

# Trends in Substance Use in Jamaica



**Uki Atkinson  
National Council on  
Drug Abuse**



# Presentation Overview

- Value of epidemiological data
- Snapshot of drug studies conducted in Jamaica
- Trends by substance
- Youth focused trends
- Parish level comparisons
- Comparison with other countries

# Importance of Research on Substance Use

Policy makers & planners recognize the need for reliable and timely data to:

- Track trends over time
- Develop country-specific profiles of particular population groups
- Develop appropriate policies/guidelines/interventions
- Establish benchmarks to evaluate the impact of interventions

# Substance Abuse Epidemiology (3 Cs)

## Consumption patterns

- Prevalence – proportion of given population
  - Use
    - Frequency (Lifetime, Annual, Past Month, Daily)
    - Intensity (eg. Binge Drinking, Heavy use)
- Incidence – new cases

## Consequences of Drug Use

- Deaths
- Medical emergencies
- Addiction/Problematic use
- Crime

## Contributing Factors

- Risk Factors
- Protective Factors

# Data Sources

- ❑ General Surveys – Households
- ❑ Special population surveys – school students, prisons, universities, out of school youth, treatment centers, emergency rooms, homeless drug users
- ❑ Rapid Assessments
- ❑ Qualitative Research - Key Informant Interviews/Focus Groups
- ❑ Hospital admissions, emergency department logs, public health reports, coroners' and medical examiners records, Treatment Center records
- ❑ Drug related crime statistics (arrests, seizures, prosecutions) from police, customs

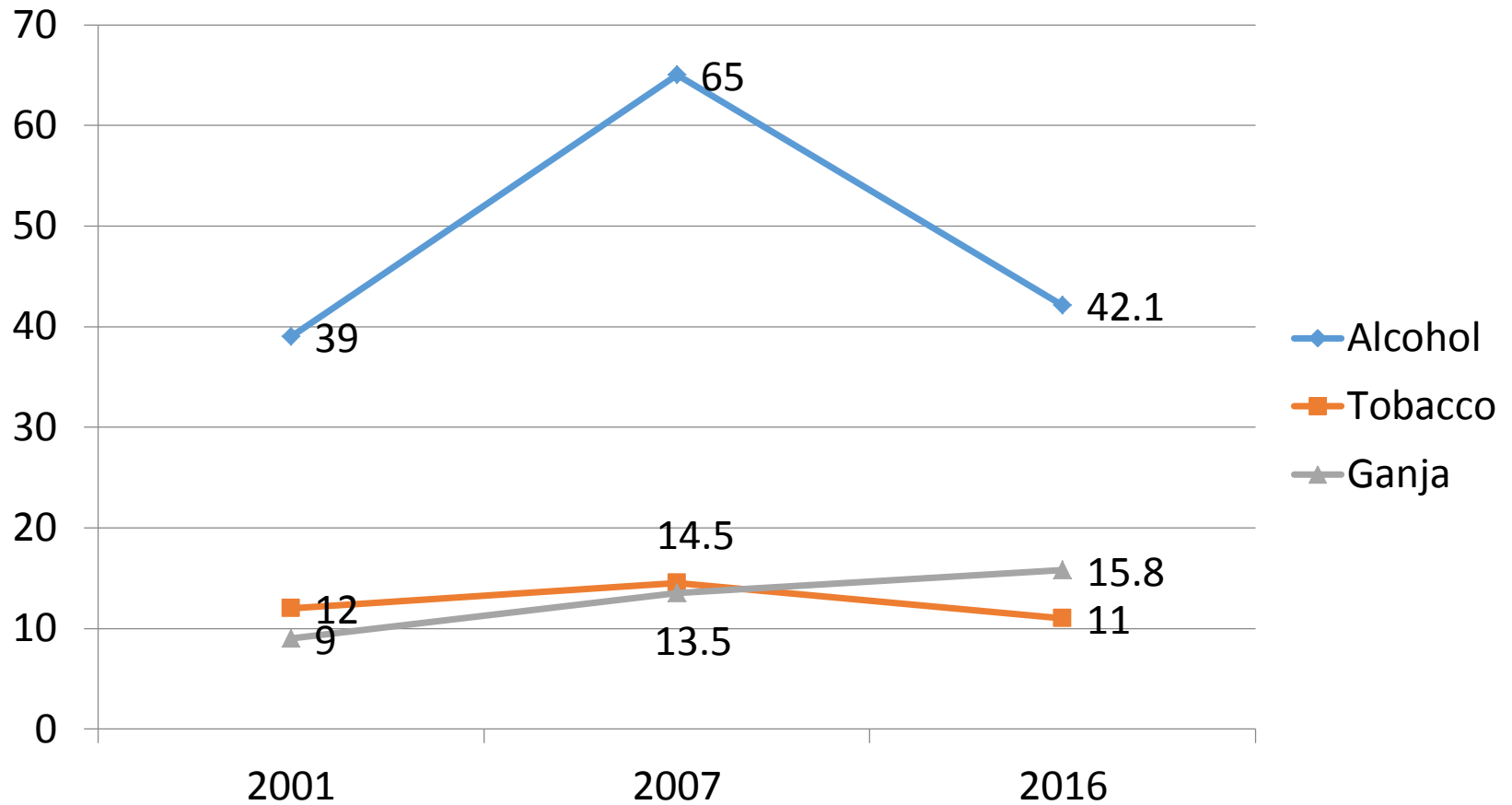
# Recent National Studies

- Jamaica Prison Survey 2014
- National Secondary School Surveys 2013, 2006
- Standardized Drug Treatment Data – 2012 to present
- Community Rapid Assessments – Community Action for Prevention
- Global Youth Tobacco Survey (2001, 2006, 2010)
- Global School Health Survey (2010)
- Studies in the Pipeline**
  - ✓ **Global Youth Tobacco Survey & Global School Health Survey (2017)**

