



Future directions in HIV in relation to the four “95”

Mariana Mardarescu MD PhD
Coordinator of Compartment for
Monitoring and Evaluation
of HIV Data in Romania

2024 ECDC HIV Network meeting
15-17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

The specific objectives of the meeting are to:

1. Enhance data quality in HIV surveillance system

- This objective aims to address emerging challenges in data collection, ensuring that the information gathered is robust and contributes effectively to informed decision-making in public health policies;

2. Discuss progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals as they pertain to HIV.

- a) Prevention/PrEP
- b) Achieving the first 95 target (estimates, testing, reducing late diagnosis)
- c) ART scale-up and integrated care
- d) The impact of HIV-related stigma on all steps of the HIV Continuum

3. Seek network input on future priorities

- Based on objectives 1 and 2, the aim will be getting input from the HIV network that will guide the programme of work for ECDC in the years ahead.

2024 ECDC HIV Network meeting

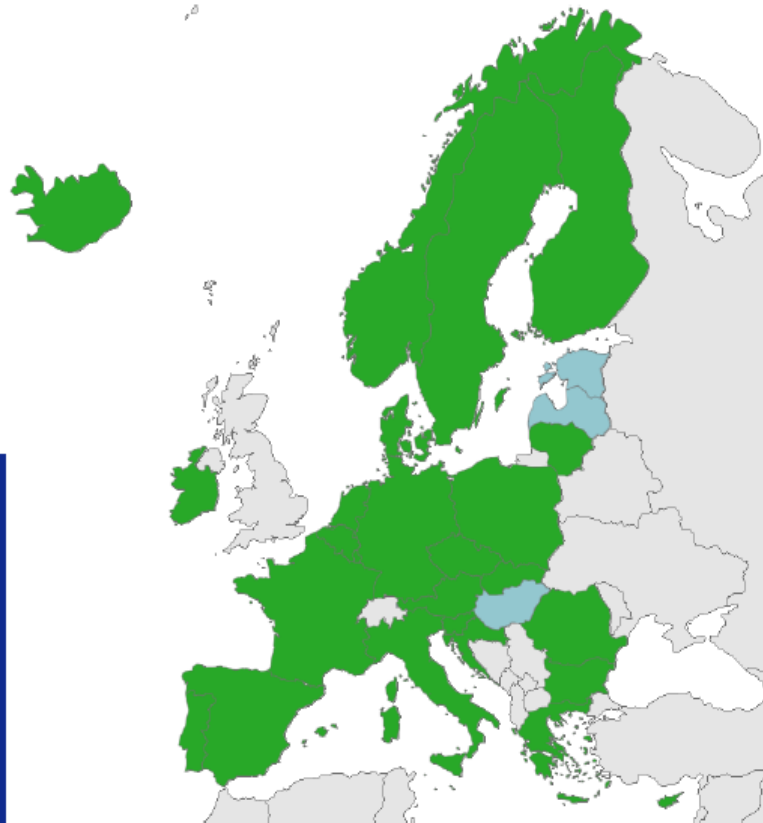
Outline

- Progress toward reaching the following targets for HIV:
 - Incidence (new infections)
 - Prevention
 - Testing
 - Treatment
 - Stigma
- Conclusions: What the EU must do to achieve the 2030 UNAIDS Goals

Source: ECDC. SDG brief HIV; 2024. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/dublin-declaration-hiv-2023-progress-report>

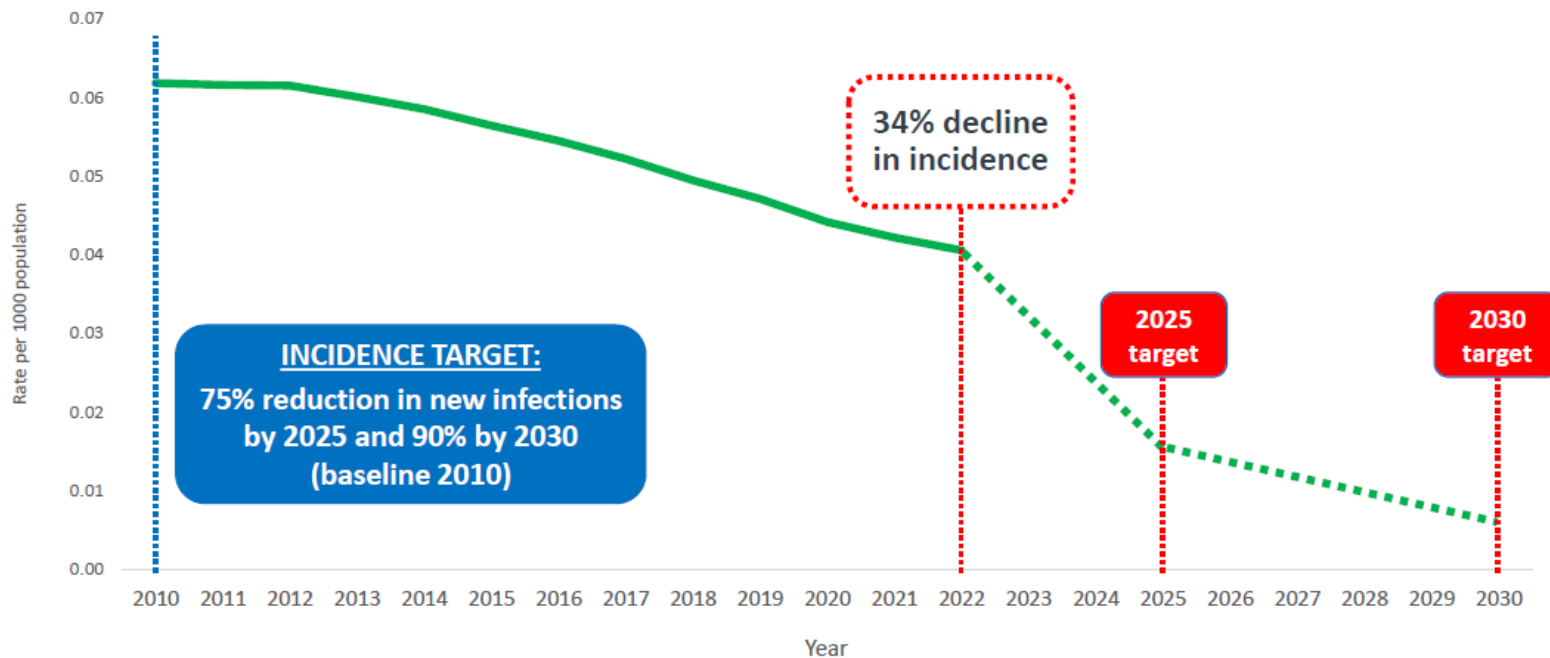


Estimated number of people living with HIV in the EU/EEA, 2022



Countries	Nr of PLHIV
Austria	7732
Belgium	19177
Bulgaria	3199
Croatia	1795
Cyprus	1354
Czechia	3983
Denmark	7100
Estonia	--
Finland	3532
France	178700
Germany	90800
Greece	17175
Hungary	--
Iceland	368
Ireland	7200
Italy	140730
Latvia	--
Liechtenstein	--
Lithuania	3626
Luxembourg	1455
Malta	814
Netherlands	24110
Norway	4572
Poland	18923
Portugal	45532
Romania	18221
Slovakia	19415
Slovenia	898
Spain	148371
Sweden	9455

Progress toward reaching HIV incidence target in the EU/EEA

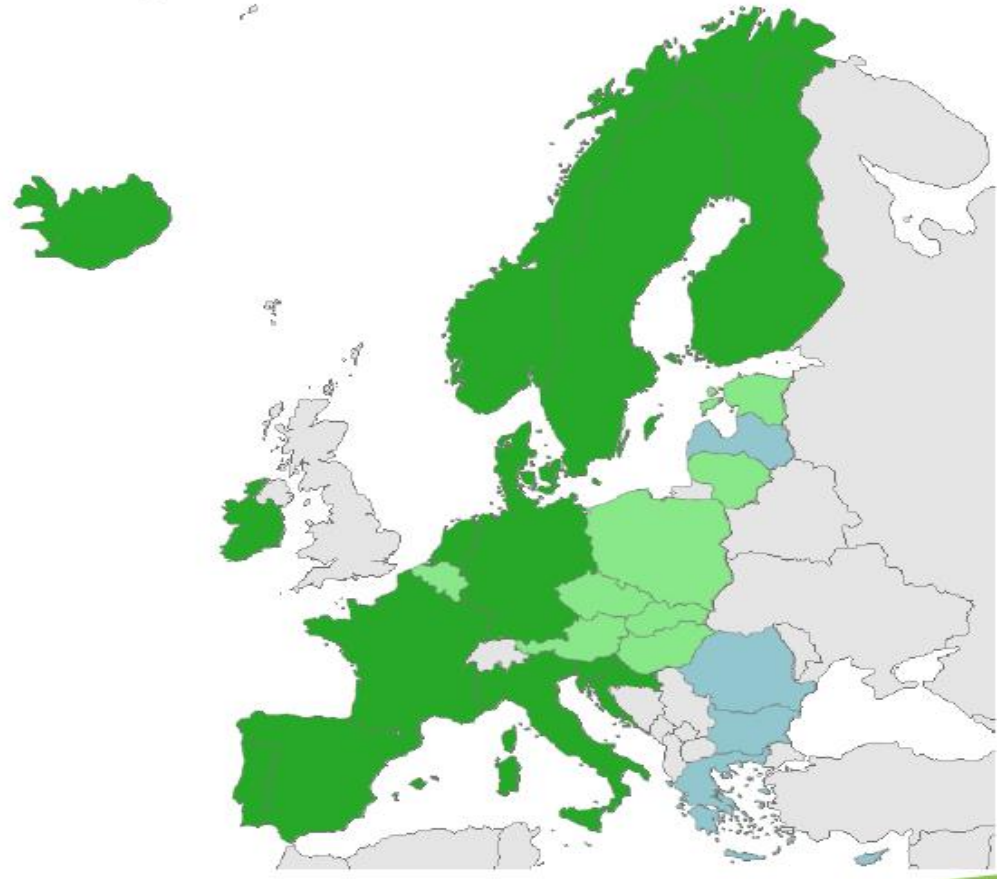


Source: UNAIDS Spectrum estimates.

