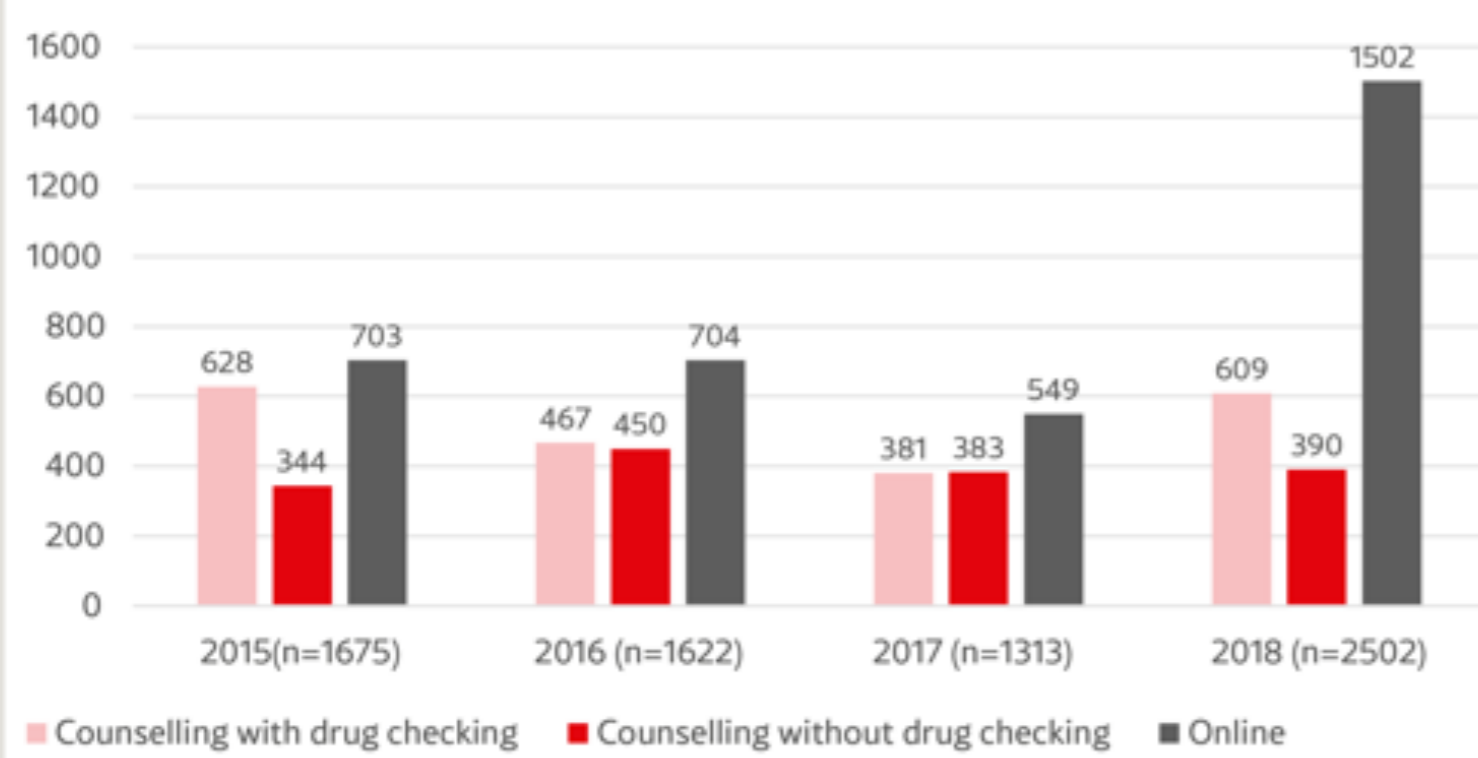


Monitoring Recreational Drug Use in Switzerland

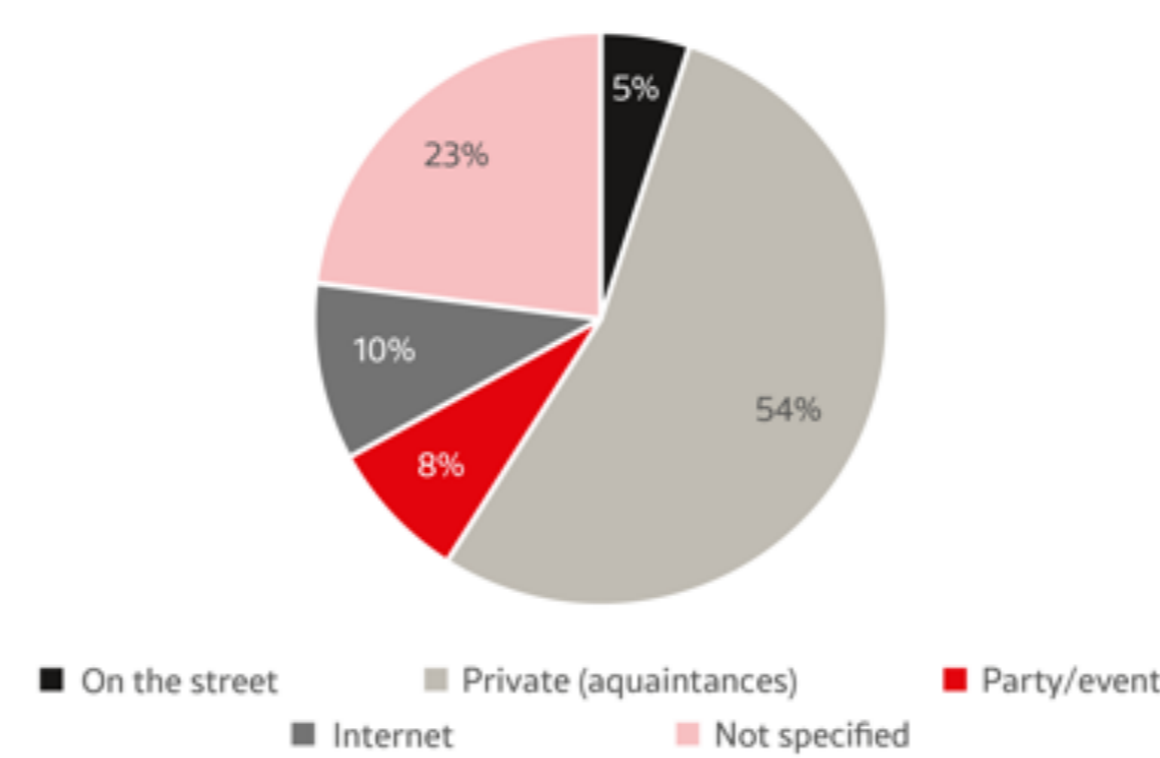
Since 2012, Infodrog has analysed non-representative data from structured interviews collected during counselling sessions with recreational drug users. The data come from all language regions of Switzerland and offer insight into the consumption realities of recreational drug users. Thanks to the acceptance-oriented attitude of the counsellors, the risk of social desirability bias is comparatively low (e.g. compared to representative telephone surveys).