# Previous Population Drug Studies Conducted in Jamaica

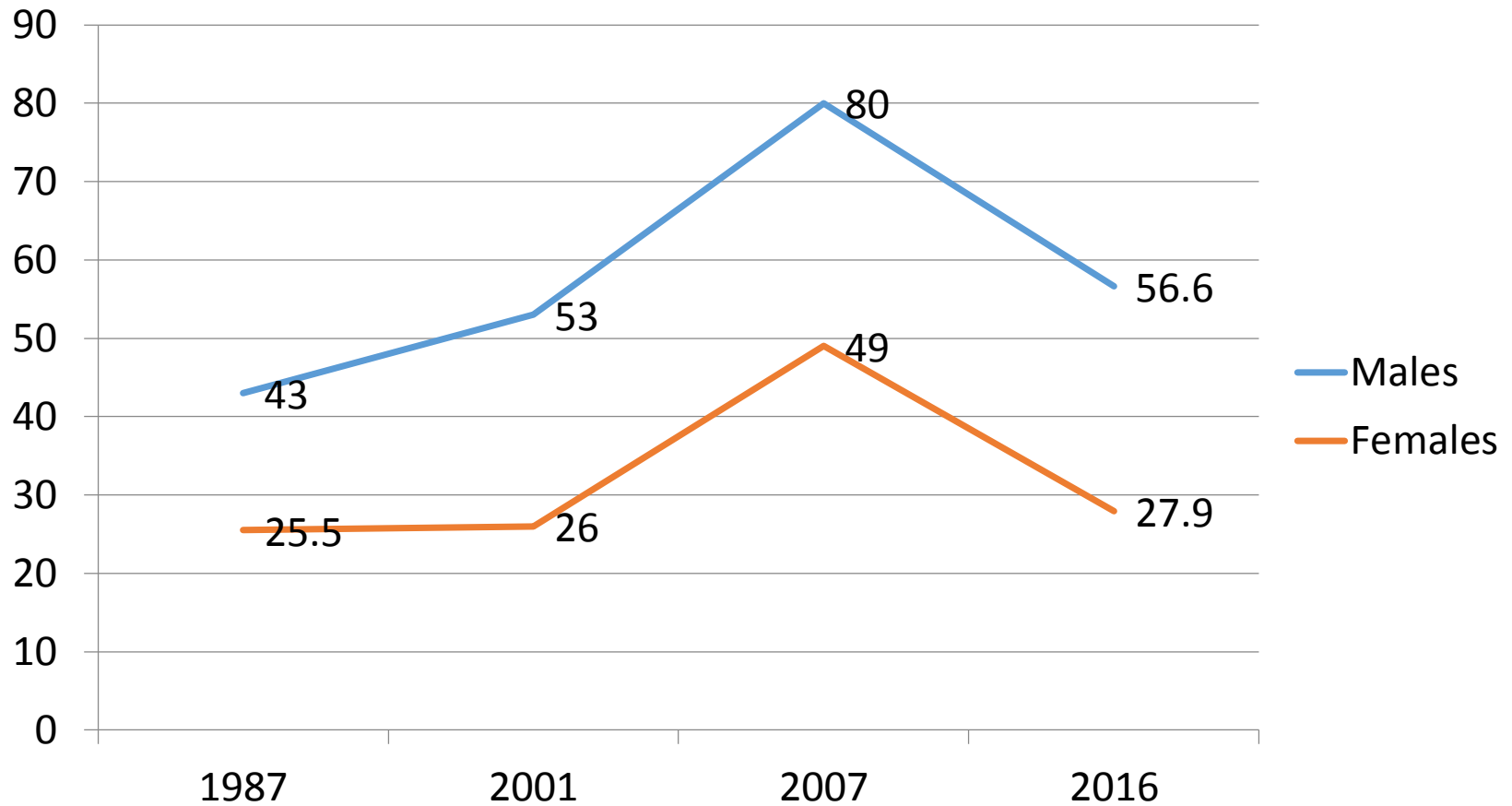
Year	Name of Survey	Target Population (Age)	Sample Size
1987	Drug Use in Jamaican Households	12+	6,007
2001	National Household Survey of Drug Use and Abuse in Jamaica	12-55	2,383
2007	Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey	15-74	2,848