Status of formal PrEP implementation in the EU/EEA as of October, 2023

- N=16** Nationally available (reimbursed)
- N=9** Generics available (not fully reimbursed)
- N=5** Not formally implemented

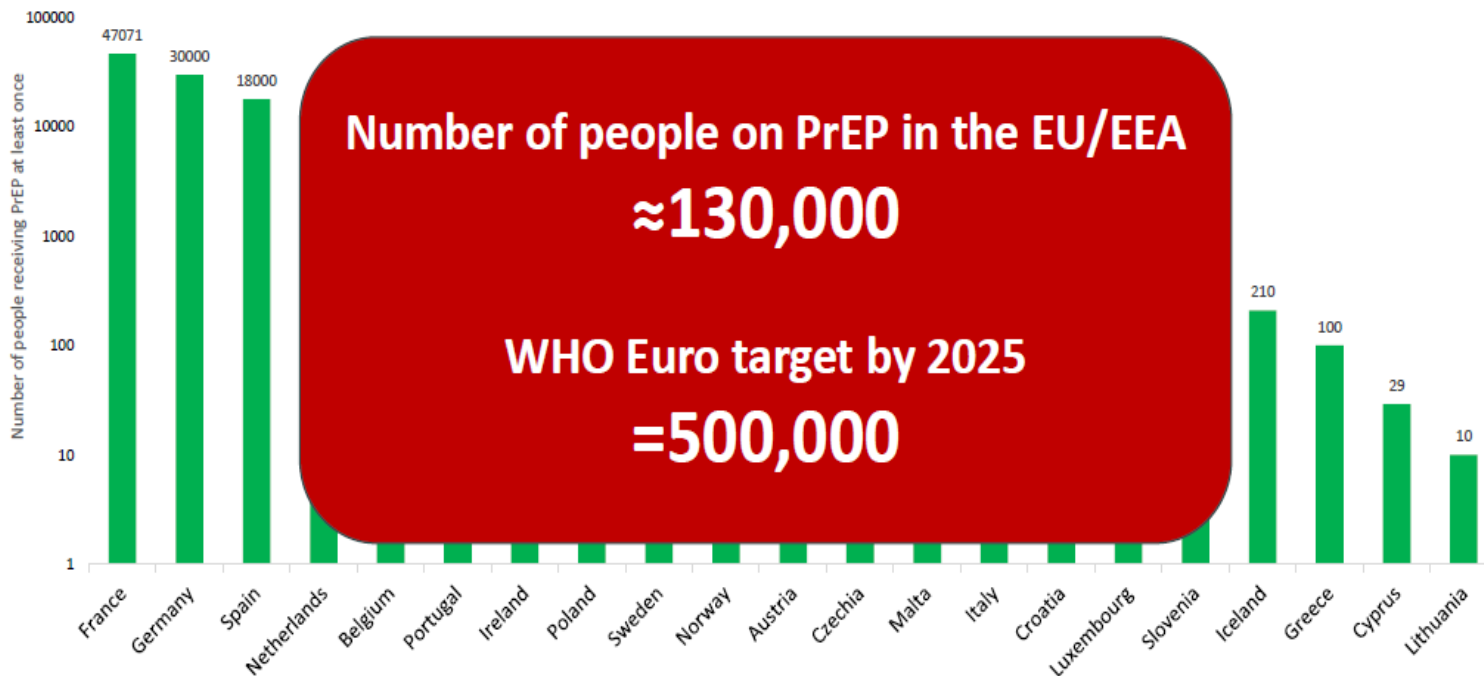
-  Luxembourg
-  Malta
-  Liechtenstein



Number of people receiving PrEP in the last 12 months, 2022

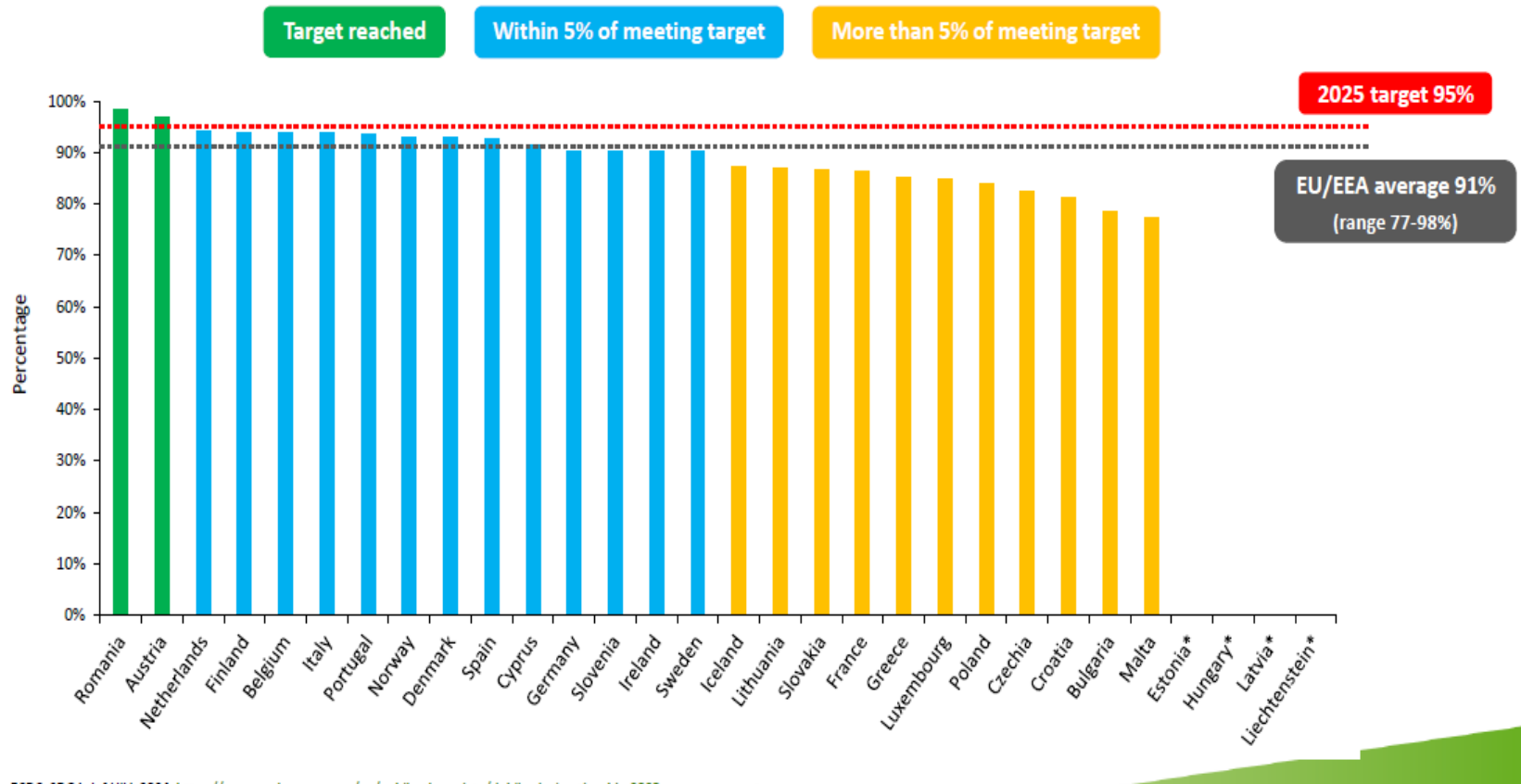


■ Number of people (aged 15+) who received PrEP at least once during the reporting period



