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Latvia EU Presidency Events

“Keep HIV, HCV, TB and STIs on the agenda “

Keep HIV high on the political agenda –

Communicating on risks of not investing in AIDS, combatting complacency and a new regional narrative are critical

Regional Consultation on the UNAIDS Strategy 2016-2021: Western Europe

During Latvia's EU Presidency related to EU events

- ✦ TB was kept somewhat on agenda
- ✦ HIV and Hep C was kept on agenda only in passing, in fact, not at all

During the time frame unrelated to EU events

- ✦ HIV was kept on agenda due to AIDS Action Europe meeting in Riga on April 20 - 22
- ✦ HIV and Hep C was kept on agenda at several Cabinet meetings by the new Minister of Health Mr. Bilevich who introduced the bill Nr. 899 and under the pressures from HIV and Hep C advocacy groups

List of Official EU Presidency Events coordinated by Latvia's Ministry of Health

http://www.vm.gov.lv/lv/aktualitates/publisko_notikumu_kalendars/

http://www.vm.gov.lv/en/what_is_new/events/?print

Selected

50	18	2	Array	No Meetings	1
	Sessions by Working Group on Pharmaceutical Products and Medical Devices in EU.		Dedicated to healthy nutrition, social issues, improved employability and employment equality across EU states, with chief focus on liquor consumption issues and social inclusion (<i>note: targeting vulnerable groups, yet, to be assessed</i>)	on Hep C and HIV/AIDS	
value to be assessed		<p>“Universal Health: Investment in Health and Prosperity for All”:</p> <p>Investing in Efficient European Health Systems which Prevent Disease; Ensuring Improved Health Outcomes and Reduced Inequalities; Developing Systems for People Centered and Sustainable Health Service Delivery</p> <p>June 3rd, “Making Patient Interest at the Core Health System a Reality”</p> <p>Note: <i>pay as go health services in Latvia is 50-60%, state provided services at continual decrease as seen at quota table at NHS</i></p> <p>29th of April High-level round table discussion Fit for Work Europe Coalition Member States.</p>			1st Eastern partnership Mini-Confidence on Tuberculosis and Its Multi-Drug Resistance.
prospective value					The Meeting of the Network of Competent Authorities for Pricing and Reimbursement

1st Eastern partnership Ministerial Conference on Tuberculosis and Its Multi- Drug Resistance. 30-31 March 2015, Latvian National Library, Riga.

- Assessment: <http://www.aidsactioneurope.org/news/announcements/report-ministerial-conference-mdr-tb-riga>
- *Personal note: well organized, yet, at the value-to-be-seen; HIV/AIDS mentioned as co-morbidity in passing in Riga Declaration's 2nd paragraph (no discussions permitted prior its adoption), and no mention of HIV/AIDS in action plan*

The Meeting of the Network of Competent Authorities for Pricing and Reimbursement met experts from the EU/EEA Member States responsible for decision-making on the pricing and reimbursement of medicines.

- https://eu2015.lv/images/Kalendars/VM/zalu_cenas_agenda.pdf

Letter of Intent between the Government of Latvia and the pharmaceutical industry (EFPIA - European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries ...

- <http://www.efpia.eu/mediaroom/279/44/Letter-of-Intent-between-the-Government-of-Latvia-and-the-pharmaceutical-industry>

Commenting this agreement, Minister for Health Bilevics talked about ineffective treatment of C hepatitis with PEG-s: Latvia may pay only for those who are cured, not for medicines themselves; developing capacity for the conclusion of the agreements directed towards the management of the introduction of specific medicines that correspond to diseases with an aim to enable any mid-term increase in payment for medicines to be spent wisely, specifically for new medicines.

Within the agreements mentioned in Clause 2, is to explore innovative payment models, such as paying for outcomes. Oncology is to be considered as a priority area, considering the updated National Cancer Program

EVENTS UNRELATED TO EU PRESIDENCY

AIDS Action Europe Meeting on 20-21 April

- Assessment: <http://www.aidsactioneurope.org/news/announcements/aae-steering-committee-met-latvian-civil-society-and-other>
- *Residual Effect: while the meeting did not penetrate the political establishment on HIV/AIDS, it did make a considerable dent with its presence in local media and its residual Letter to Cabinet of Ministers was disseminated amongst Cabinet members and, most importantly, kept it HIV/AIDS on agenda during ministerial meetings, with no less effect than ECDC 2014 September report. The letter was also presented to prime minister Mrs. Straujuma on BT 131 flight on June 22nd.*

Minister of Health Mr. Bilevich/ Introduction of Bill 899 (provisions for Hep C treatment at 90% coverage and HIV ART testament at 350 CD4+)

- *Residual Effect: supported by AIDS Action Europe and ECDC reports, and pressures from LIC and NGO, the bill was introduced by Mr. Bilevich but stonewalled by Minister of Finance during a closed door session. The wrangling is ongoing, as Ministry of Health does not have convincing financial data, and targeting by international health agencies is weak; European Commission and WHO “lack teeth” in addressing Latvia on its HIV/AIDS and Hep C policies; the new round of battle is set for September 2015 during cabinet meetings.*
- *Mr. Bilevich did succeed in compelling then government to review pricing for drugs 4 times a year instead of 2.*

Latvian and Baltic Patient Community Advisory Board's (BaltCAB) founding meeting on March 20th-21st, in Riga.

