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Methamphetamine in the Czech Republic

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Structure of the presentation

- History of meth use in Czech Republic
- Epidemiology
 - Key and core indicators
 - Specifics of Czech meth use/rs
- Recent trends
- Future?



History of Czech meth (PERVITIN)

- CzechoSlovak drug use no distinct from rest of Europe till WWII
- Iron curtain after 1948 cut off people, and commodities – incl. psychotropic drugs
- Use of pharmaceuticals with/out alcohol
- 1960s: dex/phenmetrazine and other stimulants
- 1970s: simple formula of production of meth (PERVITIN) reinvented, probably in Prague, and quickly widespread into the Czech part of the federation
- Self-supporting „squads“ sharing supplying functions and production know-how as typical phenomenon of pervitin production and consumption



History (cont.)

- 1984: estimated 30,000 „non-alcohol addicts“ in Czechoslovakia; pervitin clearly prevailing
- 1986: 1890 people arrested because of „drug crimes,“ only 6 because of „drug sale“
- 1990s and later: home-made opioids pushed out by heroin and its hierarchically organized suppliers quickly, but not so for meth... (so far)



Prevalence in GP and PDU estimates (for country of 10 mil.)

- 18-64 of age, 2004:
 - Lifetime prevalence: 2.5% (22% THC)
 - Last year prevalence: 0.9% (9.3% THC)
- ESPAD (16agers), 2007:
 - LTP: 3.5% (45.1% cannabinoids)
 - LYP: 3.1% (34.8% cannabinoids)
- Prevalence of problem use of pervitin, 2007:
 - 21,000 meth PDUs out of all 31,000 PDUs (e.g. 2/3)
 - stable in last 10 years
- Increasing prevalence of meth use in recreational setting

