

GET TEST: an innovative approach to engage MSM into the continuum of HIV services

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Introduction:

GET TEST is an innovative project for Ukraine aimed at screening men who have sex with men for HIV, STIs and viral hepatitis. The project started in December 2015 and is implemented through the end of September 2017. GET TEST is designed and funded by the USAID RESPOND Project and includes four major components: innovative online outreach, motivational counseling, testing, and referral. AHF Ukraine provides rapid testing kits for HIV, STIs and hepatitis for community-based testing.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the GET TEST Project are:

- Get access to the hard-to-reach and underserved MSM;
- Involve them in rapid testing for HIV, STIs, HBV and HCV;
- Detect new infections;
- Provide linkage to care and support;
- Assist with the access to ARVs.

Methods:

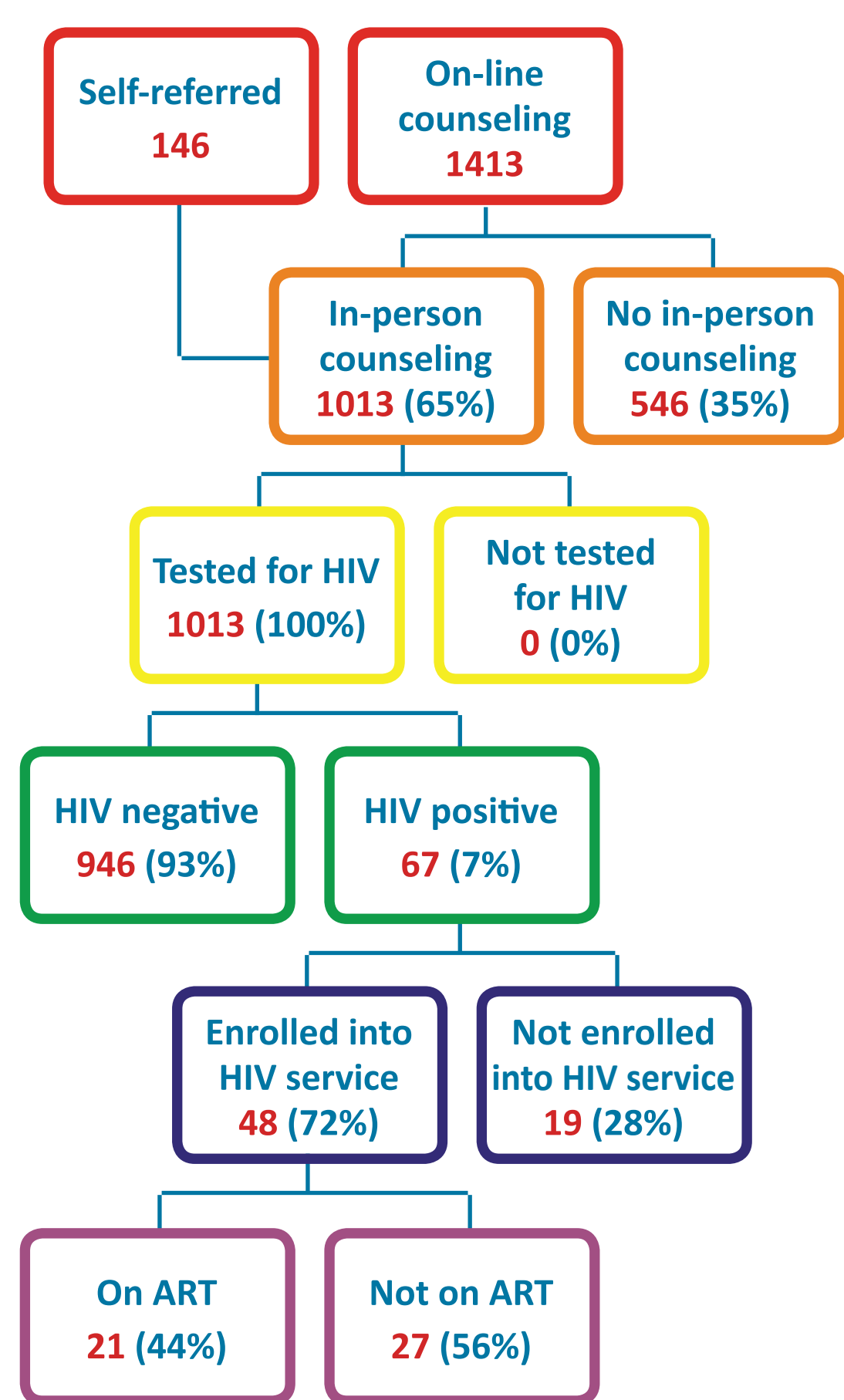
In 2016, recruitment of MSM for testing took place in two cities, Kyiv and Odesa:

