

Country progress report - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Global AIDS Monitoring 2018



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Empowerment and access to justice - Empower people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV to know their rights and to access justice and legal services to prevent and challenge violations of human rights

AIDS out of isolation - Commit to taking AIDS out of isolation through people-centred systems to improve universal health coverage, including treatment for tuberculosis, cervical cancer and hepatitis B and C

HIV testing and treatment cascade

Ensure that 30 million people living with HIV have access to treatment through meeting the 90-90-90 targets by 2020

Progress summary

The Ministry of Health initiated a process of drafting new HIV strategy until 2021 with a strong commitment to maintain and scale up the response to HIV in the country. Drafting of the new Strategy involved wide consultation process including experts from different ministries and institutions, international organizations present in the country and non-governmental organizations.

The aim of the strategy is to achieve 90-90-90 targets with a clear focus to maintain and enhance services provided to key populations by civil organizations.

Prevention of mother-to-child transmission

Eliminate new HIV infections among children by 2020 while ensuring that 1.6 million children have access to HIV treatment by 2018

Progress summary

Macedonia since 2016 has a policy for universal access to HIV treatment to all people living with HIV regardless of CD4 cell count at diagnosis.

HIV prevention; Key populations

Ensure access to combination prevention options, including pre-exposure prophylaxis, voluntary medical male circumcision, harm reduction and condoms, to at least 90%% of people by 2020, especially young women and adolescent girls in high-prevalence countries and key populations—gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and their clients, people who inject drugs and prisoners

Progress summary

Although Macedonia is country with low prevalence of HIV (latest data suggest concentrated epidemic among MSM), Ministry of Health supports a wide network of NGOs working on HIV prevention with key populations such as MSM, SW and PWID. These NGOs are implementing programs for condom distribution, harm reduction/needle exchange, community based voluntary counseling and testing (at stationary points and through mobile testing vans), as well as peer and psychosocial support services.

Policy questions: Key populations (2016)

Criminalization and/or prosecution of key populations

Transgender people

-

Sex workers

-

Men who have sex with men

-

Is drug use or possession for personal use an offence in your country?

-

Legal protections for key populations

Transgender people

-

Sex workers

-

Men who have sex with men

-

People who inject drugs

-

Policy questions: PrEP (2017)

Has the WHO recommendation on oral PrEP been adopted in your country's national guidelines?

No, guidelines have not been developed

Gender; Stigma and discrimination

Eliminate gender inequalities and end all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, people living with HIV and key populations by 2020

Progress summary

Since 2010, in the country there is a law against discrimination by any form (race, gender etc.), however, the civil societies are lobbying for amendments which will more explicitly protect rights of key populations.

Policy questions (2016)

Does your country have a national plan or strategy to address gender-based violence and violence against women that includes HIV

-

Does your country have legislation on domestic violence*?

-

What protections, if any, does your country have for key populations and people living with HIV from violence?

-

Does your country have policies in place requiring healthcare settings to provide timely and quality health care regardless of gender, nationality, age, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, language, socio-economic status, HIV or other health status, or because of selling sex, using drugs, living in prison or any other grounds?

-

Knowledge of HIV and access to sexual reproductive health services

Ensure that 90%% of young people have the skills, knowledge and capacity to protect themselves from HIV and have access to sexual and reproductive health services by 2020, in order to reduce the number of new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women to below 100 000 per year

Progress summary

The Ministry of Education in coordination with Ministry of Health and Civil Societies are working on including sexual and reproductive health as one of the subjects in the school curricula. This process is not finished. In meantime, this topics from sexual and reproductive health are part of the facultative "life skills" subject in the schools. In addition, NGOs are implementing projects for peer education.

Social protection

Ensure that 75%% of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV benefit from HIV-sensitive social protection by 2020

Progress summary

All patients who are in care have access to services from a social worker within the HIV treatment center. In addition, under annual National HIV Program civil society organizations also provide psychosocial support for people living with HIV, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs and sex workers. Access to HIV-sensitive social support is recognized in draft National HIV Strategy until 2021.

Policy questions (2016/2017)

Yes and it is being implemented

a) Does it refer to HIV?

No

b) Does it recognize people living with HIV as key beneficiaries?

No

c) Does it recognize key populations (sex workers, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, transgender people, prisoners) as key beneficiaries?

No

d) Does it recognize adolescent girls and young women as key beneficiaries?

No

e) Does it recognize people affected by HIV (children and families) as key beneficiaries?

No

f) Does it address the issue of unpaid care work in the context of HIV?

No

What barriers, if any, limit access to social protection programmes in your country?

-

Community-led service delivery

Ensure that at least 30%% of all service delivery is community-led by 2020

Progress summary

The 2018 Annual programme for HIV in the country is completely financed by the Government and Ministry of Health, in this program worth 1,5 million Euros, 48% of the funds are distributed to NGOs working on HIV prevention with key populations.

Policy questions (2017)

Does your country have a national policy promoting community delivery of antiretroviral therapy?

No

What safeguards in laws, regulations and policies, if any, provide for the operation of CSOs/CBOs in your country?

Registration of HIV CSOs is possible

Registration of CSOs/CBOs working with key populations is possible

HIV services can be provided by CSOs/CBOs

Services to key populations can be provided by CSOs/CBOs

Reporting requirements for CSOs/CBOs delivering HIV services are streamlined

Number of condoms and lubricants distributed by NGOs in the previous year

a) Male condoms:

343606

b) Female condoms:

-

c) Lubricants:

86699

HIV expenditure

Ensure that HIV investments increase to US\$ 26 billion by 2020, including a quarter for HIV prevention and 6%% for social enablers

Progress summary

Compared to 2017 (when 50% of the HIV total expenditures were funded through Global Fund), in 2018 the Government direct funding is increased 10 fold.

Empowerment and access to justice

Empower people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV to know their rights and to access justice and legal services to prevent and challenge violations of human rights

Progress summary

A community-based organization "Stronger Together" is a direct beneficiary of the funds from the Annual HIV Program. One of the activities is to support PLWHIV practising their rights. In addition, the Clinic for Infectious Disease where all people living with HIV are treated, there is a team of social worker and psychologist as well that assist these people. NGOs working with key populations also offer social and legal services (funds for legal services provided from sources other than national HIV program) for their clients.

AIDS out of isolation

Commit to taking AIDS out of isolation through people-centred systems to improve universal health coverage, including treatment for tuberculosis, cervical cancer and hepatitis B and C

Progress summary

All patients living with HIV have right and receive free of charge universal health coverage (universal health coverage is guaranteed by the state for all citizens). including treatment for TB, HBV or HCV. The country is currently developing strategies for increasing the coverage for HCV treatment.