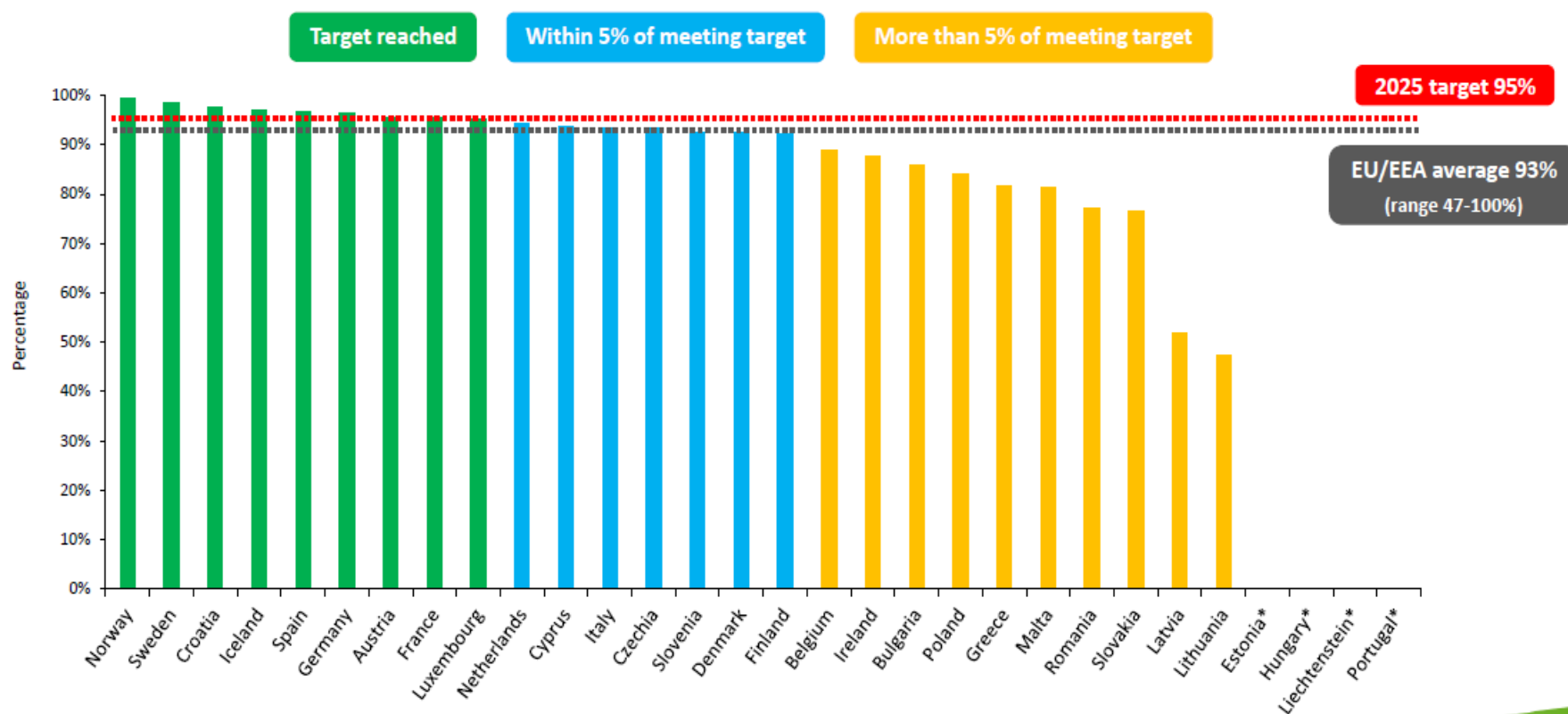
Source: ECDC Dublin Declaration monitoring 2023. Validated unpublished data. Preliminary analysis.

Progress toward the 1st 95% target (reported in 2023): 95% of all PLHIV who know their status (n=26 countries)



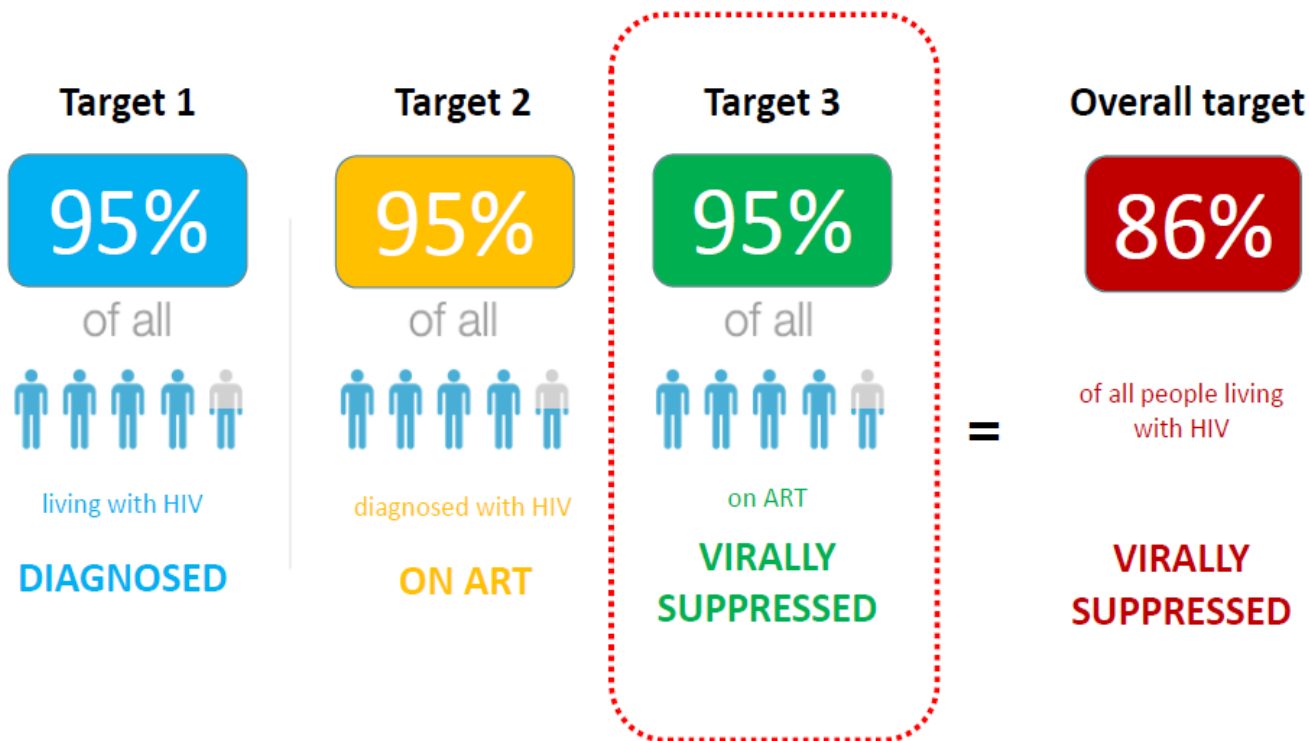


Progress toward the 2nd 95% target (reported in 2023): 95% of those diagnosed on ART (n=26 countries)



Source: ECDC. SDG brief HIV; 2024. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/dublin-declaration-hiv-2023-progress-report>

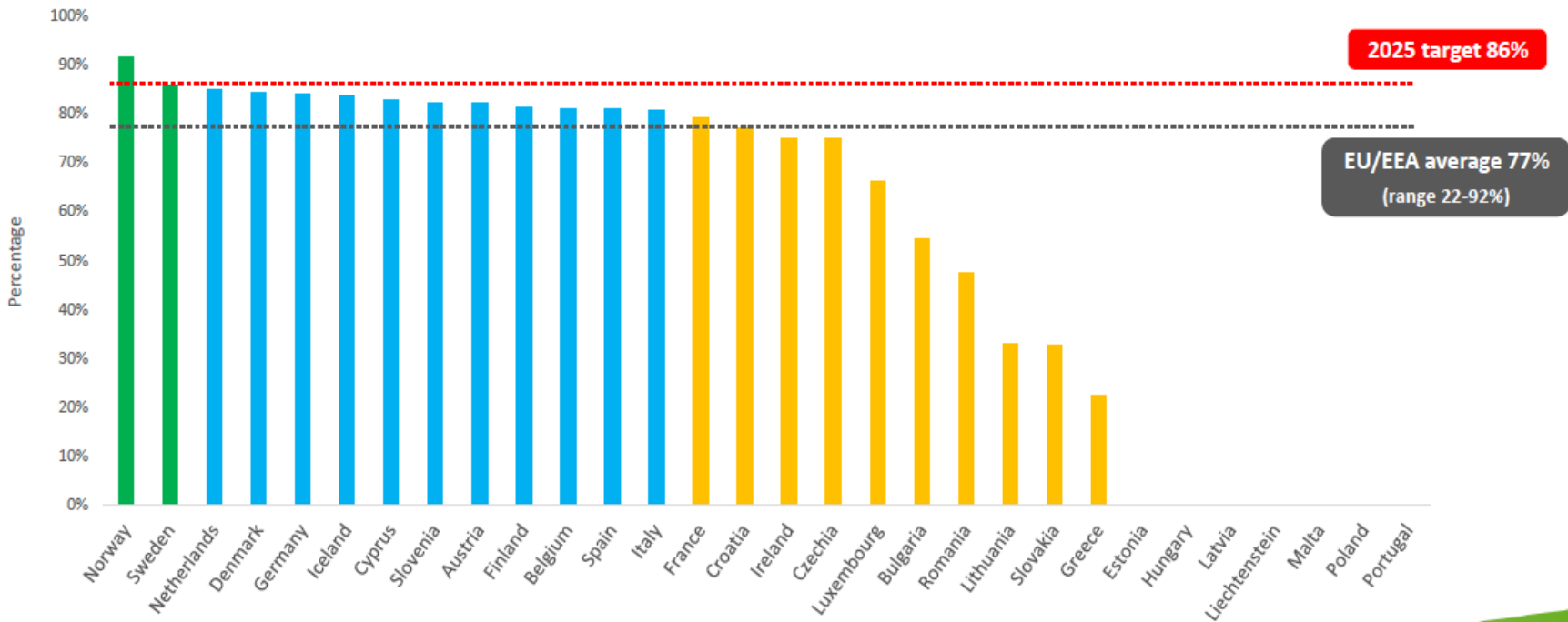
Testing and treatment targets for 2025



Progress toward achieving the overall target reported in 2023): 86% of all PLHIV virally suppressed (n=23 countries)



