



EHPV

Eesti HIV-positiivsete võrgustik
Estonian Network of PLWH

PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV STIGMA INDEX: FINDINGS FROM ESTONIA

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HIV in Europe Copenhagen Conference

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Hoolime Eestimaa inimestest

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 300 People living with HIV who shared their personal feelings, fears, and experiences.
- NGO Convictus Eesti for cooperation and support (interviewing in prisons)
- Infectious disease department in West-Tallinn Central Hospital
- Ministry of Justice
- Igor Sobolev, Chair of the Board of Estonian Network of PLWH

THANKS



HIV in Europe supported the research undertaken



Technical support provided by GNP+ for the in country implementation of this research

THE PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV STIGMA INDEX IN ESTONIA 2011

Research conducted by Estonian Network of PLWH, with technical and financial support from:

HIV in Europe

- ✓ Financially Supported the in country roll-out process, including an additional study incorporated into the Stigma Index focusing on barriers to testing and uptake of care
- Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP +)
- International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW)
- International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
- UNAIDS

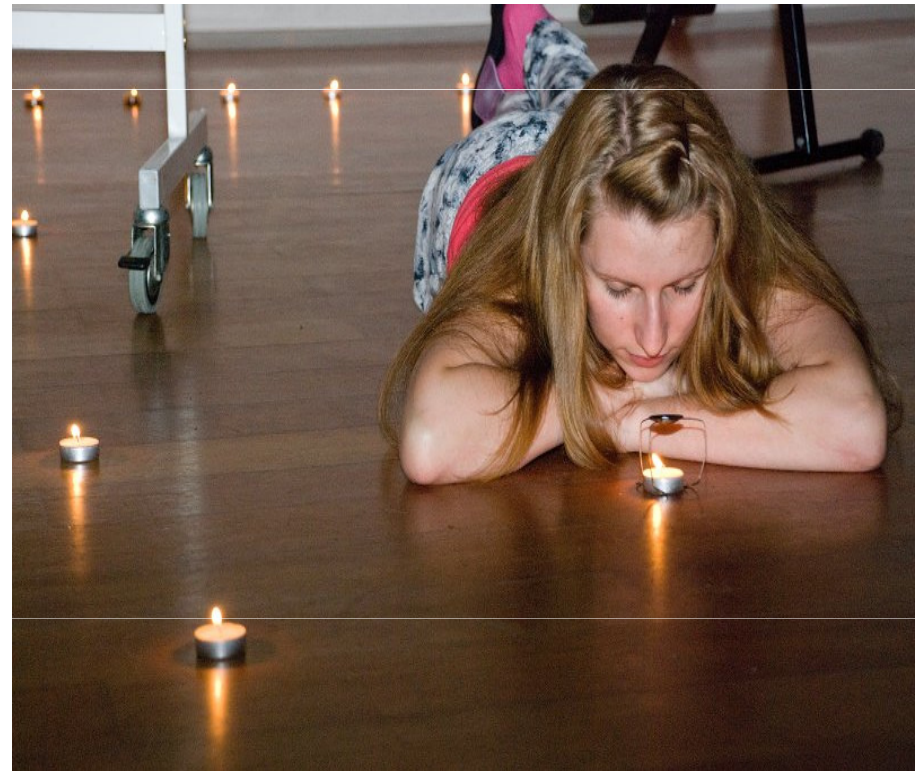
are the founding partners of the Index

THE PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV STIGMA INDEX IN ESTONIA 2011

- The research protocol approved by the Tallinn Medical Research Ethics Committee
- Basic tools - a structured questionnaire and informed consent form in Estonian and Russian languages.
- Data Collection November-December 2010
- Total sample – 300, including 24 prisoners .
- Interviewing in male Tartu prison and female Harku prison.

MAIN RESULTS

- ✓ Psychological and physical violence
- ✓ Common manifestations of stigma included being the subject of gossiping, oral harassment and threatening behavior
- ✓ Internalised stigma on high level: low self-esteem, blamings, feelings of shame and guilty, suicidal feelings...

