

**HUHIV/CAHIV**

**activities report for 2013**



## HUHIV/CAHIV activities report for 2013

**Name of Organization:** HUHIV/CAHIV - Croatian association for HIV and viral hepatitis

[www.huhiv.hr](http://www.huhiv.hr); <https://www.facebook.com/huhiv>; <https://www.facebook.com/checkpoint.zagreb>;  
<http://www.youtube.com/udrugahuhiv>

**Report date:** January 30th 2014.

### 1. Activities implemented

Activities in 2013 were focusing on Checkpoint Zagreb opening, its continuing operations and relationship with youth by providing free services to education, counselling and testing for HIV and HCV, as well as participation and promotion of Checkpoint Zagreb in marking of World hepatitis day, World AIDS Day and the first European HIV testing week.

#### 1.1. CheckPoint Zagreb opening

CheckPoint centre implementation and opening required a carefully prepared protocols providing professional services and quality control in cooperation with experts from the Clinic for Infectious Diseases "Dr. Fran Mihaljevic", Croatian Red Cross and the obligatory supervision of the Head of the Department for the serological diagnosis of hepatitis and HIV at Institute for Clinical Microbiology - Department of Virology at the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases" Dr. Fran Mihaljevic "in Zagreb.

All standards and protocols, adjusted to CDC, were implemented during the work of CheckPoint centre.

Internal expert education was completed according to the protocols

- training and presentation of the testing characteristics
- importance of the evaluation
- quality control
- requirements for testing and storing of the testing material
- protocol of testing
- reading the tests (with practical samples)
- demonstrations of the process
- guidelines for users (informed consent, risk estimate, test results)
- internal control of content and validity
- protocol for dealing with persons with positive anti HIV / HCV results and connections with the systems of care and treatment

The innovative methodology of rapid and reliable testing for HIV and HCV from saliva with protocols to provide education services, counselling and care, meant the reach of the public, young people and those at risk of infection.



We have created a campaign to mark the CheckPoint Zagreb opening - printed campaign in public transport vehicles to over 1,500 ad slots in Zagreb, universities and dormitories. The same campaign was advertised on most national and local televisions, web portals and appearances in TV and radio broadcasts.



We have designed and printed 10,000 copies of educational brochures with expert information about HIV and HCV infections as well as all sexually transmitted infections aimed for general population, young people and the population at risk of contracting HIV / HCV.



The opening was organized by the City of Zagreb, Department of Health with the mayor of Zagreb as a host who opened the CheckPoint and the first tested.



Response was above all expectations, especially by youth. It all resulted in 208 people who responded to testing for HIV and HCV in the period of May 2013 as first month and 218 persons who were provided educational and counselling services on HIV / HCV and other sexually transmitted diseases.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvrBZ90QI24&feature=youtu.be>



## 1.2. World hepatitis day

Further promotion of public health and CheckPoint Centre Zagreb services presupposed awareness campaign to mark World Hepatitis Day. We organized a week of awareness about viral hepatitis as part of a campaign in public transport (to over 1,500 ad slots in 5 major Croatian cities), TV commercials and advertising in health centres, web portals and social networks. Open days of free and anonymous testing for hepatitis C was organized as part of the Association Open Door days.



We have designed and printed 10,000 copies of educational brochure with expert information about HIV and HCV infections (authors: Prof. Josip Begovac and Prof. Adriana Vince) and aimed for general population, young people and the population at risk of contracting HIV / HCV.

We distributed over 6,000 brochures during the campaign.



Response was above all expectations. It all resulted in 523 people who responded to testing for HIV and HCV in the period June and July 2013 and 503 persons who were provided educational and counselling services on HIV / HCV and other sexually transmitted diseases. At that time it was discovered five positive people on anti-HIV and four persons tested positive for anti HCV.

After summer vacation in September, the return of all the effects of campaigns resulted with 132 persons who were tested for HIV/HCV with three new HIV and one HCV positive persons.

All persons are sent to a reference centre at the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases in Zagreb and all persons have occurred there.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enezvNdH-Qg>



A symposium on the occasion of World Hepatitis Day at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases "Dr. Fran Mihaljevic" was hosted by Professor Adriana Vince, with CAHIV support by distribution of educational and promotional materials, and important messages on about 150 participants.