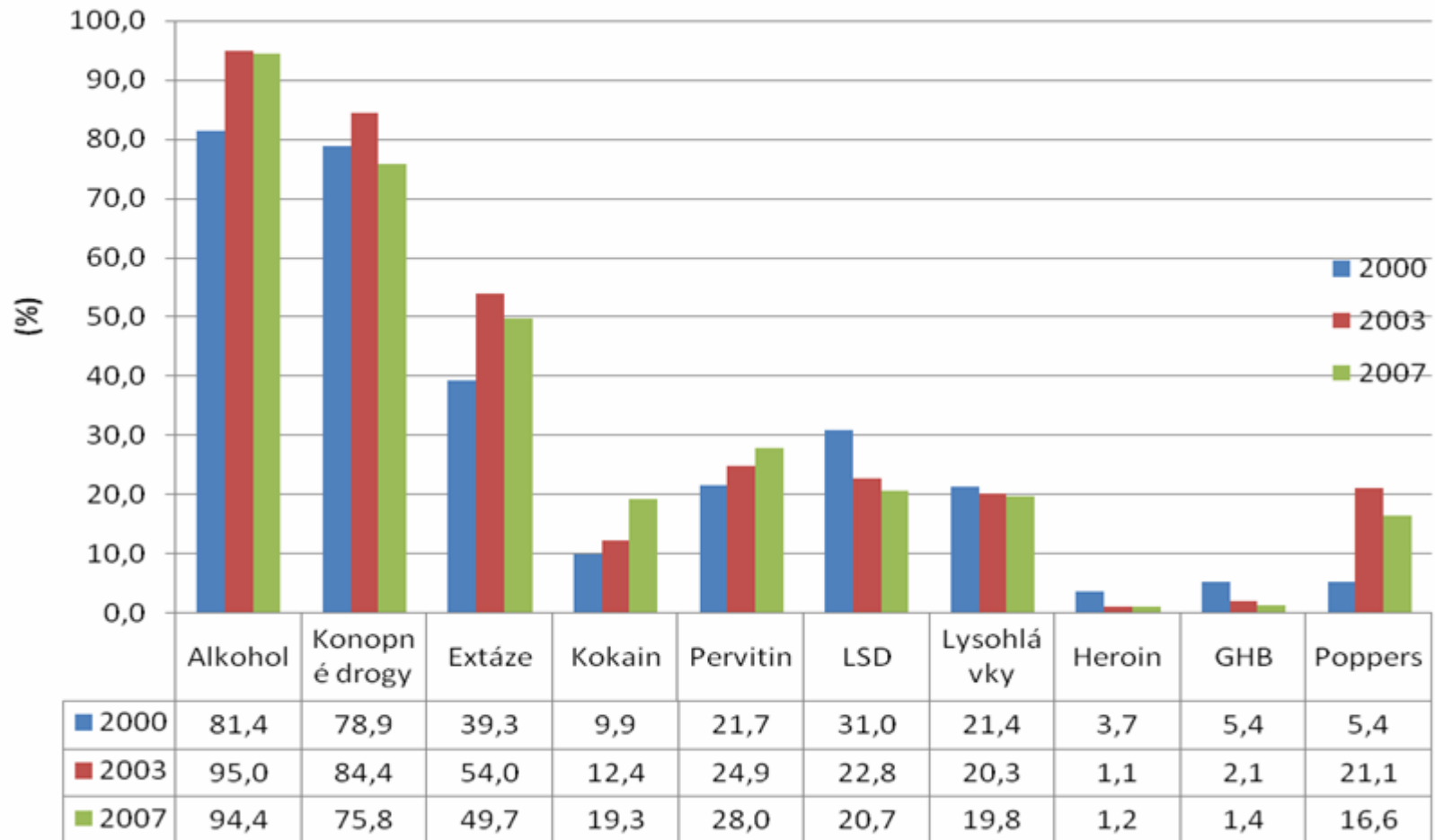


PDU estimates – trend (MM)

Year	Total number of problem drug users		Opiate users		Pervitin users		Injecting drug users	
	Abs.	Per 1,000 persons aged 15-64	Abs.	Per 1,000 persons aged 15-64	Abs.	Per 1,000 persons aged 15-64	Abs.	Per 1,000 persons aged 15-64
2002	35,100	4.89	13,300	1.85	21,800	3.04	31,700	4.41
2003	29,000	4.02	10,200	1.41	18,800	2.61	27,800	3.86
2004	30,000	4.14	9,700	1.34	20,300	2.80	27,000	3.73
2005	31,800	4.37	11,300	1.55	20,500	2.82	29,800	4.10
2006	30,200	4.13	10,500	1.44	19,700	2.69	29,000	3.97
2007	30,900	4.20	10,000	1.36	20,900	2.84	29,500	4.01

