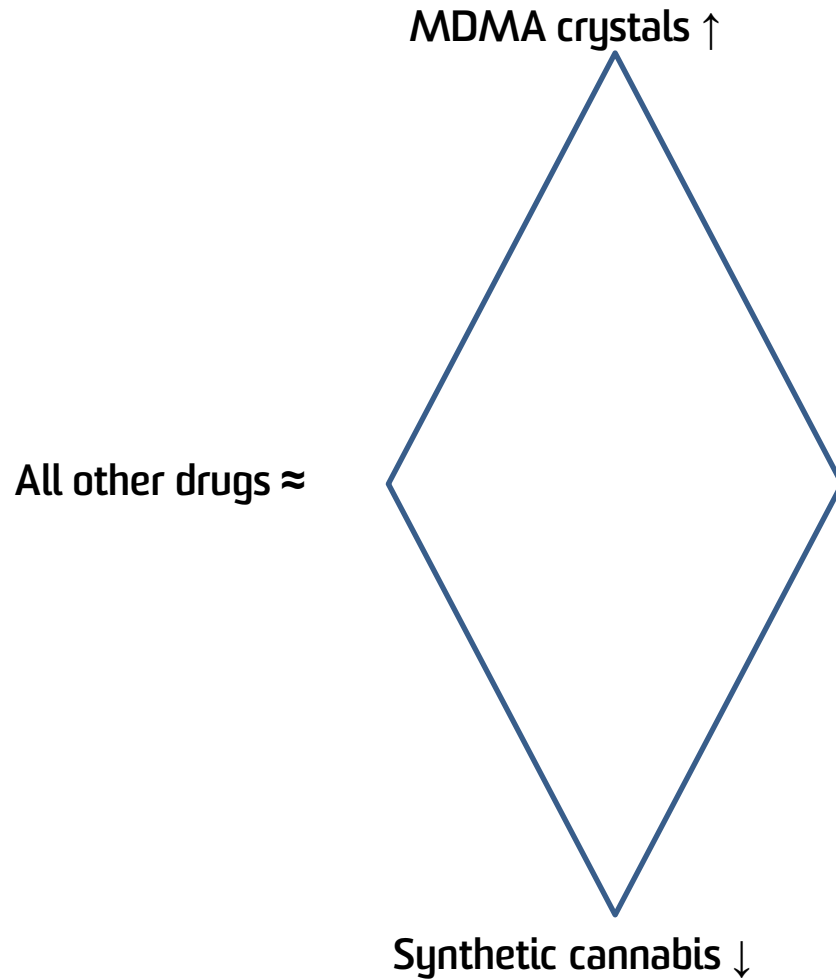
Source: EDRS interviews

\* includes licit and illicit use

# Snapshot days of use RPU, 2014



# Summary: Key messages



# Acknowledgments

Study participants

Agencies assisting with recruitment



Key experts

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