



**Short Description on Situation of
Problematic Drug Users in Kosovo
and
Launch of Methadone Maintenance
Therapy (MMT)**

NGO Labyrinth
Safet Blakaj

Short history of NGO Labyrinth

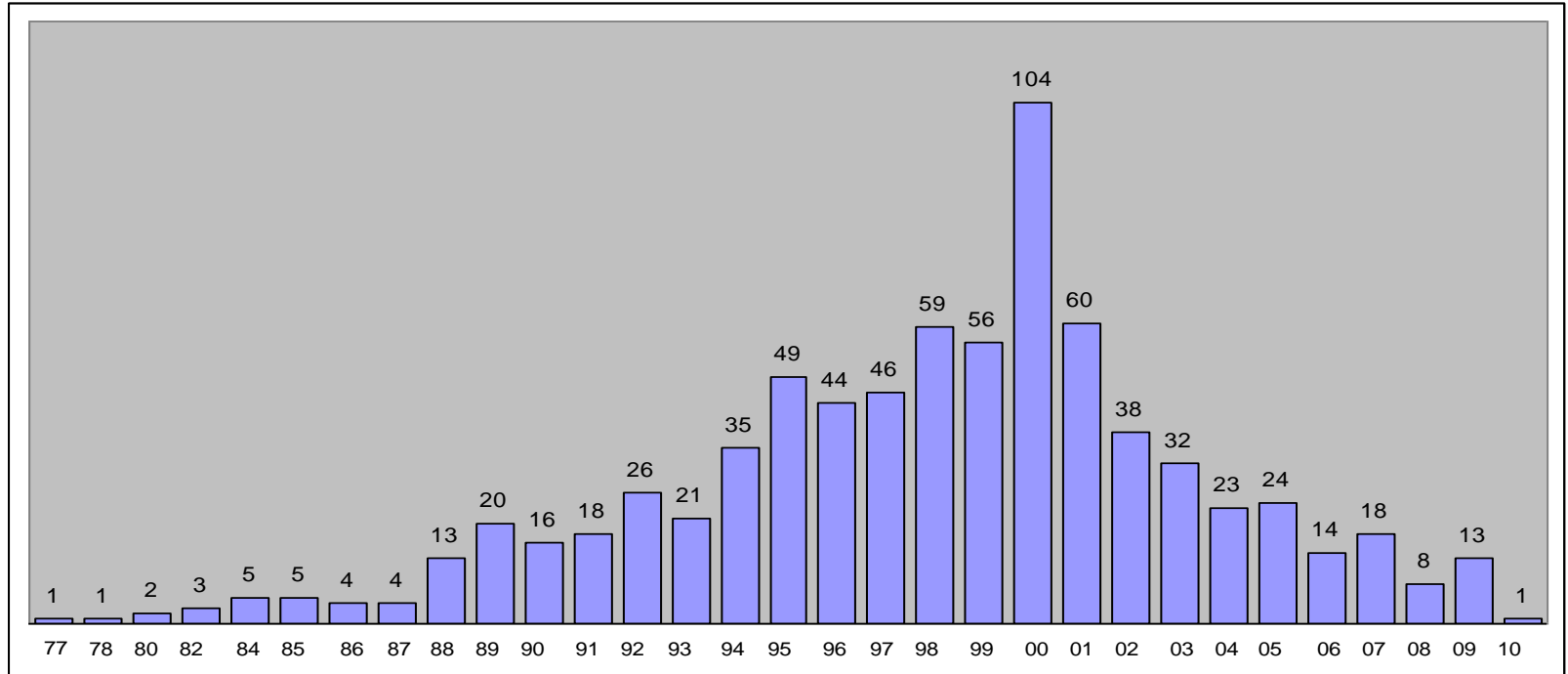
- Was established in 2002
- Has two sectors: prevention and treatment
- Implementing Harm Reduction programmes since 2004
- Ngo Labyrinth has three centers : in Prishtine, Prizren dhe Gjilan
- On its database NGO Labyrinth has registered more than 1000 problematic drug users.

