

**CANNABIS TRENDS
AND RECENT POLICY
DEVELOPMENTS IN ALBANIA**

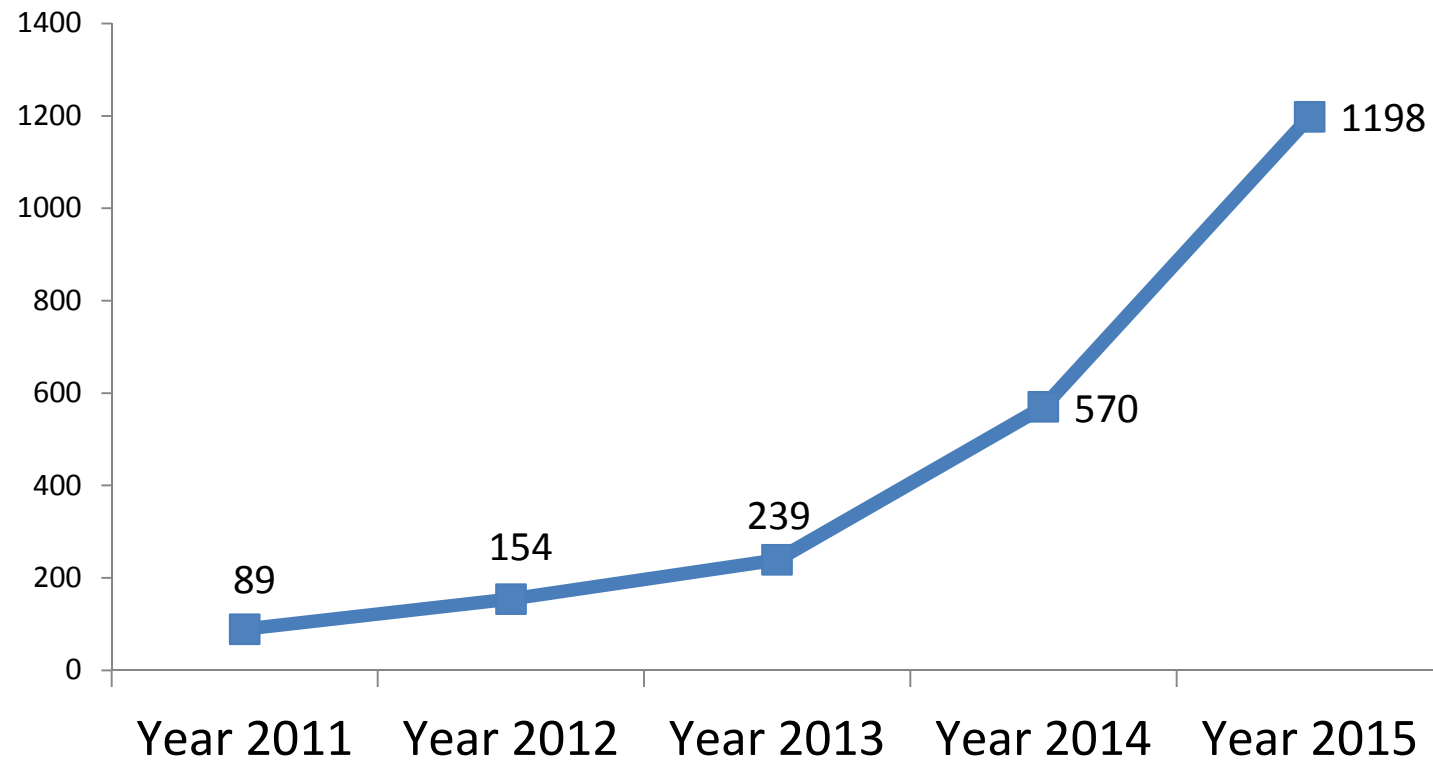
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CANNABIS SITUATION

- Cannabis - a progressively worrisome issue
- Albania has been increasingly present in local and international mass media regarding cannabis.

