



Community-Based HIV Testing: The Athens Checkpoint Experience



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Barbican Centre

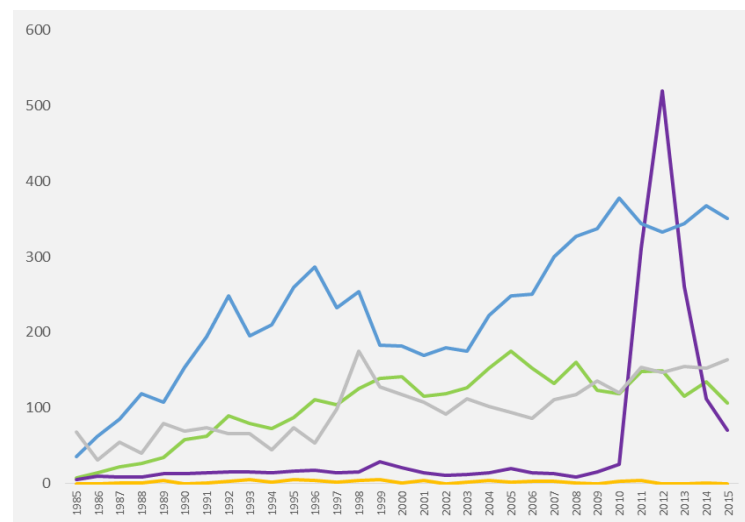
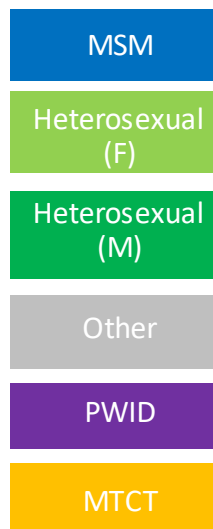
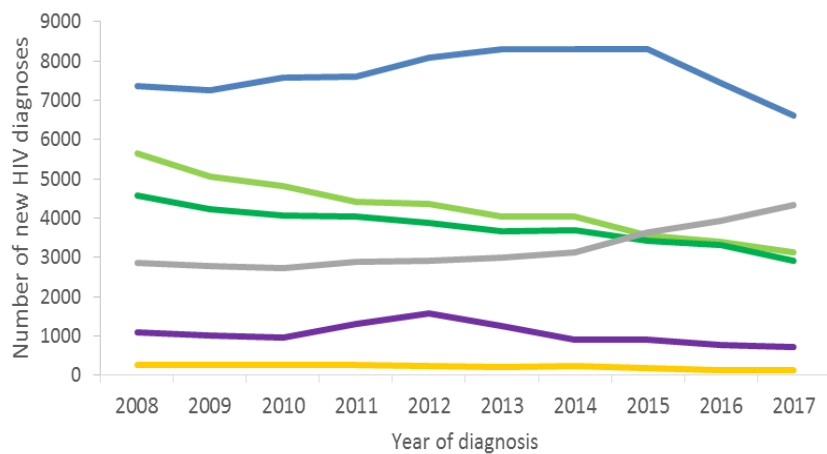
Outline

1. Epidemiological data - background information
2. Rationale behind the creation of the 1st CBCT service
3. The Checkpoint initiative and its evolution
4. Checkpoint milestones
5. 2019 – 2020 goals
6. Fast Track Cities Initiative & Checkpoint & City of Athens 2020 -2022
7. Concluding remarks

EU/EEA VS Greek HIV diagnosis trends 2008 - 2017

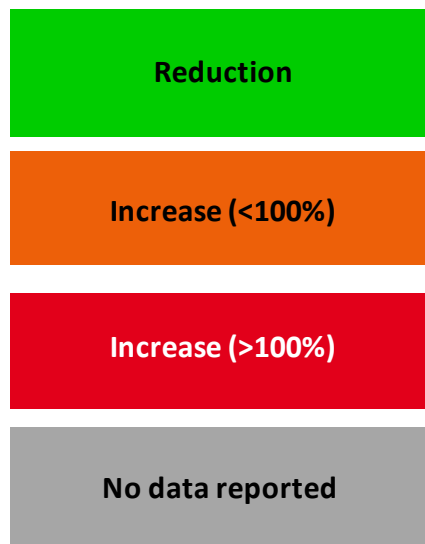
EU / EEA

Greece



The majority of EU/EEA countries reported an increase of HIV diagnoses in MSM, 2006 - 2015

