



QUICKTAKE

DRUG ABUSE IN MALAYSIA

It has been 35 years since drug abuse was declared a national security problem in Malaysia in the 1980s. Back then, heroin use was the number one challenge for drug policy makers.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO DRUG POLICY MAKERS FACE TODAY?

1. Lack of clarity in the classification of drugs

 <p>Opiates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heroin • Morphine 	 <p>Marijuana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hashish 	 <p>ATS* & Meth-amphetamines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed • Meth, Chalk, Yaba • Syabu, Ice • Ecstasy 	 <p>Benzo-diazepines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diazepam (Valium), Alprazolam (Xanax), Lorazepam (Ativan) 	 <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kratom • Inhalants (glue) • Depressants • Hallucinogens 	 <p>These are under Poisons Act 1952 not Dangerous Drugs Act 1952**</p> <p>**glue is unregulated</p>
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Source: Maklumat Dadah 2017

*Amphetamine-type Stimulants

2. Different sentencing for the same offence depending on the authority who made the arrest

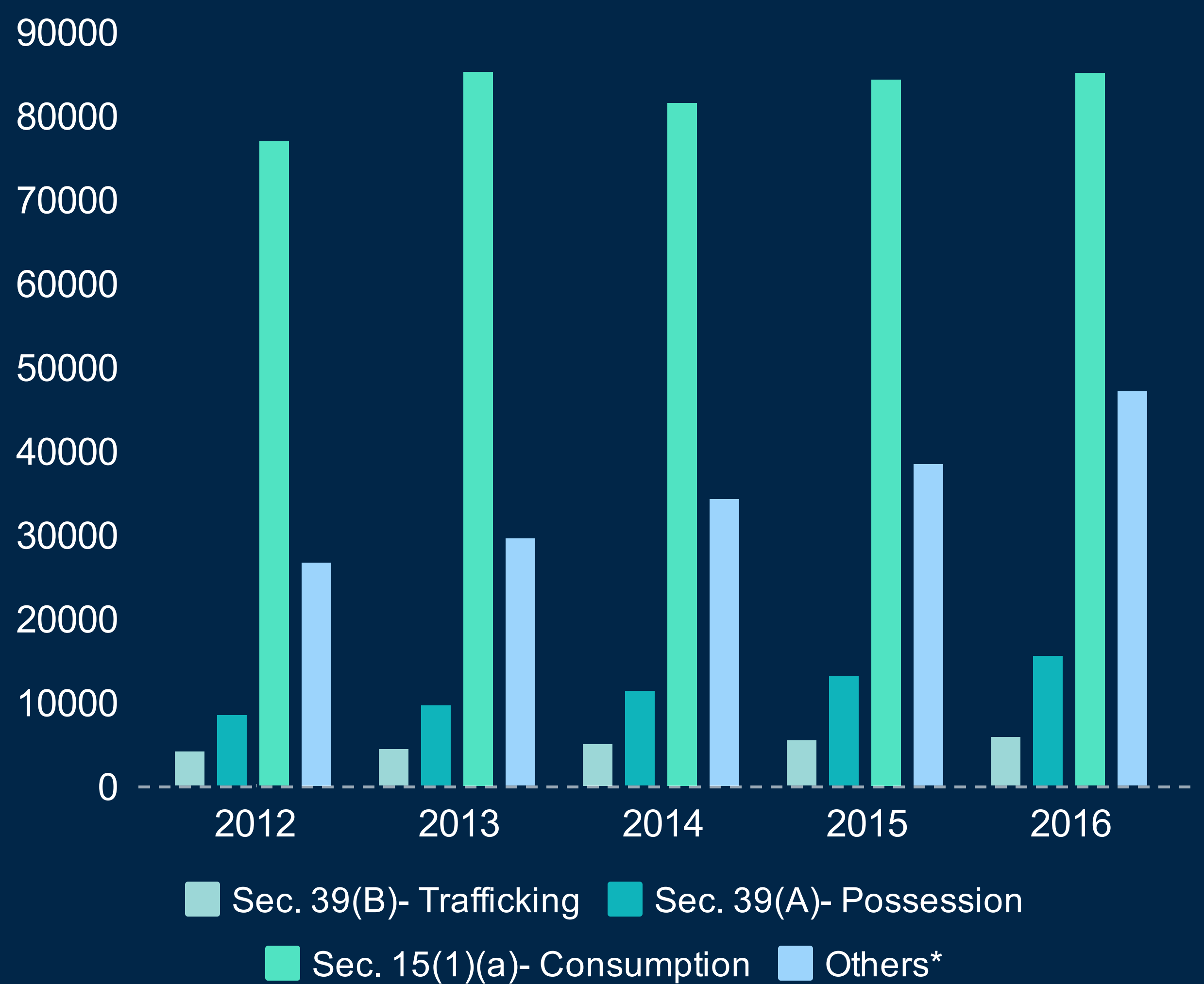
<p>Incarceration</p> <p>Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM)</p> <p>Section 15(1)(a) of Dangerous Drugs Act 1952</p>	<p>Treatment & Rehabilitation</p> <p>Agensi Anti-Dadah Kebangsaan (AADK)</p> <p>Section 6(1)(a) or Section 8(3)(a) of Drug Dependants (Treatment & Rehabilitation) Act 1983</p>	<p>Supervision</p> <p>PDRM / AADK</p> <p>Section 6(1)(b) or Section 8(3)(b) of Drug Dependants (Treatment & Rehabilitation) Act 1983</p>
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Please note that the laws listed above relate to drug use only.