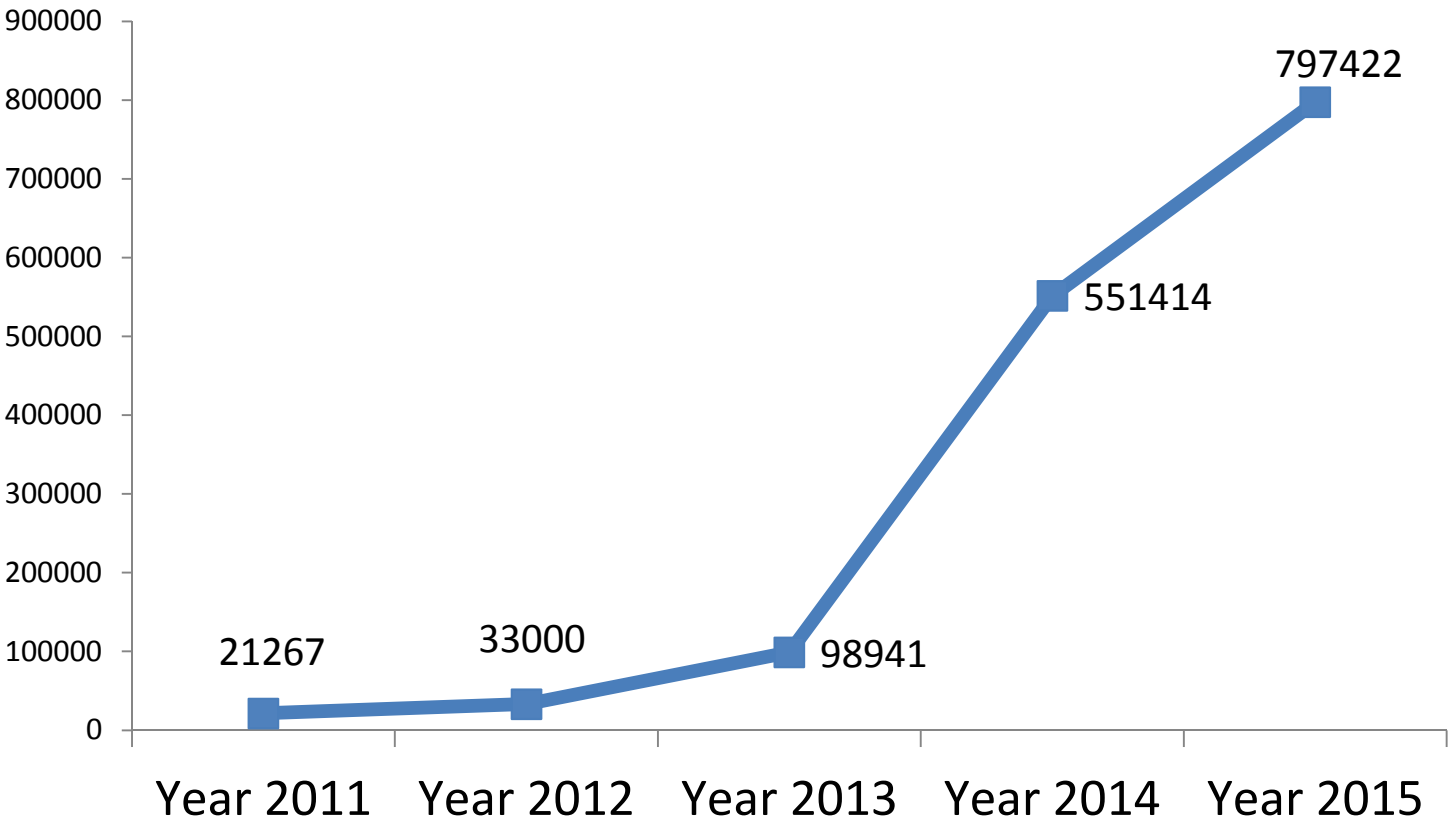
CANNABIS SITUATION – PRODUCTION

Cultivation episodes (number) detected by police