# Trends in Substance Use (Past Year) (2001 – 2016)

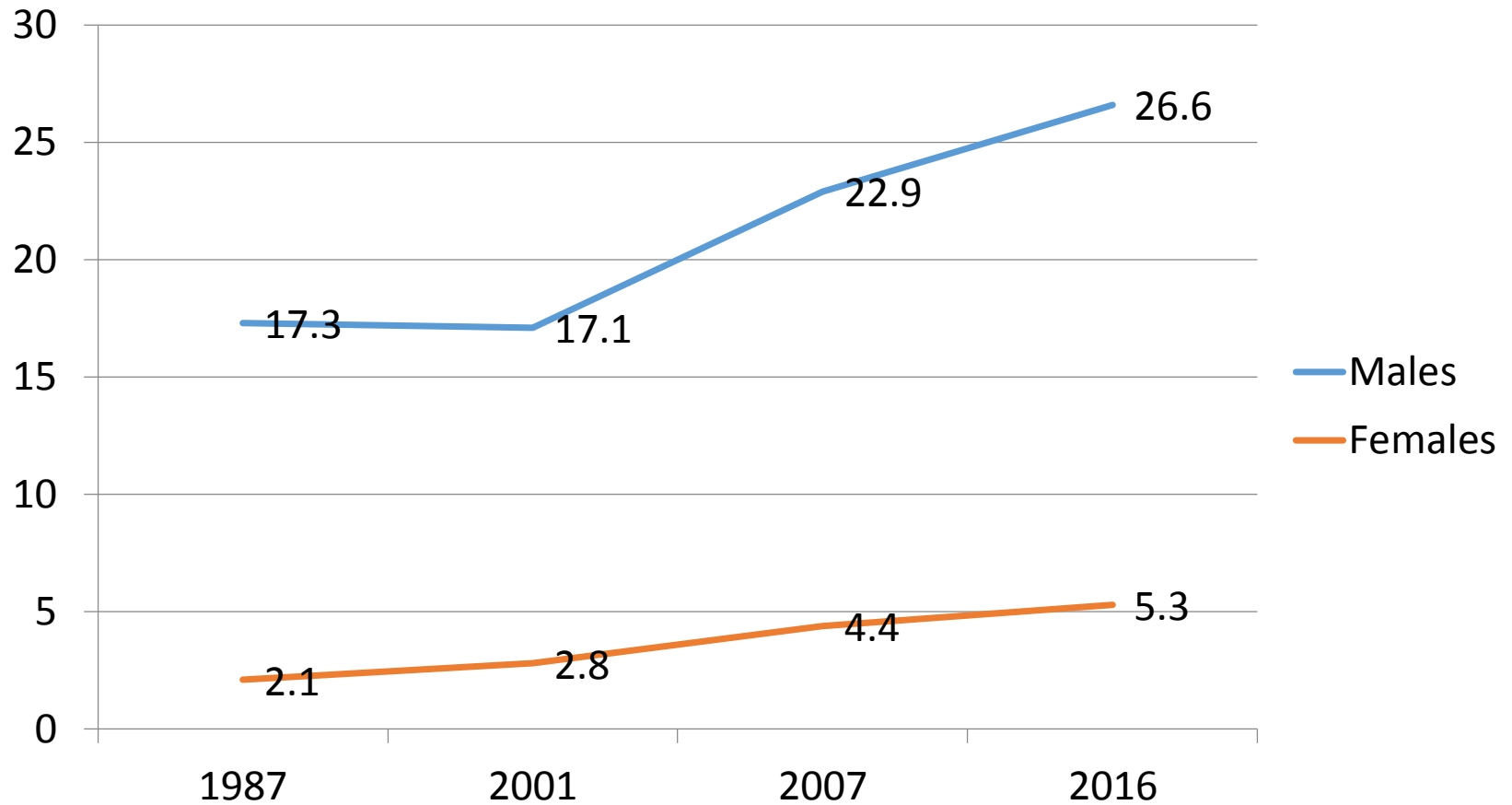




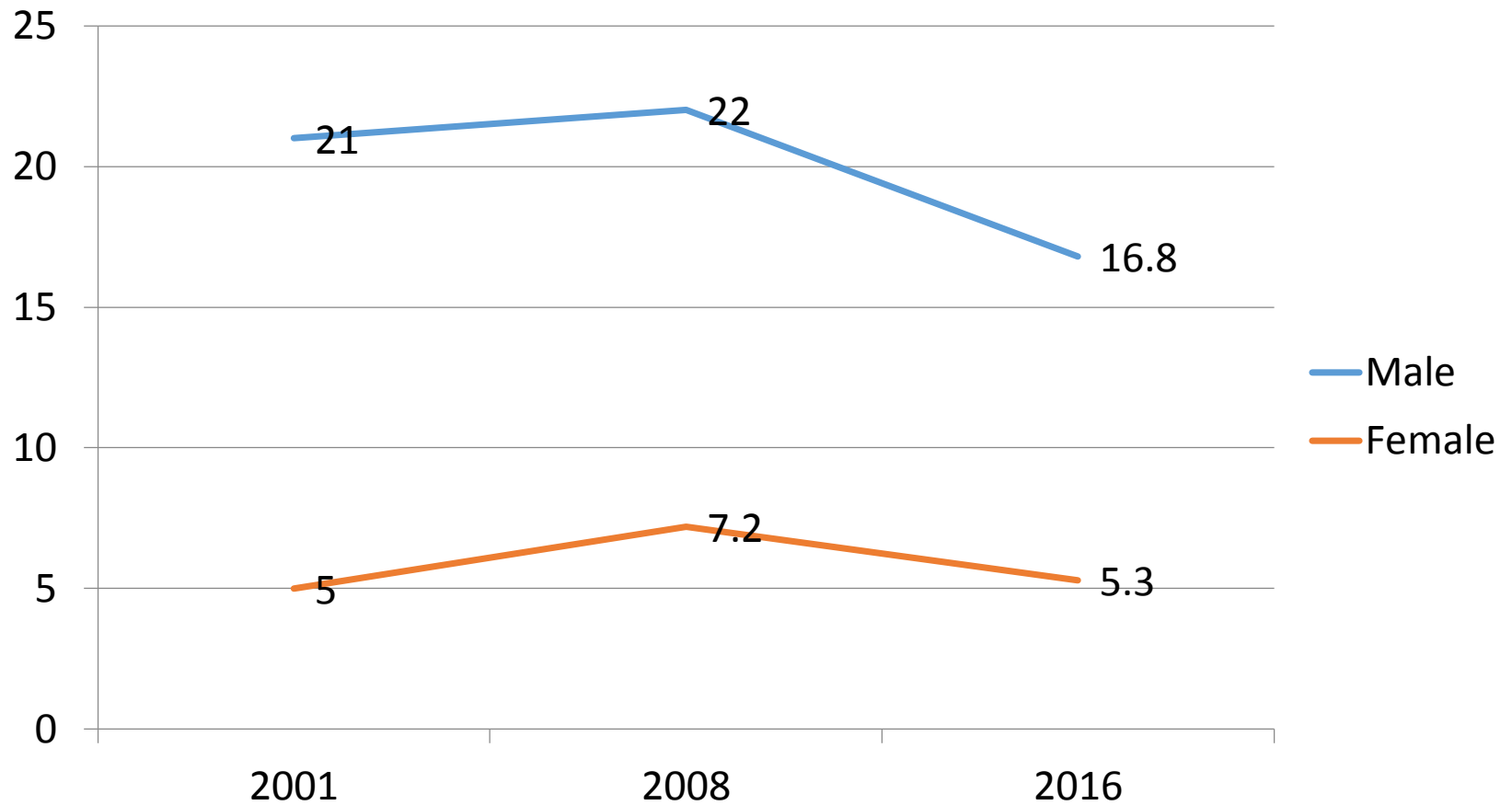
# Trends in Current Alcohol Use by Gender (1987 – 2016)