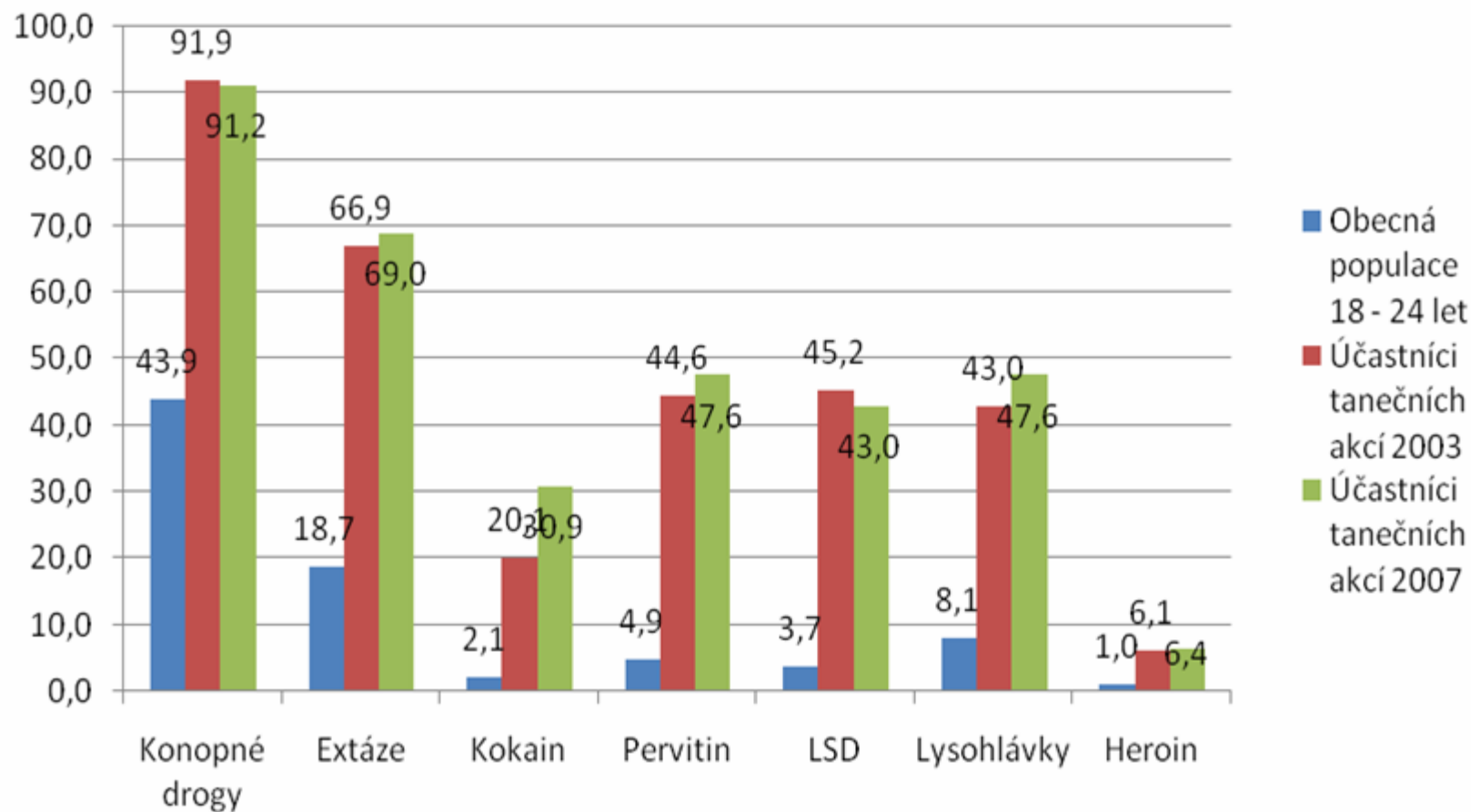


Meth use in recreational setting – last 12M prevalence





Meth use in recr. setting/general population



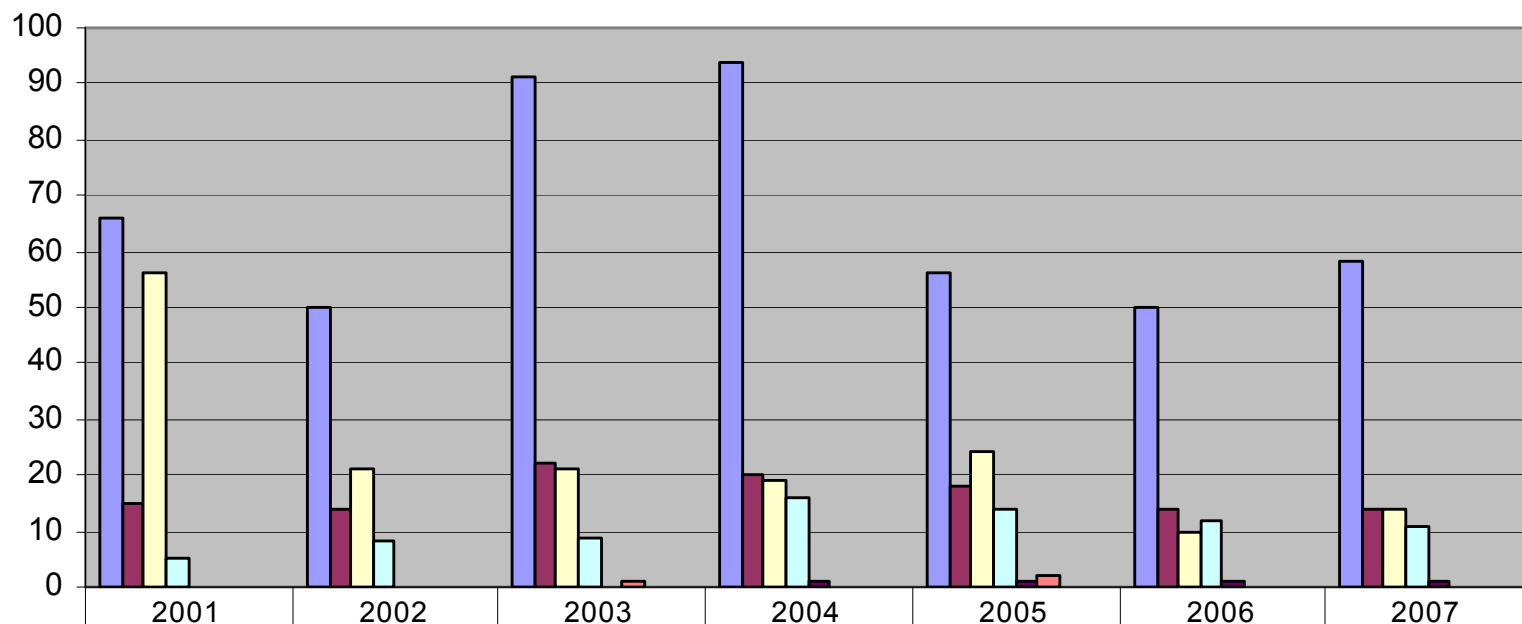


Meth and DRIDs

- 35% of injecting methamphetamine users anti-HCV positive (no difference to opioids)
- HIV (2007): 0.02% prevalence in Czech IDUs, no details about drugs known



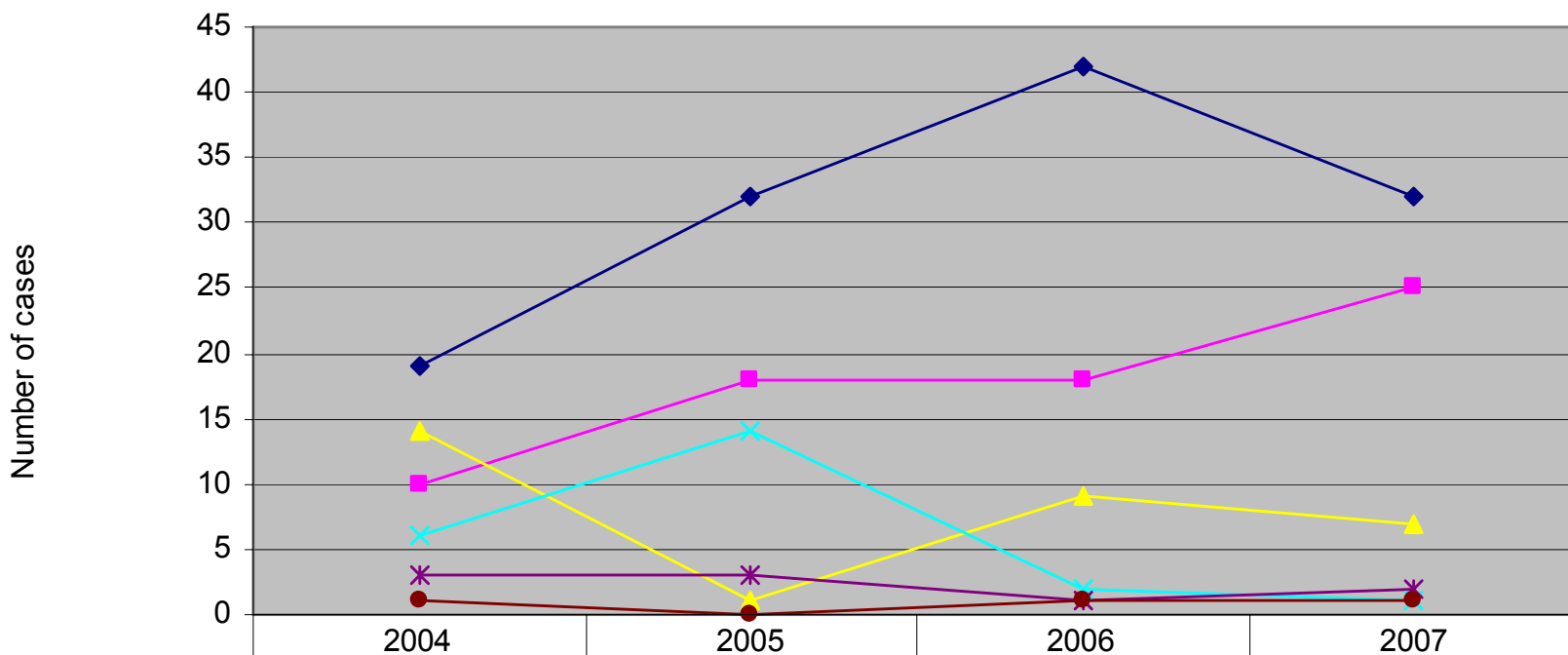
Direct DRDs in CR in 2001 - 2007



	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
■ Benzodiazepines	66	50	91	94	56	50	58
■ Inhalants	15	14	22	20	18	14	14
■ Opiates/opioids	56	21	21	19	24	10	14
■ Amphetamines (pervitin)	5	8	9	16	14	12	11
■ Cocaine	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
■ MDMA	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
■ Hallucinogens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
■ Cannabis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