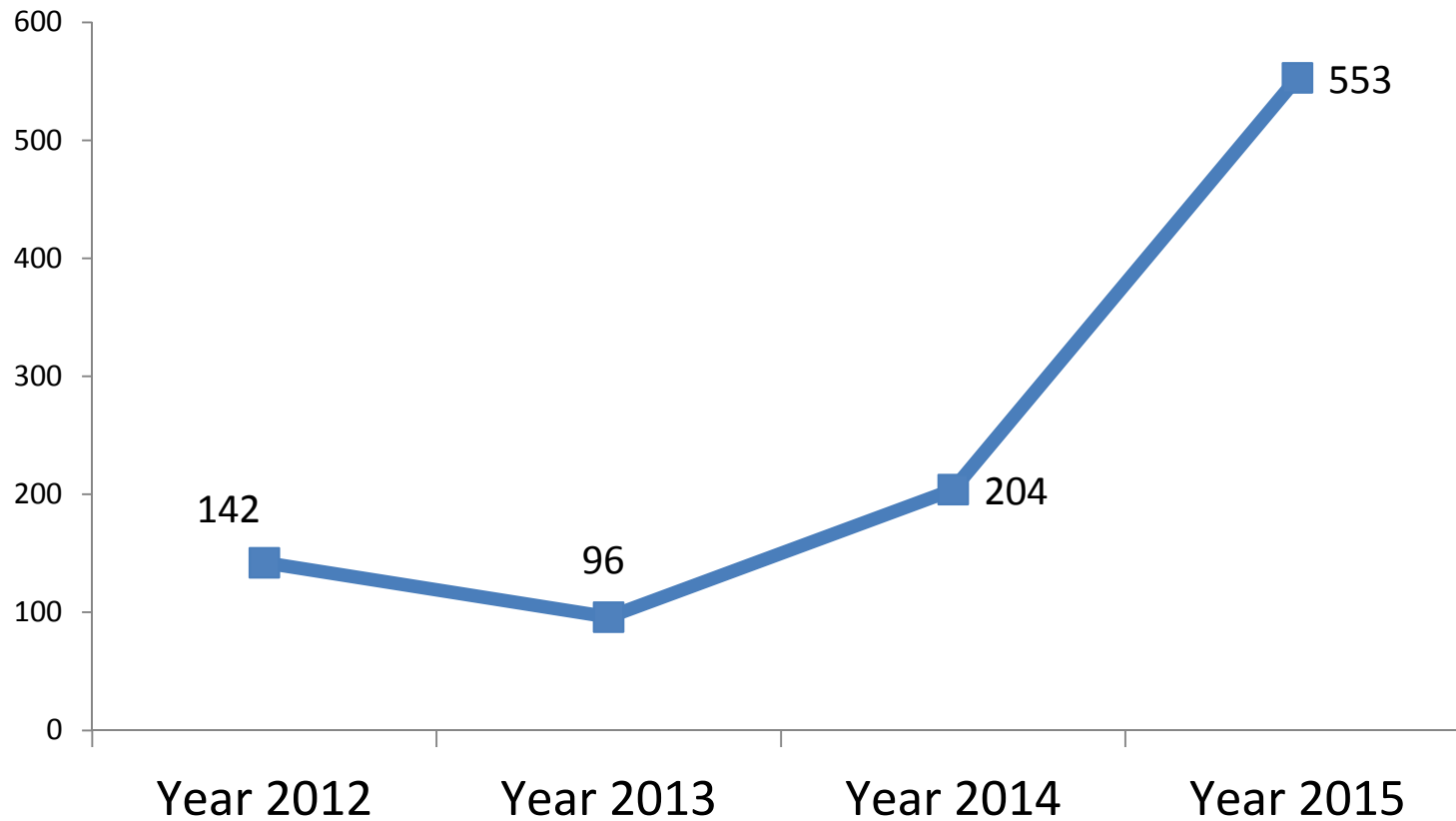
CANNABIS SITUATION – PRODUCTION

Cannabis plants (number) destroyed