- *At this meeting, the patient community activists, representatives of the pharmaceutical industry, and decision-makers in the healthcare sector set a framework of the format for future cooperation nationally in order to address the issues pertinent to a more effective treatment access. Countries present: Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Russian Federation (Baltic Sea region)*

Europride 2015

- *Residual Effect: addressed HIV/ AIDS Latvia policies with diplomatic channels of US Embassy Consul and President Obama Special Envoy from State Department, on GLBT issues, Randy Berry. Partnership with US based NGOs is further pursued. AIDS Action Europe contact Janis Libeks is a good source on PreP inner working via U.S. health insurance system*



ISSUES SURFACED

developing new
narratives to counter
older narratives via
thorough data drive
research
and arrest loopholes for
political maneuvers



- narrative: government of Latvia lacks necessary funds to address Hep C and HIV/AIDS properly
- counter narrative: government of Latvia (a) has necessary funds to address Hep C and HIV/AIDS properly, its refusal to provide funds or postpone the requests on technical grounds is rooted in (b) socio-cultural attitudes and political calculus *(data on account (b) can be provided upon request)*



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GDP growth (annual %)

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Annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2005 U.S. dollars. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources.

World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files.

Catalog Sources World Development Indicators

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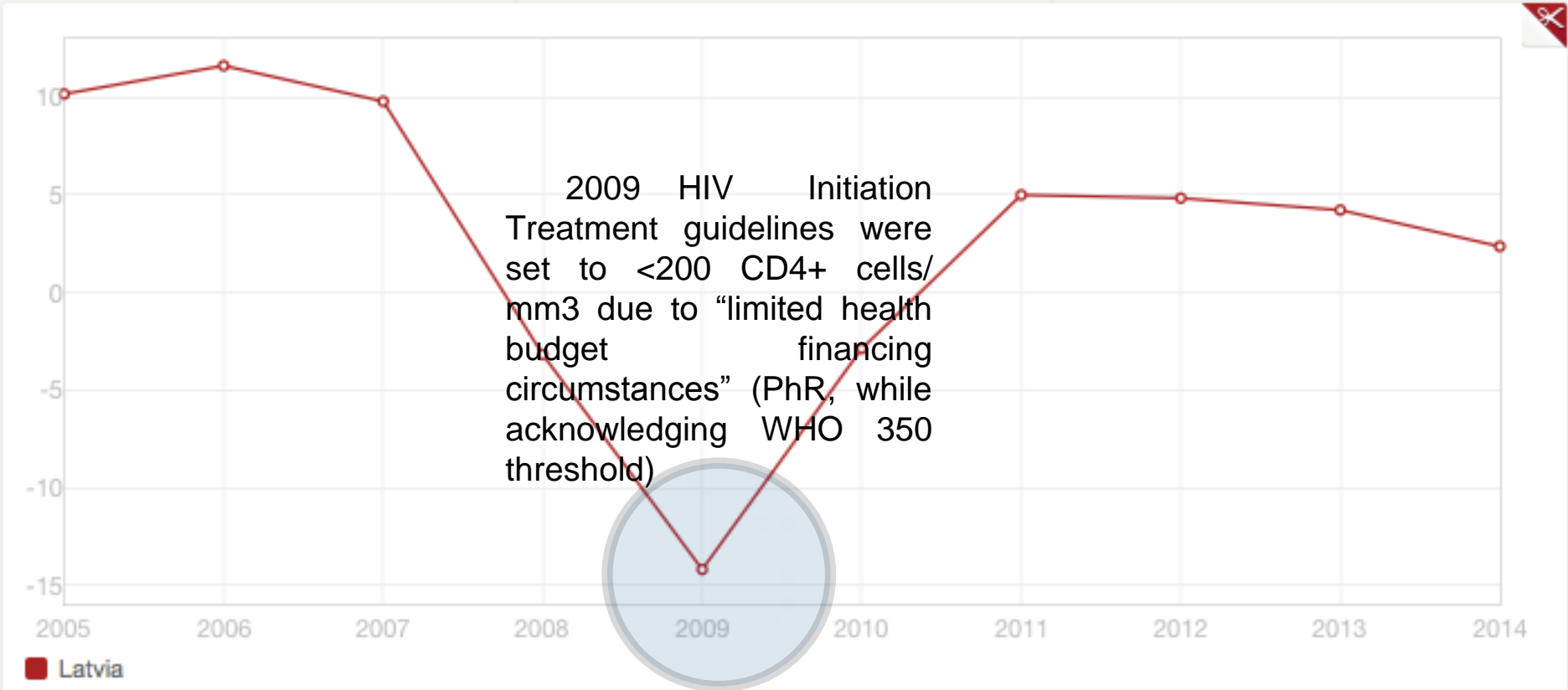
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Economy & Growth