- 1) Clients self-registered for testing at www.gettest.com.ua advertised through MSM dating sites (Qguys, Bluesystem, etc.), applications for smartphones (Hornet), social media (Facebook, Twitter) and Google AdWords.
- 2) A social worker communicated online with MSM, invited them to take rapid testing and provided peer-to-peer counseling. The social worker served as a case manager, accompanied the client during registration at the clinic and motivated them for ART.

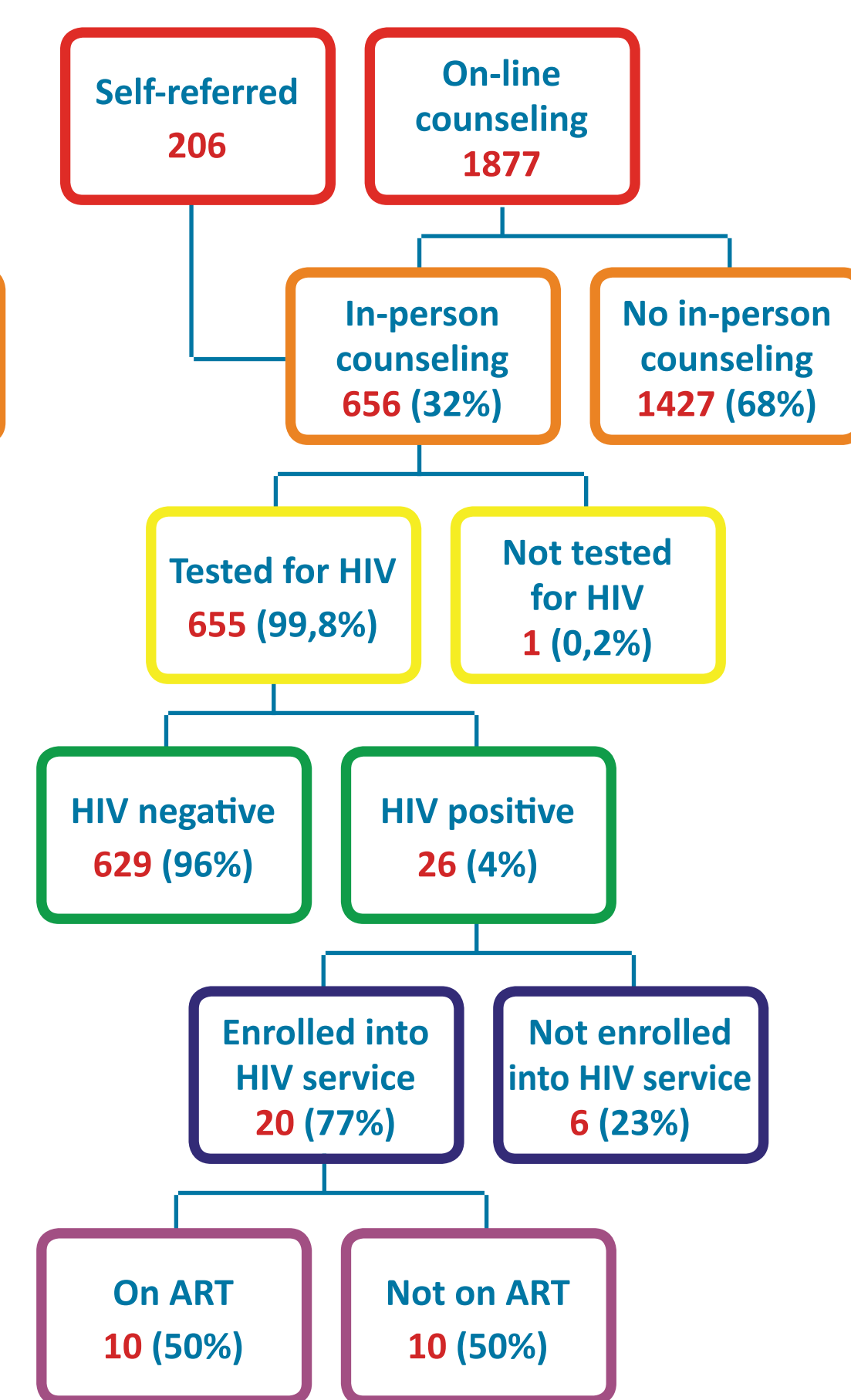
Results:

HTS and Linkage to Care for MSM, as of Dec 2016

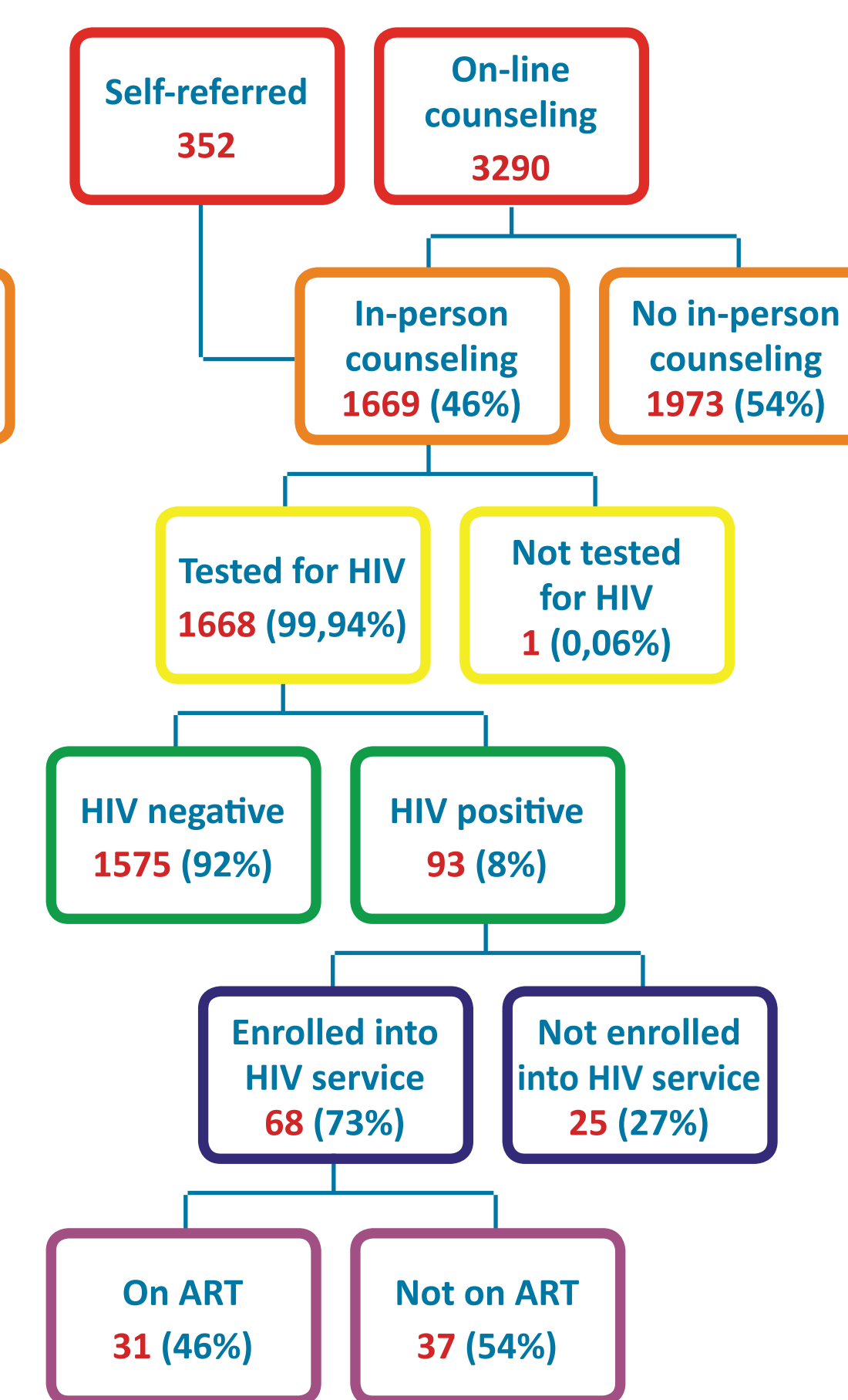
Kyiv (since Dec '15)



Odesa (since Mar '16)