- In 1978, according to the statistical data's of ex-Yougosllavia, in Kosovo there were no drug users registered (Zavod za zdrastvenu zastitu. A. Despotovic, M. Ignjatovic)
- In 1985, there were 71 drug users registered (*Izvestaj saveznog komiteta za rad I socialnu zasititu*)
- In 2010 according to a group of experts evaluation, in Kosova there are 3000 to 5000 problematic drug user.
- No cases of HIV positive among drug users
- According to Bio-BSS study 2011, 37.4% Hep C positive and 6% Hep B positive

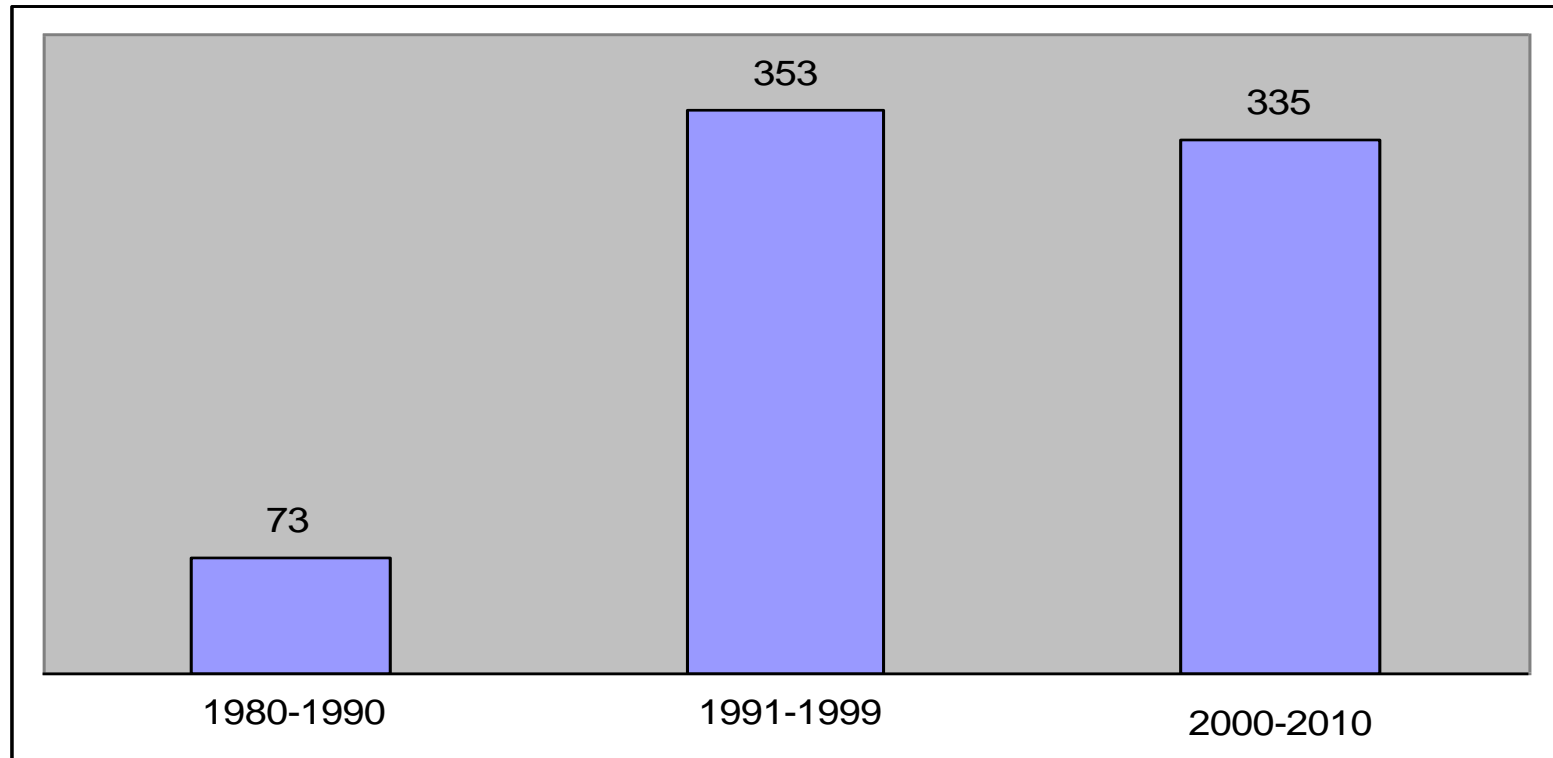
A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a light green vertical bar and a dark blue horizontal bar with rounded ends.

