



Measures against Drug Abuse in Japan

Police Policy Research Center, National Police Agency

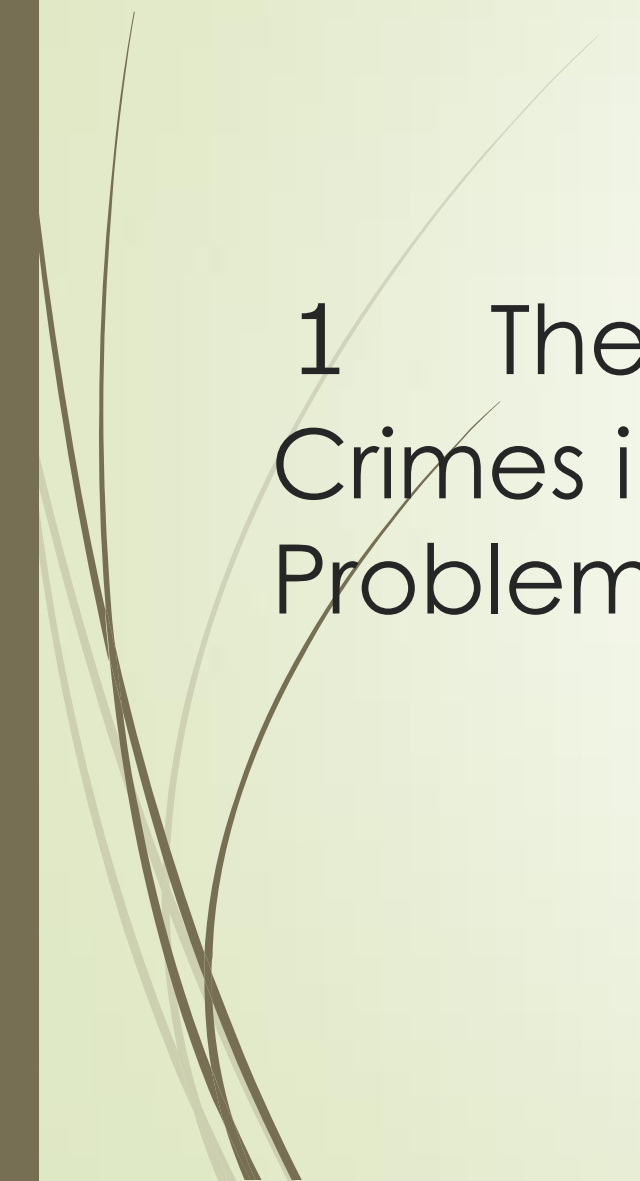
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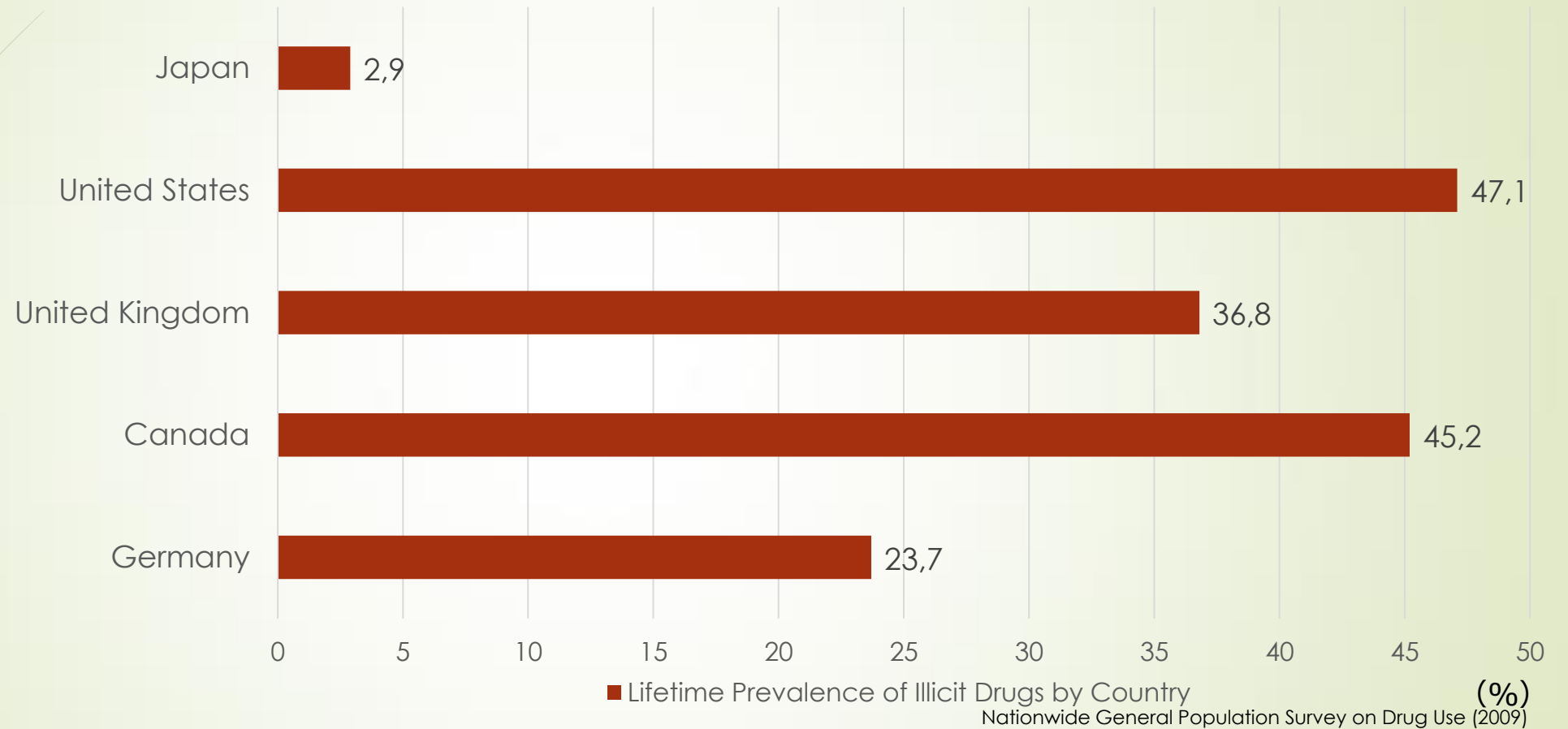
Outline of the Presentation