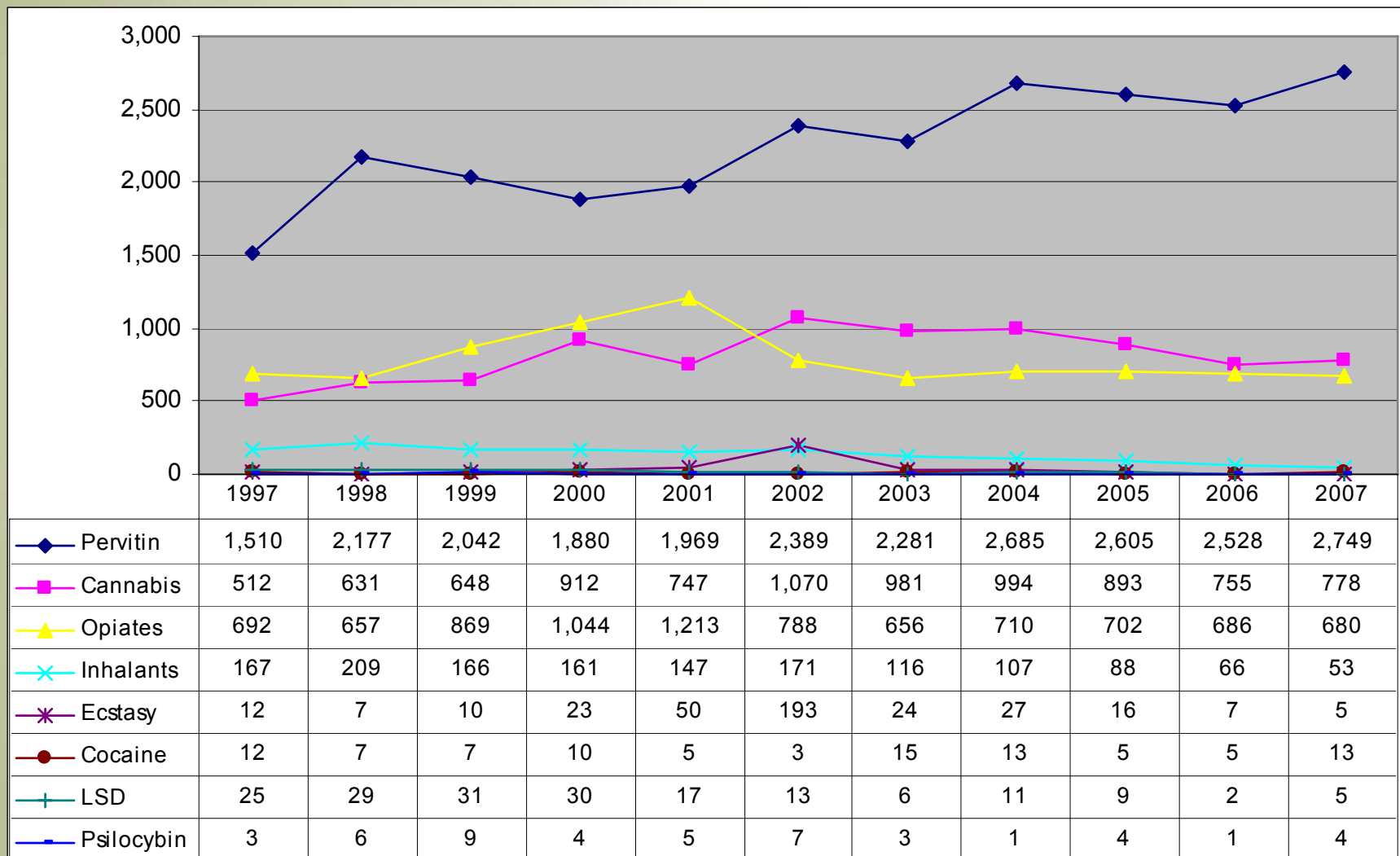
Indirect DRDs in CR in 2004-2007



◆ Pervitin	19	32	42	32
■ THC	10	18	18	25
▲ Opiates/opioids	14	1	9	7
✕ Inhalants	6	14	2	1
* MDMA	3	3	1	2
● Cocaine	1	0	1	1