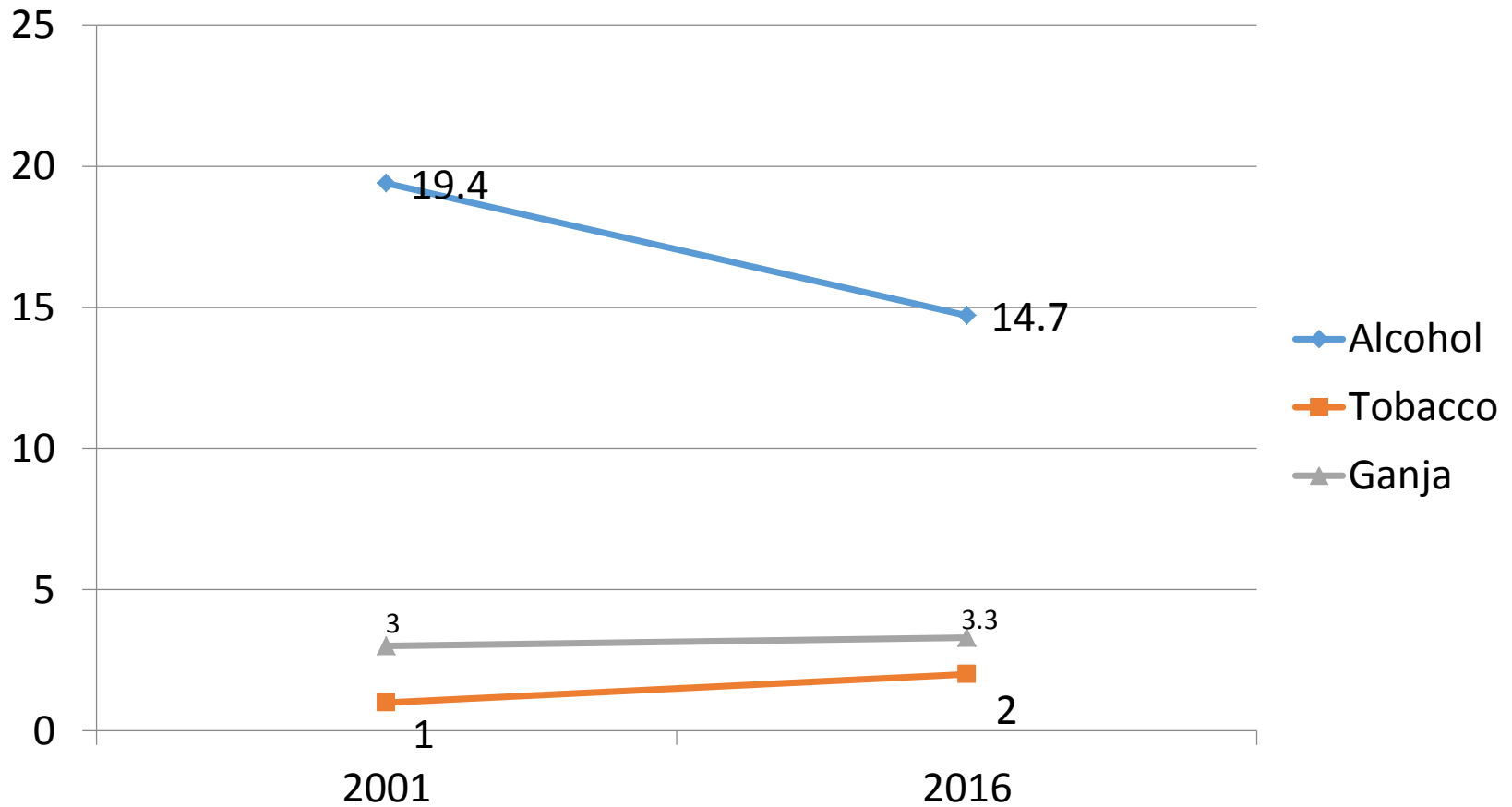
# Trends in Current Ganja Use by Gender (1987 – 2016)



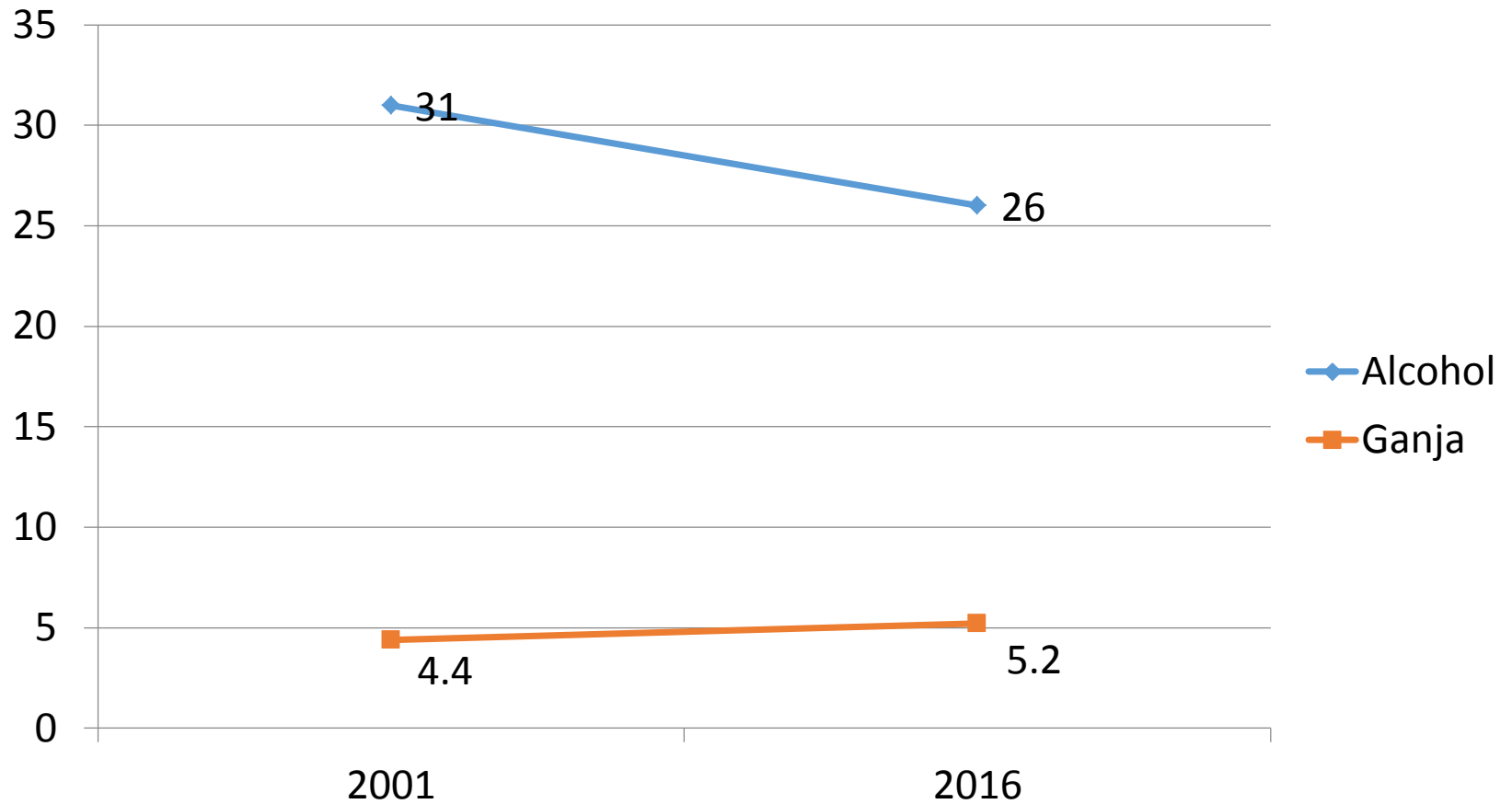
# Trends in Current Cigarette Use by Gender (2001 – 2016)



