

How does the drug problem vary, and how is it changing?

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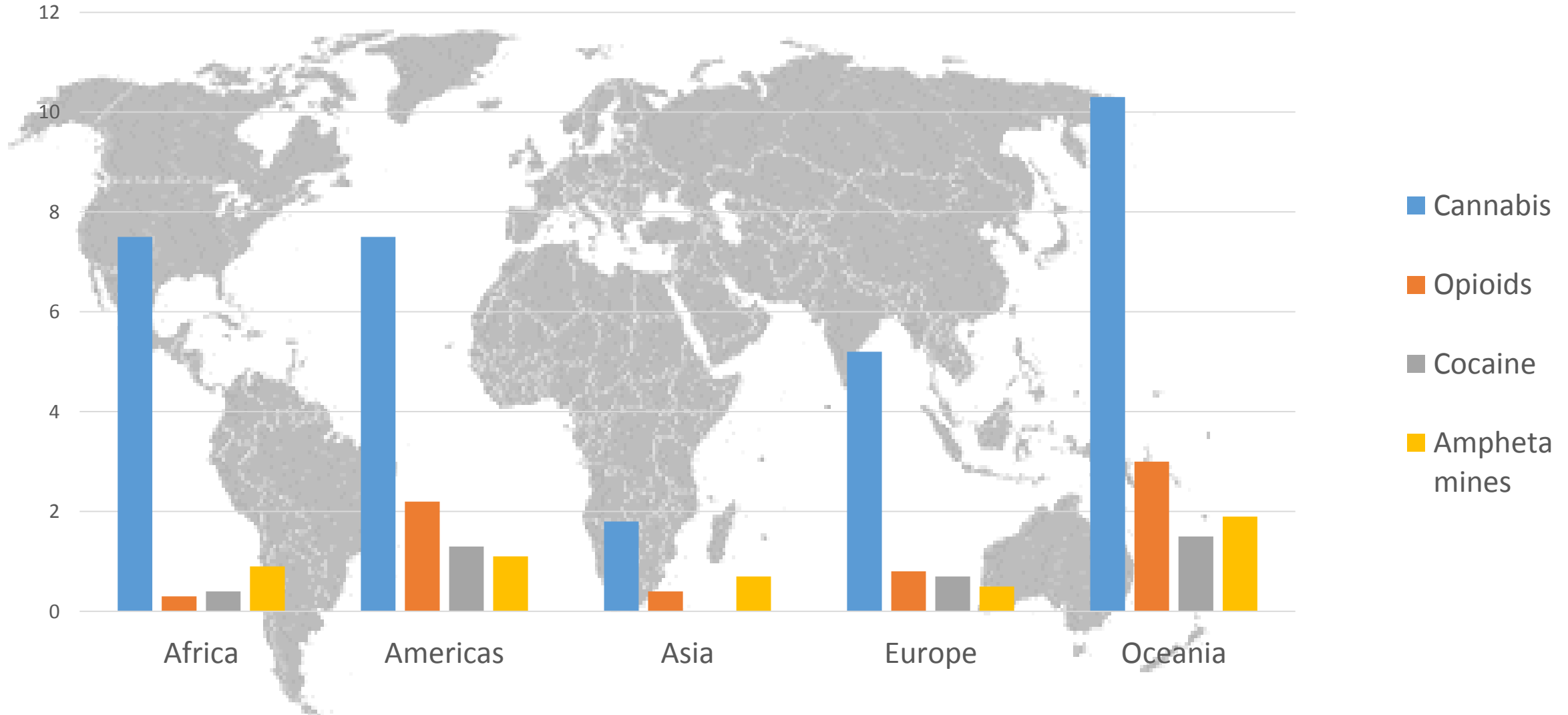
Drugs

- Amphetamines
- Cannabis
- Cocaine
- Hallucinogens
- Hypnotics
- Inhalants
- Opioids
- Sedatives