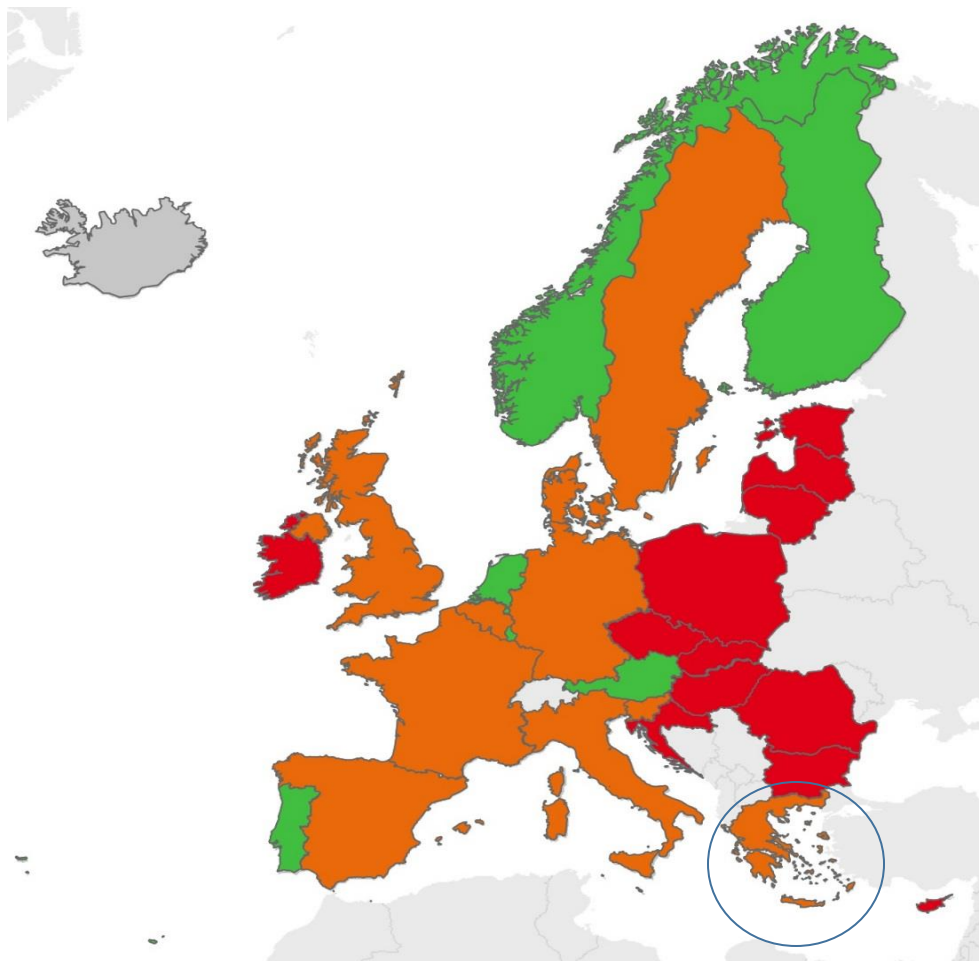
Change of % new HIV diagnoses in MSM 2006-2015