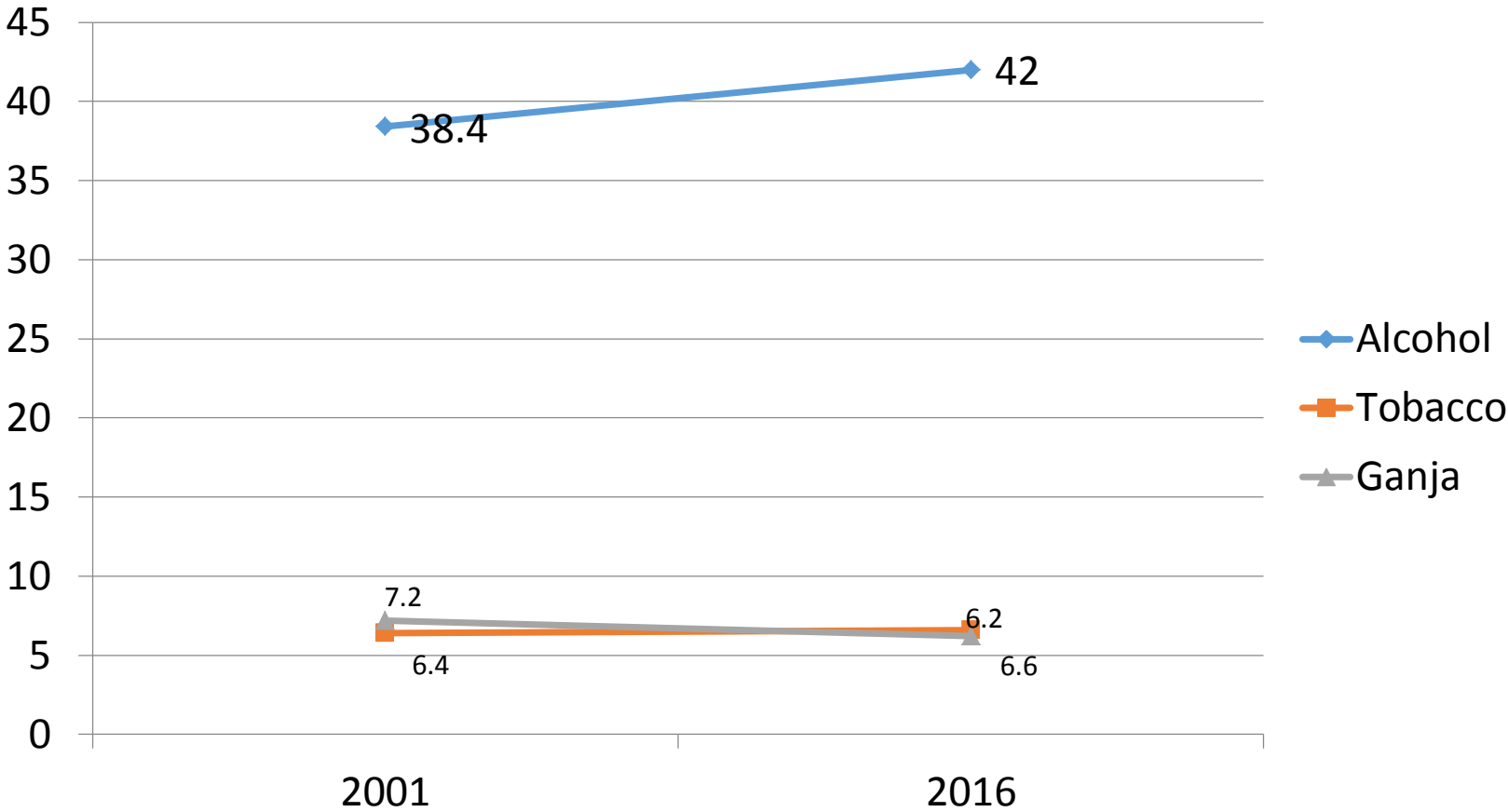
# Trends in Adolescent (12-17) Current Drug Use (2001 – 2016)