- 1 The Current Situation of Drug-Related Crimes in Japan and Measures against the Problem
- 2 Measures against New Psychoactive Substances(NPS)



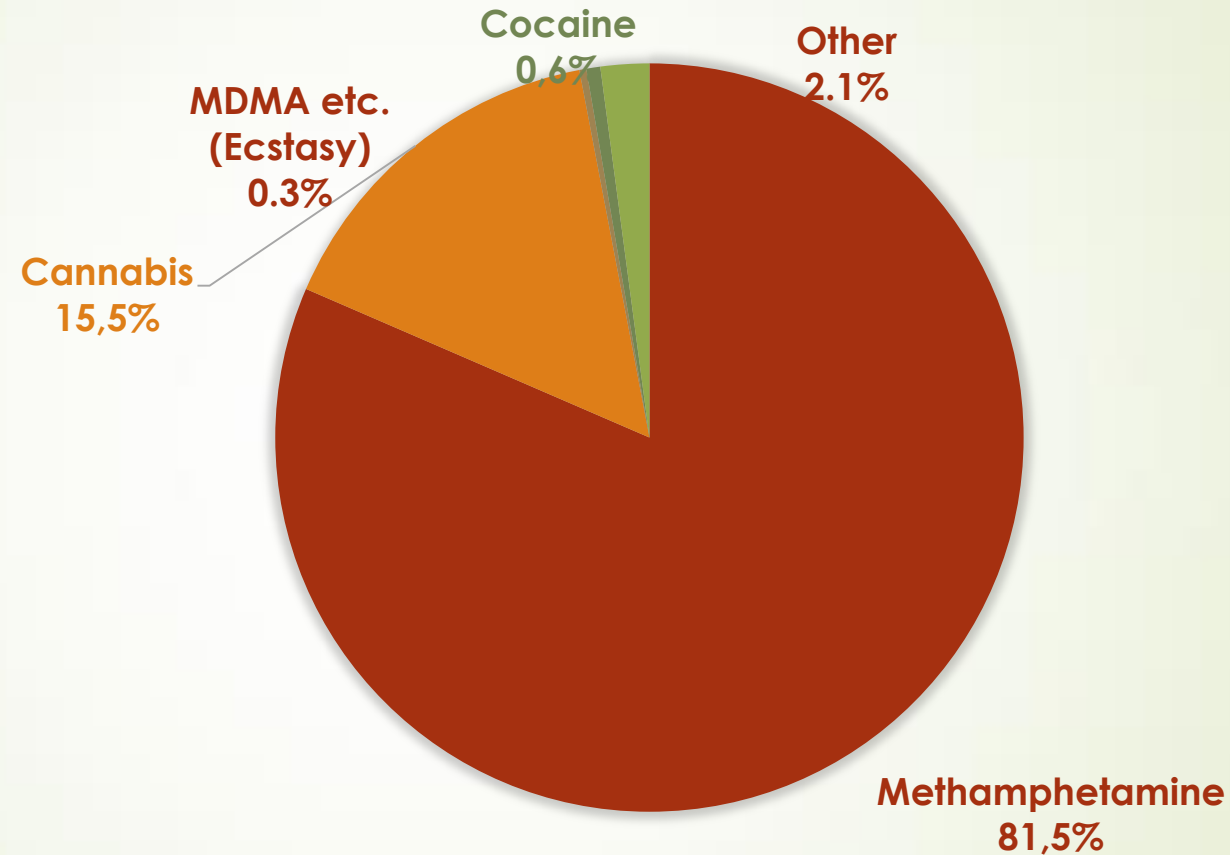
1 The Current Situation of Drug-Related Crimes in Japan and Measures against the Problem