Target reached Within 5% of meeting target More than 5% of meeting target



Source: ECDC. SDG brief HIV; 2024. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/dublin-declaration-hiv-2023-progress-report>



ECDC HIV Network meeting

16 – 17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

Assessing progress to reaching the SDGs by 2030: Country progress Romania

Mariana Mărdărescu MD PhD

Coordinator of Compartment for Monitoring and Evaluation of HIV/AIDS
Data in Romania

National Institute for Infectious Disease “Prof. Dr. Matei Bals”

Bucharest, Romania



ECDC HIV Network meeting

16 – 17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

HIV monitoring in Romania

Monitoring instruments in Romania

The data on HIV/AIDS in Romania are stored in:



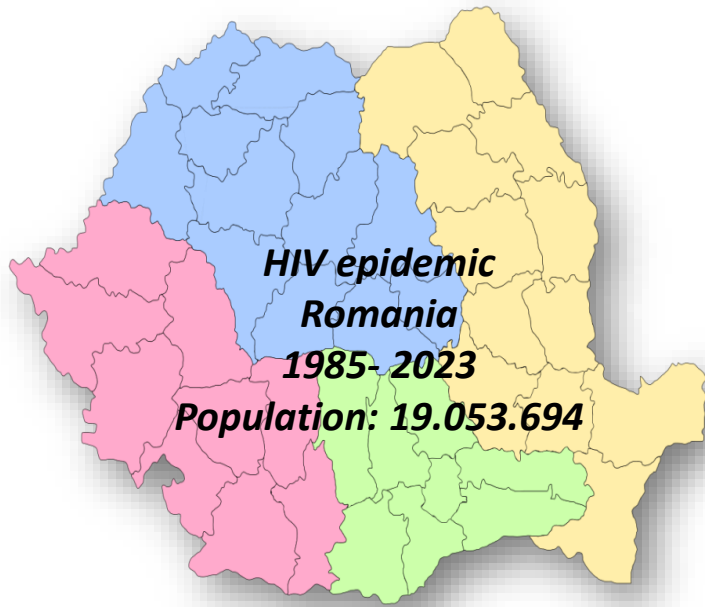
- The National HIV/AIDS Data Base: **27.897** (cumulative total 1985-2023)
- **The cohort of long-term survivors - infected in the late 1980s and early 1990s as children: >6000 out of people diagnosed with HIV.**
- **Today they enter the 30-35 age group.**



- The National Registry of Patients under CART treatment in Romania (Technical Assistance and Management of the HIV Programme Unit)- **14.567.**



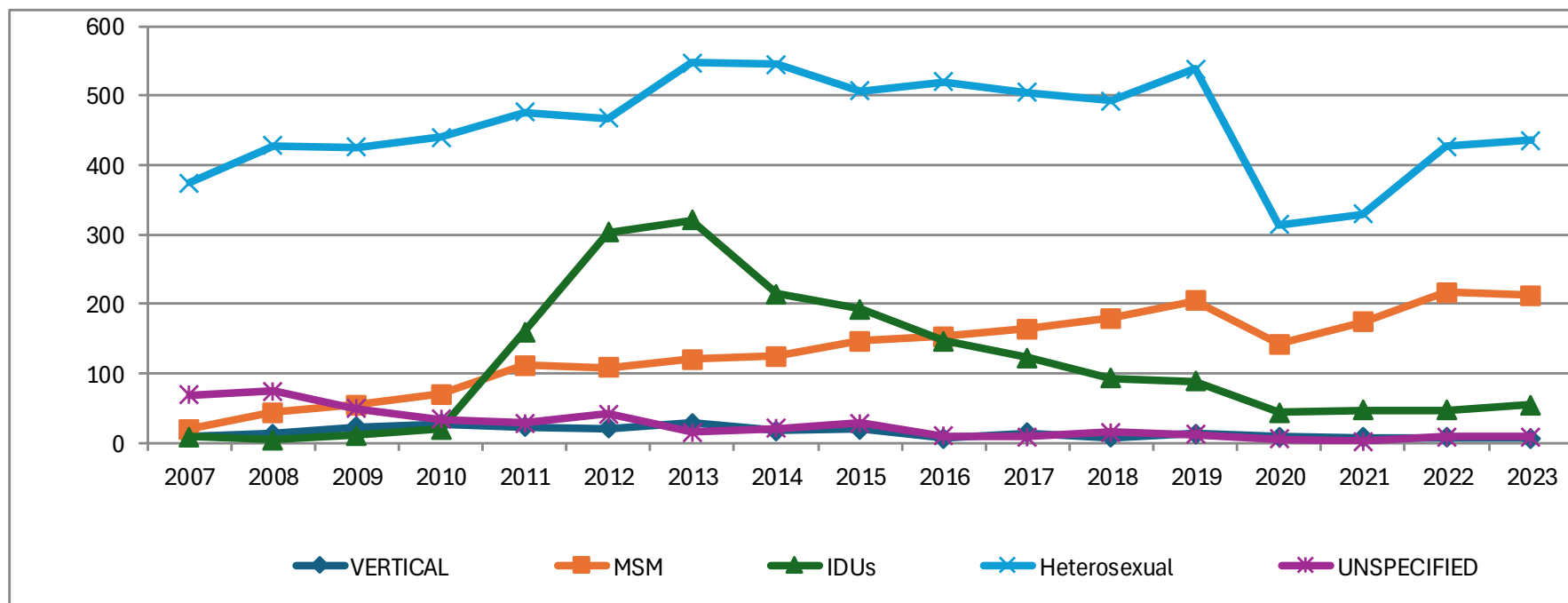
- *The National Registry of pregnant women- infected with HIV and of perinatally exposed children – 1994 mothers and children perinatally exposed to HIV, monitored during 1 January 2013 - 31 December 2023 (ongoing monitoring)- <2% national transmission rate.*



- ✓ 1985-2023 cumulative cases: **27.897**
- ✓ No. of PLWHA registered in the National HIV Data Base (1985-2023): **18.282**
- ✓ **757** average number of new cases between 2010-2023
- ✓ UNAIDS estimates for PLWHA: **20.000** (17.000-23.000 in 2022)*
- ✓ Long-term survivors' cohort (1988-1990), non-vertically infected **~11.000**, registered in the National HIV Data Base, between 1990-2000.
- ✓ Co-infected HIV/HBV from the Romanian cohort: **43,4%**
- ✓ **>5500** PLWHA from the long-term survivors' cohort
- ✓ YPLWHA for the 25-34 age group:
 - ✓ **5323-29%** from the total number of those registered in the National HIV Data Base
- ✓ **New tendencies:** young heterosexual persons, MSM, IDUs (significant increase in numbers starting with 2011 until 2016).
- ✓ **0,8%** rate of vertical transmission, at national level (30 December 2023), from the overall of new detected cases (from 4,55% of the new cases detected in 2010 to 0,8% in 2023).
- ✓ New cases in 2023: **716**, **>60% heterosexual transmission**
- ✓ No. of persons in **ART and prophylaxis** at 31 December 2023: **15343** (Technical Assistance and Management Unit).