Non-visible countries

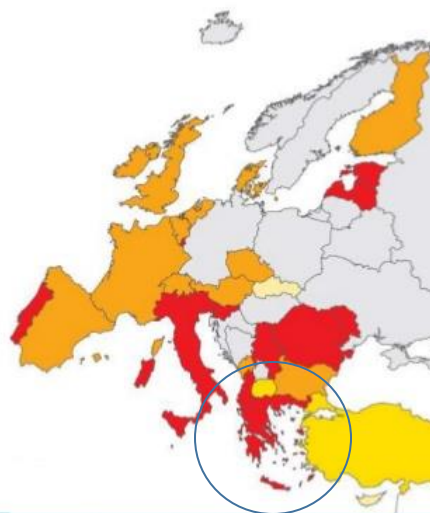
 Luxembourg

 Malta



Proportion of diagnosed HIV cases with a CD4 count < 350 cells/mm³, 2014 VS 2016, EU/EEA

Proportion of HIV cases diagnosed late (CD4<350 cells/mm³), 2014, EU/EEA



Non-visible countries
■ Liechtenstein
■ Luxembourg
■ Malta

Source: ECDC/WHO (2015). HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Europe, 2014

*Among cases with CD4 count at diagnosis reported

Late diagnosis, 2016, EU/EEA



% persons with CD4
<350 cells/mm³ at HIV diagnosis



Missing data or did not report

EU/EEA Average: 48%

Non-visible countries
■ Luxembourg
■ Malta

Source: ECDC/WHO (2017). HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Europe 2017–2016 data



EMIS 2010: The European Men-Who-Have-Sex-With-Men Internet Survey

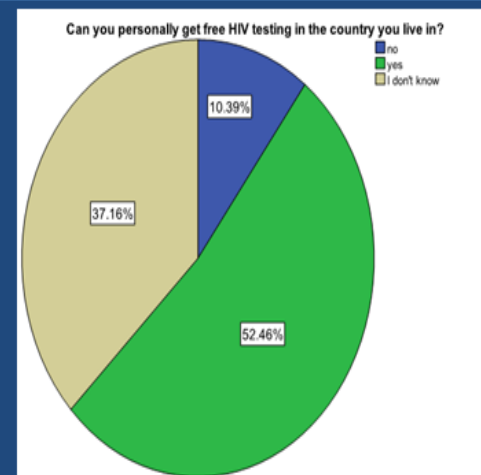
HIV test - Greece

Never tested for HIV: **936 (1 out of 3)**

Tested at least once for HIV: **1605 (2 out of 3)**

	Never received an HIV test result N (%)	Received an HIV test result N (%)
Athens	359 (27.5)	946 (72.5)
Thessaloniki	148 (38.4)	237 (61.6)
Rest of Greece	429 (50.4)	422 (49.6)

Free HIV test





HIV testing
disruption

Testing
facilities
reduction

Fee
introduction

Discriminatory
attitudes

Diagnostics'
stock outs

Sexual
health
education



CHECKPOINT

prevention and testing centers



Joint activity - partnership

PositiveVoice
people+HIV

&



Hellenic Association PLWHA, Athens, Greece

Aids Healthcare Foundation Europe, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Collaborations



Philosophy

OBJECTIVES

- 1) HIV, HBV, HCV, Syphilis **testing**
- 2) Facilitation of **early diagnosis** and **optimal access** to treatment
- 3) Normalization of HIV testing
- 4) **“Peer-to-peer”** counseling services
- 5) Battling **stigma** and discrimination

TARGETS

- 1) Reduce the **undiagnosed** fraction
- 2) Reduce the number of **MSM** who have never been tested before

LOGISTICS

- 1) Central, easily-accessible location and friendly, non-clinical environment
- 2) Convenient opening hours (Mo-Sa: 12-8 pm)
- 3) Scheduled appointments & drop-ins
- 4) Modern diagnostics (rapid testing)