Lifetime Prevalence of Illicit Drugs by Country



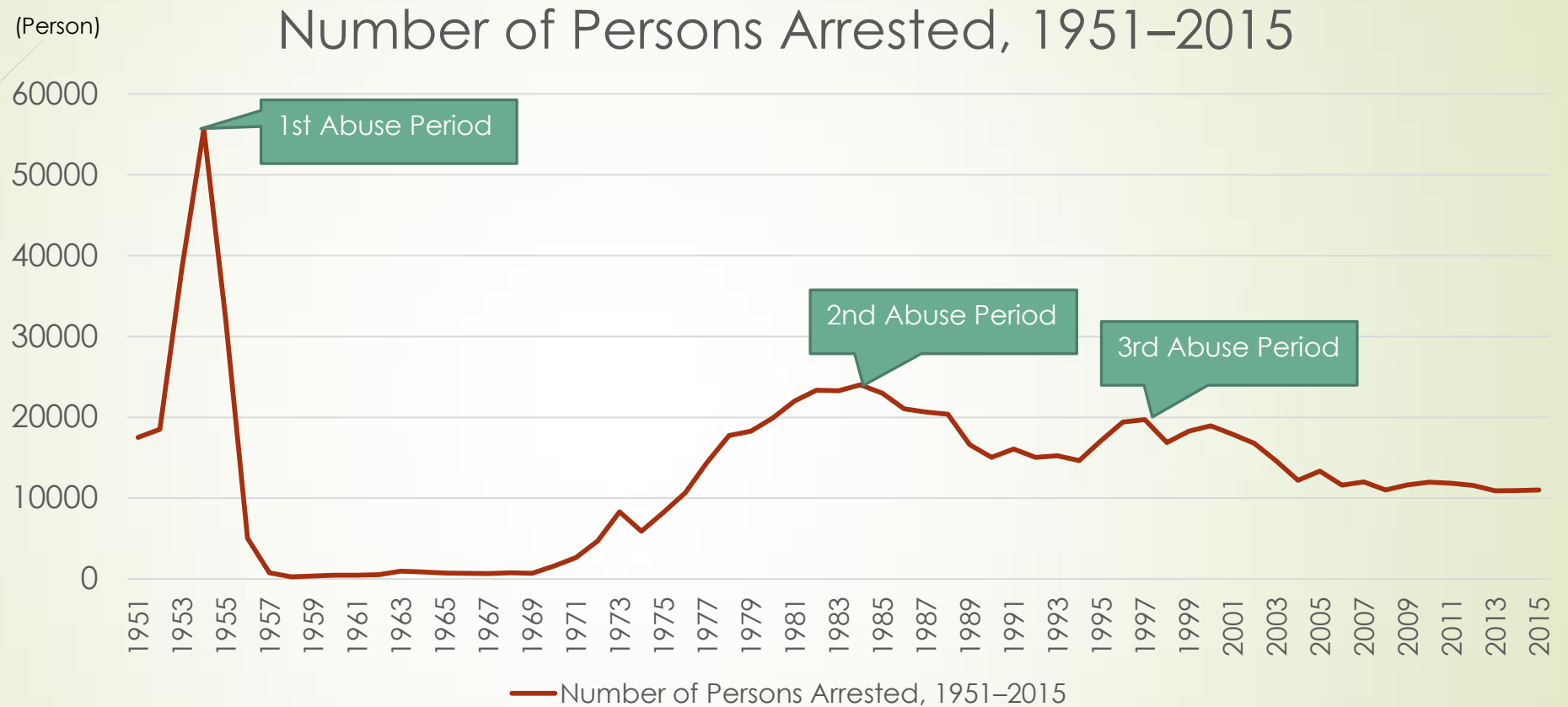
- Significantly lower rate in Japan than other countries