Drug use

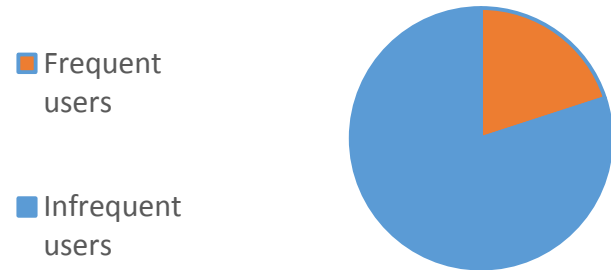
Past year prevalence any use



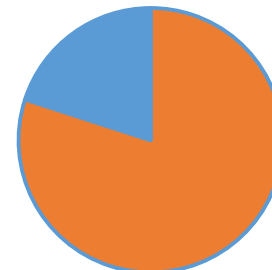
Source: UNODC World Drug Report 2017

Problematic drug use

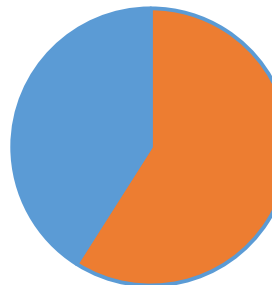
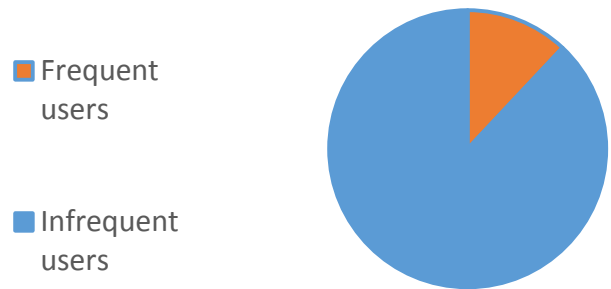
Distribution of users



Distribution of consumption by user groups



Marijuana



Prescription drugs with abuse potential

High risk drug use

- Injection

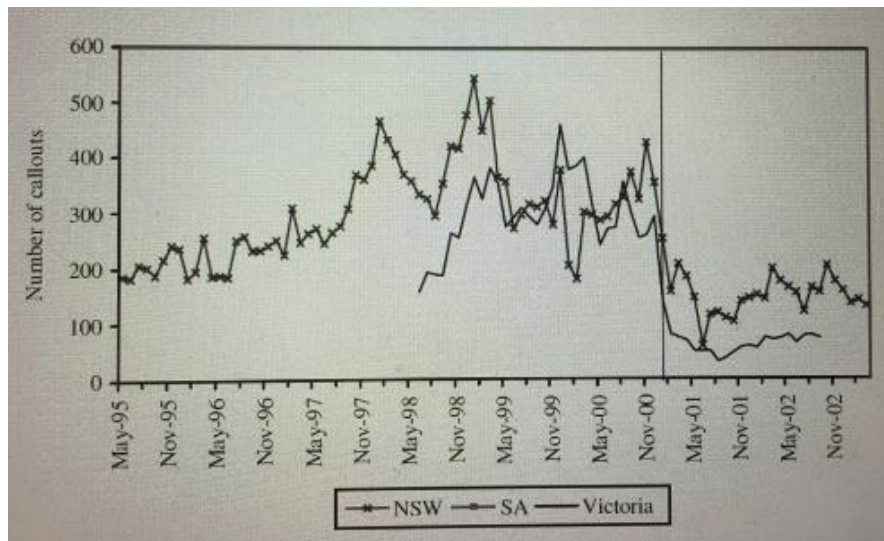
- Increased risk of overdose and infections
- Prevalence of PWID varies considerably
 - Higher in some Eastern European countries
 - Lower in most African and South Asian countries