### 1.3. World AIDS day and European HIV testing week



The campaign to mark World AIDS Day is the focus and the conclusion of our annual activities.

We have designed and printed 10,000 copies of CheckPoint brochure with description of all services and aimed for young people and the population at risk of contracting HIV / HCV.



Approximately 8,000 copies of the brochures and 10,000 condoms were distributed:

- while maintaining educational Positive concert on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2013. on the occasion of World AIDS Day organized by CAHIV with a visit of about 10,000 young people,
- during the celebration of the World AIDS Day on December 1<sup>st</sup> by placing CAHIV Info tent in the Zagreb city centre square with the participation of volunteers of the Association of Croatian medical students and Croatian Red Cross,
- during expert symposium on November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases Dr. Fran Mihaljevic, organized by Professor Josip Begovac,
- and through partner organizations and their activities all over Croatia



We have designed and printed campaign posters on the occasion of World AIDS Day and the first European HIV testing week, which were placed at over 1,500 ad places in vehicles of public transport in five major Croatian cities, in universities and dormitories. The same campaign showed at all major Croatian web portals, TV stations and advertising LCD screens on the streets.

During the campaign that we started at the beginning of October until December 31<sup>st</sup> 2013 we significantly enhance the scope and interest of citizens in CAHIV web portal and Facebook pages CAHIV and Checkpoint Zagreb.

It all resulted in 546 people who responded to testing for HIV and HCV in the period from October till December 2013 and 598 persons who were provided educational and counselling services on HIV / HCV and other sexually transmitted diseases. At that time it was discovered five positive people on anti-HIV. All persons were sent to a reference centre at the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases in Zagreb and all persons have occurred there.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enezvNdH-Qg>





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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHkt9yr5EY0>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUwGaBugNmw>

#### 1.4. A press conference organized by the City of Zagreb on the occasion of the results of the CheckPoint Zagreb

December 10th 2013. - Good response to Check Point in Zagreb - Centre for rapid and anonymous testing for HIV and hepatitis C, is confirmation that the launch of this project by the Croatian Association for HIV and viral hepatitis with support of the City of Zagreb, was successful and important step in the prevention and early detection of disease, said at press conference at the City Administration, which presented the results of a six-month work of the Centre, which operates under the watchful eye of the Clinic for Infectious Diseases Dr. Fran Mihaljevic.



I am proud that Zagreb, by launching the CheckPoint Centre, in the region stood side by side with the advanced European cities, said **Mayor of Zagreb Milan Bandic**. We enabled free and anonymous testing for





HIV and hepatitis C, using the latest and best technology of rapid saliva tests. According to all indicators so far in the last six months, number of visits is great, and it is obvious that the Centre is needed to our city and citizens, especially for the young population that largely responded to anonymous testing, whose results are ready in 20 minutes, added the mayor. We cannot sit idly, he noted, but in cooperation with experts we should take all measures for raising awareness, influence on prevention and reduce new infections.

Of the 1128 people who came to the centre to get tested, 1070 were tested for HIV, and 913 for hepatitis C virus (HCV), noted **Vice Chairman of CAHIV, epidemiologist Dr. Dragutin Pticek**. As for HIV, 60 % of males were tested and 40 % females, of which six men and four women were HIV positive, and HCV was detected among five men and one woman, said Dr. Pticek, noting that according to the findings, HIV prevalence is mostly among homosexual persons, and that all new HIV cases, after providing medical and psychosocial support are referred to further treatment at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases.

However, HIV and HCV positive test results have been reported in people of heterosexual orientation and the most common mode of transmission is still unprotected sex.

Dr. Pticek explained that among young people, who mostly come to the test, the most important is prevention, education and avoiding risky behaviour - this includes unprotected sex, drug use, tattooing, piercing. Educated and counselled are a total of 1160 people, mainly young people aged 18 to 30 years. Progress has been made in the education of young people who usually do not use protection during sexual intercourse, do not perceive protection as protection against STDs, but only from pregnancy, they do not know what are the real elements of the transmission risks of HIV / HCV. Individual counselling in the process of risk assessment and after testing contributes significantly to the increase in awareness and general knowledge about blood and sexually transmitted infections and reduces the spread of infection.