CANNABIS SITUATION – PROSECUTED OFFENDERS

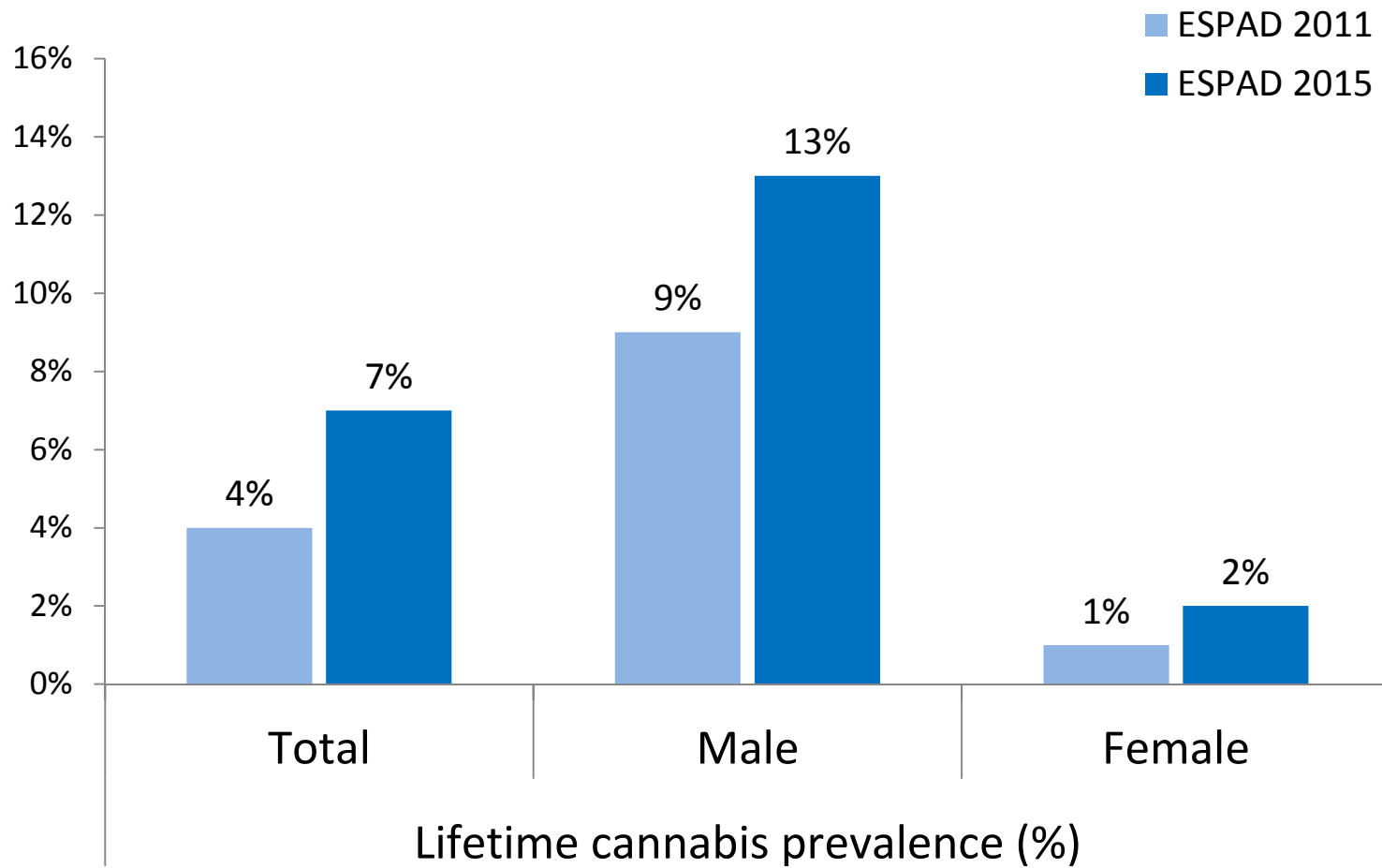
Prosecuted offenders (number)