*UNAIDS- HIV Estimates for Romania 2022

Tendencies in routes of transmission Romania 2007-2023



Tendencies in routes of transmission Romania România 2007-2023*

Route of transmission	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Vertical**	9 (1.85%)	13 (2.28%)	23 (4%)	27 (4.55%)	23 (2.84%)	21 (2.21%)	28 (2.69%)	17 (1.76%)	19 (2.09%)	6 (0.7%)	15 (1.81%)	7 (0.9%)	13 (1.5%)	8 (1.5%)	7 (1%)	8 (1%)	6 (0.8%)
MSM	19 (3.91%)	44 (7.73%)	54 (9.6%)	69 (11.63%)	108 (13.36%)	101 (10.67%)	112 (10.77%)	144 (14.96%)	139 (15.34%)	152 (17.92%)	163 (19.68%)	180 (22.67%)	202 (23.2%)	142 (26,54%)	203 (30%)	218 (29%)	207 (29%)
IDUs	9 (1.85%)	4 (0.7%)	11 (2%)	19 (3.2%)	160 (19.8%)	304 (32.13%)	326 (31,37%)	221 (22.97%)	194 (21.41%)	149 (17.57%)	124 (14.97%)	95 (11.96%)	90 (10.35%)	45 (8.4%)	52 (7,7%)	49 (6,6%)	54 (8.%)
MSM/IDU	1 (0.2%)	0	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.16%)	7 (0.86%)	7 (0.73%)	9 (0.86%)	9 (0.93%)	11 (1.21%)	3 (0.35%)	3 (0.36%)	3 (0.4%)	2 (0,2)	3 (0.6%)	5 (0.74%)	3 (0.4)	5 (0.69%)
Heterosexual	378 (77.93%)	434 (76.27%)	430 (75.5)	443 (74.7%)	481 (59.52%)	472 (49.89%)	549 (52.83%)	550 (57.17%)	515 (56.84%)	528 (62,26%)	514 (62%)	494 (62.21%)	550 (63%)	332 (62%)	399 (59.7%)	463 (61,7%)	435 (61%)
Unspecified	69 14.22%)	74 (13%)	49 (8.7%)	34 (5.73%)	29 (3.58%)	41 (4.33%)	15 (1.44%)	21 (2.18%)	28 (3.09%)	10 (1.17%)	9 (1.1%)	15 (1.9%)	12 (1.4%)	5 (0,9%)	2 (0.3%)	9 (1,2%)	9 (1.25%)
Total ***	485	569	568	593	808	946	1039	962	906	848	828	794	869	535	668	750	716

*Update of the data and case confirmation - performed annually

**Newborns with perinatal exposure and with the status of "HIV infected" in 2023 and perinatally exposed children, under surveillance since the previous years and confirmed in 2023.

Distribution of ages of PLWHIV 31 December 2023

Total no. of HIV/AIDS cases (1985-2023): **27897**

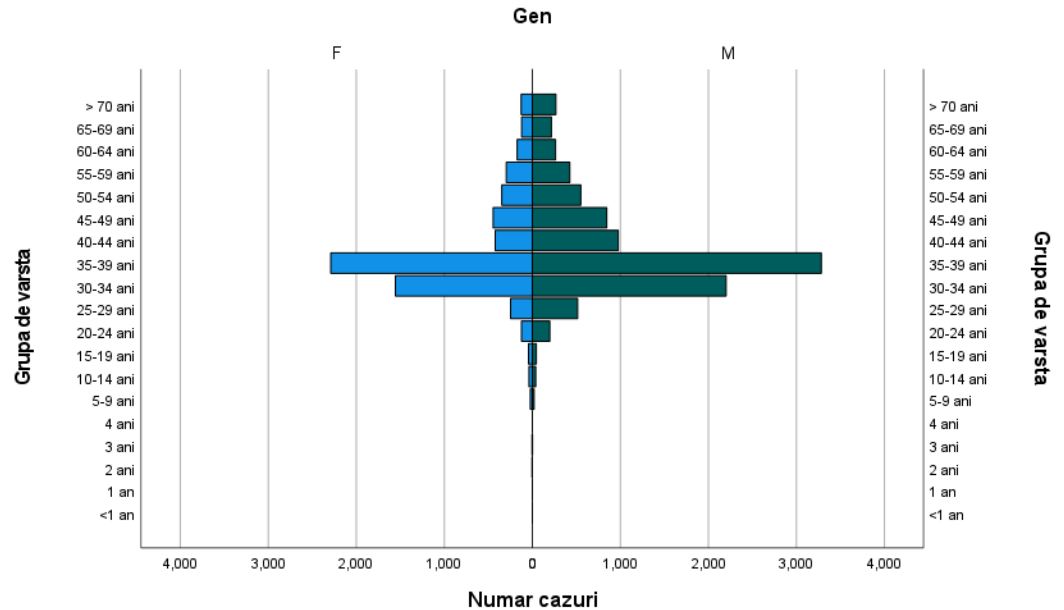
PLWHA 31 December 2023: **18282**

Age groups:

- 0-14 years: 141
- 15-19 years: 132
- 20 years: 18009 (>6000 from the Romanian Cohort)

WLWH:

- 20-39 years: **4062 (>60%)**





ECDC HIV Network meeting

16 – 17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

Prevention
PrEP....

National Strategy for the Surveillance, control and prevention of HIV Cases in 2022-2030- adopted in December 2022 by Ministry of Health and the Romanian Government

- ✓ The strategy contains a specific objective that targets PrEP ;
- ✓ Under revision- the application methods for achieving the abovementioned objective;
- ✓ Target PrEP: by the end of 2024, **approximately 150 persons**- through the National ART Programme.

Source:

<https://sgg.gov.ro/1/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/ANEXA-PLAN-NATIONAL-STRATEGIA-HIV-SIDA.pdf>

Pre-exposure Prophylaxis Implementation in Central-Eastern European Countries

- PrEP Romania, a hybrid in-person + mobileHealth PrEP uptake and adherence programme, who aimed to empower MSM and their healthcare system to adopt PrEP and support adherence.

ClinicalTrials.gov ID NCT05323123

- **Sponsor Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, in partnership** with the Romanian Association Against AIDS, Bucharest, the National Institute of Infectious Diseases Matei Balș, Bucharest, and the University of Medicine and Pharmacy Iuliu Hațieganu, Cluj-Napoca
- Started on 1st November 2021; **150 GBM** included, who received **TDF/FTC daily, for 6 months**.
- No new cases of HIV infection were detected.

Ongoing:

- PrEP Romania services sponsored by **Elton John AIDS foundation – partnership** between the Romanian Association Against AIDS, Bucharest and the National Institute of Infectious Diseases Matei Balș, Bucharest
- **Started on 23rd November 2023**; will include between **100-150 GBM**, who will receive **TDF/FTC**, either on-demand or daily, for a minimum of 12 months.
- Until 3rd April 2024, **96 GBM were included**.



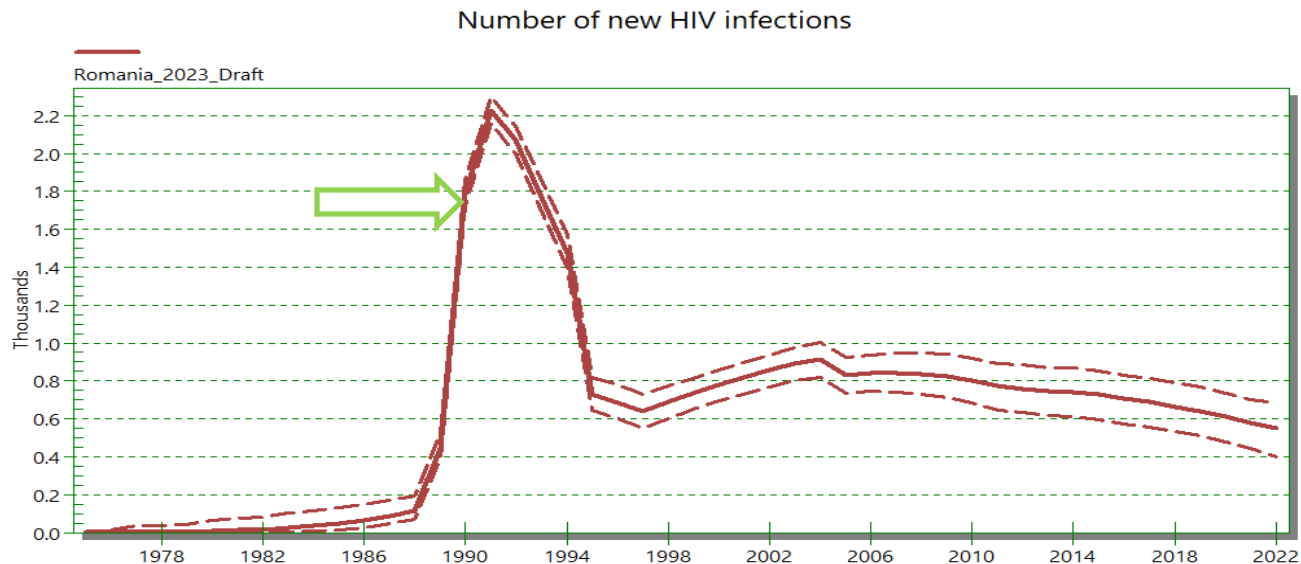
ECDC HIV Network meeting

16 – 17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

Incidence – A 75% reduction in new HIV infections by 2025 from a 2010 baseline

UNAIDS Estimates:

- ✓ HIV incidence rate for Adults, aged 15–49 years, 2010-2022: <0.01%
- ✓ HIV incidence (new HIV infections per 1000 uninfected population), 2010-2022:
 - ✓ Estimate: 0.04 (2010)- 0.03 (2022)
 - ✓ Low: 0.03 (2010)-0.02 (2022)
 - ✓ High: 0.05 (2010)-0.03 (2022)