3. Most drug-related arrests by PDRM are for consumption

Majority of drug-related arrests by PDRM are under Section 15(1)(a) of Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 for consumption / self-administration

Arrests by PDRM

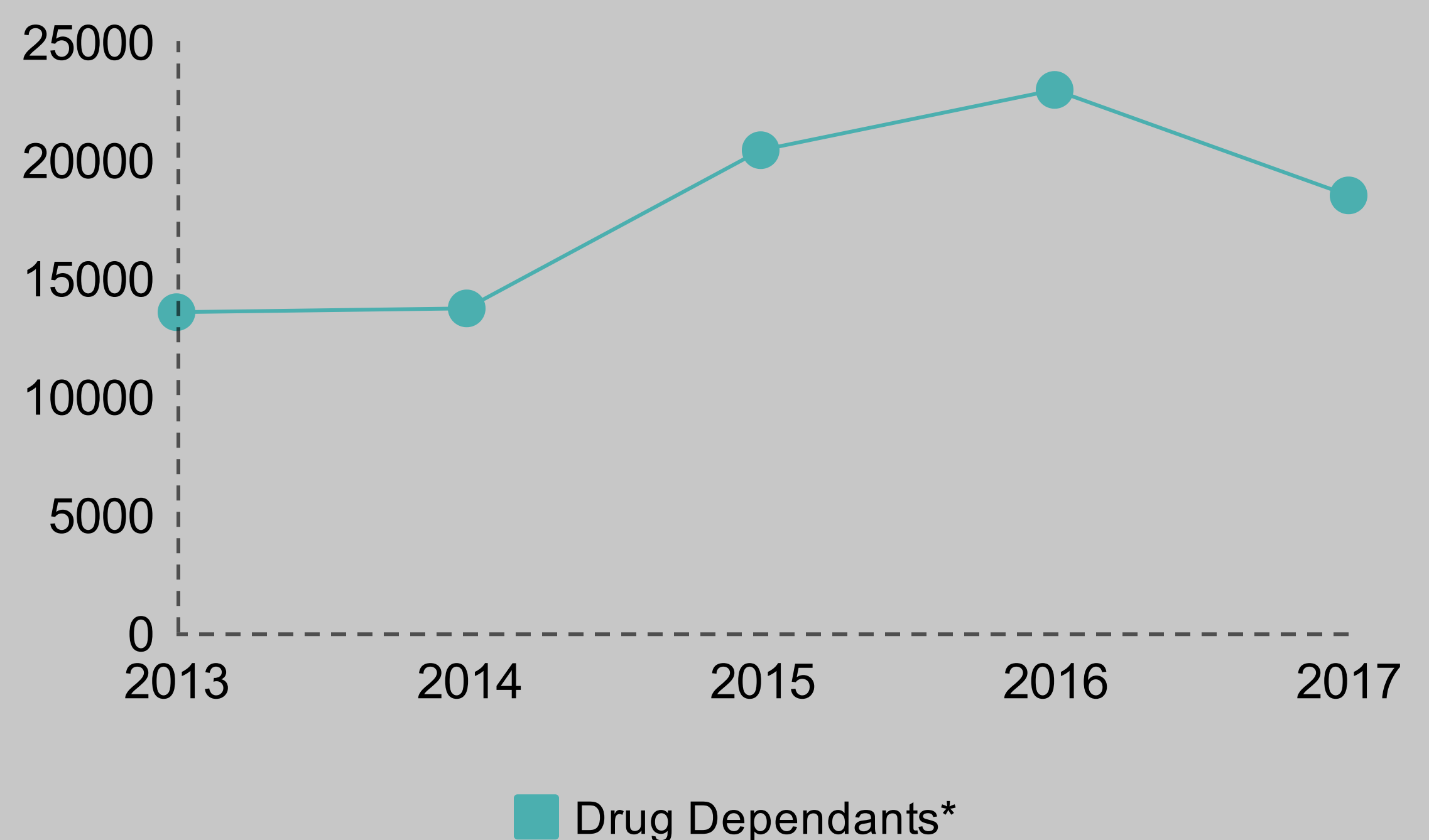


Source: Maklumat Dadah 2016

4. Number of arrests by AADK has steadily increased

AADK has witnessed a steady increase in the number of drug dependants between 2013 - 2017