Percentage of Persons Arrested for Drug-Related Crimes(2015)



- Persons arrested for Methamphetamine account for over 80% of the total
- Recent increase in the use of cannabis

Transition of Persons Arrested for Methamphetamine-Related Crimes



- 1st Abuse Period: Philopon (methamphetamine) extremely popular in society devastated by defeat in the war
- 2nd Abuse Period: Increase of Smuggling and trafficking as funds of organized crime groups(BORYOKUDAN)
- 3rd Abuse Period: Increase of abuse by younger generations, such as junior high and high school students



Development of the Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy

- In response to the advent of the third abuse period of methamphetamine, the Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy was established in May 1998 to end the abuse. Various measures were taken comprehensively by relevant ministries and agencies in an integrated manner.
- The Second Strategy was developed in 2003, the Third Strategy in 2008, and the currently implemented Fourth Strategy in 2013, respectively. Under these strategies, various measures have been continuously taken by the government overall.

The Fourth Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy

The following five goals were set:

- Prevent people from abusing drugs by enhancing efforts to raise awareness among young people, families, and communities, and by raising normative consciousness
- Strictly prevent relapse into drug abuse by supporting drug abusers through treatment and reintegration into society, and by enriching support for their families
- Eliminate drug trafficking organizations, thorough control over end users, and strengthen oversight of diversifying drugs for abuse
- Interdict entry of drugs into Japan through strict crackdown at the border
- Promote international cooperation to interdict drug smuggling



Specific Measures

- Raise normative consciousness among young people through drug abuse prevention classes at school, etc. Create social momentum toward eliminating drug abuse from the whole society through advocacy and awareness-raising activities.
- Conduct a crackdown to dismantle illicit drug trafficking organizations, actively using effective investigation methods such as wiretapping, and promoting a crackdown on professional smuggling, trafficking, etc.
- Prevent drugs of abuse from entering Japan through cooperation among the police departments, the Customs Office, and the Japan Coast Guard
- Uncover diverse smuggling routes and techniques, analyze illicit drugs, and strengthen cooperation with related countries and organizations, as well as improve and enhance the drug control system in accordance with smuggling risks



Drug abuse prevention class provided by a police officer



Enlightenment poster for drug abuse prevention

Preventing Drug Abusers from Relapsing into Drug Abuse

- Guidance on Withdrawal from Drug Dependency

→ Provided to sentenced persons. Participants are encouraged to understand the problem of drug use inside them and to think about specific approaches to preventing relapse into drug abuse. In fiscal 2014, 6,694 people participated in the guidance session.