➡ Romanian children's cohort, non-vertically infected, born between 1988-1990

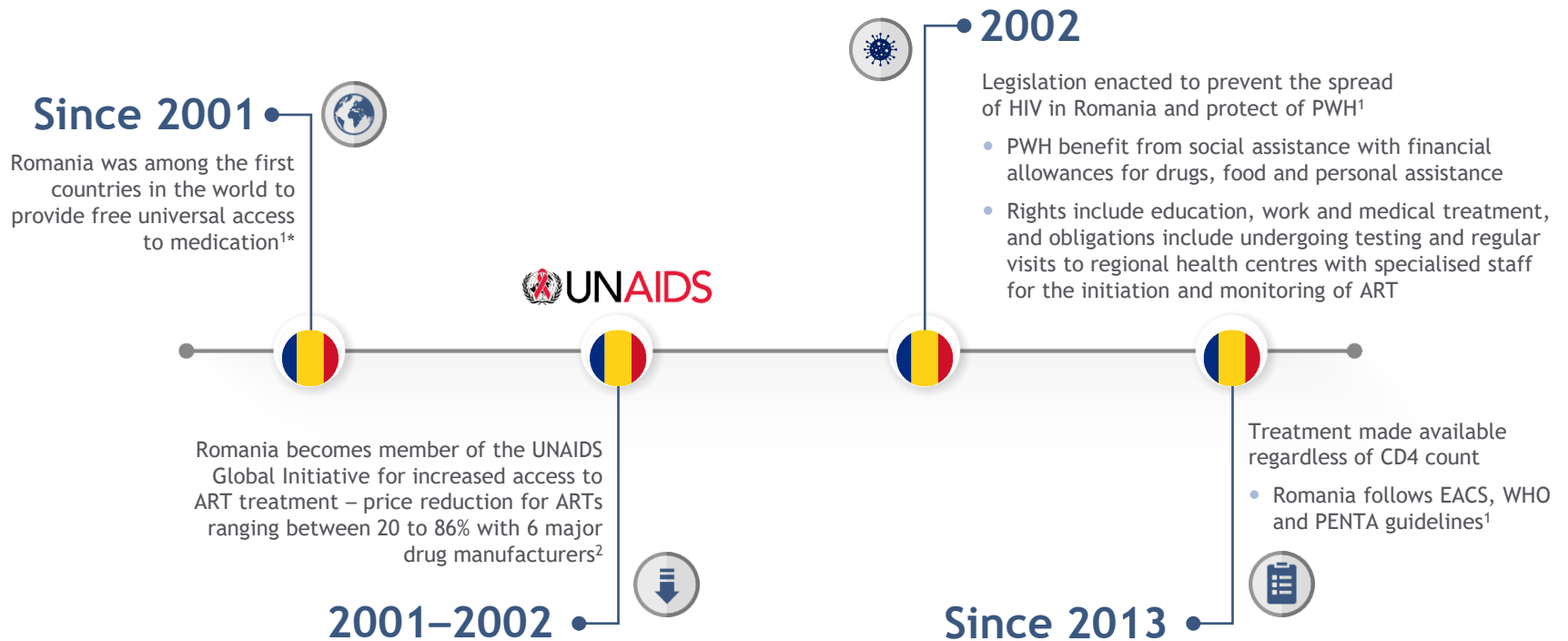


ECDC HIV Network meeting

16 – 17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

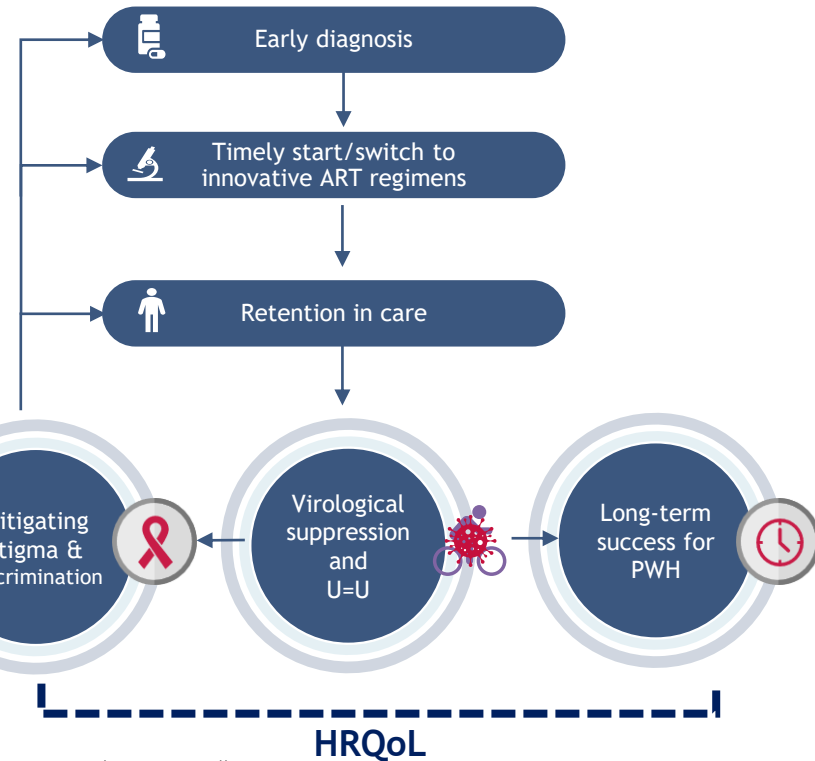
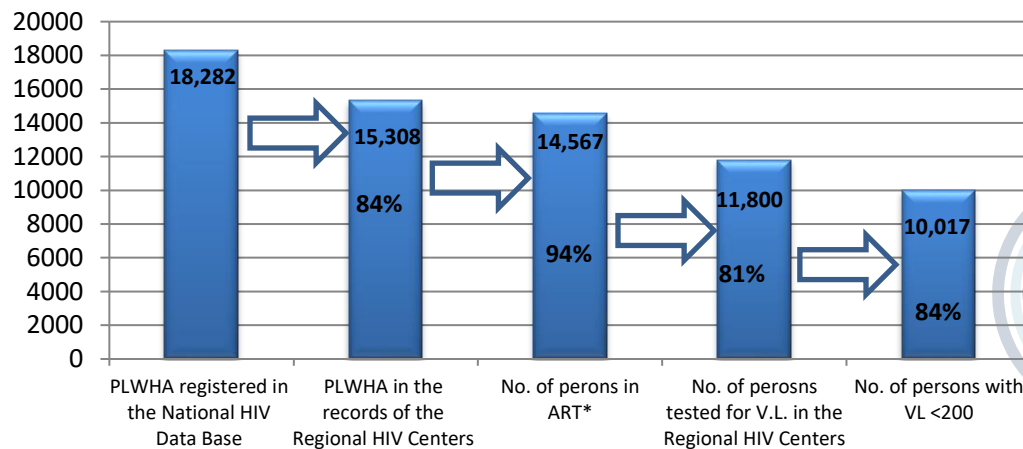
**Testing and treatment –
95-95-95, and overall 86% target**

Romania pioneering the HIV fight



Continuous progress towards the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets in Romania

LINKING PWH TO THE CARE CASCADE THROUGH REDUCING STIGMA AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE THERAPIES¹⁻³



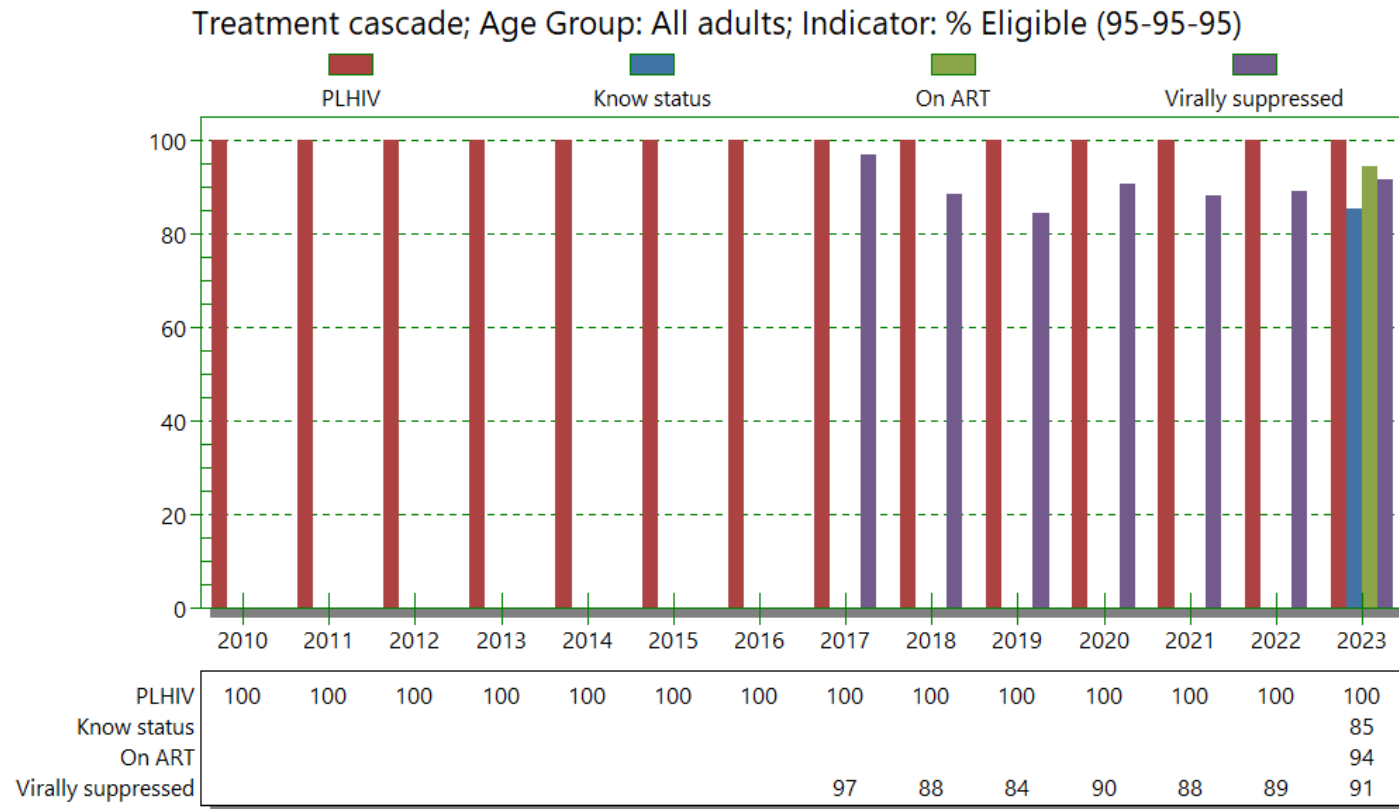
*>5500 from the Romanian Cohort discovered during their early childhood years, in the early 1990s, long-term survivors, therapeutically multi-experienced