Survey Setting



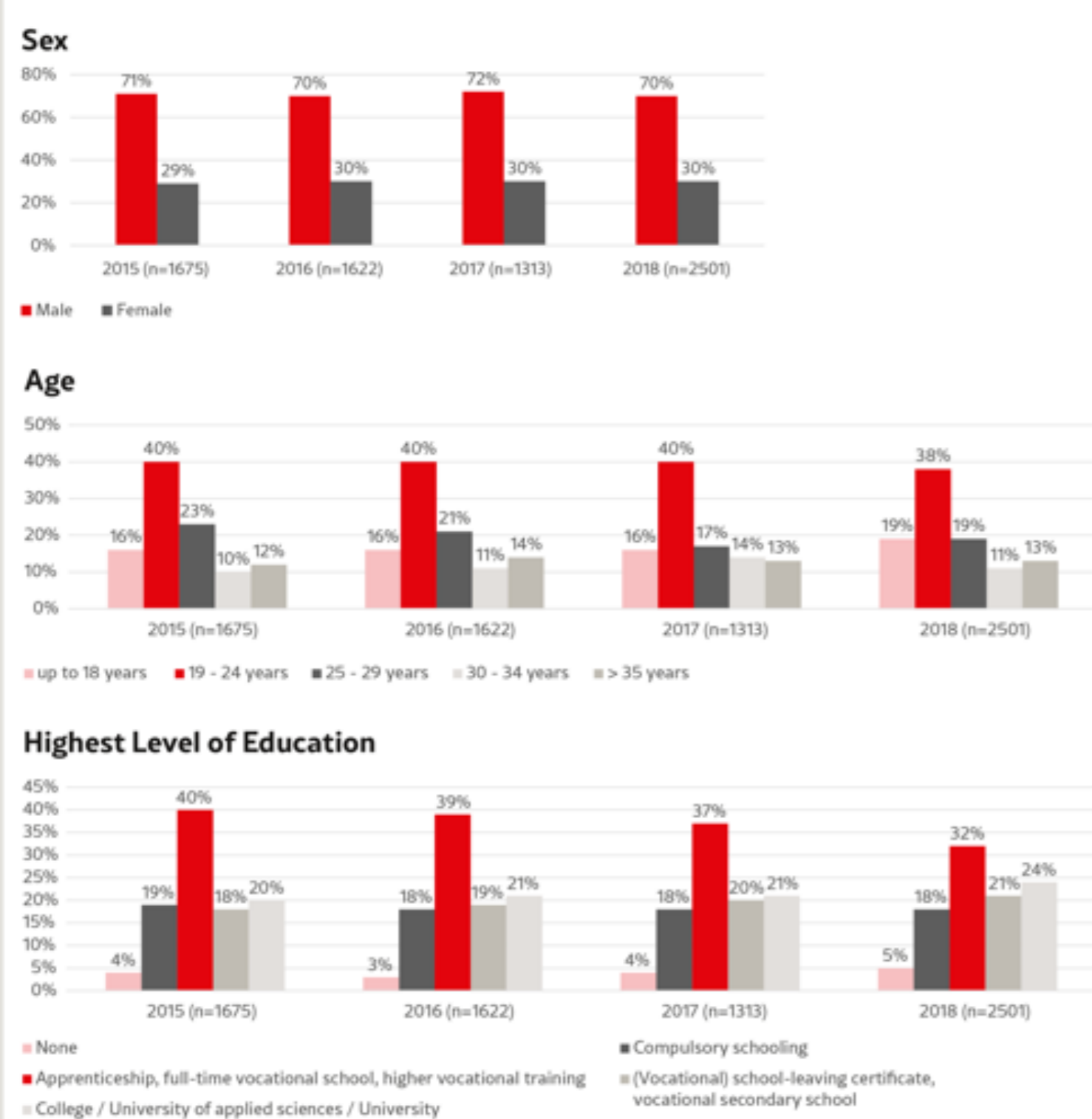
The number for “online” has risen sharply in 2018 due to the additional placement of the link to the survey on websites popular with recreational drug users.

Source of Substance Tested (2018)



The majority of respondents who had a substance tested within the framework of a counselling session declared that they had obtained the substance from their private network.