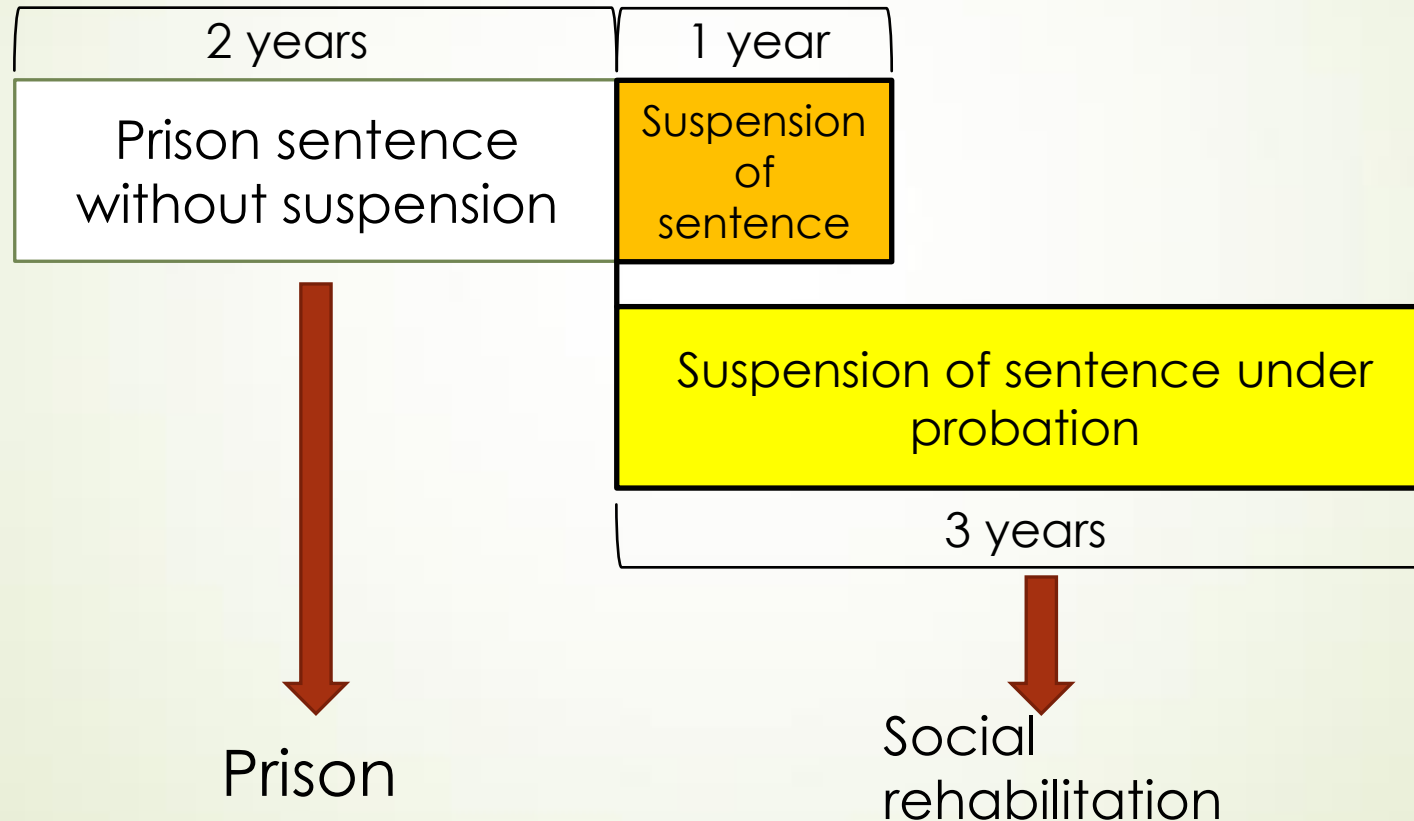
- Professional Treatment Program

→ Provided to probationers. Based on psychology and other expert knowledge, this program was developed by setting cognitive behavioral therapy as a theoretical base.

Specifically, this program is composed of two approaches: (1) curriculum designed to teach participants specific approaches to preventing relapse into drug abuse, and (2) simplified drug detection screening intended to maintain and improve the probationers' will to stop using illicit drugs. In fiscal 2014, 1,270 persons started the treatment.

Partial Suspension of Execution of Sentence

For example, a sentence of “three years in prison with one year suspension of sentence under three-year probation in replacement of one year of the imprisonment period”





Partial Suspension of Execution of Sentence

Purpose of Introducing the System

- This system is introduced to increase options to encourage sentenced persons to refrain from repeating drug abuse, and achieve improvement and rehabilitation in society under the psychological coercion of possible return to prison.