Arrests by AADK



Source: Maklumat Dadah 2016

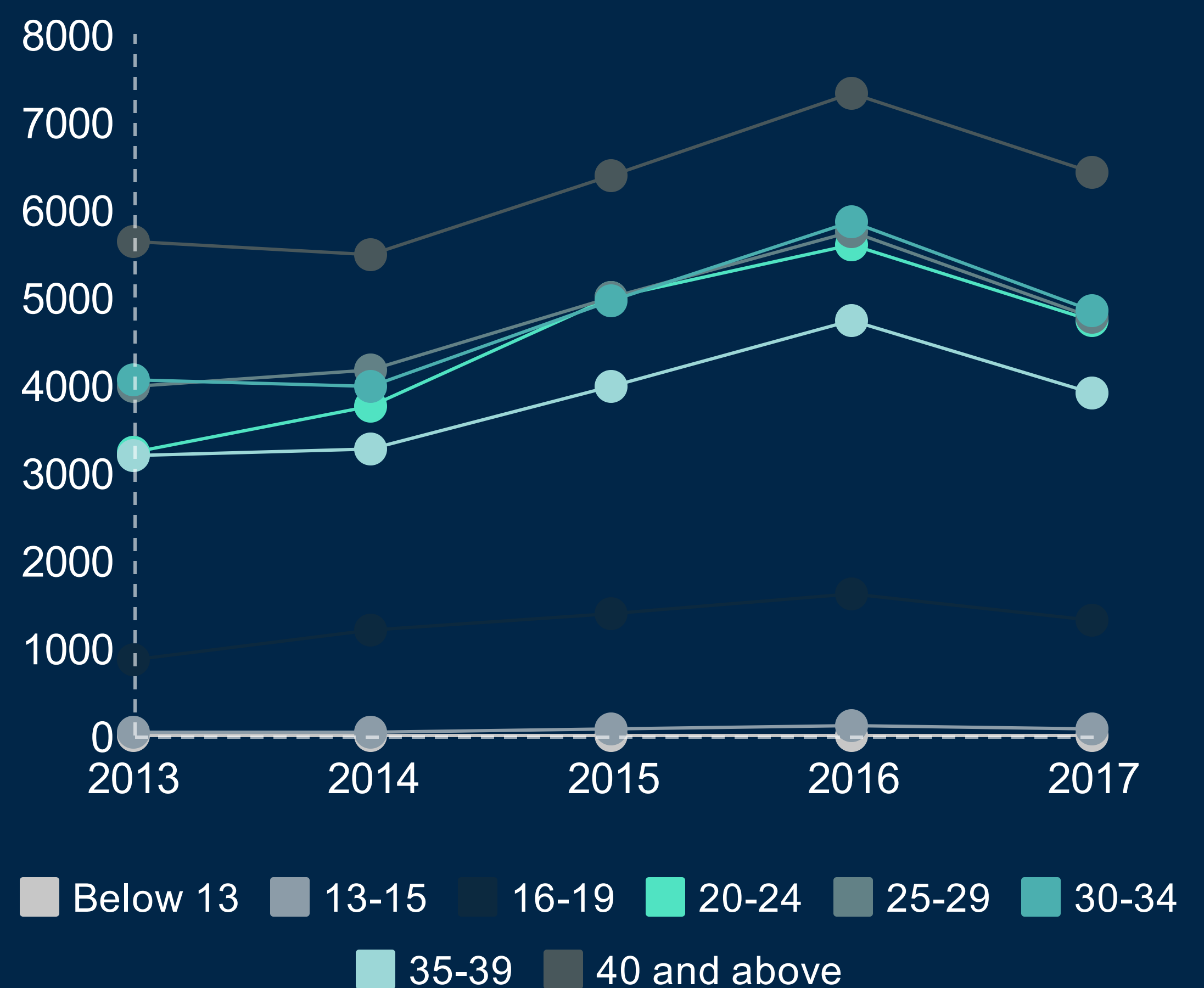


*term used by AADK is on the premise that each drug user arrested and charged by AADK has a dependence on drugs

5. There is an increase in the prevalence of drug use for almost all age groups

Prevalence of drug use has been steadily increasing over the years and is evident in almost all age groups