Sociodemographic Data

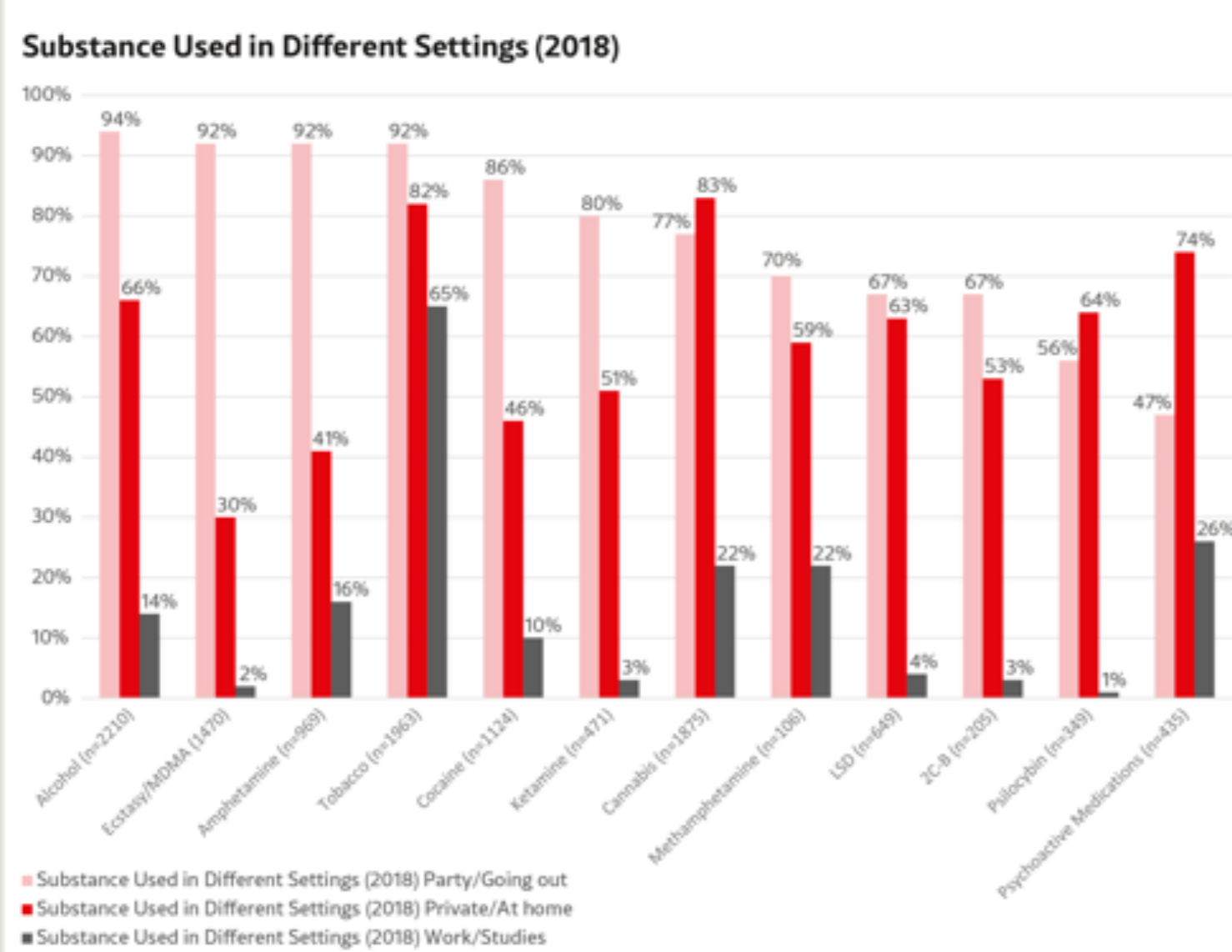


The interviewees are predominantly male, tend to be well educated, and are mostly young adults.

