Global HIV and AIDS statistics

2020 global HIV statistics

HIV continues to be a major global public health issue. In 2020 an estimated 37.7 million people were living with HIV (including 1.7 million children), with a global HIV prevalence of 0.7% among adults. Around 16% of these people (6.1 million) do not know that they have the virus. 1

Since the start of the epidemic, an estimated 79.3 million people have become infected with HIV and 36.3 million people have died of AIDS-related illnesses. In 2020, 680,000 people died of AIDS-related illnesses. This number has reduced by around 64% since the peak of 1.9 million in 2004 and 1.3 million in 2010.2

The vast majority of people living with HIV are located in low- and middle- income countries. East and Southern Africa remains the region most affected by HIV in the world, with 20.6 million people living with HIV and 670,000 new HIV infections in 2020.3 The WHO African region remains most severely affected, with nearly 1 in every 25 adults (3.6%) living with HIV and accounting for more than two-thirds of the people living with HIV worldwide.
Reaching the 90-90-90 targets

While there has been progress towards UNAIDS’ 90-90-90 targets for prevention and treatment, year-on-year reductions appear to be stalling, while the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the HIV response are not yet known.

The first 90%
In 2019, four out of five people living with HIV (84%) knew their status.

The second 90%
Among people who knew their status, four out of five (87%) were accessing treatment.

The third 90%
And among people accessing treatment, more than four out of five (90%) were virally suppressed.

West and Central Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions need urgent action if they are to reach the targets. 4
New infections

In 2020, there were roughly 1.5 million new HIV infections.\(^5\)

Since 2010, global new HIV infections have declined by 31%, from 2.1 million in 2010. Since 2010, new HIV infections among children have declined by 53%, from 320,000 in 2010 to 150,000 in 2020. \(^6\)

Much more also needs to be done to improve knowledge of HIV and HIV testing among adolescents and young people.\(^7\)

In 2019, 65% new adult HIV infections globally were among key affected populations and their partners, including sex workers, people who inject drugs, prisoners, transgender people, gay men and other men who have sex with men. These populations accounted for 93% of new HIV infections outside of sub-Saharan Africa and 39% of new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa.

The risk of acquiring HIV is:

- 35 times higher among people who inject drugs.
- 34 times higher for transgender women.
- 26 times higher for sex workers.
- 25 times higher among gay men and other men who have sex with men.

91% of new HIV infections in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; 95% of new HIV infections in the Middle East and North Africa; 96% of new HIV infections in Western and Central Europe and North America;
94% of new HIV infections in Asia and the Pacific; 92% of new HIV infections in Latin America; 72% of new HIV infections in West and Central Africa; 68% of new HIV infections in the Caribbean and 32% of new HIV infections in East and Southern Africa.8

Young women (ages 15-24) are especially at risk, with around 5,000 new infections each week occurring among this group. In sub-Saharan Africa, adolescent girls and young women (aged 15 to 24 years) accounted for 25% of HIV infections in 2020, despite representing just 10% of the population..9

Nearly one third (35%) of women around the world have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some time in their lives. In some regions, women who experience violence are one and a half times more likely to become infected with HIV.10

The gaps between those for whom the HIV response is working and those for whom it is failing are growing. We must close those gaps—which will require reforming punitive laws and re-imagining HIV services—so that HIV rates and AIDS-related deaths fall equitably across geography, identity and income.
Treatment

Despite challenges, new global efforts have meant that the number of people receiving HIV treatment has increased dramatically in recent years, particularly in resource-poor countries. In 2020, 73% of all people living with HIV were accessing treatment. Of those, 66% were virally suppressed. 11

This equates to 27.5 million people living with HIV receiving antiretroviral treatment (ART) as of June 2019 – up from 7.8 million in 2010. But this level of treatment scale-up was not enough for the world to meet its global target of 30 million people on treatment by 2020. 12

Significant progress has been made in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT). In 2020, 85% of all pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV had access to treatment to prevent transmitting HIV to their babies. This is more than double 2010 levels when just 45% of pregnant and breastfeeding women were receiving ART. 13
HIV and tuberculosis (TB)

Tuberculosis (TB) remains the leading cause of death among people living with HIV, accounting for around one in three AIDS-related deaths. In 2020, 9.8 million people developed TB, around 8% were living with HIV. More than four in ten people (45%) who are living with both HIV and TB are unaware of their health status and are not receiving treatment.14 15

Funding

At the end of 2020, US$ 21.5 billion (in constant 2019 United States dollars) was available for the AIDS response in low- and middle-income countries—around 61% was from domestic sources. 16

Around 61% of the total resources for HIV in low- and middle-income countries in 2019 were drawn from domestic sources.17

UNAIDS estimates that US$ 29 billion will be required for the AIDS response in 2025 in low- and middle-income countries, including countries formerly considered to be upper-income countries, in 2025 to get on track to end AIDS as a global public health threat.18

We cannot have poor countries at the back of the queue. It should not depend on the money in your pocket or the colour of your skin to be protected against these deadly viruses. We
cannot take money from one disease to treat another. Both HIV and COVID-19 must be fully funded if we are to avoid massive loss of life.

- Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS

The reduction in new HIV infections has been strongest in the region most affected by HIV, East and Southern Africa, where new HIV infections have been reduced by 43% since 2010. New infections have also fallen by 37% in West and Central Africa, by 28% in the Caribbean, 21% in Asia and the Pacific and 11% in Western and Central Europe and North America. But in Eastern Europe and Central Asia the annual number of new HIV infections has risen by 43% between 2010 and 2020. New HIV infections have also increased by 7% in the Middle East and North Africa. Latin America data reported no change in 2020.

1. UNAIDS (2021) AIDSinfo.unaids.org
2. UNAIDS (2021) AIDSinfo.unaids.org
3. UNAIDS (2020) AIDSinfo.unaids.org
4. UNAIDS (2020) AIDSinfo.unaids.org
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