

Press Release



Switzerland takes bronze in Euro HIV Index

Brussels, October 13, 2009

The care and conditions for people living with HIV/AIDS in Switzerland are very good, said the Euro HIV Index (EHIVI) 2009 which was presented today in Brussels. This first survey of HIV policy and best practice ranked Switzerland 3rd out of 29 countries, scoring 775 points from a potential 1,000. Luxembourg wins the ranking with 857 points, followed by Malta (791).

"Switzerland is doing rather well in all four sub-disciplines of the Index, but results in prevention are the most impressive. Access to care for undocumented migrants could be the weak spot. A number of NGOs work to help such groups to access the system and get treated." states Dr. Beatriz Cebolla, the Euro HIV Index Director. "The Swiss need to improve the number of checkups in order to prevent secondary infections; it is important to provide HIV testing to tuberculosis patients, or testing for STD and hepatitis to HIV patients."

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.

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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