Key Findings

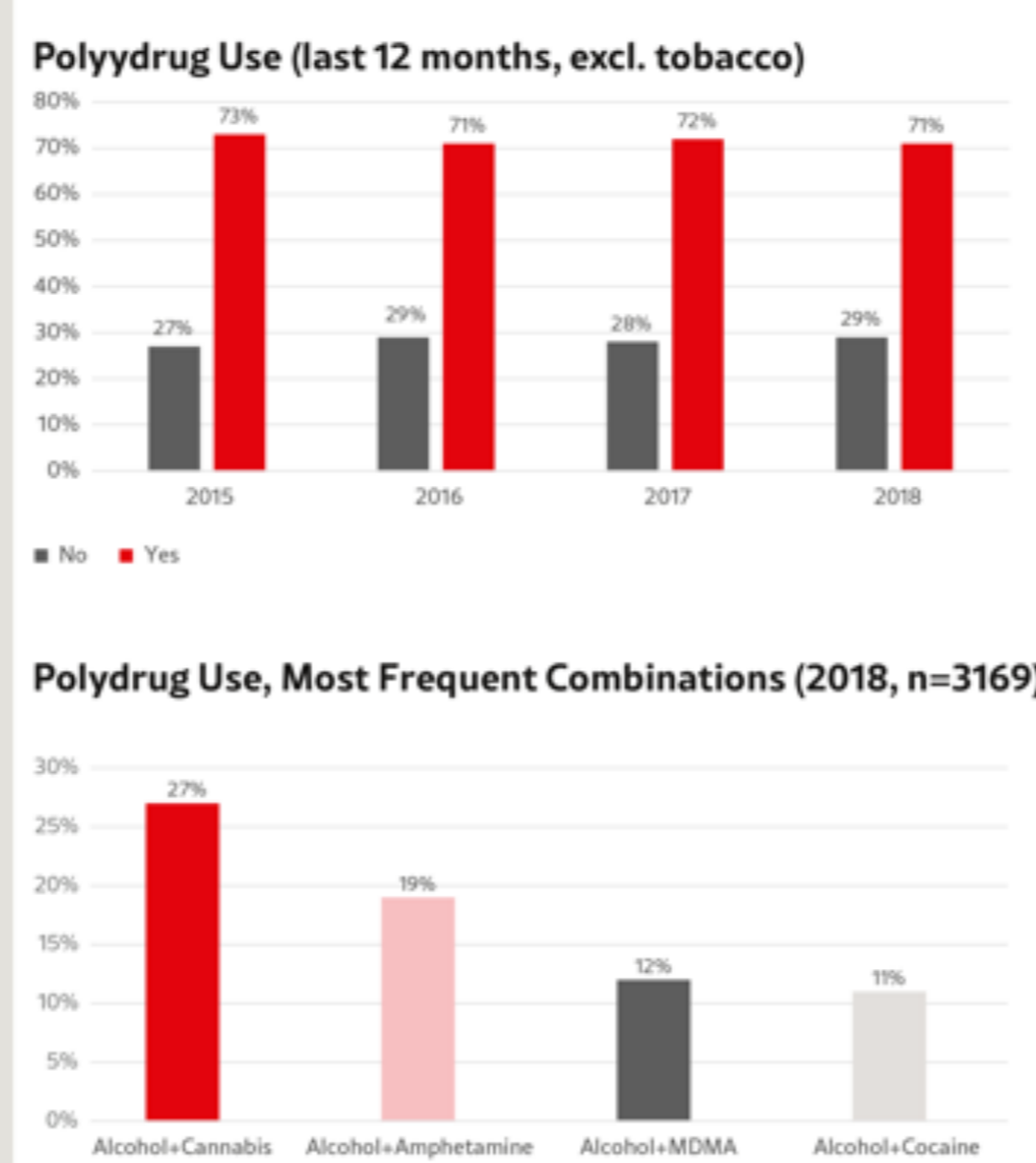
- ▶ The non-representative data offer exclusive access to a group of users who are very difficult to reach for other prevention and harm reduction organisations.
- ▶ Thanks to the acceptance-oriented attitude of the counsellors, the risk of social desirability bias is comparatively low (e.g. compared to representative telephone surveys).
- ▶ The target group is characterised by predominantly hidden drug use, a lack of awareness associated with its drug use, and, lastly, by behaviours that are partly harmful to health, however without the typical symptoms of addiction.
- ▶ The most commonly used illicit psychoactive substances among recreational drug users are cannabis, MDMA/Ecstasy, amphetamine, and cocaine.
- ▶ As complementary data, surveys of recreational drug users can help to identify trends in substances and associated problems at an early stage.