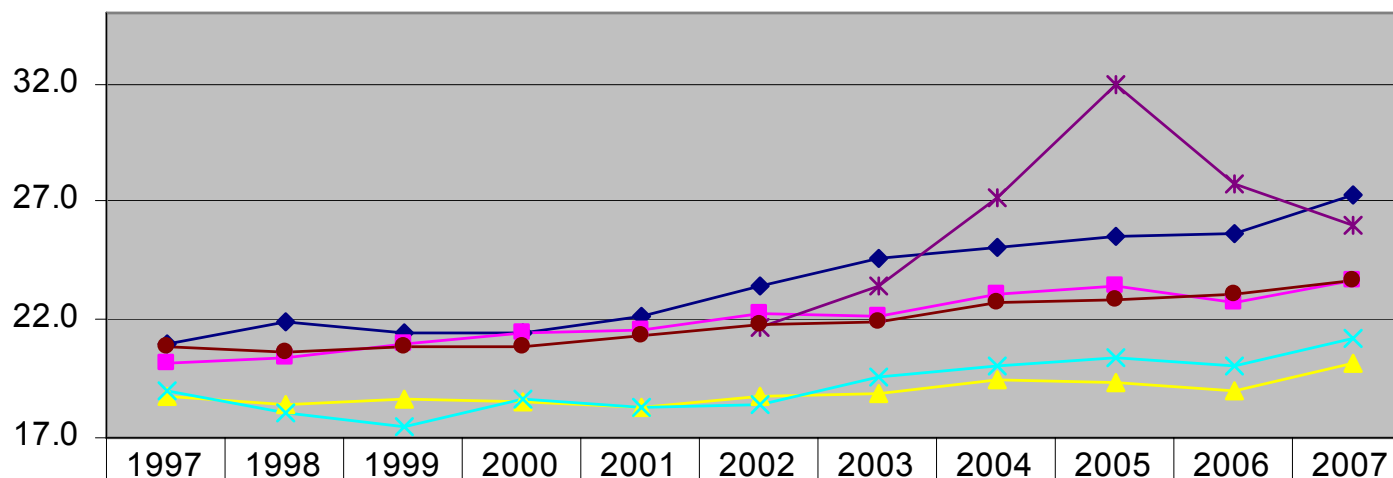


First treatment demands





First treatment demands – mean age



◆ Heroin	21.0	21.9	21.5	21.5	22.1	23.4	24.6	25.1	25.5	25.7	27.3
■ Pervitin	20.2	20.4	21.0	21.4	21.6	22.3	22.2	23.1	23.4	22.7	23.7
▲ Cannabis	18.7	18.4	18.6	18.5	18.3	18.7	18.9	19.5	19.3	19.0	20.1
✕ Inhalants	19.0	18.1	17.5	18.6	18.3	18.4	19.6	20.0	20.4	20.0	21.2
✱ Cocaine + crack						21.7	23.4	27.2	32.0	27.8	26.0
● All drugs	20.8	20.6	20.8	20.9	21.3	21.8	21.9	22.7	22.9	23.1	23.7

