

KEY FACTS ON HIV EPIDEMIC IN ROMANIA AND PROGRESS IN 2011

(pop. 21 355 849)

Romania is one of the few countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe with a significant number of people affected by HIV/AIDS. By the end of 2011, Romania had reported a cumulative total of 5 003 HIV cases, 12 572 AIDS cases and 5 950 deaths among AIDS cases to the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Once a person registered as infected with HIV is diagnosed with AIDS the Romanian reporting system removes the case from the HIV dataset, which explains why the number of reported HIV infections is lower than the number of AIDS cases. For the year 2011, 394 HIV cases, 270 AIDS cases and 217 deaths among AIDS cases were reported. The rate of newly diagnosed HIV infections in 2011 was 1.8 per 100 000 population and 71% of new cases were among male. Of the newly reported infections with information about transmission mode in 2011 (83%), 42.2% were infected through heterosexual contact, 33.0% through injecting drug use, 21.4% through men having sex with men and 3.4% through mother-to-child transmission. Due to an outbreak in 2011, there was a marked increase in the number of HIV diagnoses in injecting drug users.

In 1989, Romania experienced a major nosocomial HIV epidemic in which more than 10 000 institutionalized children contracted HIV through blood transfusions and infected needles. A cumulative total of 205 mother-to-child transmission cases have been reported in Romania, including 11 in 2011.

Taking undiagnosed infections into account, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and WHO estimate that 16 000 (13 000 – 20 000) people were living with HIV in Romania in 2011 and that less than 500 people died from AIDS-related causes during 2011.

In 2011, 306 679 people were tested for HIV at 120 testing facilities. All Romanian citizens can receive two HIV tests free of charge per year. As of 2010, testing was systematically performed before an invasive medical intervention, before marriage, to blood donors, pregnant women and military recruits.

In 2002, 3 310 people were receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART), by 2010 this number increased to 7 276 and by 2011 to 7 536. 53 facilities in the country were providing ART. Estimated ART coverage in 2010 based on 2010 WHO guidelines was 69% (range 60-77%).

The number of syringes distributed per injecting drug user per year by needle and syringe programmes (NSP) is estimated to be 48.78 in 2011. 4 NSP sites and 10 OST sites were operational in 2011. The coverage of OST is still low both in community settings (9%) and in prison settings (difficult to measure since no data is available on the number of IDU in prison settings).

Sources:

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO Regional Office for Europe. *HIV/AIDS surveillance in Europe 2011*. Stockholm, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2012

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). *UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic*. Geneva, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, 2012

WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF. *Global HIV/AIDS response – Epidemic update and health sector progress towards universal access: progress report 2011*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2011

WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF. *Monitoring and reporting on the health sector response to HIV/AIDS; Romania country report 2012*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2012.

Pharris A, Wiessing L, Sfetcu O, Hedrich D, Botescu A, Fotiou A, et al. Human immunodeficiency virus in injecting drug users in Europe following a reported increase of cases in Greece and Romania, 2011. *Euro Surveill.* 2011;16(48):pii=20032.

European Commission: Eurostat [web site]. European Union, 2013
<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&language=en&pcode=tps00001&tableSelection=1&footnotes=yes&labeling=labels&plugin=1> (accessed 31 May 2013)