Outline

- Eligibility: Those who are imprisoned for the first time
- Possible period of imprisonment: Imprisonment with or without work for a period not exceeding three years
- Suspended period: Not less than one year and not more than five years



2 Measures against New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

Transition of NPS Issue in Japan

- Around 1998: Spread of the abuse of magic mushrooms, a drug not subject to legal regulation but whose effect is similar to methamphetamine; increase in the number of abusers transferred to hospitals; occurrence of fatal cases
- Around 2004: Homicides and other crimes occurring along with the increase in the number of shops selling such drugs
- Around 2011: Became known as a “law-evading herb” and rapidly recognized as a social problem
- 2014: Named a “dangerous drug”





Measures against NPS

Revision of the Pharmaceutical Affairs Act (currently the Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Act)

2006: Introduction of the Designated Substances Control System

2012: Inclusive Designation System was introduced to inclusively restrict substances with similar chemical structures. There were 772 substances inclusively designated in February 2013, and 504 substances in December 2013, and then 840 substances in May 2015.

April 2014: Prohibition of the possession or use of designated drugs

December 2014: Expansion of the scope of substances subject to prohibition of sales at NPS shops, etc.; tightening of the regulations on advertisement of NPS

Measures against NPS

「The Emergency Measures to Eliminate the Abuse of NPS」 created in July 2014

- 1 Thoroughly ascertain the actual situation of NPS and enhance enlightenment on the risks
- 2 Ensure prompt designation of drugs and crackdown on NPS-related crimes
- 3 Reexamine the ideal regulations on NPS in response to the situation