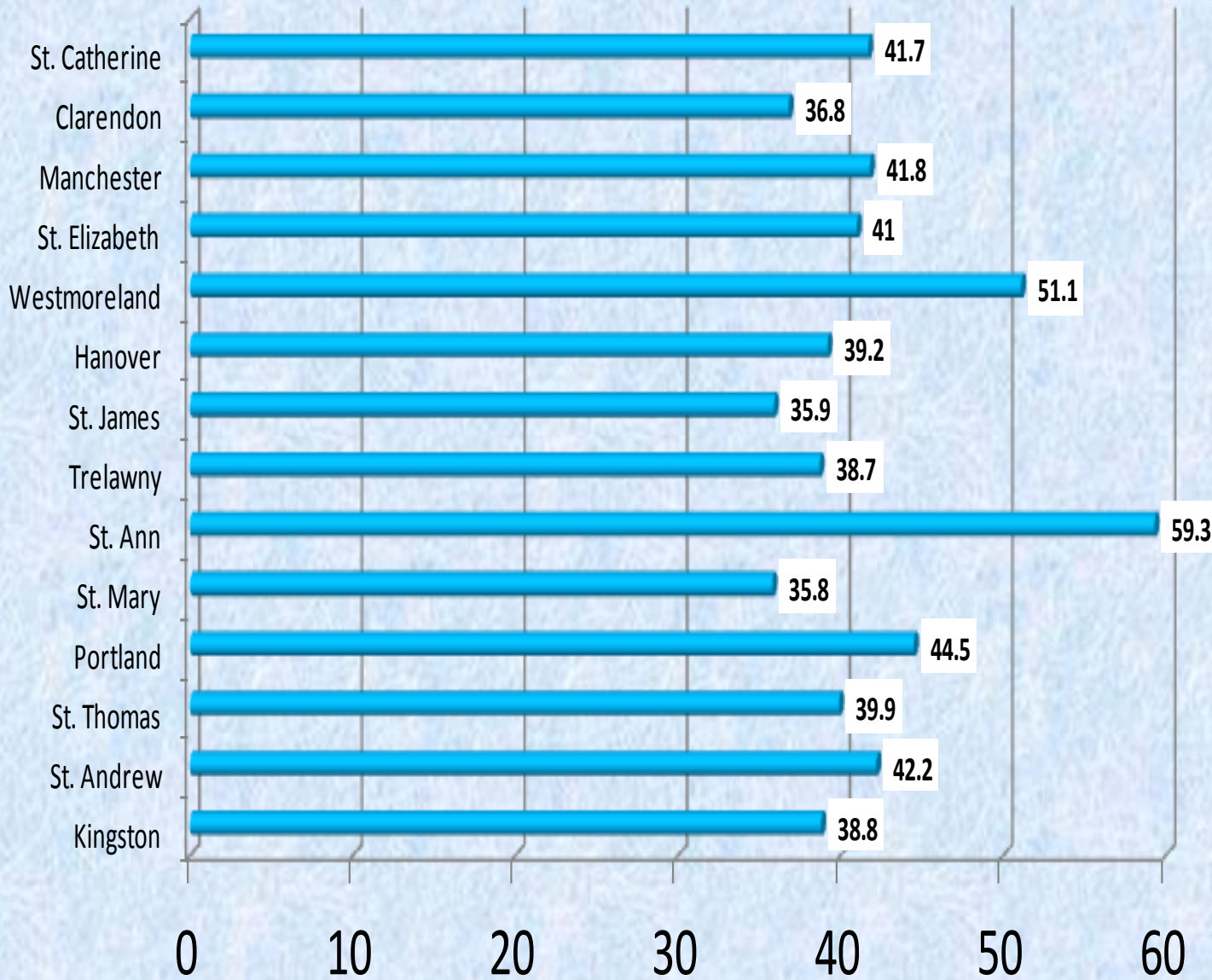
# Trends in Adolescent (12-17) Past Year Drug Use (2001 – 2016)