With thanks to the mayor and to the relevant city services for recognizing ideas and support to its implementation, **the head of the Reference Centre for diagnosis and treatment of HIV infection, at the Ministry of Health Prof. Josip Begovac** noted that this centre is very important because early detection of the disease and, therefore, keeping the disease under control and reduce mortality, as well as the cost savings on treatment. He pointed out that according to the latest studies by experts, it is profitable when one HIV positive person on the 1000 tested is detected, and CheckPoint Zagreb revealed 10 per 1,000 tested.

"Croatia is now unique in this part of Europe by a place like this. This has greatly facilitated the diagnosis and treatment, and prevention of further spread of the disease" said Professor Begovac .

This conference is taking place today on the International Human Rights Day, said prof. Begovac, and because of that, as we know, people with this disease are often stigmatized by society. We are pleased to be proved that the interest in getting tested in the last six months, since the centre opening, is much higher than usual in health care institutions, and that means that we will discover more people with HIV and HCV infections in the early stages. Such centres, which are located outside the institutions and offer a quick test results on a simple way and anonymity are important because the citizens much easier decide to take that step, concluded professor. Begovac.



## 1.5. Publication of 13<sup>th</sup> CAHIV Yearbook edition

13 year in a row, CAHIV proudly released a new edition of the CAHIV Yearbook for 2012th. CAHIV Annual Yearbook is traditionally designed for healthcare professionals and delivers a rich overview of scientific articles, news and events in the areas of HIV, hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases and quality of life, overview of events, projects, and activities, CAHIV activities, participations and accomplishments, news and curiosities from the region and the world in 2012.



[http://huhiv.hr/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/GODISNJAK-HUHIV\\_2012.pdf](http://huhiv.hr/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/GODISNJAK-HUHIV_2012.pdf)

## 1.6. HUHIV web portal, SOS/Info phone, On-line support & Social network

CAHIV this year achieved twice the interest of citizens and youth on issues of health, information on HIV, hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases, counselling and testing options, through a very necessary quality project information and services to citizens.

Only citizens' interest and desire for information by CAHIV website and Facebook shows an exponential growth of 50% in the last six quarters, i.e. 200% more interest around World AIDS Day compared to the same period last year.

## 1.7. Self-support groups

7th year in a row CAHIV is organising Self-support groups with aim to help each other and every new participant by shearing experience, to easier accept and live with their disease.

## 1.8. Days of Association open doors



CAHIV was traditionally included in the Open door Days and by presenting its content and services to the citizens.

Open door days fit into a series of activities across Europe organized on the occasion of the European Year of Citizens 2013th. The aim of the European Year of Citizens is to encourage citizens to be informed and to exercise their rights and participation in decision-making processes on matters of public interest.



## 1.9. Deleting diagnose from Sickness remittances

After a few years of the initiative, independently but with the help of other related associations and organizations we managed to achieve the target that the code diseases does not print to a form report on sick leave, with the aim of protecting the rights of patients.

## 1.10. CAHIV & dm (drogerie markt) joined campaign “Protect yourself and help others”



9<sup>th</sup> year in a row, we continued a campaign which is primarily intended for the fight against HIV / AIDS in Croatia. In all dm stores when buying condoms every 2.00 Kuna is shared for the fight against HIV / AIDS.

## 1.11. Work of CAHIV Counselling centre at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases “Dr. Fran Mihaljevic” Zagreb

Through our counselling centre closely connected with hospital patients, we continued counselling, psychosocial support and assistance to those suffering from viral hepatitis and those who are being treated from hepatitis.

## 1.12. Through daily work and a number of initiatives in the health system, health and welfare, CAHIV actively conducted views, suggestions and proposals

In order to influence the development of health and the development of civil society, as well as alerting the accuracy of the report and the National Strategy, which is a picture of the situation in Croatia, appealing to the need for the realization of missing partnerships and collaboration with UNDP organization, the involvement of relevant institutions and organizations in joint activities and encouraging excellence in the early detection of blood and sexually transmitted infections.

## 2. Targets that have been met in 2013

All's efforts, cooperation and activities were aimed at encouraging young people to HIV and HCV testing and information on sexually and blood transmitted diseases, modes of transmission, protection and education.