15308- persons in active records

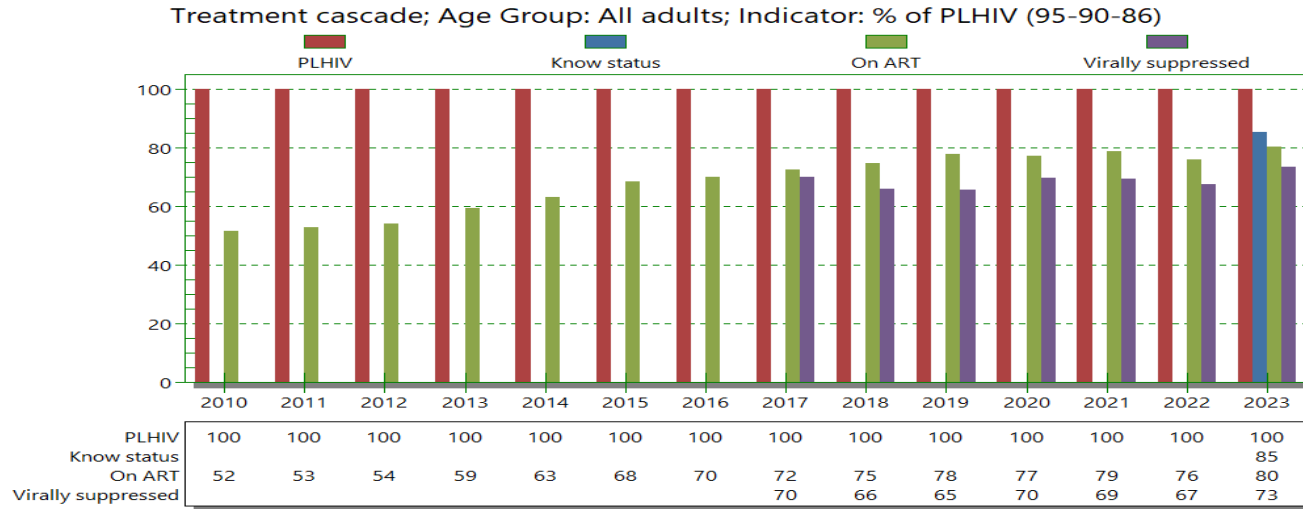
ART, antiretroviral therapy; PLWHA, people living with HIV; U=U, undetectable=untransmittable.

1. National HIV Curriculum. 2017 [online]. Available at: www.hiv.uw.edu/go/screening-diagnosis/linkage-care/core-concept/all. Last accessed: April 2020; 2. Robertson M, et al. AIDS Care 2014;27:260-7; 3. UNAIDS Confronting discrimination 2017. Available from: <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2017/confronting-discrimination> Last accessed: April 2020.

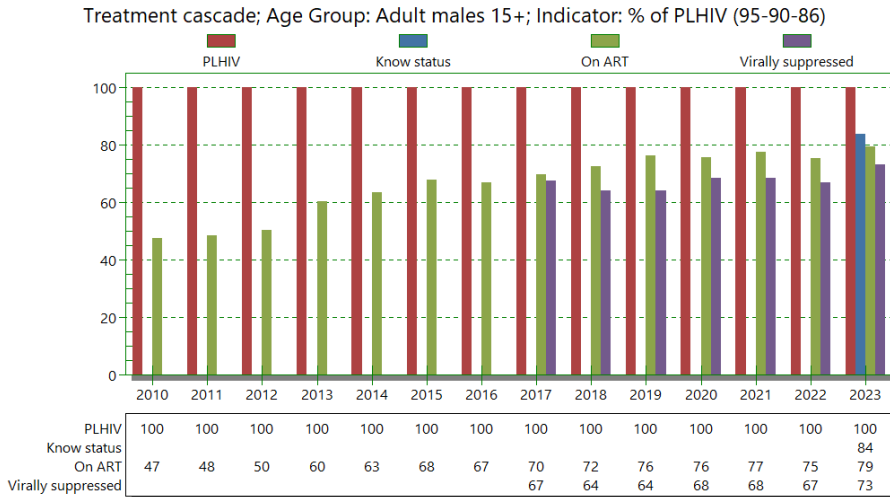
Progress towards 95-95-95, all adults (15+)



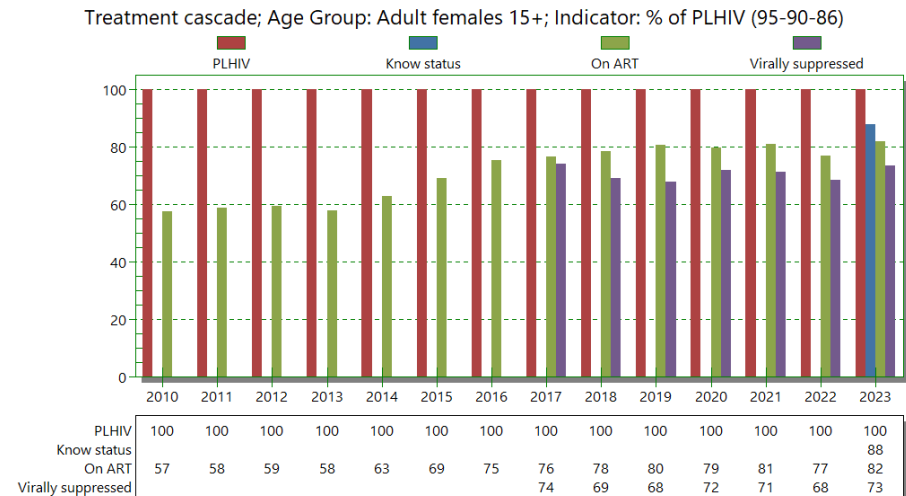
Treatment cascade, all adults (15+), % of PLHIV (95-90-86)



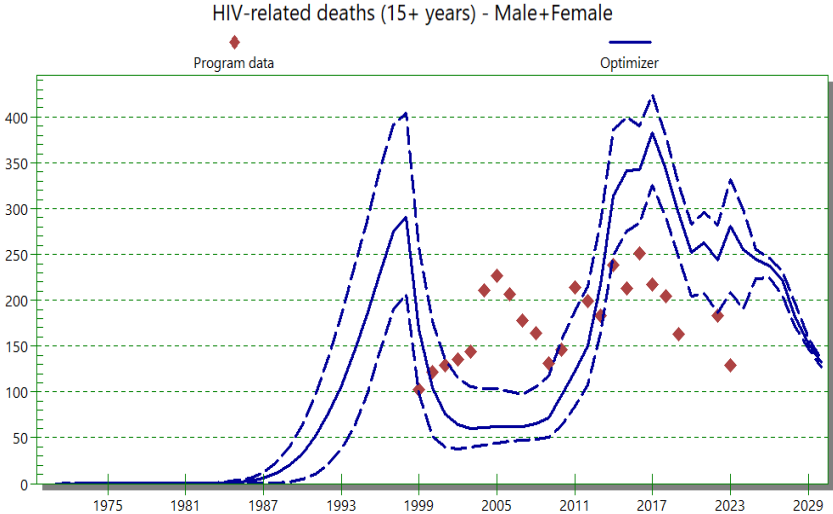
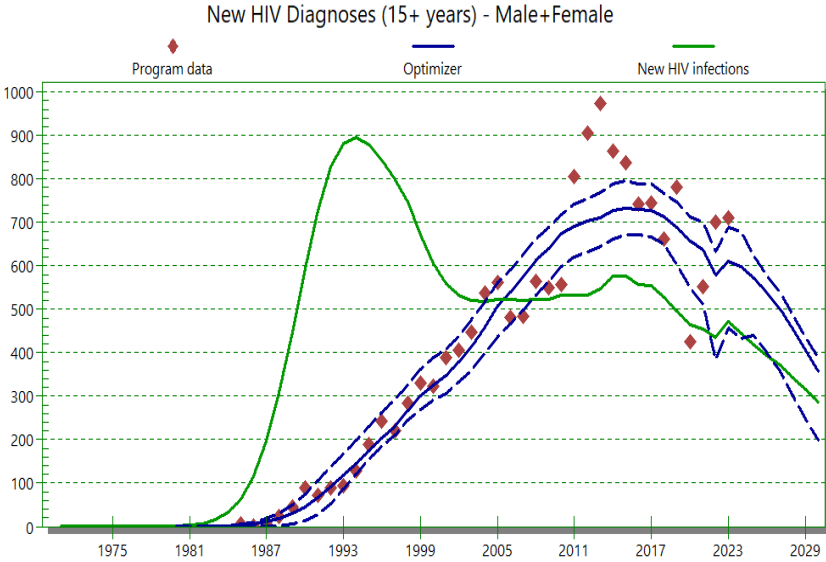
Treatment cascade, males (15+), % of PLHIV (95-90-86)



