

Spain needs to improve conditions in HIV care and support, says new EU Index

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The care and conditions for people living with HIV/AIDS in Spain need to improve, said the Euro HIV Index (EHIVI) 2009 which was presented today in Brussels. This first survey of HIV policy and best practice ranked Spain 15th out of 29 countries, scoring 711 points from a potential 1,000. Luxembourg wins the ranking with 857 points followed by Malta (791) and Switzerland (775).

Spain, without having disastrous results, does not seem to be flawless in any of the four subcategories.

“Spain has very good harm reduction strategies implemented for drug users and prisoners, even though every region has its own programs. It is also important to highlight that undocumented migrants face less problems when it comes to accessing care”, states Dr. Beatriz Cebolla, the Euro HIV Index Director. “There are some things that should be implemented, such as sex education in schools as a prevention measure not only for HIV but for other sexual transmitted diseases.”

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 works under the auspices of the Swedish presidency and has received an unrestricted educational grant by Gilead Research.

Press Release



For more information and the explanatory report:

http://www.healthpowerhouse.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=54

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