

Hungary needs to improve conditions for people living with HIV, says new EU Index

Brussels, October 13, 2009

The care and conditions for people living with HIV/AIDS in Hungary need to improve significantly, said the Euro HIV Index (EHIVI) 2009 which was presented today in Brussels. This first survey of HIV policy and best practice ranked Hungary 23rd out of 29 countries, scoring 652 points from a potential 1,000. Luxembourg wins the ranking with 857 points followed by Malta (791) and Switzerland (775).

"Access to HIV care in Hungary is difficult for several reasons:

1) HIV/AIDS is strongly stigmatised, and patients often experience discrimination. Hence, they rarely disclose their status in their social life, which makes HIV even a more difficult burden to carry.

2) There is a law which ensures anonymous and free of charge testing and counselling, but the practice is very weak. Counselling hardly ever happens and most of the testing facilities ask for health insurance cards for easier reimbursement of the examination/test, making very difficult the access for migrants", states Dr. Beatriz Cebolla, the Euro HIV Index Director.

While the number of people living with HIV (PLWH) increases in every member state of the EU, budgets in several countries are reduced. Sexual risk behaviour is becoming more and more regular practice. Criminalization of HIV is a problem in many countries, and still HIV specific legislation exists in some countries; people can get prosecuted also for unintentionally and unknowingly transmitting the virus. The access to care for marginalized groups such as undocumented migrants is not guaranteed almost anywhere in Europe. Discrimination and stigma against PLWH is frequent at work and in schools. Harm reduction strategies in prisons are still weakly implemented, especially in the Eastern European countries. There is a general lack of leadership in HIV management and no government seems to know the true number of HIV-infected inhabitants. The main conclusion of the HIV Index is that there is still a lot to do.

About the Index

The EHIVI ranks the HIV situation across 28 indicators, covering 4 areas that are key to HIV: Involvement and rights, Access, Prevention, and Outcomes. The Euro HIV Index is compiled from a combination of public statistics, patient polls and independent research conducted by the founder, the Brussels-based think tank Health Consumer Powerhouse. The EHIVI 2009 takes a patient centred position. The Index is being held in association with the Swedish EU presidency of autumn 2009. It has received an unrestricted educational grant by Gilead Research.

Press Release



You are invited to a Netviewer session of the presentation at 10 a.m. You can participate in the session by clicking this link:

<https://get.netviewer.com/meet/join.php?sinr=831594&sipw=nv64>

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