Treatment cascade, females (15+), % of PLHIV (95-90-86)



Predictions...until 2029





ECDC HIV Network meeting

16 – 17 April 2024
Stockholm, Sweden

Stigma in Romania

Stigma

Study on the Quality of Life of people living with HIV in Romania:

- ✓ Deployed in 2022/2023 on 1050 (361 women and 689 men) people living with HIV from eight regional centers across Romania.
- ✓ Mean age: 38 years

Study Objectives

- ✓ Objective 1: Assessing the quality of life and identifying perceptions.
- ✓ Objective 2: Evaluating needs and assessing services.
- ✓ Objective 3: Identifying immediate needs and future actions

Results:

Stigmatization

(% aggregated and weighted values from 12 questions / direct values)

- ✓ 36.7% / 39.9% of respondents believe that a person with HIV/AIDS is more easily stigmatized than others.
- ✓ 38.1% / 48.4% of respondents believe that women are more stigmatized than men.
- ✓ 50.0%/59.5% of respondents believe that children are more easily stigmatized than adults.
- ✓ 23.6%/25.0% of respondents do not engage in social activities due to HIV infection.

Study on the Quality of Life of people living with HIV in Romania

M. Mardarescu¹, G. Tudoran², C. Berteza Hanganu³, A. Streinu-Cercel⁴

¹National Institute for Infectious Diseases "Prof. Dr. Matei Bals", Compartment for Monitoring and Evaluation of HIV/AIDS Data in Romania, Bucharest, Romania,
²HIV Outcomes Romania, Brussels, Belgium,
³Ascedo International, Iasi, Romania,
⁴University for Medicine and Pharmacy "Carol Davila" Bucharest, Infectious Diseases Department, Bucharest, Romania

Purpose:

After 38 years since the discovery of the first HIV case in Romania, quality of life became an essential element for patients and professionals, at the same time. In this context, the current study aims to assess quality of life among this group by exploring its perception on stigma and access to social and medical care. The ultimate goal is to understand challenges and needs faced by this population, formulating policy recommendations for an enhanced well-being.

Study Objectives

Objective 1: Assessing the quality of life and identifying perceptions.

Objective 2: Evaluating needs and assessing services.

Objective 3: Identifying immediate needs and future actions.

Methodology:

The study¹ encompassed **1050 people living with HIV from eight regional centers across Romania (361 women and 689 men)**. Subsequent phases included subject recruitment, questionnaire administration and comprehensive data collection. Quantitative analysis was combined with qualitative insights, enabling a holistic understanding of the HIV phenomenon in our country. A rigorous approach combined structured surveys and in-depth interviews to capture multifaceted insights. Ethical considerations were a core concern resulting in thorough analysis of data, for patterns and nuances.

Results:

The findings offer a comprehensive portrayal of the challenges and perceptions within the HIV-positive community.

- **58.8% of respondents consider HIV as a manageable condition;**
- **22.2% view it as a burden;**
- **36.7% believe that HIV-positive individuals face stigma;**
- **COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating integration challenges - 51.2%, (particularly for children- 62.5%.);**
- **medical service satisfaction is high (94.3%);**
- **needs for medical care (35.1%) and service enhancement (11.4%);**
- **Patients' associations are seen as pivotal allies, with 45.8% familiar and 25.2% engaged;**
- **Respondents urged integration prioritization (73.3%), social programs (81.9%), and stigma reduction (86.6%).**

Conclusions:

The findings reflect the multifaceted challenges in Romanian community in terms of perceptions, stigma, integration, service access. Policy changes are needed with emphasis on state engagement, involvement of NGOs and tailored support. Aligning policies with community expectations can increase quality of life in HIV persons. The study's holistic approach offers a comprehensive policy roadmap addressing diverse well-being dimensions.

1. The sociological study measuring the perception of the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS was conducted by HIV Outcomes Romania in partnership with the National Institute of Infectious Diseases Prof. Dr. Matei Bals and the Regional Centers for the Evaluation and Monitoring of HIV/AIDS Infection.

Self-perception of stigma

(% aggregated and weighted values from 4 questions / direct values)

- **84.2% / 85.5%** of respondents consider themselves well integrated into society.
- **64.0% / 67.8%** of respondents self-blame for their HIV infection.

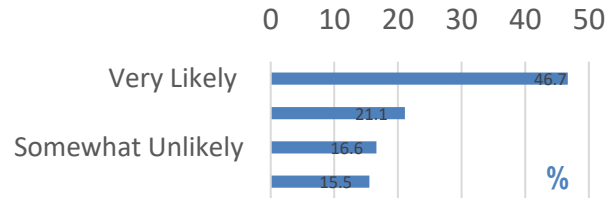


Fig. A: Self-perception of stigma related to the HIV/AIDS status - direct values.

Stigmatization

(% aggregated and weighted values from 12 questions / direct values)

- **36.7% / 39.9%** of respondents believe that a person with HIV/AIDS is more easily stigmatized than others.
- **38.1% / 48.4%** of respondents believe that women are more stigmatized than men.
- **50.0% / 59.5%** of respondents believe that children are more easily stigmatized than adults.
- **23.6% / 25.0%** of respondents do not engage in social activities due to HIV infection.

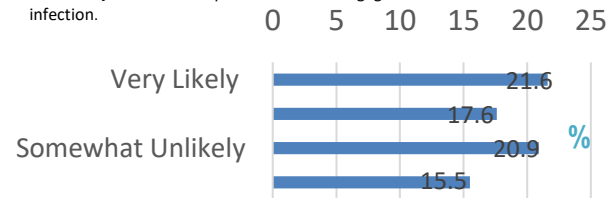


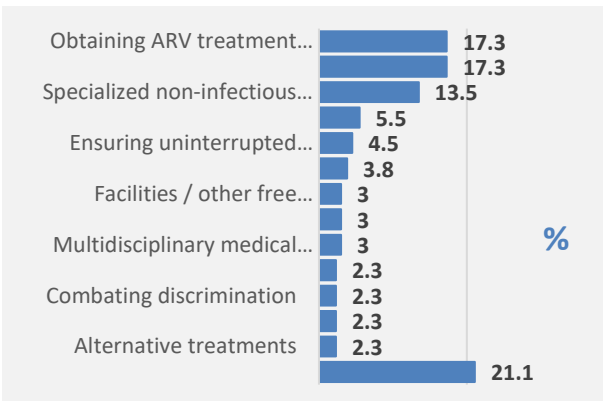
Fig. B: Stigmatization by others due to HIV infection - direct values.

Medical Services

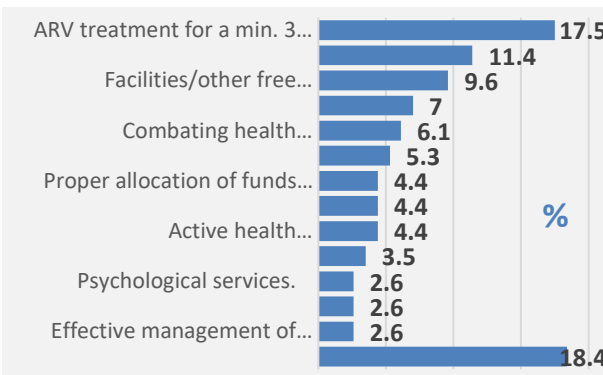
(%, aggregated and weighted values / direct values):

- **94.3% / 96.2%** of respondents are satisfied with the accessed medical services and interaction with medical staff.
- **46.7% / 70.6%** of respondents require additional medical services.

Immediate Needs of Respondents (cluster analysis)



Respondents' Suggestions



Thank you!