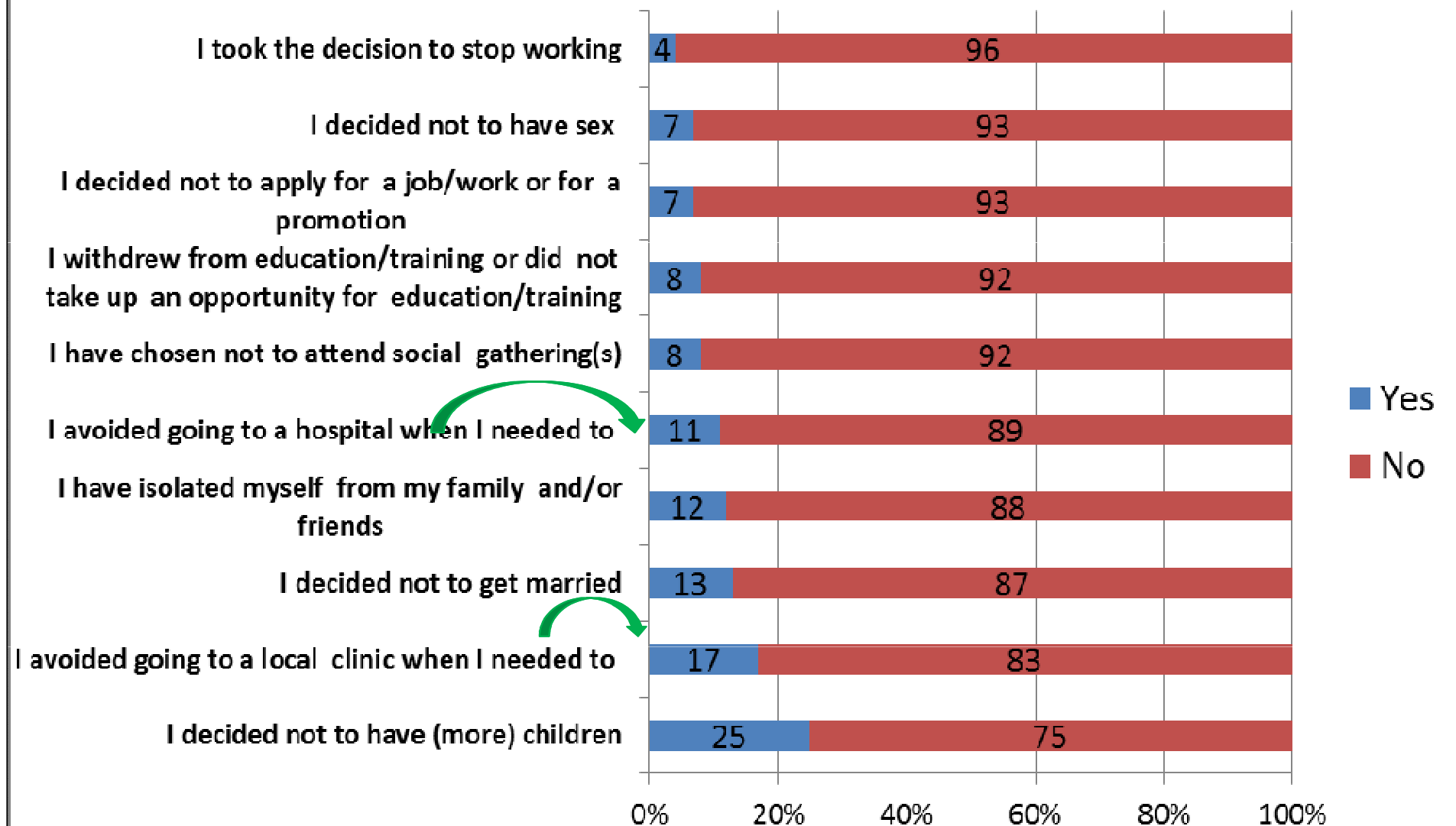


MAIN RESULTS

- ✓ Respondents don't believe that their medical records are kept confidential
- ✓ Health care professional advised to PLWH not to have a child
- ✓ Health care professionals coerced PLWH into being sterilized



HOW STIGMA STOPPED PLHIV LEADING FULL LIVES



HIV TESTING AND DIAGNOSIS

The decision to undergo HIV test

Yes, I took the decision myself to be tested (i.e. it was voluntary)	I took the decision to be tested, but it was under pressure from others	I was made to take an HIV test (coercion)	I was tested without my knowledge – I only found out after the test had been done
63% (n=189)	9% (n=26)	10% (n=31)	18% (n=53)

Counselling during HIV-testing

I received both pre- and post-HIV test counselling	I only received pre-test HIV counselling	I only received post-test HIV counselling	I did not receive any counselling when I had an HIV test
32% (n=96)	2% (n=6)	32% (n=97)	34% (n=101)

ADVOCACY RESULTS

1. Participation of ENPLWH in working out of Guidance to HIV testing and referral of PLWH to treatment:

- ✓ Results from STIGMA INDEX study was used as additional evidence which proved the importance of Guidance creation.
- ✓ Ministry of Social Affairs made new Guidance and ENPLWH had opportunity to make recommendations, especially was stressed component of counseling.
- ✓ Rapid HIV testing was included into guidelines as primary HIV testing method.

Guidance is available at web-site of Ministry www.sm.ee

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW GUIDANCE GIVES TO HEALTHCARE SYSTEM MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO:

- Discover HIV infection cases in early stages
- Reduce the proportion of those who HIV+ but not aware of it
- Contribute to people being more aware of their 'risk' behavior'
- Reach out to diverse communities

NEXT ADVOCACY STEPS

Development of policy and guidelines on HIV testing and treatment linkage, which will allow:

- Initiate ARV treatment in time for those who need it
- Increase access to psycho-social support services for PLWH



STIGMA INDEX FOLLOW UP

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES 1/2

Training program for PLWH to decrease level of internalized stigma:

- ✓ March 2012 began first training program. Participants contracted as volunteers and peer counsellors on stigma and discrimination issues for one year. Total coverage of 1 training program is 100 PLWH.
- ✓ New counsellors will be involved as volunteers in regularly held events of massive rapid testing.



STIGMA INDEX FOLLOW UP ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES 2/2

3. Creation of 'Trusted specialist' network to reduce confidentiality breaches and internal stigma level.

Presentation of network will be timed to coincide with Candlelight Memorial Day 2012 and will be accompanying with massive rapid testing events.

- ✓ PR campaign will help decrease negative prejudices about PLWH and HIV also will increase number of tested people.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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