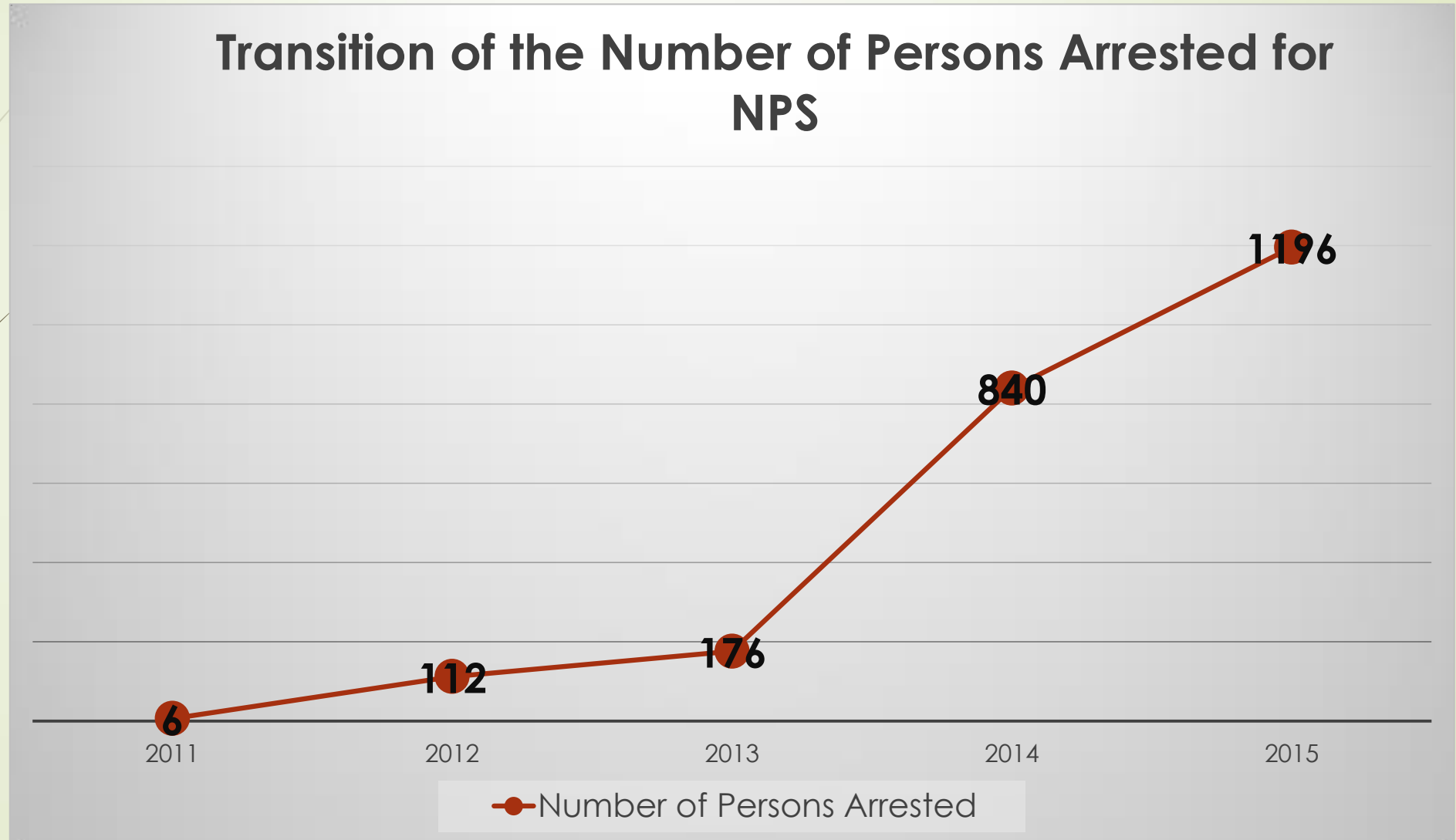
Change of Name

Substances that used to be called “law-evading drugs” may encourage abuse due to the misunderstanding that these substances are not subject to crackdown.

→ The new name “dangerous drugs” was chosen from among the public.