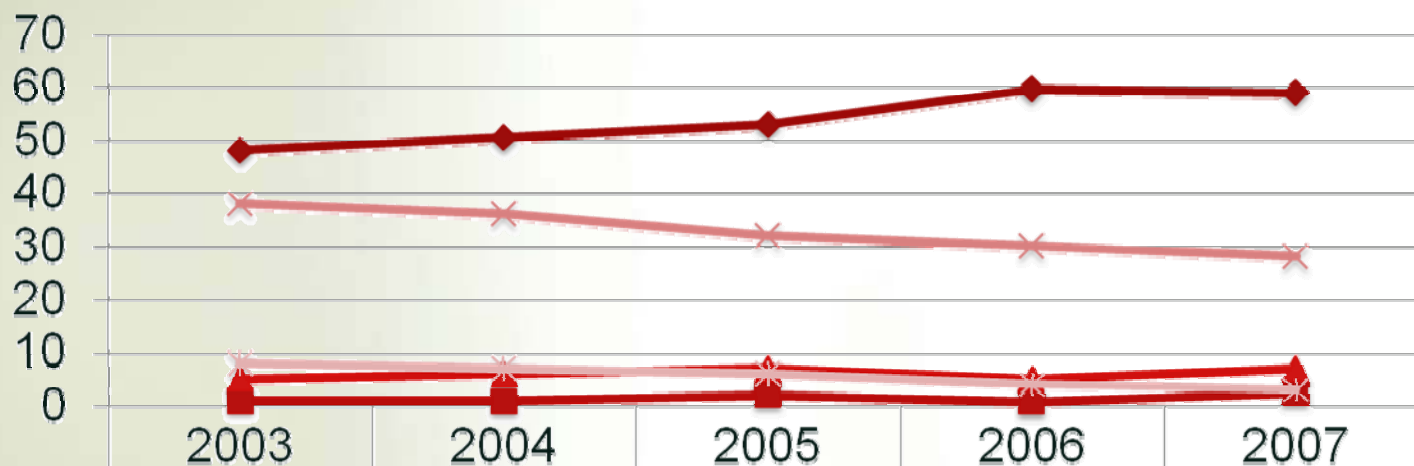


Market/s and law enforcement

- Estimated annual consumption (2005): 3,150 kg, of which 160 kg consumed in recreational settings, almost 3,000 kg by PDUs
- Price about 1000 CZK per 1 g *stable* for last 15 years, as well as purity
- Seizures: 6,15 kg in 374 seizure cases in 2007
- 1178 „meth arrests“ in 2007 (59% of all drug arrests)
- 593 (49% of all drug cases) sentenced in the same year



Meth arrests (in %)



◆ Pervitin (%)	48	50	53	60	59
■ Cocaine (%)	1	1	2	1	3
▲ Heroin (%)	5	6	7	5	7
✕ Cannabinoids (%)	38	36	32	30	28
* Other drugs (%)	8	7	6	4	3



Market - trends

- Police provides isolated reports on export of Czech meth and/or „cooks“ persistent from mid 1990s
- In 2007 and 2008: the first cases of „manufacture“ meth production in Czech history – related to increase in recreational setting?
- Still small scale kitchen laboratories prevail (cca 400 annually, increasing trend)
- Use of pseudoephedrine from over-the-counter medicines as a precursor for meth production increased in last 3-4 years
 - restriction of sale to 1 package a week or even prescription of medicines containing pseudoephedrine discussed currently in the Parliament







Summary

- Historically and up to now, meth use is NOT concentrated into specific social, sexual NOR ethnic minority
- Stable number of problem meth users despite substantial social changes in 90s
- Increasing in night-life / dance culture setting recently
- Changes in use and availability of precursors (ephedrine/pseudoephedrine)



Future in Europe?

- Increase in use in Baltic countries, Ukraine, and Caucasus probably unrelated to Czech situation
 - Different, less sophisticated patterns of production
 - Methcathinone, never used in Czech Republic, almost as frequent as methamphetamine
 - But popularity increases, and demand often ignites supply
- Early 2000s reports about „Fliegersalz“ from Austria and „Czecho“ from Germany remain rather isolated
 - Cocaine as competing stimulant in structured and organized market
 - But black markets are turbulent and drug with no need of plant precursors and many ways of production has is attractive for businessmen



See also, e.g.,

- Zábranský, T. (2007). Methamphetamine in the Czech Republic. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 37(1), 155-180.
- Miovský, M. (2007). Changing Patterns of Drug Use in the Czech Republic During the Post-Communist Era: A Qualitative Study. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 37(1), 73-102.
- Griffiths, P., Mravcik, V., Lopez, D., & Klempova, D. (2008). Quite a lot of smoke but very limited fire - the use of methamphetamine in Europe. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 27, 236-242.
- Mravčík, V., Chomynová, P., Orlíková, B., Škrdlantová, E., Pešek, R., Miovská, L., et al. (2008). *Výroční zpráva o stavu ve věcech drog v České republice v roce 2007 [The Czech Republic - Drug Situation 2007] (1st ed.)*. Praha: Úřad vlády ČR [Office of the Czech Government]. <http://www.focalpoint.cz>



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Thanks 😊

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