Where do women get tested more often for HIV, HCV and syphilis in Warsaw
at the stationary checkpoints or at the socio-cultural event?

Authors

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Introduction

There are 27 points in Poland where one can take a free and anonymous HIV test. Despite this, still only 10% of Poles have taken an HIV test at least once in their lives. For HIV prevention, including the maintenance and promotion of free HIV testing points, the Ministry of Health allocates only 5% of funds dedicated to HIV/AIDS activities.

Our goal is to reach every person with testing and minimize the limitations associated with access to free HIV, HCV, syphilis testing.

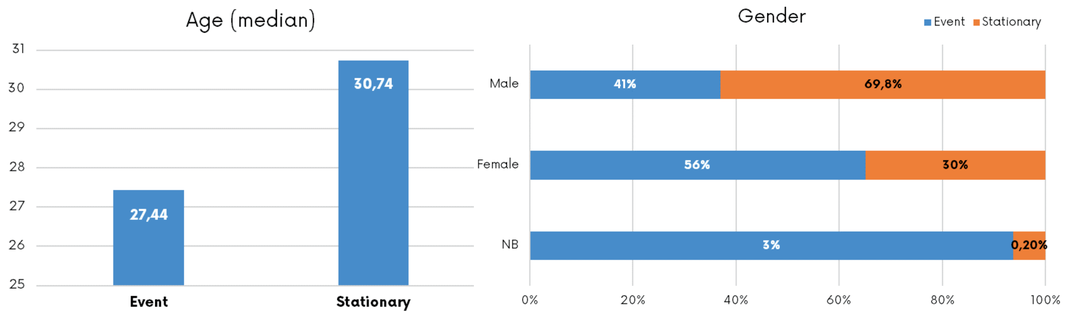
Objective

Verify the hypothesis that women are more likely to get tested for HIV, HCV, and syphilis at socio-cultural events than at stationary testing centers in Warsaw.

Methodology

A questionnaire interview (PAPI method) was conducted during the events. Collected data was compared to the data from 4 stationary HIV checkpoints collected in a similar way (CAPI instead of PAPI). The information collected included age, gender, and information on past HIV tests. Data were statistically analyzed using Fisher's exact test, Pearson's Chi-squared test, and Wilcoxon rank sum test.

Results

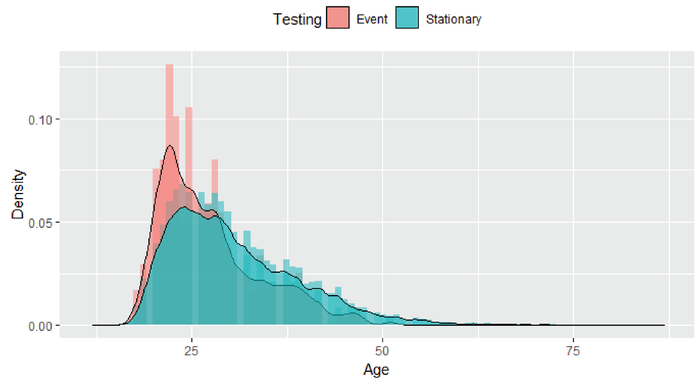


Results

Women and people identifying with another gender (other gender) tested more often at events compared to stationary tests, it is statistically significant ($p<0.001$). The difference in median age between people who test at events and at stationary checkpoints is 3 years, this is statistically significant ($p<0.001$). Based on the analysis, there are no grounds to reject the main hypothesis. There are no statistically significant differences between the frequency of first-time HIV testing at events and stationary testing ($p=0.71$). The survey included 280 people aged 18-48 (events) and 14,422 people aged 18-87 (stationary points).

"Thanks to this initiative, I know that it is necessary to test for HIV."

Client at the event.



Characteristic	**Events**, N = 280[1]	**Stationary**, N = 14,422[1]	**p-value**[2]
gender			<0.001
women	157 / 280 (56,1%)	4,351 / 14,422 (30%)	
men	114 / 280 (40,7%)	10,044 / 14,422 (70%)	
other	9 / 280 (3.2%)	27 / 14,422 (0.2%)	
first_HIV_test			0.71
no	132 / 280 (46,1%)	6,377 / 14,422 (44%)	
yes	151 / 280 (53,9%)	8,045 / 14,422 (56%)	
age	27.48 (7.02)	30.74 (8.70)	<0.001

[1] n / N (%); Mean (SD)
[2] Fisher's exact test; Pearson's Chi-squared test; Wilcoxon rank sum test

Conclusion

Women are more likely to test at events. It is also worth noting that, in general, men are more likely to get tested at stationary testing, which may be a result of men's higher level of awareness regarding stationary testing places. In addition, women are more likely to get tested for the first time compared to men.

Probably more women, in comparison to men, are unaware of the existence of free testing check-points. This needs to be investigated more thoroughly. The study also showed that non-binary people are more willing to get tested for HIV during events than at stationary check points.

All these findings support the hypothesis that women are more likely to get tested for HIV, HCV, and syphilis at socio-cultural events than at stationary testing centers in Warsaw.

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