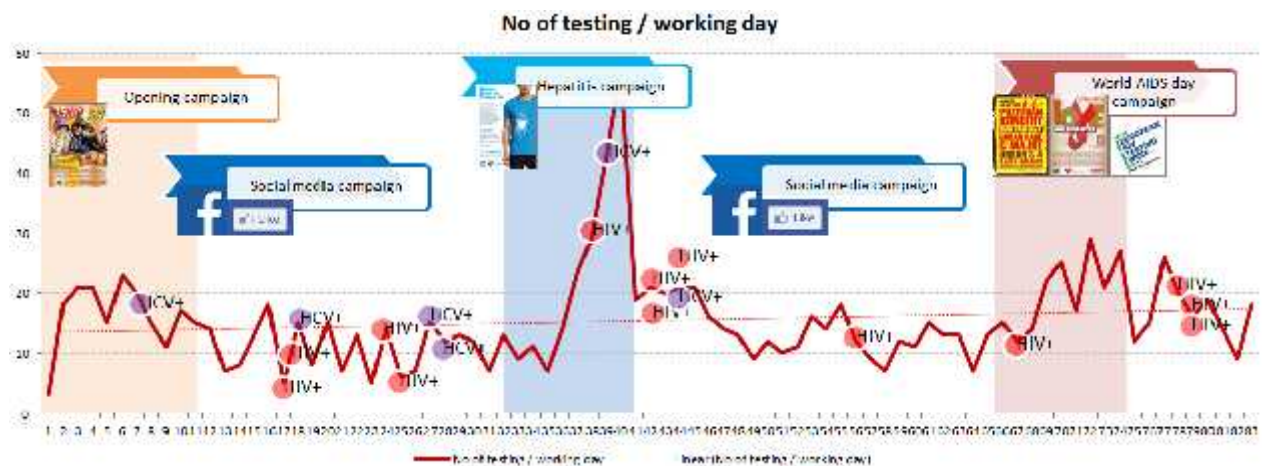
We conducted several campaigns during CheckPoint opening, World hepatitis day and World AIDS day:

- Posters in vehicles of public transport, schools and dormitories with an estimated visibility of about one million people per day
- display campaigns on national and local TV stations in the form of video spot, on major web portals and advertising on LCD screens in the main squares in Zagreb
- Distribution of educational brochures and free condoms on the educational Positive concert with a visit of about 10,000 young people
- Distribution of educational brochures in CheckPoint centre to the visitors, in the city centre during CAHIV Info Tent on World AIDS Day with an estimated direct contact with about 5,000 citizens
- Distribution of educational brochures including a lecture at a symposium to mark World AIDS Day
- Distribution of educational brochures at a symposium to mark World hepatitis Day



- Distribution of educational brochures and free condoms to numerous organisations while marking World AIDS Day and World hepatitis Day (Croatian Red Cross in Vukovar, several youth clubs and civil organisations)
- creating and displaying campaigns and all relevant information for young people and citizens in CAHIV web portal and Facebook pages, shared on many media portals and partner organizations

We distributed over 15,000 brochures in total and over 15,000 condoms during campaigns, activities and CheckPoint visits, CAHIV web sites visit increased by 120% as well as inquiries by e-mail and Info SOS phone. It all resulted in **1,277 people who responded to testing for HIV and HCV** in the period of opening to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2013 and **1,319 persons who were provided educational and counselling services on HIV / HCV and other sexually transmitted diseases**. At that time it was discovered 13 positive people on anti-HIV and 6 person tested positive for anti HCV. All persons are sent to a reference centre at the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases in Zagreb and all persons have occurred there.