Activities



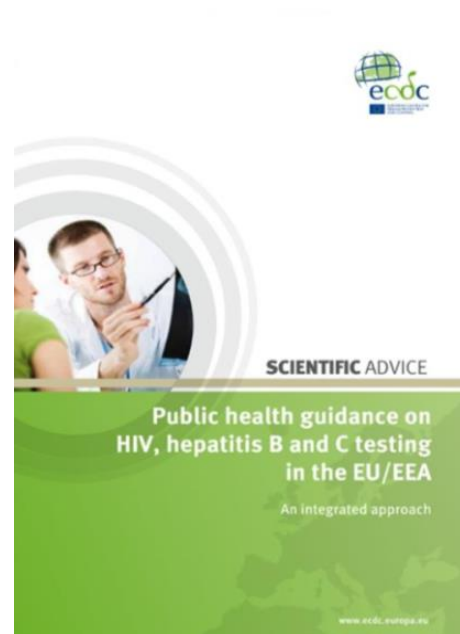
**Checkpoint's presence in every major event..
World AIDS Day, European HIV/Heps Testing Week, International Condom Day, Pride Festivals..**



6,5 years Checkpoint Milestones 2013 – 2018



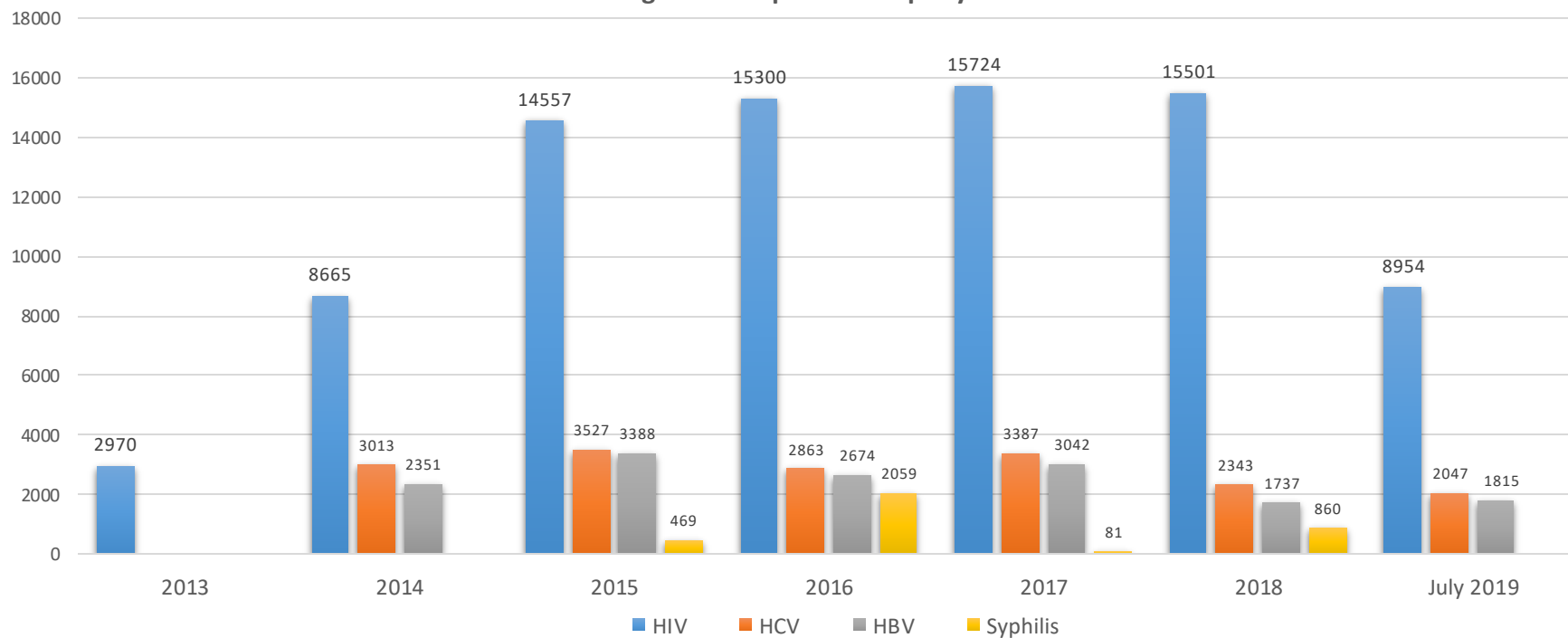
WHO, July 2015



ECDC, October 2018

6,5 years Checkpoint Milestones 2013 – July 2019

Fig. 1. Checkpoint tests per year



6,5 years Checkpoint Milestones 2013 – July 2019

Fig. 2. % Checkpoint HIV diagnoses compared to Greek CDC

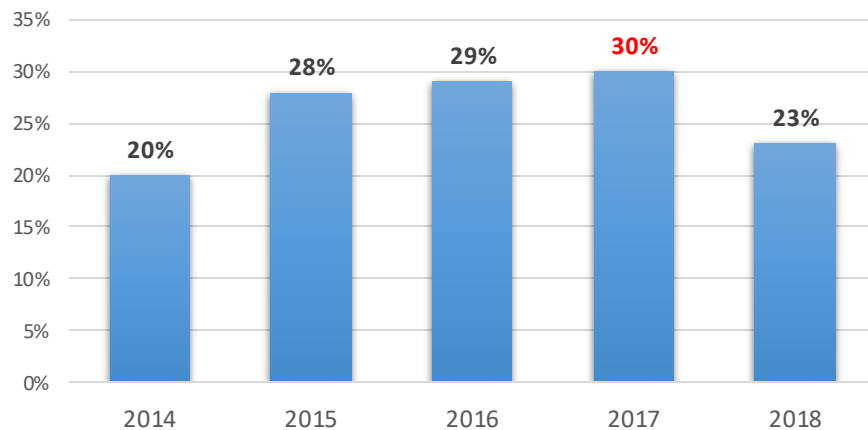
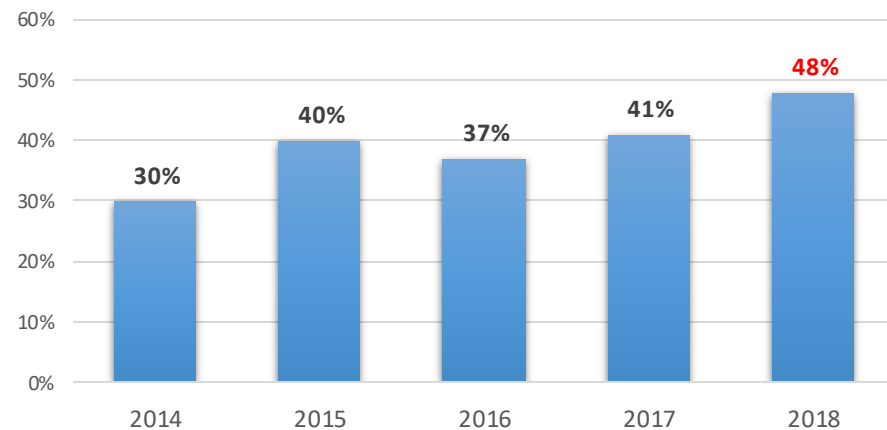


Fig. 3. % Checkpoint MSM HIV diagnoses compared to Greek CDC



6 years Checkpoint Milestones 2013 – July 2019

- Knowledge and **best practice transfer** to Albania, Bulgaria, Skopje, Moldova and Cyprus
- Ath & Thess Checkpoint: **Cost effective** (Perelman, J. et al., 2017)
- 2016 **European Citizen Award** and 2017 **Healthcare Business Awards**
- > **90 %** of the reactively tested beneficiaries was successfully linked to care
- Dispensing of > than **5 million** free condoms and **400.000** informative material
- **Mobile Unit** acquisition (testing services to the **Roma** community around Greece)