Total



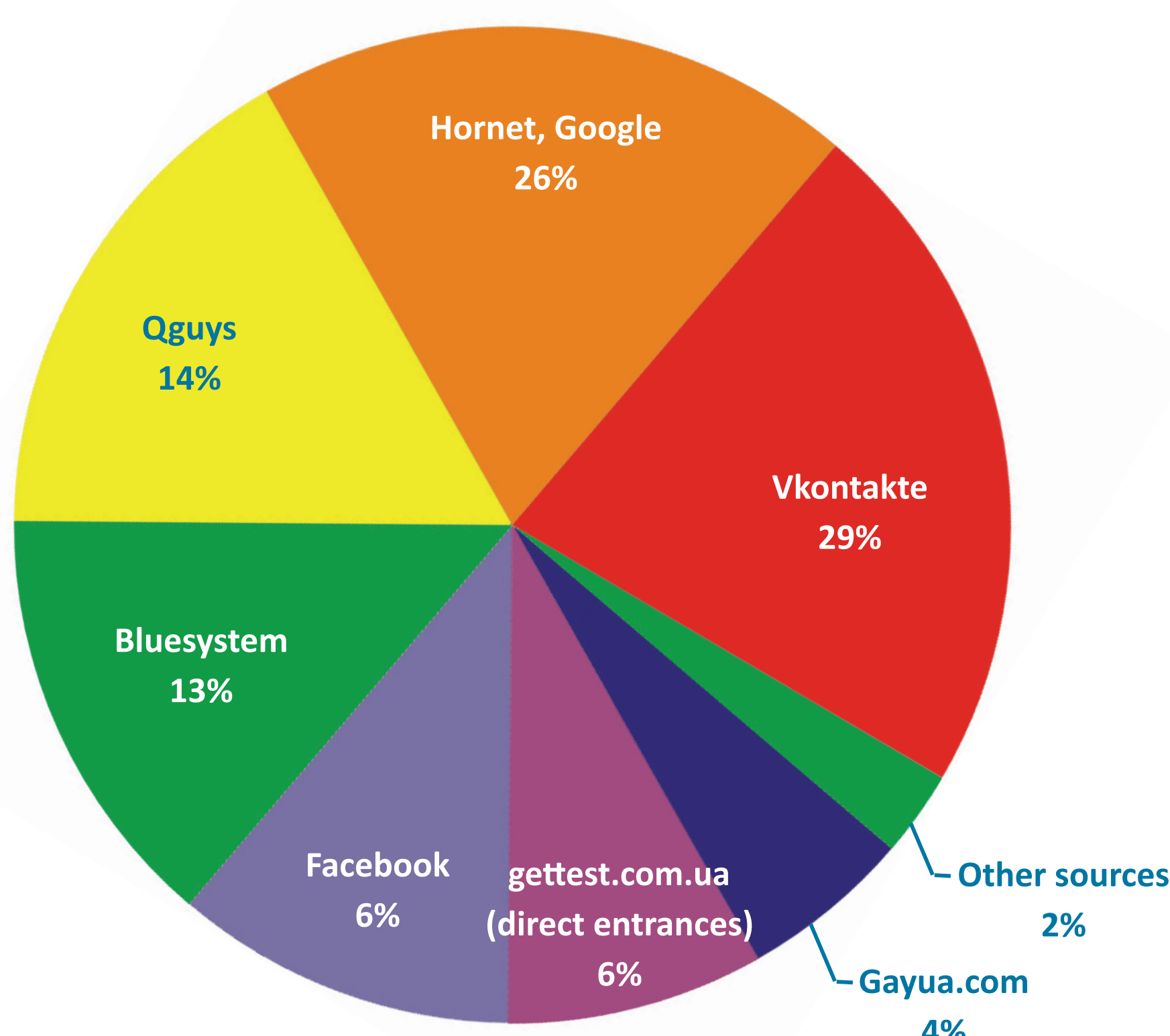
Advantages of the GET TEST Campaign:

- Engaging hard-to-reach MSM in testing.
- Clients first learn about their HIV status (the project is designed for MSM who have never been tested for HIV).
- The "human" face of the campaign: Clients see real faces the GET TEST staff on-line
- Easy Internet/smartphone appointments from anywhere and at any time.
- Client alone chooses a convenient time for testing.
- Social support for clients with a positive test result for HIV, STIs and hepatitis and escorting to relevant health care facilities.
- Convenient location of testing sites.