Setting of Substance Use



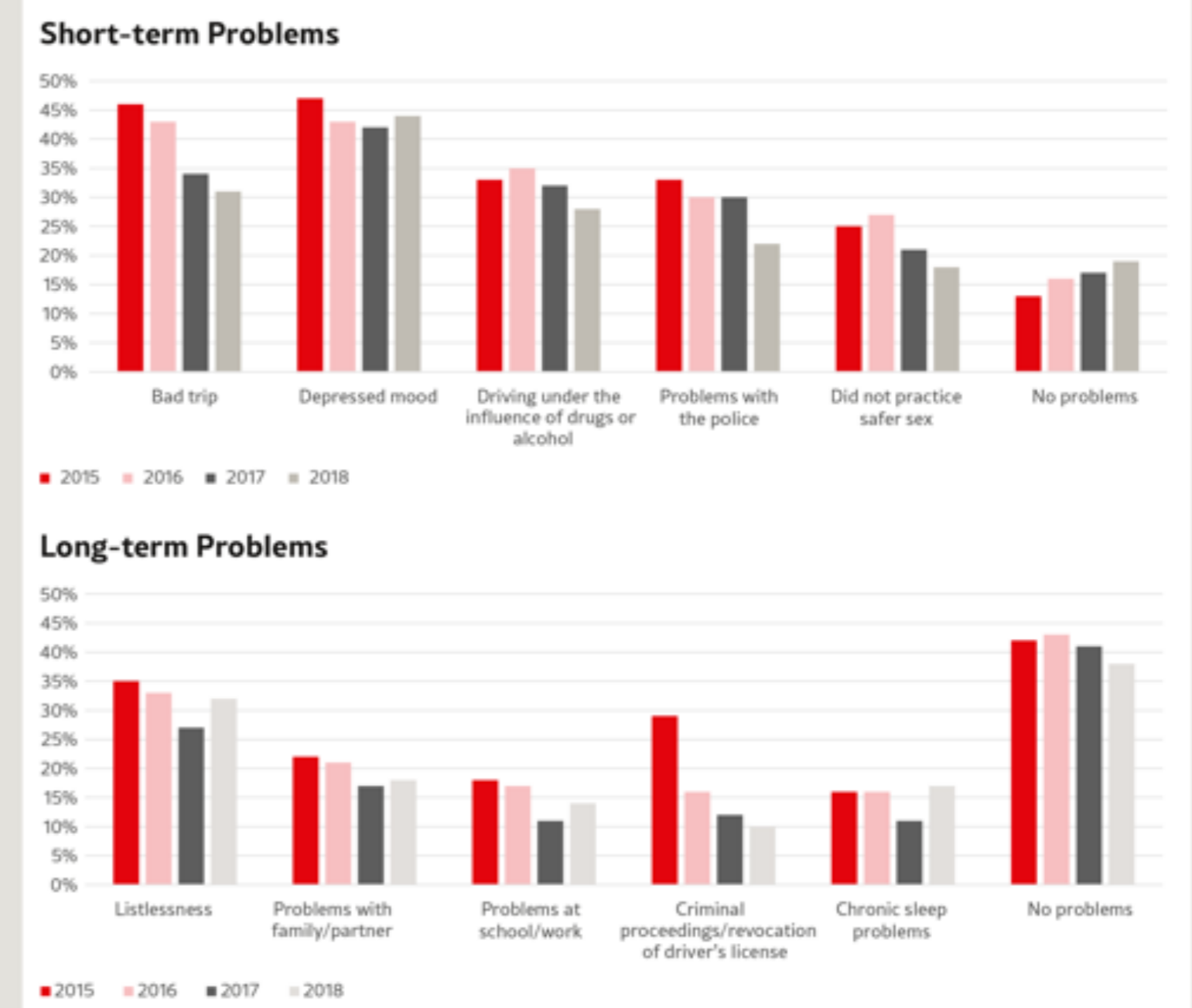
Since 2018, it has also been surveyed in which settings the various substances are mainly consumed. It is noticeable that many substances, especially illegal ones, are quite frequently consumed outside party settings (e.g. at home).

