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**Report on HIV diagnosis monitoring in  
Catalonia**

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**Centre d'Estudis Epidemiològics sobre les Infeccions de Transmissió Sexual  
i Sida de Catalunya (CEEISCAT- Catalan Centre of Epidemiological Studies  
on Sexually-transmitted Infections and AIDS)**

## 1. HIV diagnostic tests performed in Catalonia's clinical laboratory network

The number of tests performed in the network of hospital and primary care laboratories that volunteer information regarding their HIV testing (excluding tests performed for donated blood screening) has been increasing each year, while the rate of positive test results has been decreasing (see Table 1).

*Table 1. Number of tests performed in Catalonia's clinical laboratory network and the annual rate of positive test results*

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of tests</b>	<b>Positive test results %</b>
<b>1993</b>	26,168	10.40
<b>1994</b>	54,225	7.74
<b>1995</b>	65,699	5.25
<b>1996</b>	72,893	4.57
<b>1997</b>	74,278	3.66
<b>1998</b>	117,964	2.63
<b>1999</b>	121,914	2.66
<b>2000</b>	132,966	2.29
<b>2001</b>	145,116	2.02
<b>2002</b>	177,660	1.37
<b>2003</b>	187,076	1.02
<b>2004</b>	213,957	0.90
<b>2005*</b>	232,100	0.74
<b>2006*</b>	250,250	0.61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,872,266</b>	<b>2.04</b>

\* Estimated figures

The rate of tests for every 1,000 inhabitants in 2004 is 31.4, which is similar to that of other European countries. The estimated rates for 2005 and 2006 are 33.2 and 35.1, respectively.

## 2. HIV tests performed at diagnostic and counselling centres

There are 8 centres in Catalonia that offer, together with counselling, voluntary tests which are free of charge, anonymous and confidential. These centres are located in Barcelona (ACASC, CJAS, Projecte dels Noms (Names Project), SAPS, Àmbit prevenció and Stop Sida), Sabadell and Terrassa (Actua Vallès), and Lleida (Anti-AIDS Association of Lleida). The test is subsidised by the Health Department. These centres have performed 12,640 tests between 1994 and 2006. Of these, 416 of the results have been positive (3.29%). In recent years, the number of tests performed has increased, while the rate of positive test results has decreased (see Table 2).

*Table 2. Number of tests performed at alternative centres and the annual rate of positive test results*

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of tests</b>	<b>Positive test results %</b>
<b>1994</b>	141	9.93
<b>1995</b>	719	4.03
<b>1996</b>	1,007	3.28
<b>1997</b>	894	3.36
<b>1998</b>	1,000	3.50
<b>1999</b>	792	3.91
<b>2000</b>	629	2.54
<b>2001</b>	1,025	3.32
<b>2002</b>	915	3.39
<b>2003</b>	941	3.83
<b>2004</b>	1,141	4.03
<b>2005</b>	1,575	2.29
<b>2006</b>	1,861	2.42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,640</b>	<b>3.29</b>

Between the years 1994 and 2006, men comprised 62.25% of those getting tested (See Table 3). For both men and women, the age group that got tested the most was those between 20 and 35 years of age (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Number of tests performed at alternative centres and the rate of positive test results by gender and age group from 1994-2006

Age group	Gender	No. of tests performed (%)	Positive test results %
<20	Men	637 (42.05%)	1.57
	Women	878 (57.95%)	0.91
20-35	Men	6,744 (61.99%)	3.69
	Women	4,135 (38.01%)	1.35
36-50	Men	1,787 (74.09%)	5.54
	Women	625 (25.91%)	3.04
>50	Men	281 (75.34%)	1.78
	Women	92 (24.66%)	4.35
TOTAL	Men	9,449 (62.25%)	3.79
	Women	5,730 (37.75%)	1.45

The rapid test was implemented at alternative and counselling centres at the end of 2006. As a result, the standard test has been used less throughout 2007, in favour of the rapid test (see Table 4).

**Table 4.** Number of tests performed at alternative centres and the rate of positive test results according to type of test from January to June 2007

Type of test	No. of tests performed	Positive test results %
Standard test	196	3.06
Rapid test	1,522	1.58
TOTAL	1,717	1.75

To study the impact of the implementation of the rapid test, a comparison was made of the number of tests performed and the number of positive test results during the first 6 months of 2007 with regard to the same time period in 2006. A 188% increase was noted in the number of tests performed in 2007 in relation to 2006. Despite the increase in the number of positive test results, the positive test results rate decreased, from 2.25% to 1.75%.

**Table 5.** Number of tests performed at alternative centres\*, number of positive test results and rate from January to June 2006 and 2007

Year	No. of tests performed	No. of positive test results	Positive test results %
2006	776	17	2.19
2007	1688	26	1.54

\* Data from the Stop Sida centre has not been included as the centre changed locations and thus, did not perform tests for some months. As a result, their 2006 and 2007 data is not comparable.

### **3. Estimate of delays in diagnosing HIV in Catalonia**

The diagnosis delay noted with regard to the new diagnoses of HIV infections remains high, varying between 41% and 43%, depending on the different sources of information (1998-2004 PISCIS cohort and information system on new diagnoses of infection, 2001-2003 respectively).

## CONCLUSIONS

- The number of HIV diagnostic tests performed in the Catalonia laboratory network has gradually risen from 26,168 in 1993 to 213,957 in 2004. The estimated figures for 2006 are 250,250 tests.
- The testing rate in Catalonia for every 1,000 inhabitants is similar to that of other European countries. Based on 2005 and 2006 estimates, this rate has increased.
- The number of tests performed in the alternative diagnostic centres has sharply increased in recent years, from 914 tests in 2003 to 1,861 tests in 2006.
- Despite the increase in the number of tests performed, the rate of positive test results has decreased. Thus, it is important to improve access to diagnostic testing for vulnerable populations.
- Between 41% and 43% of HIV diagnoses are delayed. Early diagnosis of the HIV infection must be encouraged.