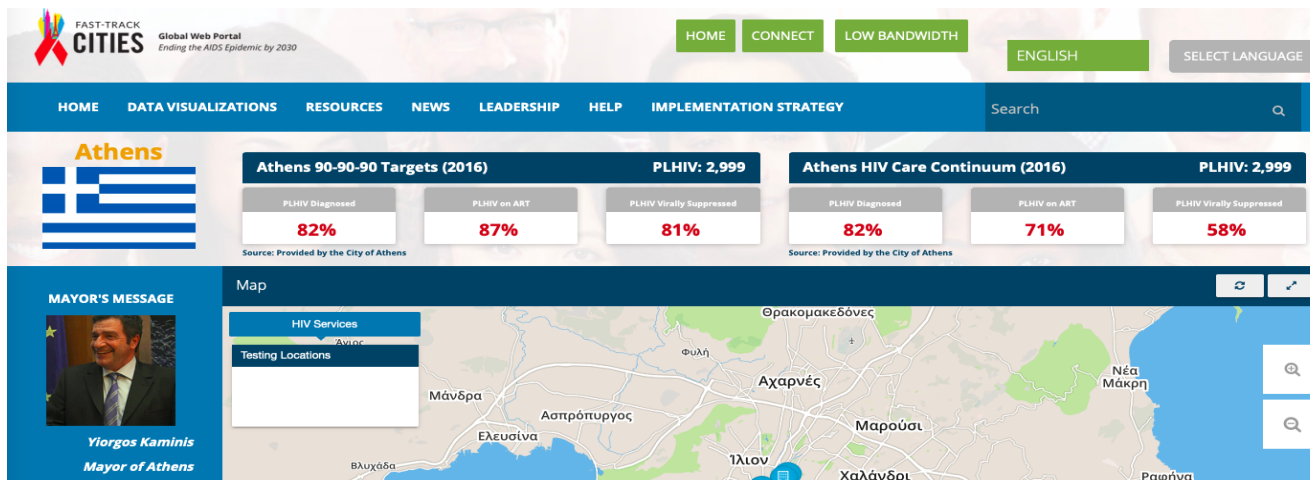
European
Citizen
of the year
2016



2019 - 2020 Checkpoint goals

- Acquisition of **4th generation** rapid tests
- Point of care: **viral load measurement** and other STIs
- Assisted Anonymous **Partner Notification System**
- Advocacy for **self-testing, PrEP, sexual education** in schools mainly through the upcoming National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan
- Increase the number of **MSM beneficiaries & seropositivity rate** achieved so far
- Increase the **targeted outreach testing**, e.g.: saunas, porn cinemas
- Enhance our presence in **refugee camps** run by the State for testing and counseling
- Upgrade the **electronic system** regarding data collection

Fast Track Cities Initiative & Checkpoint & City of Athens 2020 -2022



Aim of cooperation

- Awareness-raising towards beneficial impact of ART
- Significance of routine testing
- Reduction of HIV&HCV prevalence in PWID
- Reduction of % of undiagnosed & late diagnosed cases
- Safer sexual practices & harm reduction counseling
- Support and link recently infected people to care
- Battle stigma effects and discriminations

Arson attack, March 11th 2019

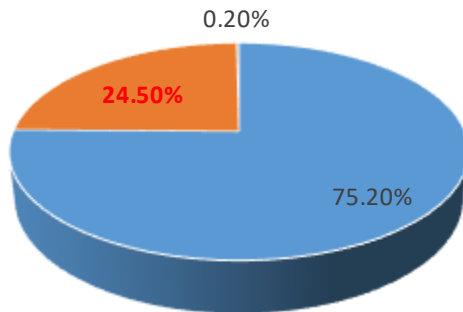


Concluding remarks

1. Community-based, friendly, non-judgmental, free testing had a huge impact to Greece
2. Reduction of new diagnoses / infections
3. The Checkpoint has managed to change the landscape of the attitudes, perceptions & knowledge in MSM



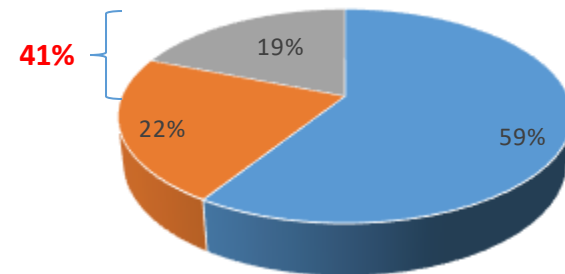
Have you been tested for HIV in the past?