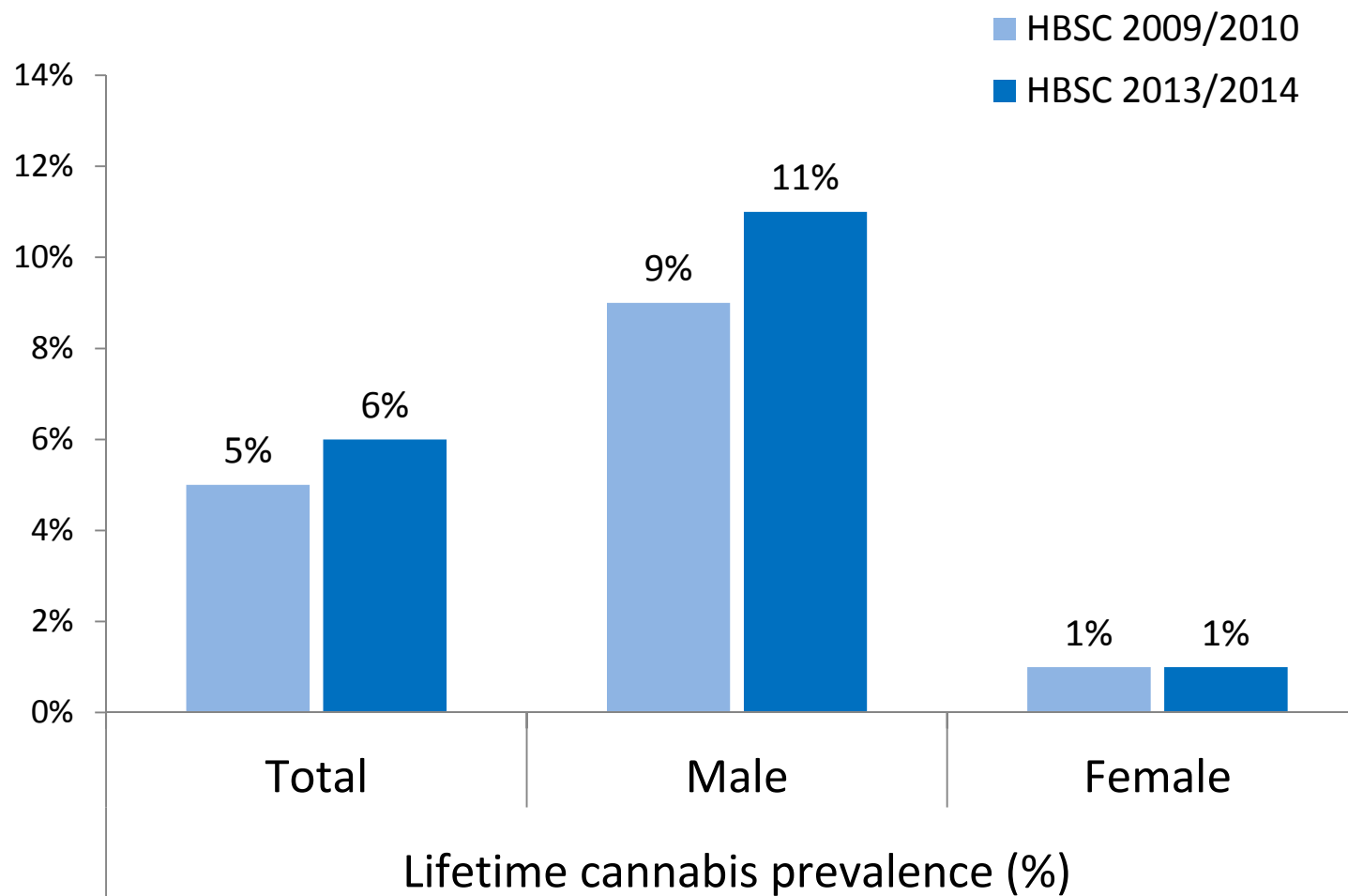
CANNABIS SITUATION – USE

- The only consecutive national studies enabling assessment of cannabis trends in Albania include ESPAD and HBSC.
- The target population of ESPAD consists of school children aged 15-16 years at the time of the survey.
- Target population of HBSC survey consists of pupils aged 11-13-15 years.

CANNABIS SITUATION – USE



CANNABIS SITUATION – USE



* Among 15 years old school children

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- On 29 March 2017, the National Action Plan Against Cultivation and Trafficking of Cannabis (NAPAC) 2017-2020 entered into force.
- NAPAC was developed in response to recent cannabis trends.
- Main focus: common inter-institutional efforts comprehensively and directly targeting identification, detection and annihilation of criminal networks involved in cultivation and trafficking of cannabis.

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- NAPAC also will consider basic factors that enhance cannabis cultivation and trafficking:
 - disadvantaged socio-economic conditions;
 - increasingly international demand;
 - enforcement of different legal standards in drug destination sites;
 - close collaboration between criminal networks and their financial power.

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- A recent feature of NAPAC is the way the success of different institutions in the fight against cannabis is measured, through use of these indicators:
 - Success rates of identification;
 - Success rates of detection;
 - Success rates of detention;
 - Success rates of legal prosecution of persons financing and heading these criminal groups or networks.

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- Unlike previous approaches, NAPAC will also orient the institutions' efforts at the early stages of cannabis cultivation cycle, aiming to achieve success by preventing the introduction of seeds in the country and destroying cannabis plants when they are still seedlings, in closed environments, closed areas and predominantly near residential areas.

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- Identification and sequestration of assets created by criminal activity is another important criterion to measure the success rate in facing with cannabis phenomenon.
- On the other hand, detection and annihilation of cannabis plants in the last stage of their cycle will be considered an extreme situation which will entail serious responsibilities for all relevant authorities.

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- NAPAC gives particular attention to measures that contribute to the discouragement of citizens to engage in illegal activities of cultivation and trafficking of cannabis, including:
 - various measures to raise public awareness;
 - promote and support legal economic activities in affected areas;
 - facilitating fiscal burden and ensure social support to high risk individuals and communities as defined in NAPAC.

RECENT POLICY RESPONSES

- Intensification of public communication in the interest of citizen awareness, reduction of cannabis use and broad civic cooperation in the common effort against cannabis will be an important priority of this national action plan.

EFFECTIVENESS OF NAPAC

- The success of NAPAC measures in reducing the multifaceted aspects of cannabis in Albania in the future remains to be seen.

THANK YOU !