Polydrug Use



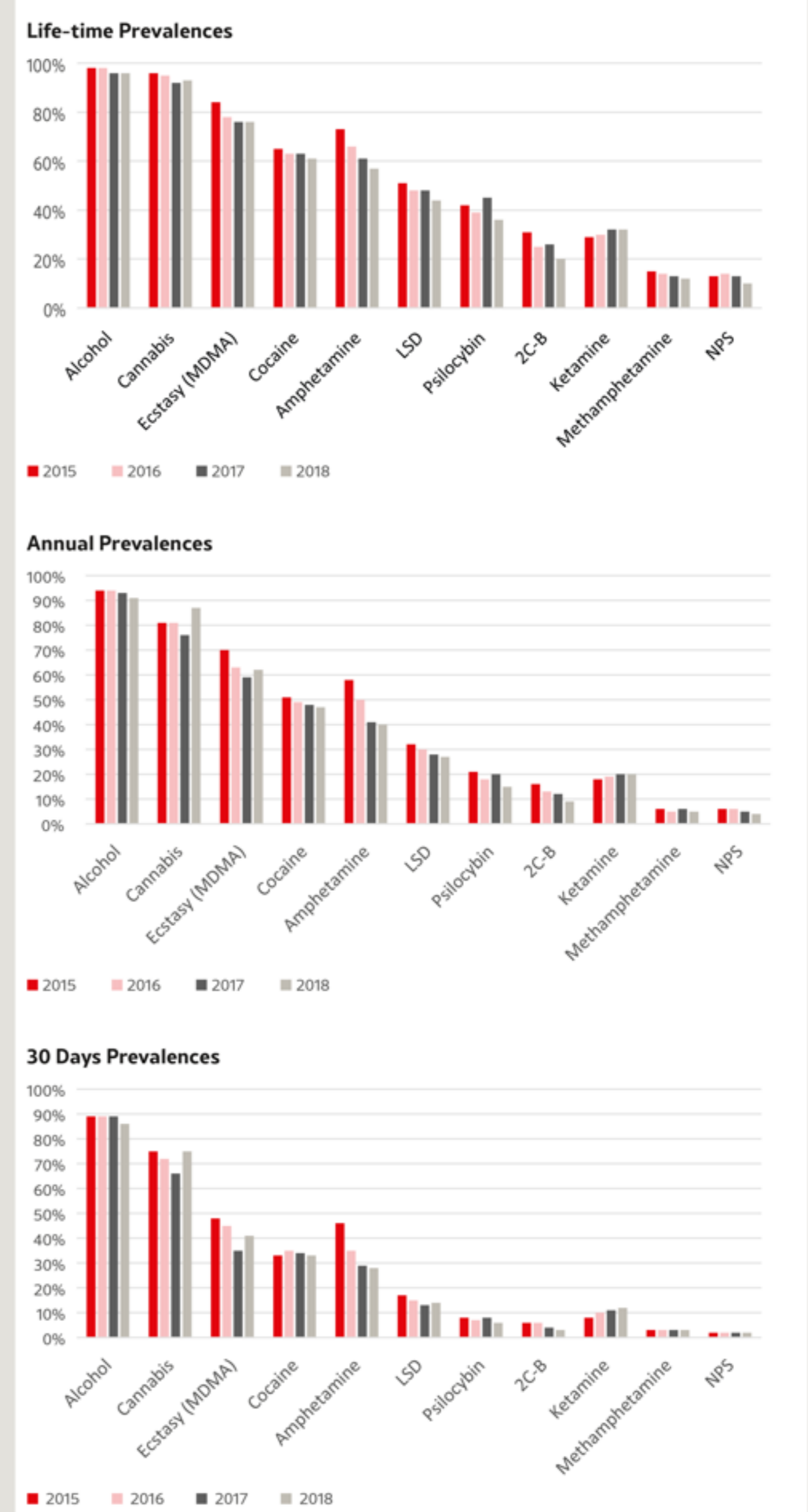
Polydrug use is widely common among recreational drug users. New tools (e.g. <https://substance.ch/combichecker>) and advice on the additional risks of polydrug use are therefore essential.

Problems Related to Drug Use



Short-term problems associated with the use of psychoactive substances (such as depressive mood or risky behaviour in road traffic) appear to be relatively common. Long-term problems, on the other hand, appear to be comparatively less frequent. Approximately 40% of respondents have no long-term problems at all in connection with the use of psychoactive substances.

Prevalences



The interviewees most frequently consume legal psychoactive substances (tobacco and alcohol). However, cannabis, ecstasy/MDMA, amphetamine, and cocaine dominate among illegal psychoactive substances. Other substances (e.g. NPS) are used comparatively rarely. The comparison between the years 2015–2018 indicates that the substances consumed are relatively stable.