*Data's from the database of NGO
Labyrinth*

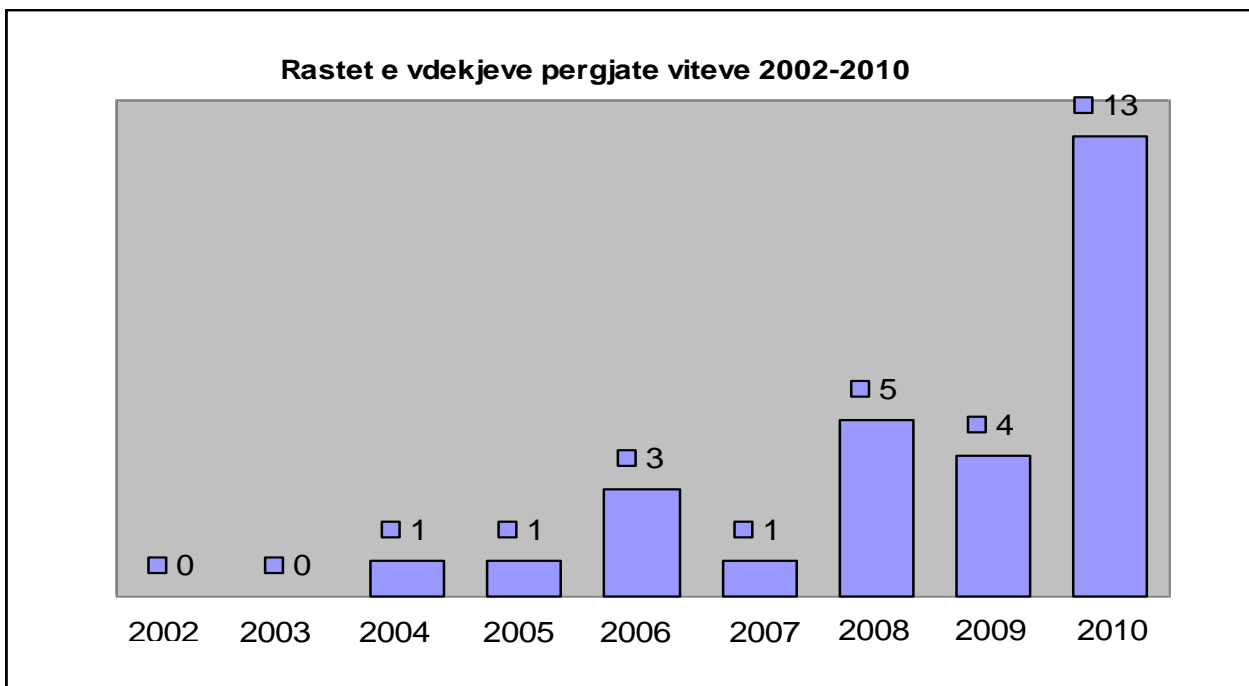
Number of people that had started using drugs during the period 1977-2010