- Agriculture, value added (% of GDP)
- Cash surplus/deficit (% of GDP)
- Central government debt, total (% of GDP)



the additional amount requested for 2015 to start treatment at 350 CD4+

184 122 Euros

amount denied and postponed as a lack of funds by both
Ministry of Finance and Parliament's (Saeima)
Subcommittee for Public Health

188 400 Euros

Base salary (without compensations and auxiliary expenditures) increase for Saeima deputies for year 2015. Approved by Ministry of Finance

518 400 Euros

Base salary increase for Saeima deputies since 2012 when requests for Hep C and HIV/AIDS additional funding was denied annually

1 400 000 Euros

Leftover from EU presidency; MOH Mr. Bilevich's request to use this pool to cover 184 122 Euros was denied on technical grounds

613 000 Euros

Leftover from drug compensation schema used for other purposes than cover additional drug costs for HIV/ AIDS

3 000 000 Euros

State Audit Board found that 3 million euros paid as a salary advance in 2014 to public officials and administration as EU presidency costs was unnecessary, unaccounted for, or unjustified, and unrelated to EU presidency

- socio-cultural attitudes and political calculus

Maria Gessen a world renown [Russian](#) and [American](#) journalist, author, and LGBT activist was once noted: "social media does not create messages that do not exist offline, but it does amplify that which exists offline"

Latvian social media and blogosphere is notably homophobic and xenophobic, where HIV is still looked upon as a gay and drug addict disease, often echoed by religious zealots and public officials

In 2012 former Health Minister Ingrida Circene (V) said, "Professionals and experts have not provided any evidence on the treatment outcomes whether you start treatment at 350 or you start treatment at 200 CD4+ cells." ("HIV is not drug addicts disease" DIENA 06.12.2012)

"So far, support to address this issue at the political level does not exist... it is clear - the money will not be here for the next three years – R. Mucins said to HIV patient NGOs (VM Secretary of State Rinalds Mucins. "AIDS patients also knocking at the door of the Saeima" nra.lv 2012)

Recommendations

International Institutions such as EATG, WHO, ECDC, EACS, and international NGOs such AIDS Action Europe relentlessly pursue public officials at regions and hold those that fail on commitments, via letters writing, routine inspections, personal contacts and investment;

Where their statutes do not permit the direct contact with responsible parties, organizations should reexamine whether the statutes needs to be modified to reflect the changing landscape of HIV epidemic and particularly government's response;

Accept the fact that “no money narrative “ has no basis in reality in post-Soviet geographical space, and is in fact, rooted on socio-cultural and political attitudes, and proceed accordingly;

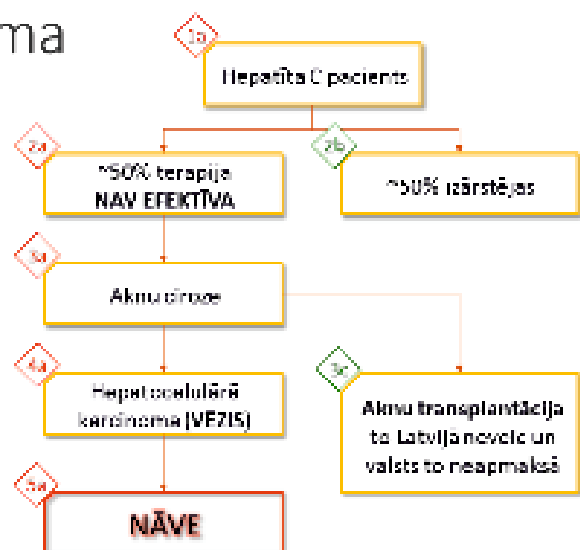
Above mentioned organizations should increase a direct work with local NGOs to asses true realities on the ground at a particular regions and reassess the narrative furnished by respective government officials

NGOs should increase the data drive narrative in their advocacy campaigns to support local health agencies

