

Citizens' summary

EU policy paper – combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbouring countries 2009-13

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

In 2007, more than 50 000 new cases of HIV/AIDS were reported in the EU and neighbouring countries, and currently some 2 million Europeans are living with HIV.

Effective treatments exist, but there is no cure. **Prevention** is therefore key to combating HIV/AIDS and if we neglect it, lives and resources will be wasted.

WHAT EXACTLY WOULD CHANGE?

The EU is proposing to:

- scale up the implementation of prevention strategies that target **local realities and needs**.
- work towards ensuring **universal access** to prevention, treatment, care and support.
- improve surveillance in EU and neighbouring countries and **share quality data** to be used as a basis for effective policies
- support an effective response to HIV/AIDS in **priority regions** (new EU members in Eastern Europe and the neighbouring countries most affected)
- work with member countries to develop better ways to reach the **populations most at risk** of HIV infection.

WHO WOULD BENEFIT AND HOW?

Society – it is hoped that the number of new HIV infections would drop, and the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS would improve

People at risk – in particular, men having sex with men, certain migrant groups, injecting drug users.

WHY DOES ACTION HAVE TO BE TAKEN BY THE EU?

Only the EU can:

- **collect data and monitor conditions** across Europe, giving national authorities more information on which to base their policies
- provide political support to member countries and **stakeholders across Europe** to:
 - improve access to prevention, treatment, care and support
 - reach migrants from countries with a high prevalence of HIV
 - improve policies targeting the populations most at risk.
- bring together European countries to **share ideas** on how to:
 - address effectively HIV/AIDS
 - strengthen the role of civil society
 - support national efforts to help people living with HIV/AIDS.

WHEN IS THE PROPOSAL LIKELY TO COME INTO EFFECT?

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