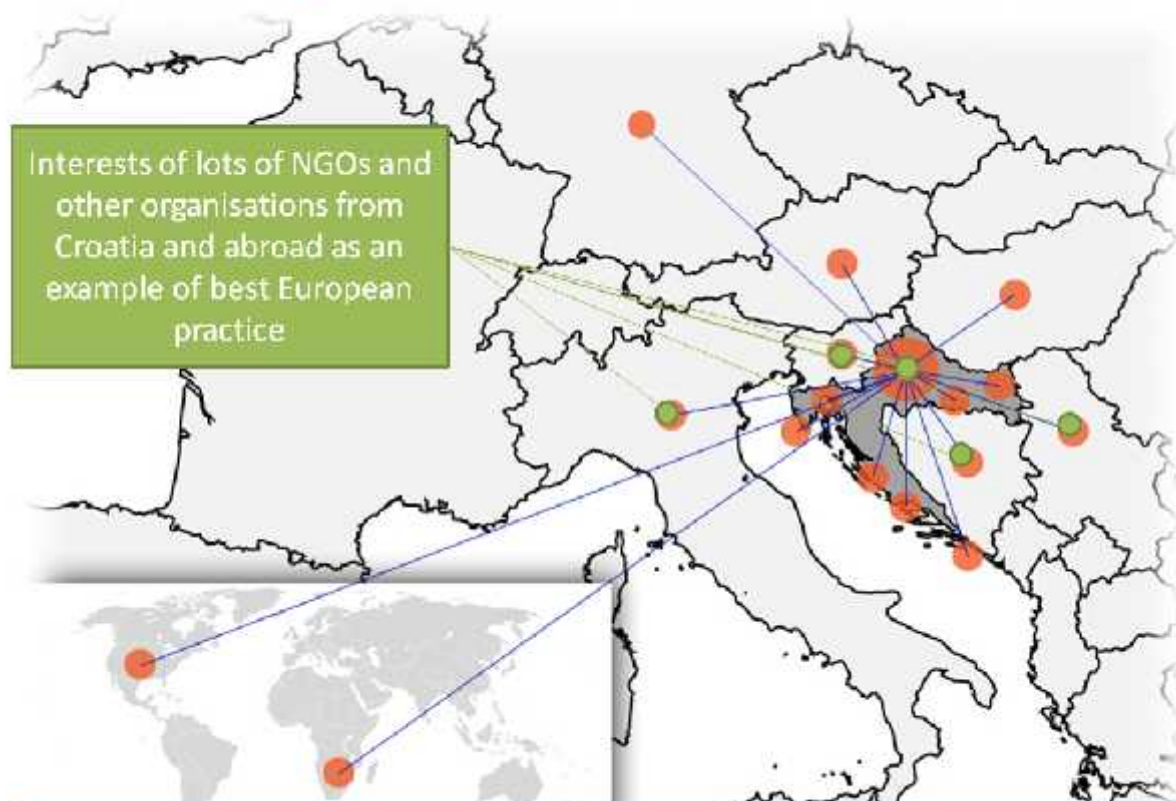


Great progress is made in educating young people in the process of risk assessment and after testing that contributes significantly to the increase in awareness and general knowledge about blood and sexually transmitted infections and reduce the spread of infection.

Interest of young people and citizens is extremely high. The average number of visits to the center per working day is 15 people (working hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 16:00 till 19:30; in total 83 working days). Through direct contact with young people, and through the internet and social networks, we have received a very large number of queries, interest and praises for the existence and offering of such services, especially by young people and students that highlight all the advantages of CheckPoint center and the need for a permanent and continuous presence.



## National, regional and international reach





### 3. Next activities in 2014

In future period, CAHIV will continue promotional activities aimed at a CheckPoint Zagreb in order to promote HIV and HCV testing, education and counselling services. Promotional activities will include Internet campaigns and cooperation with related experts, organizations and partners (on national and international level) to reach the targeted population, and collaboration with experts in conducting testing and education of young people as well as sharing and promoting best practice, mentoring and helping other organisations and countries to implement such concept.

We also expect the return of all the effects in the coming period of campaigns carried out.

Ongoing activities will include these objectives:

- increasing the uptake of HIV and hepatitis C testing among people, preventing the further spread of sexually transmitted and blood-borne diseases
- covering young people and people at high risk detecting of HIV and HCV infection
- providing psychosocial support and interdisciplinary care to people who tested positive and providing continuous health care through regular check-ups and responsible behaviour
- providing education, more information and creating and developing the awareness of risks and the importance of healthy living

Overall objectives for 2014:

- To ensure coverage of as many young people at risk
- Improve sexual and reproductive health of young people and family planning
- Strengthening cooperation between non-governmental organizations, public sector and local communities in providing security services for sexual and reproductive health in a friendly environment for young people
- Leveraging on improving reproductive health policy
- Implement and conduct educational programs on HIV, hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases intended for young people but also health professionals and workers in the social welfare