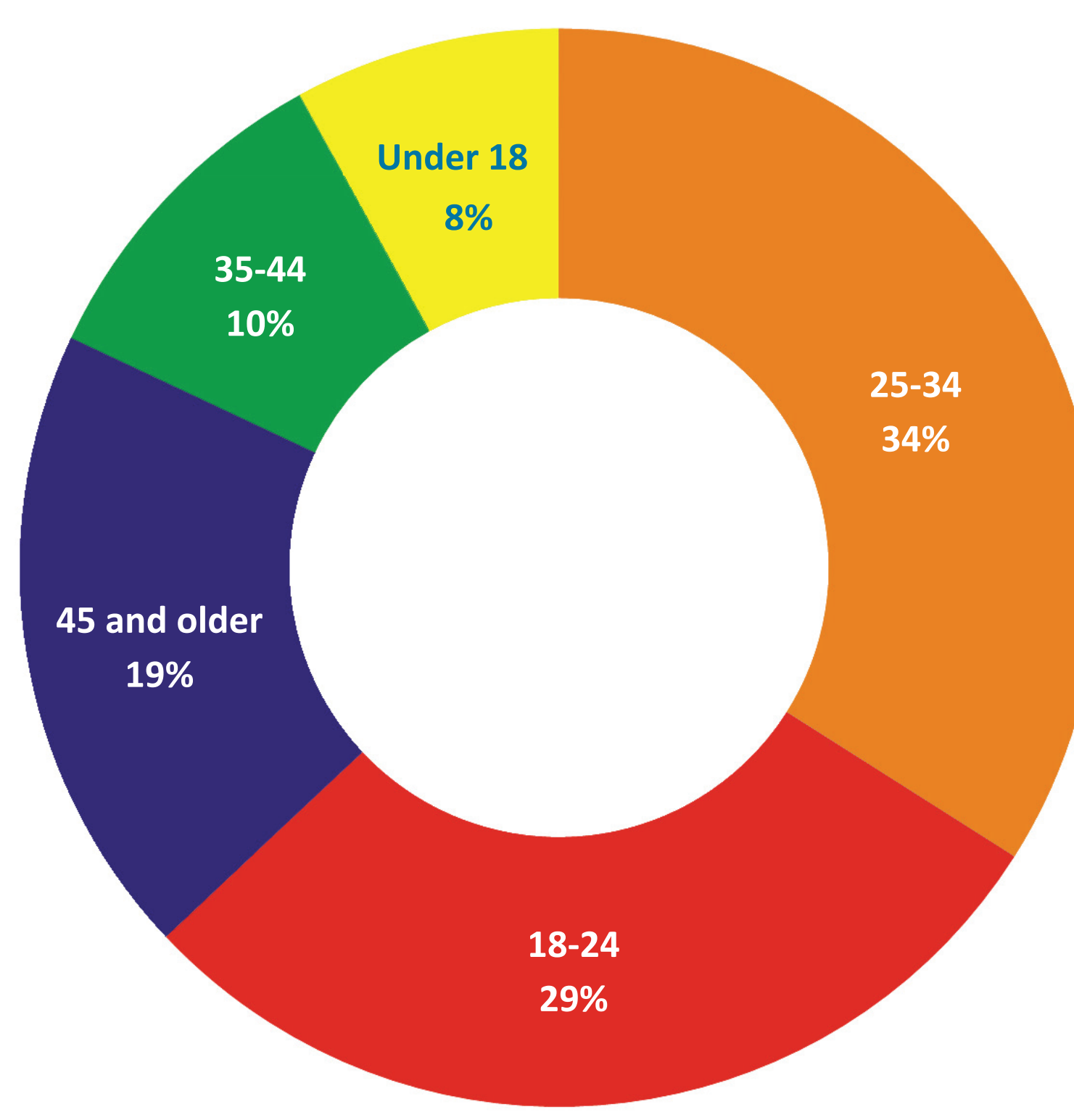
Advertising banners at Hornet, Qguys, Gettest.com.ua, Facebook



Gettest.com.ua: Referring Sources



Gettest.com.ua: Client age



Conclusions:

GET TEST proved to be an effective model to attract hard-to-reach MSM from among Internet users, with high HIV detection rate (6%). As a result of a successful advertising campaign, a sufficient number of MSM has been involved who have never received services in our organization.

For even more coverage, it is necessary to:

- Increase the amount of advertising on the Internet,
- Improve the full cascade of services for each client, including psychosocial support,
- Reduce the level of internal stigma and increase adherence to antiretroviral therapy,
- Increase the number of sites for the provision GET TEST services.



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