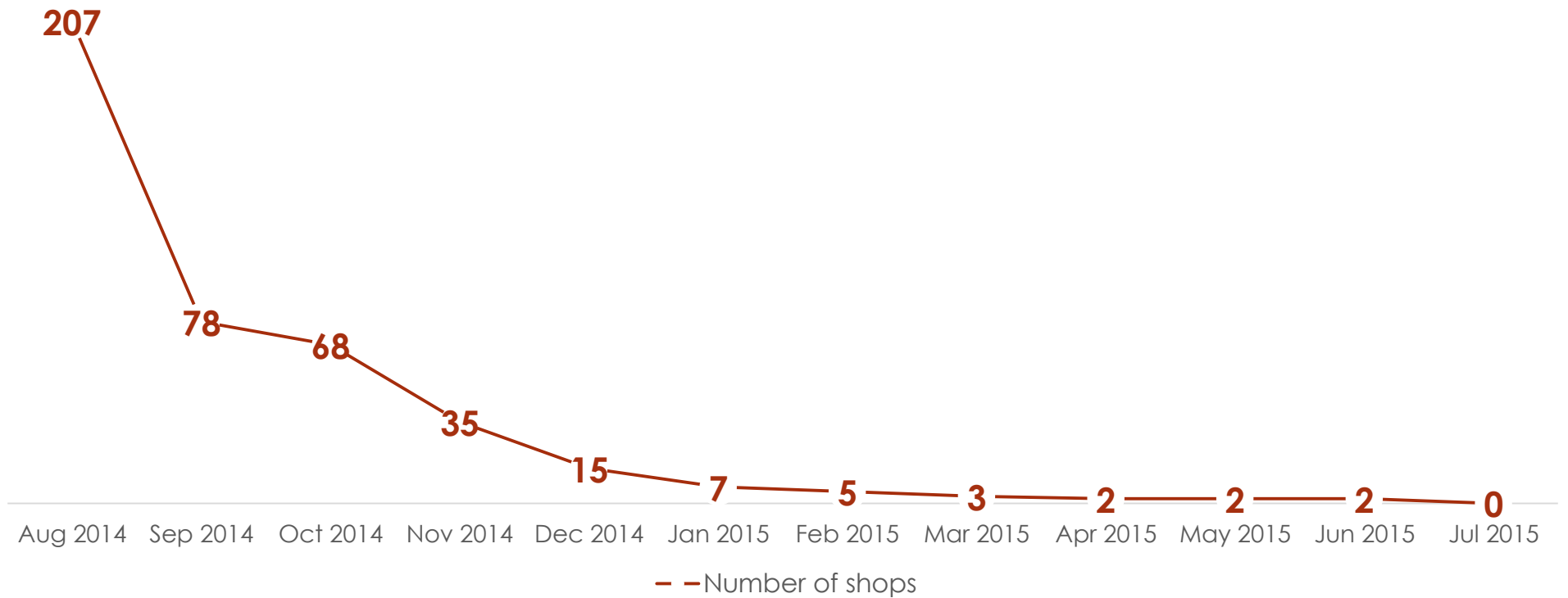


NPS: Number of Persons Arrested



NPS: Transition of the Number of Shops

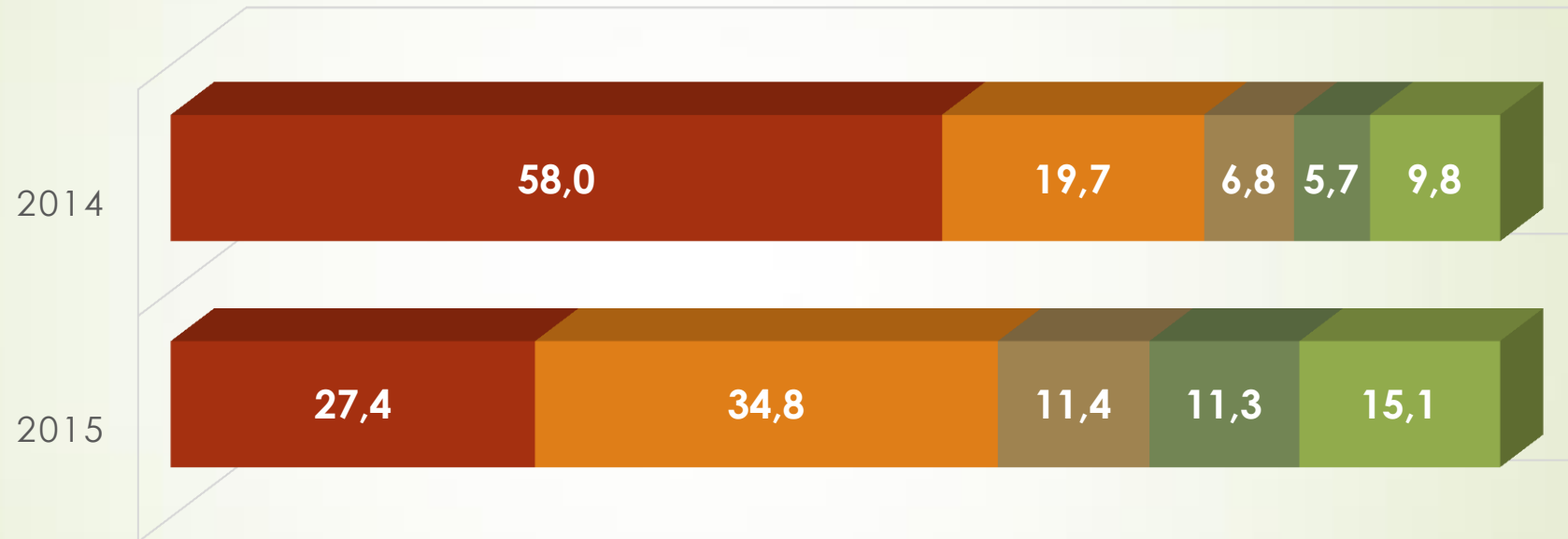
TRANSITION OF THE NUMBER OF NPS SHOPS



NPS: Means of Acquisition

MEANS OF ACQUISITION USED BY NPS ABUSERS

■ Street shop ■ Internet ■ Acquaintance ■ Trafficker ■ Other/Unknown



Shift of acquisition from street shops to the Internet



It is necessary to strengthen cyber patrolling and take further measures against Internet marketing



Conclusion

- Initiatives conducted by the government overall, such as the Fourth Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy
 - The illicit drug-related problem in Japan is less serious than before
- Increased number of methamphetamine smuggling cases due to globalization, etc., resulting in possible aggravation
 - Continuous efforts, including not only crackdown but educational activities at schools, are necessary.
- Introduction of the Partial Suspension of Execution of Sentence
 - Appropriate implementation of this system is essential to prevent relapse into drug abuse.
- A certain positive effect of the government-led measures against NPS
 - Further measures need to be taken against Internet marketing.