# Trends in Adolescent Drug Use (Lifetime) (2001 – 2016)

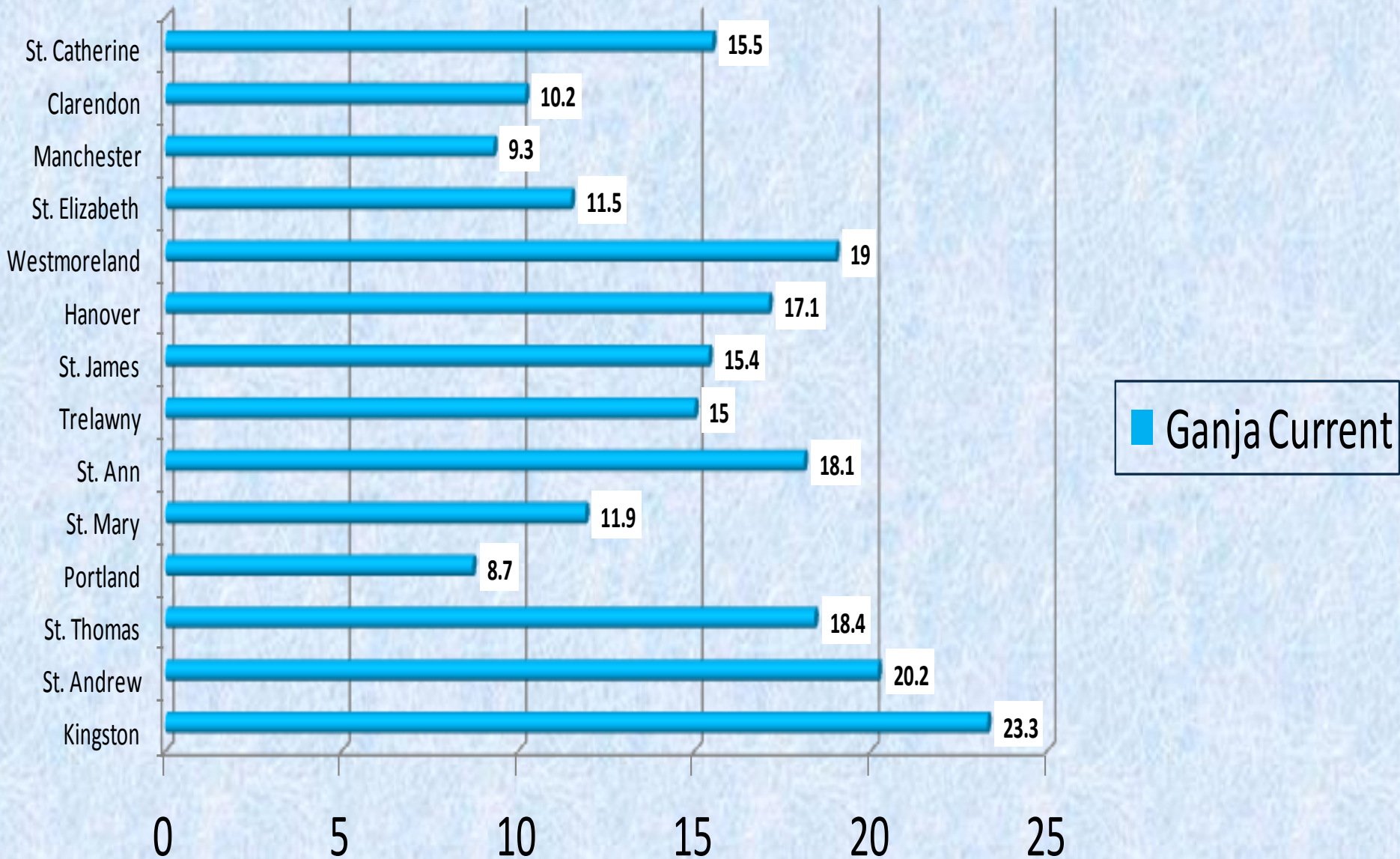


# Alcohol Current



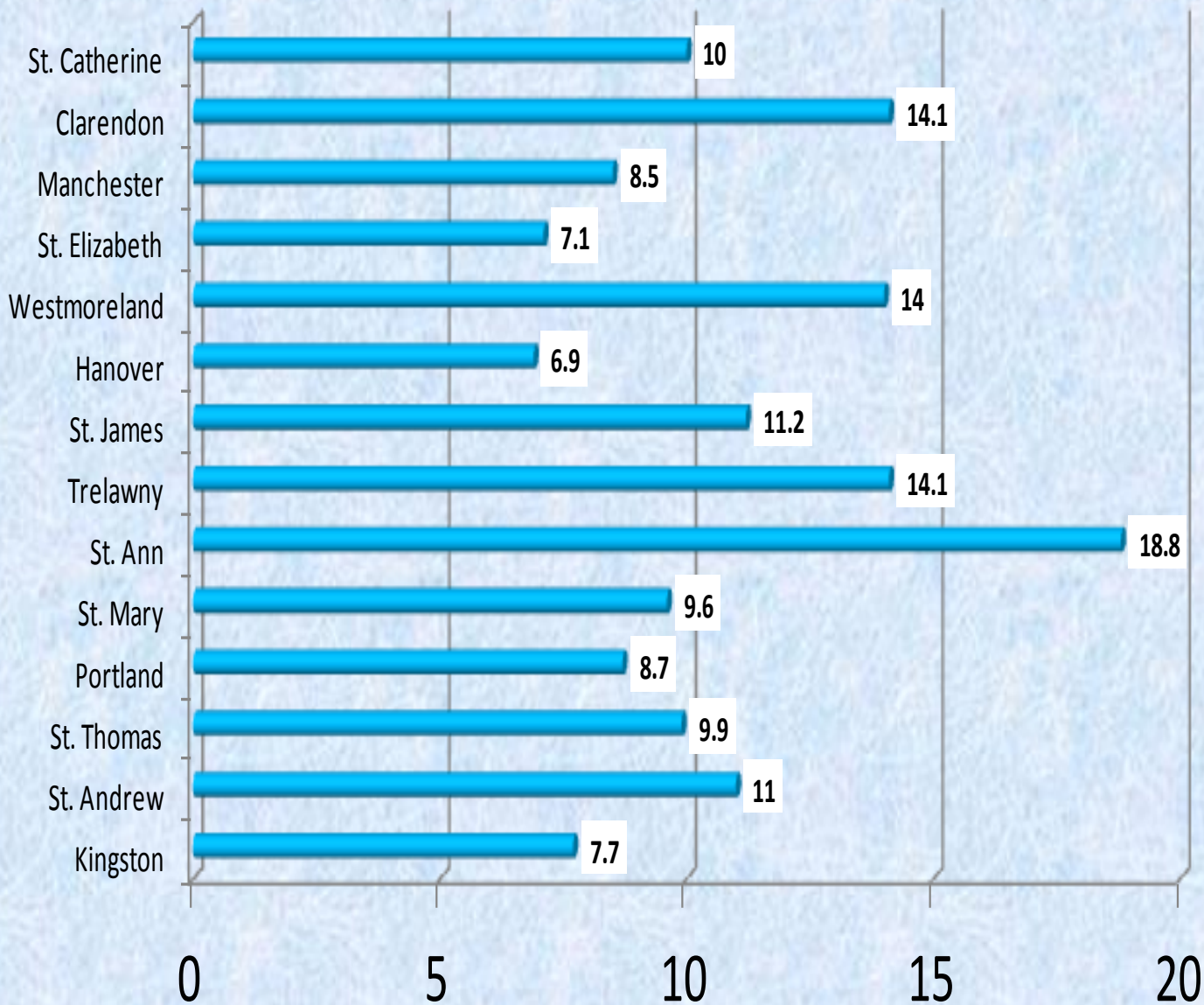
■ Alcohol Current

# Ganja Current



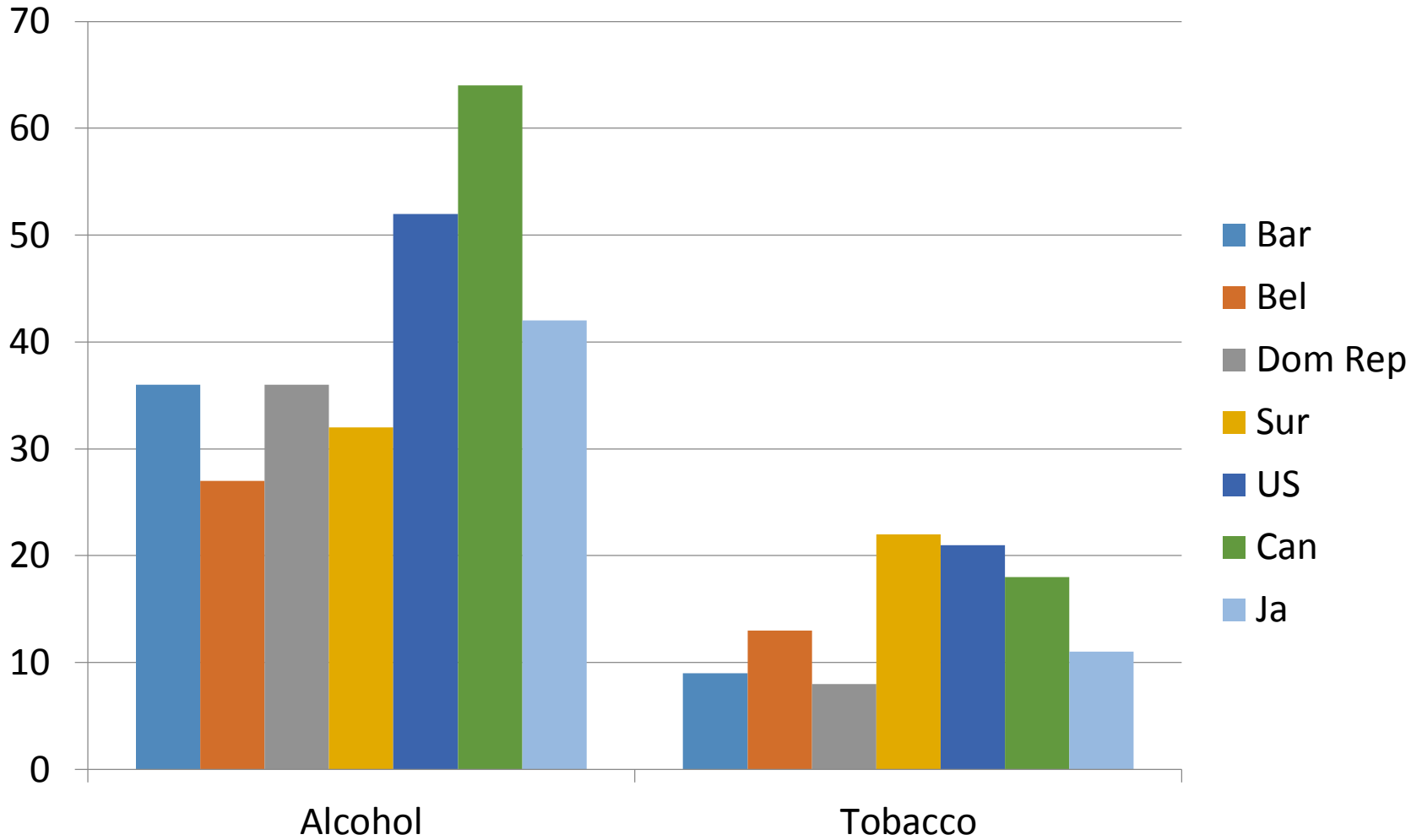


# Tobacco Current

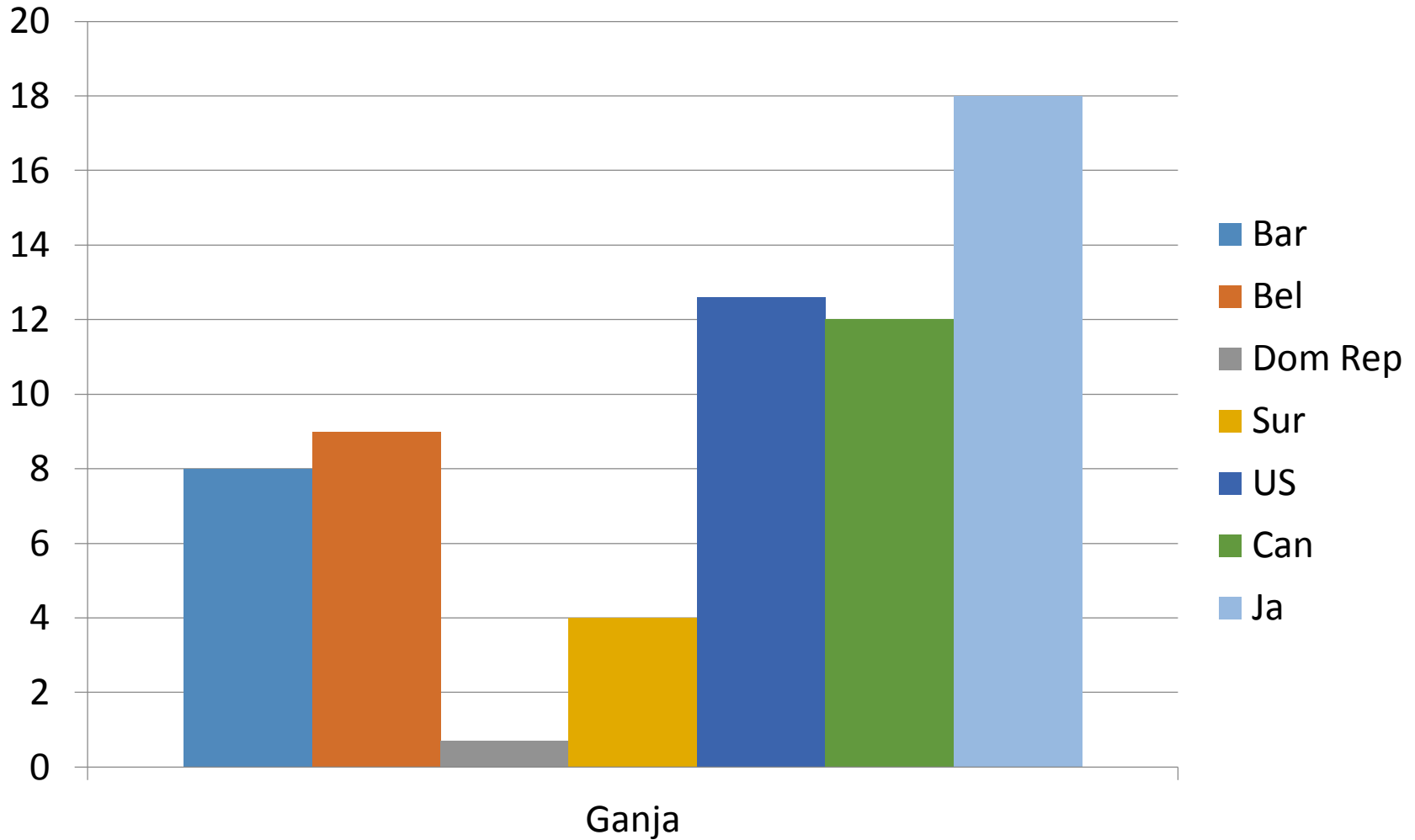


■ Tobacco Current

# Country Comparisons –Alcohol & Tobacco (Past Month)



# Country Comparisons –Ganja (Past Year)



# Summary

## 2001 vs 2016

- ❑ 3% increase in past year alcohol use among general population
- ❑ Notable gender differences in current use of alcohol - 2% increase among females, 13% increase among males
- ❑ 6% increase in past year ganja use among general population
- ❑ 3% increase in current ganja use among females, 9% increase among males
- ❑ Current cigarette use among females has remained the same since 2001 (5%) and has decreased by 5% among males
- ❑ Current use of alcohol has decreased among adolescents, ganja and tobacco use have remained the same

# Summary

## **NHS 2016**

- Current alcohol use is highest in St. Ann and Westmoreland, lowest in St. Mary and St. James
- Current ganja use is highest in KSA and lowest in Portland and St. Andrew
- Current tobacco use is highest in St. Ann and lowest in Clarendon
- Higher past year prevalence of ganja use in Jamaica compared to selected countries in the region

*Thank You...*