

Resolution on HIV/AIDS: early diagnosis and early care

2008/2667(RSP) - 20/11/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 19 November 2008, the European Parliament adopted by 480 votes to 4, with 10 abstentions, a resolution on HIV/AIDS: early diagnosis and early care. The resolution had been tabled for consideration in plenary by the Greens/EFA, EPP-ED, PES, UEN, ALDE and GUE/NGL groups.

Parliament recalls that EuroHIV's end-year report 2006 shows that 269 152 people were newly diagnosed as infected with HIV in 1999-2006 within the EU and 806 258 people were newly diagnosed as infected with HIV in the European Region of the WHO. In the EU, 11% of all new HIV infections affect young people under the age of 25, according to the EuroHIV report. The reports from EuroHIV and UNAIDS confirm that the number of new HIV infections is still rising at an alarming rate within the EU as well as in neighbouring countries, and that in some countries the estimated number of people infected with HIV is almost three times higher than the official number.

However, despite the increased number of HIV infections, the steady decrease in the number of AIDS cases diagnosed in recent years has continued in 2006, with 40% fewer cases diagnosed in 2006 in comparison to 1999 in the EU. A large proportion of HIV infections remain undiagnosed, and many people do not know whether they are infected or not, and are likely to discover it only once afflicted by HIV/AIDS-related illnesses.

Parliament calls on the Council and the Commission to formulate a strategy on HIV to:

- promote early diagnosis and reduction of barriers to testing;
- ensure early care and communication of the benefits of earlier care.

It calls on the Commission to ensure accurate monitoring and surveillance by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, including more precise estimates (size, characteristics, etc.) of the undiagnosed population, respecting confidentiality and protecting personal data. The Commission must commit substantial political, financial and human resources to support the implementation of such a strategy. Together with Member States, it must ensure access to testing, which must remain free and anonymous.

Parliament calls for the following :

- the establishment of an HIV/AIDS risk reduction strategy focusing on vulnerable groups and groups known to be at high risk;
- the preparation of Council recommendations on the implementation of evidence-based testing and treatment guidelines in each Member State ;
- ensuring that future monitoring of progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Europe and neighbouring countries incorporates indicators that directly address and assess human rights issues in relation to HIV/AIDS.

It calls on Member States to enact provisions which effectively outlaw discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS, including restrictions that impact on their freedom of movement within their

jurisdictions. Member States are also asked to step up information and education campaigns on the prevention, testing and treatment of HIV/AIDS.