

Introductory technical note



The report on the Integrated Surveillance System on AIDS, HIV and STIs in Catalonia (SIVES, according to the Catalan acronym) which we present corresponds to the year 2010. It is CEEISCAT's Technical Document number 20 and, given that since 2006 the SIVES reports have been biennial, it is the thirteenth SIVES created since 1995, the year in which the first report was published.

Like the previous reports, it includes the information which CEEISCAT creates and organises, this being the data which comes from formal epidemiological surveillance systems, as well as information which comes from projects categorized somewhere between surveillance and applied investigation, often through observational studies. The use of different sources of information for the monitoring of a pathology has been called enhanced epidemiological surveillance and, in this sense, SIVES has been identified by the European Center for Disease Control (ECDC) as one of the most integrated in Europe [1]. With this in mind, we want to take a step further and what is different to previous editions is that sexually transmitted infections (STIs) now appear completely integrated in all the sections, especially in the first one, on morbidity and mortality.

On the other hand, there is wide consensus on the fact that the monitoring of HIV and STIs does not just allow for the description of the parameters of morbi-mortality, but also has to be useful for the design and evaluation of health interventions, whether they be welfare or preventative. In this sense, last year, following the instructions of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the AIDS Program of the United Nations (UNAIDS), we have now made an effort to identify and disseminate some of the indicators which these organisations have recognised as the most relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of these epidemics [2]. This year a further step has been taken and that which was an annex in the report in 2008, in the 2010 version has become a section. Apart from the indicators generated directly by SIVES, other indicators of sexual and reproductive health which exist in our context have been included (section 6, indicators available through the System of Epidemiological Surveillance of AIDS/HIV/STIs in Catalonia and other sexual and reproductive indicators).

None of this would have been possible without the efforts of all the technicians who have worked in the Centre since the first epidemiological report in 1995, and all the professionals who directly or indirectly facilitate the creation of all the data analyzed and presented. To create and maintain this type of information system is a task which often requires years of work and, therefore, the

vision and constancy of these professionals and the institutions which finance them is fundamental. To this end, I would like to give thanks once again to the Department of Health, through the Management of the Public Health System and the Catalan Institute of Oncology, which the Centre has been a part of since 2007, for all their support and the trust they have placed in us. Finally, I would like to also acknowledge the support of The senior management of the Public Health System; of the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC), the EU-Commission (The European Union); the Institute for Women, The Ministry of Work and Social Affairs; the senior management of Public Health, the Ministry of Health and Consumers; The Biomedical Research Centre Network for Epidemiology and Public Health (CIBERESP, according to the Spanish acronym); the Foundation for AIDS Investigation and Prevention in Spain (FIPSE, according to the Spanish acronym); the Agency for Administration of University and Research Grants (AGAUR, according to the Catalan acronym); the Barcelona Public Health Agency (ASPB, according to the Catalan acronym); the Harvard School, Bristol University and Gilead Sciences, Inc.

The epidemiological reports are the physical expression of all this hard work, but the highest acknowledgement is most certainly knowing that the information analyzed is useful to all of us who work in the fields of HIV and STIs, to administrations, NGOs and to health and social science professionals in general. This is what we, the professionals of CEEISCAT desire.

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[1] European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Mapping of HIV/STI behavioural surveillance in Europe. ECDC technical report. Stockholm: ECDC; 2009.

[2] UNAIDS. Monitoring the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. Guidelines for the development of basic indicators. Report 2010. (UNAIDS/09.10S / JC1676S). Geneva, 2009.