Prevalence of drug use by age groups



Source: Maklumat Dadah 2017

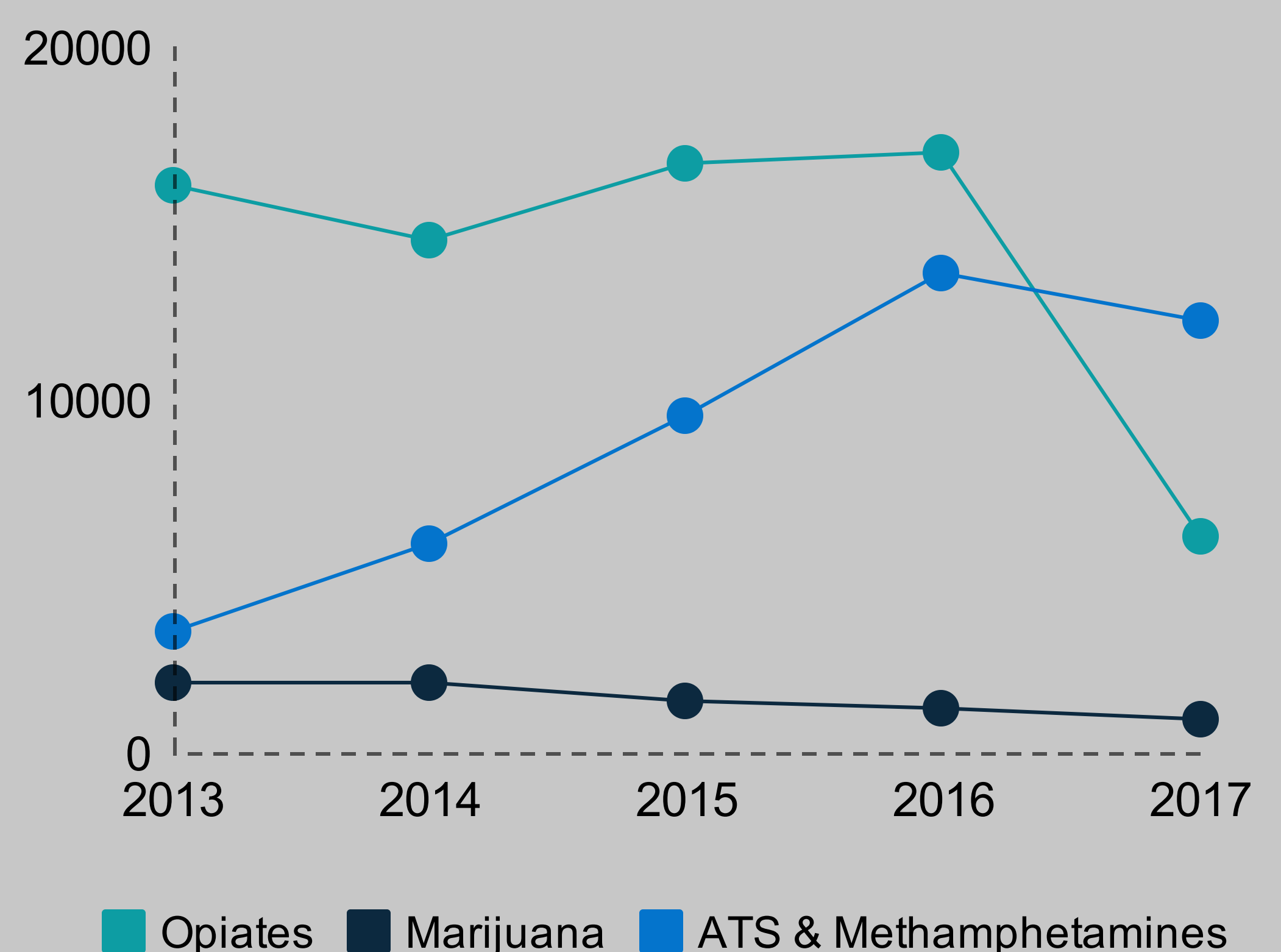


Based on National Health and Morbidity Survey 2017 on Adolescent Health, the prevalence of Form 1 to Form 5 students who had ever used drugs in their lifetime was 4.3%, which is 2.5 times higher compared to the Global School-based Student Health Survey in 2012 (1.7%).

6. Use of Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) has overtaken use of opiates

Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are increasingly becoming the main drug of choice, overtaking opiates

Types of drugs abused



Source: Maklumat Dadah 2017

7. Keeping an offender in an institution is costly



Cost of keeping an offender in prison

RM 20,690* annually



Cost of keeping an offender in compulsory rehab

RM 38,530**



Cost of keeping an offender under supervision and counselling

RM 5,340* annually

Source: Agensi Inovasi Malaysia, 2017

*estimated cost per offender
**estimated cost for two years



AADK is only legally allowed to keep an offender in their institutions for treatment and rehabilitation if the drug abused falls under the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952.



IDEAS TO ADDRESS DRUG ABUSE IN MALAYSIA



1

introduce an early warning system to monitor emergence of new drugs



4

develop professional capacity to support long term treatment



2

strengthen data collection for better estimates of drug use



5

review treatment effectiveness of court-mandated incarceration and rehabilitation



3

inform and educate to address stigma surrounding drug use and addiction

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