

Socio-demographical and behavioural characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africans (SSA) attending a Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) Centre in Brussels.



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Introduction : In 2012, Belgium had the highest rate of new HIV diagnoses in western Europe, 55% were non Belgians among whom 62% came from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Objectives : Analyse, between 2008 and 2012, the evolution of HIV prevalence, socio-demographical and behavioural characteristics of SSA attending a HIV VCT centre that offers anonymous and non-anonymous testing.

Methods : Calculation of prevalence and analysis with SAS 9.2 and Epi Info7 based on data collected through a home made venue-based questionnaire completed by each patient attending the VCT centre. SSA were selected based on the question: "What is your country of origin?"

Stable variables will be presented as means and any evolution will be specified.

Results

Between 2008 and 2012,

13.839 persons with a known origin were tested (94,5% of all tested).

Among them **2064** listed a country of origin in Sub-Saharan Africa, representing a proportion of 15% over the years, distributed as below .

Women	Non MSM	MSM	Total
587 (28%)	1137 (61%)	140 (11%)	2064

HIV Prevalence

Overall prevalence was 3,2% (maximum of 4% in 2012)

4,9% in Women and 6,8% in women anonymously tested ,

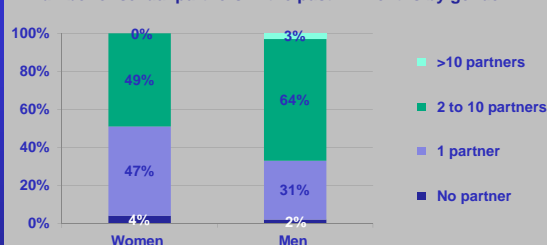
2,2% in Men and 3,9% in MSM.

Socio-demographical characteristics

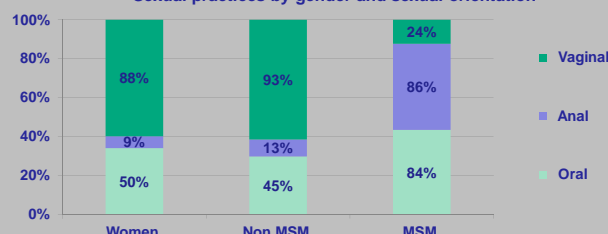
	Women		Men	
	2008	2012	2008	2012
Age (median)	27,5		31,5	
Living in Belgium for more than 5 years	52%		62%	43%
Education				
Low	13%		4%	11%
Medium	48%		43%	38%
High	37%		46%	50%
Without health insurance	12%	18%	18%	
Working	30%	25%	43%	
Non workers are :	70%	75%	57%	
Students	67%	42%	53%	37%
People with no legal status	8%	11%	20%	22%
People receiving social help	15%	33%	23%	33%
Other	10%	14%	4%	8%

Behavioural characteristics

Number of sexual partners in the past 12 months by gender



Sexual practices by gender and sexual orientation



Other sexual behaviours in the past 12 months	Women		Men	
	2008	2012	2008	2012
Had sex with a HIV positive person	19%	4%	31%	6%
Have been clients of prostitutes	0%		16%	
Practiced transactional sex	1,5%		2%	
Had unprotected sex in the last 3 months	48%	54%	44%	52%
Had multiple concurrent partners	12%		22%	

Condom use in the past 12 months	Women		Men	
	2008	2012	2008	2012
Always used condom for sexual penetration	21%		28%	22%
Never used condom for penetration	3%		5%	2%
Always used condom for oral sex	3%	6%	12%	
Never used condom for oral sex	53%	60%	59%	37%
Didn't use it because of alcohol and/or drug use	7%	70%	19%	67%

The proportion of SSA using IV drugs was low <1% for women and <2% for men (2011-2012). Other illegal drugs consumption increased : the proportion of SSA who used more than 2 illegal drugs went from 1,0% to 3,6% (cocaine: +2,3%, cannabis: +1,7% and speed: +1,5%).

Other findings :

- The proportion of SSA who have never been tested before decreased from 32% to 28% (from 37% to 29% in women and 29% to 25% in men).
- 76% were unaware of post-exposure prophylaxis treatment (77% of women and 74% of men)
- 52% had no general practitioner (58% of women and 43% of men).

Conclusion

Over the last 5 years, among SSA tested HIV prevalence increased to reach 4% in 2012 . There was 10% MSM, women were younger than man and less educated. We noticed high proportion of social vulnerability, multiple partners, unprotected sex because of alcohol and/or drug use and low condom use in both genders.