■ Yes ■ No ■ No response

EMIS 2010: **30%** never been tested before

Do you know where you can get tested for HIV?

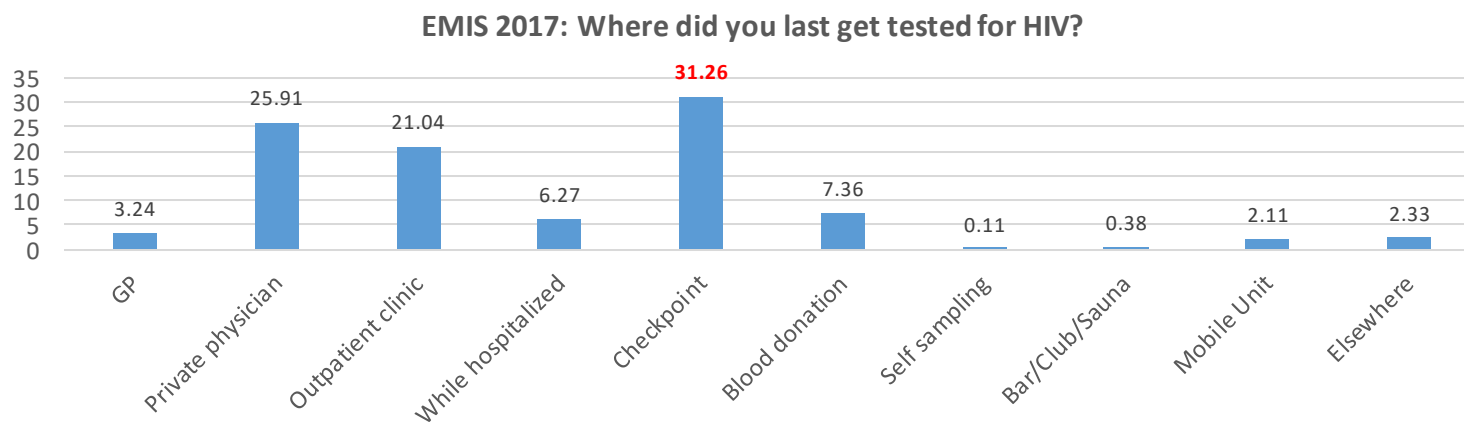


■ Yes ■ No ■ Do not know

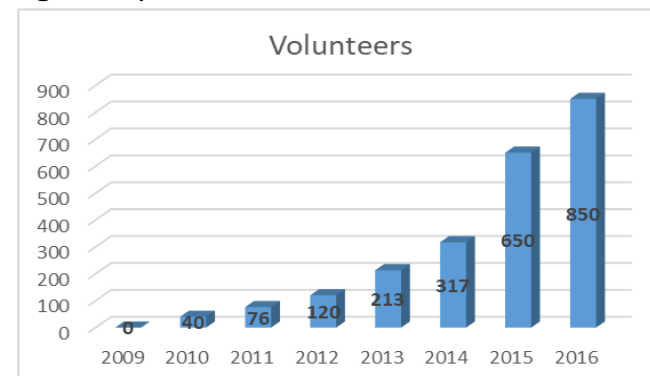
EMIS 2010: **47,5%** did not know / was not sure

Concluding remarks

4. Checkpoint: “success story” in intensifying public health through it’s testing and awareness-raising activities



5. Important cooperation between the City of Athens & Checkpoint in curbing the epidemic



Donors - Supporters



abbvie



Foundations



THE RADCLIFFE
FOUNDATION

Ath & Thess Checkpoint team



Athens, Thessaloniki and rest of Greek regions' volunteers



Thank you !

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