- Poly drug use

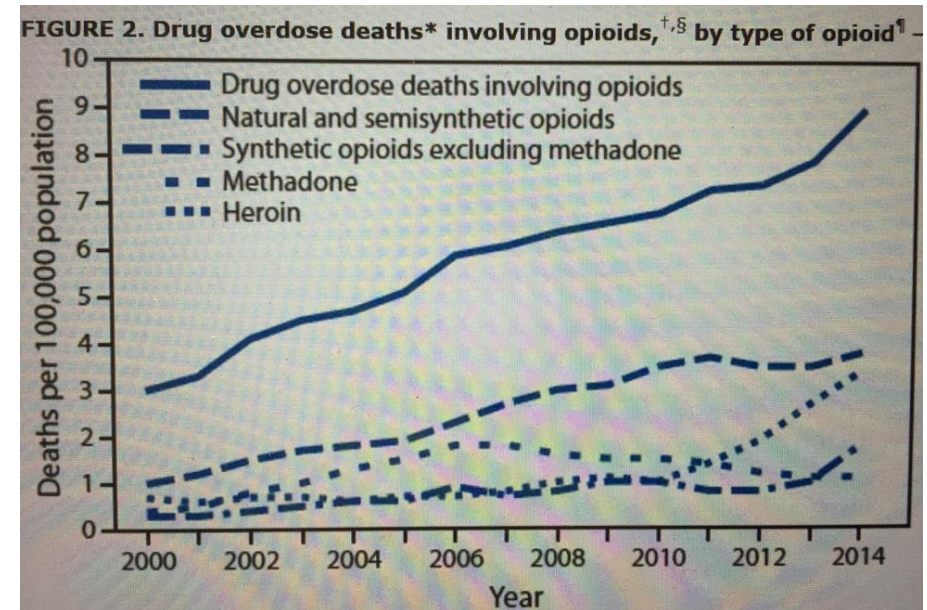
- Prevalent among problem drug users
- Concomitant use of different drugs may increase risk

Trends in drug use and harm

- May reflect
 - Price and availability changes
 - Political and societal changes



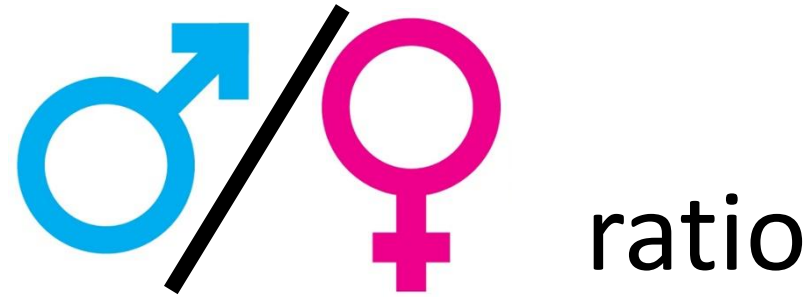
Australia 2001: Sudden decrease in heroin availability,
-> increase in price and decrease in purity



USA 2011-2014: Increase in heroin availability and
decrease in price & increased availability of fentanyl

Sources: Degenhart et al., 2005; Rudd et al., 2016

Gender differences



- Youth drug use
 - Europe, North America
- Adult illicit drug use
- Prescription drug use
- Problem drug use
 - Europe, North America, Australia
 - Various LAMI countries

1.4

3

< 1

2-5

higher

Age differences

- Occasional drug use concentrated among youth and young adults
- Problem drug use mostly among young to middle age adults
- Mean age of PWID has increased
 - Australia, Norway
 - Declining rates of initiation
 - Longer continuation of use
 - Later onset of problematic use

Drug use careers

- Initiation often in adolescence
- Most do not progress to problem use
- Cannabis as gateway drug?
 - Variable sequencing
 - Causality?
- Problem drug use careers
 - Few long term studies
 - High mortality

Conclusions

- Research mainly from limited number of affluent countries
- Significant differences in extent of drug use and problem use across countries and regions
 - Reflecting variations in drug markets, legislation, and political, economic and social conditions

Thank you!