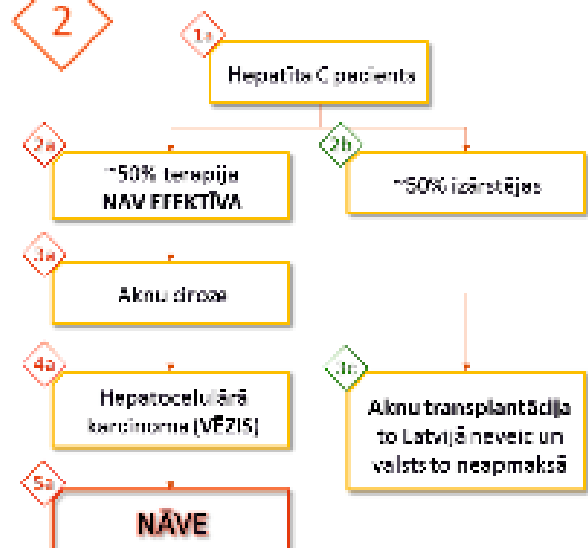
Esošā sistēma

(3,2m€ / gadā)

1



2

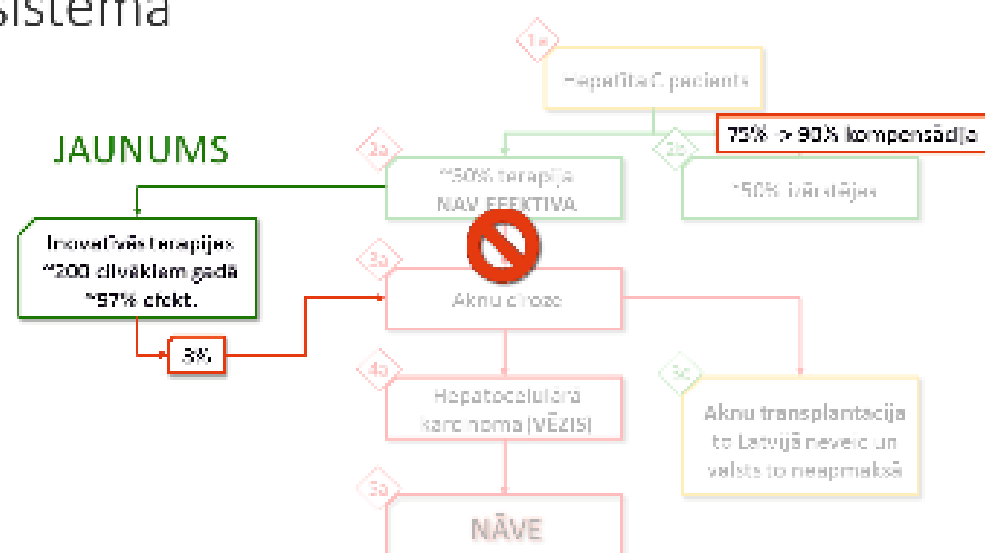


ZUDUMI SISTĒMĀ

- 2A 2014. gada valsts terejusi 3,18 milj. € esošajai (vecajai) terapijai, ~50% pacientu šī terapija ir neefektīva. **1,59m€**
Laikus terapiju pārtraukt nav neviena interesēs, jo nav citu alternatīvu
- 2A 2015. gada ražotāji par 20% samazinājuši cenu esošajai terapijai **0,61m€**
- 2B Ārstējoties pacientam ir augsts līdzmaksājums (200-300€) un virkne papildus izdevumu. Atbalstam tiek ņemtas slimības lapas, 1. un 2. grupas invaliditāte, kas tērē valsts līdzekļus **3,45m€**
0,38m€
- 3A Ik gadus ārstē ap 967 pacientiem **0,28m€**
- 4A Ik gadus ārstē ap 145 pacientiem **0,16m€**
- Ahām grupām piešķir 1. grupas invaliditāti **0,11m€**

Jaunā sistēma

3



IEGUVUMI SISTĒMĀ

4

Ja ievieš jauno sistēmu vairs nelietderīgi netērēs 2,22 m €/gadā no esošā veselības budžeta

un izdevumi 4,38m€ apmērā pakāpeniski mazināsies ar katru gadu

sharing a personal note in HIV advocacy narrative



to policy makers and stakeholders of faith: Commandment 5, Canon Laws, and Mathew Chapter 25 in all Christian religions explicitly bar the faithful from causing harm by direct or indirect action to the health and well-being of another human being and is a cause for eternal damnation; they are ordered under the provisions to care for the sick

to policy makers and stakeholders of secular convictions:

AIDS industry is a multibillion dollar industry, that has provided steady stream of employment, network growth, luxuries, perks, and life style, which is paid by with the lives of HIV and Hep C patients, and we owe it to them for the life we enjoy



Thank You