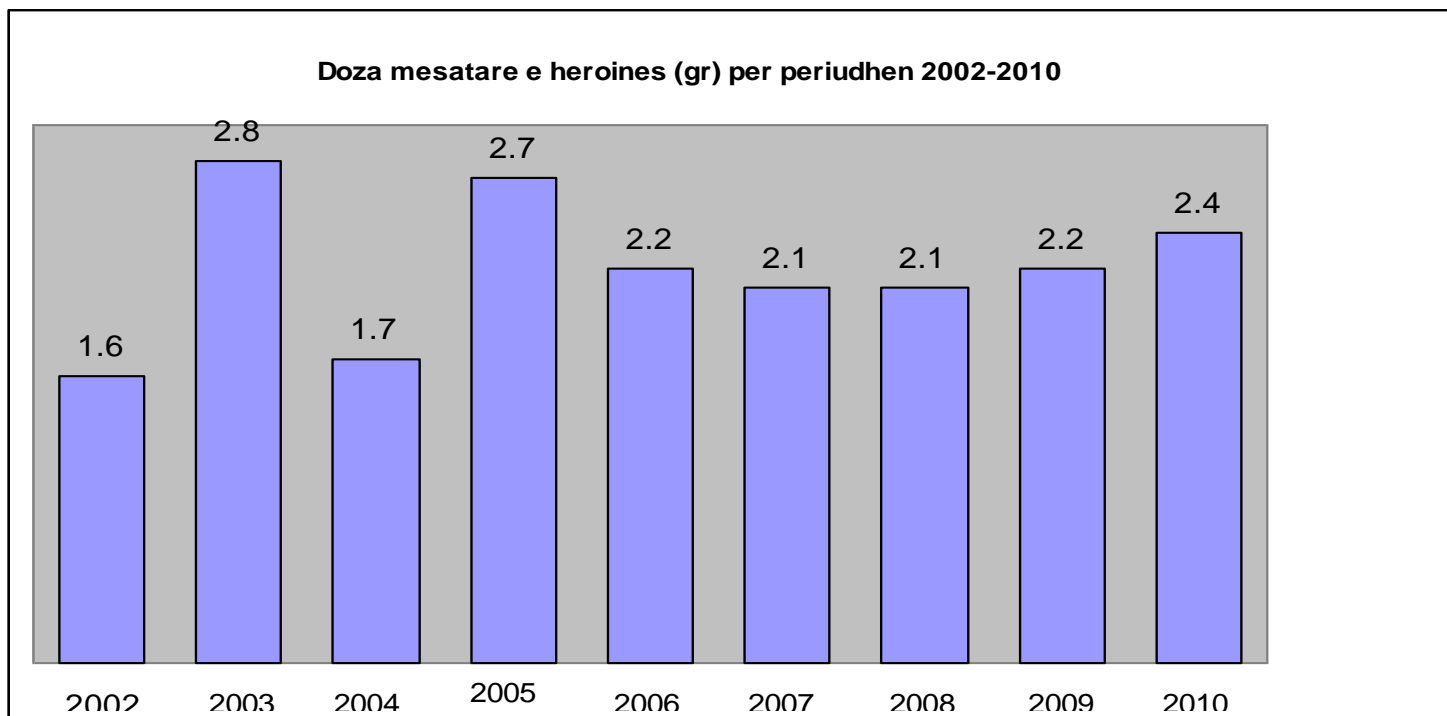
Number of people that had started using drugs in three decades



