



## HIV service delivery in the context of COVID-19

### Case study on the expansion of HIV self-testing

Partner Organisation(s):  
**Foundation of Social Education**  
<https://www.fes.edu.pl>



#### OVERVIEW

In Poland, a country of 38 million only 9% of adult population have undergone HIV testing with 60% reporting unknown mode of transmission. Although the number of HIV infections in Poland increases every year, there are virtually no publicly funded promotion/social campaigns for testing.

The largest nationwide preventive campaign, promoting HIV testing "Project Test" (<http://www.projekttest.pl>), running since 2009, is primarily financed from international funds - MAC AIDS FUND. The campaign promotes voluntary testing and counselling (VTC) for HIV.

There are currently 30 sites in Poland where an HIV test can be performed anonymously and free of charge, along with pre- and post-test counselling. HIV home self-testing is included in the 2019 Polish HIV Guidelines<sup>1</sup>, however, no policy based on these guidelines has yet been implemented.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ptnaids.pl/images/AIDS-2019-final.pdf>, accessed 9.06.2020

<sup>2</sup> Original name: atomo HIV Self-Test (Atomo Diagnostics, Australia), recommended by WHO, HIV Rapid Diagnostic Tests for Self-Testing accessed on <https://unitaid.org/assets/HIVST-landscape-report.pdf>, accessed 9.06.2020

#### APPROACH



As a result of VCT closures during COVID-19 lockdown, "Project Test" webpage introduced a new service – an option to order a **free HIV Simplitude™ ByMe™<sup>2</sup> test (CE 2797)** intended for **self-testing** by untrained lay users at home.



**Online counselling and distribution coordination** done by the Foundation for Social Education which currently run "Project Test".



Individuals who wished to order the test had to **call the helpline**, where, after talking to the HIV counsellor, they received a password that allowed them to **order the test and get it by post**.



Test shipment was done **anonymously**.

# Country Case Study: Poland



PROJEKT  
TEST

## HIGHLIGHTS



**600** TESTS  
DISTRIBUTED DURING THE  
SIX WEEKS OF LOCKDOWN



OVER **50%**  
ORDERED BY WOMEN  
PREVIOUSLY ONLY **1**  
WOMAN PER **6** TESTED



**53%** OF PEOPLE  
ORDERING A TEST TESTED  
FOR THE FIRST TIME



**10%** OF CLIENTS  
SUBMITTED FEEDBACK  
CONCERNING TEST RESULTS  
WITH **1** REACTIVE TEST  
REPORTED

## LESSONS LEARNED



The **home HIV self-testing programme**, initiated as part of an independent social campaign, **will be continued** and HIV self-tests offered from the Foundation for Social Education after the **COVID-19 related lockdown** as one of the testing opportunities (in addition to VTC and mobile and outdoor testing).



The programme and **promotion campaign** “End of AIDS. Every result is good” generated a lot of interest in HIV testing resulting in over 30 articles and 11 video clips in the media advocating the home HIV self-tests.