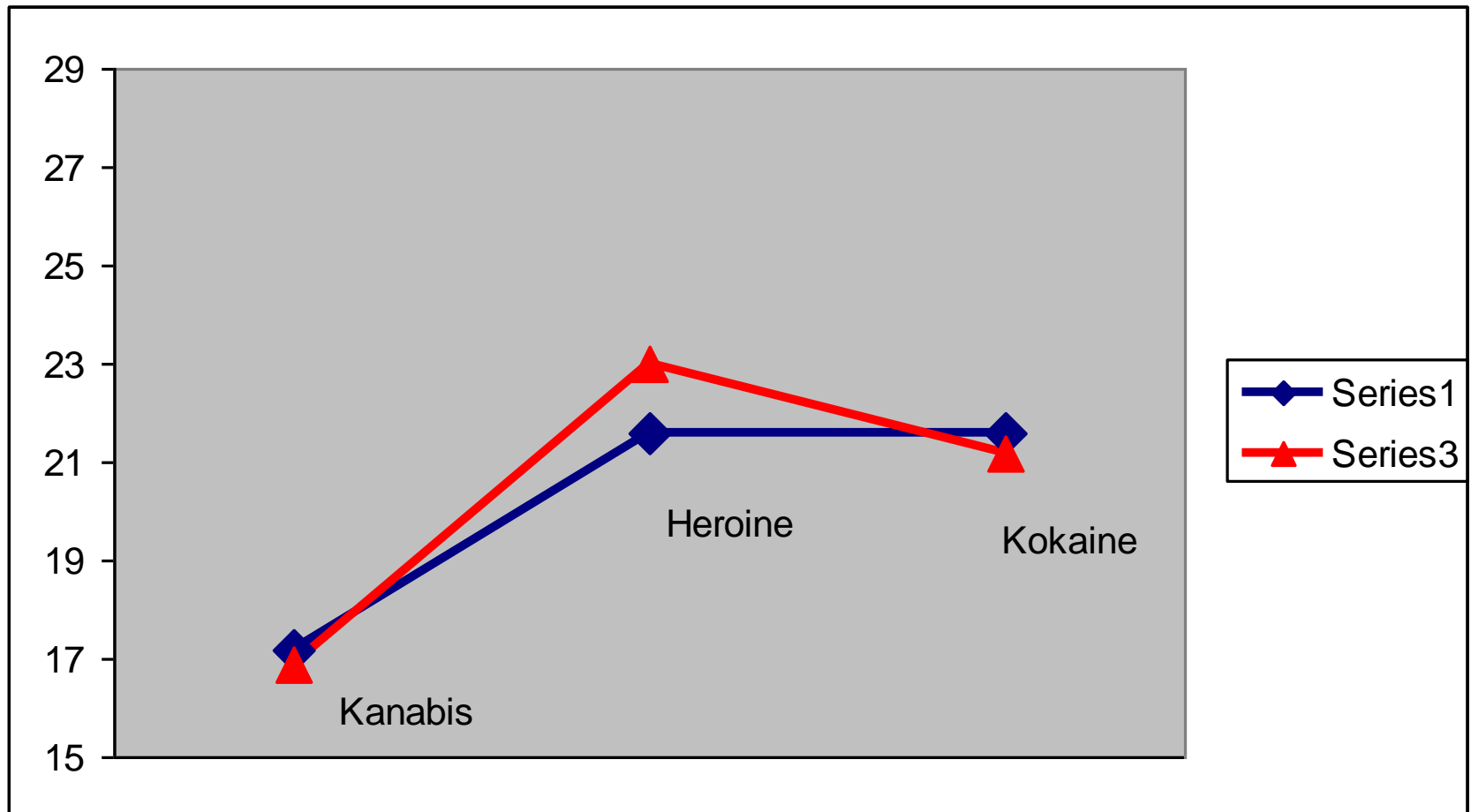
The incidence of deaths among drug users during the period 2002-2010



The average dosage of heroin use during the period 2002-2010



Comparing the average age of onset of drug use inside Kosovo and outside of Kosovo



Launch of methadone maintenance therapy

- Since 2004 Labyrinth has been lobbying and advocating for the implementation of Methadone Maintenance Therapy.

- Obstacles

Legal infrastructure

*Negative attitudes of professionals toward
MMT*

The inherited concepts from the past

- During the period March-April 2012 there were some positive movements in order to initiate the MMT programme in Kosovo. Different institutions played their role, The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Kosovo Police, The Secretariat for the implementation of National Anti-drug Strategy, the psychiatric Clinic and NGO Labyrinth
- At the end permission from MoH
- MMT programme in Kosovo has officially started in 26 of April 2012
- The influence of EMCDDA and Global Fund

- In the first week, 6 clients have been included in MMT.
- Currently there are 54 drug users in MMT programme
- The initial dosage is 30-50 mg, while the maintenance dosage is 80-120 mg
- Take away dosage, according to National Protocol, prepared by the MoH
- Until now three public centers have also started with MMT programme
- Prisons...?

Challenges

- Establishment of MMT centers in all the regions of Kosova
- Coordination among implementing centers of MMT
- Lacking of funds
- Including methadone in the essential list of medications that is provided by MoH
- Raising human resources among professionals

Donor

- The initiation and the implementation process of MMT was supported by the
GLOBAL FUND