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# The European Union against HIV/AIDS

LEAFLET

## European Programme for Action to confront HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria

In response to the rapid worldwide spreading of the three main communicable diseases linked to poverty, and in particular HIV/AIDS, the European Commission has developed a coherent policy framework to confront HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis through external action. This led in April 2005 to the adoption of a European Programme for Action covering all developing countries for the period 2007-2011.

The Programme for Action proposes the European Union (EC and EU Member States) to support country-lead programmes confronting the three diseases as well as action at global level in areas where the EU can add value. It also argues for an increasing EU contribution to help fill the financial gap, thus reflecting Europe's weight as international partner in development.

- At **country level**, the Programme for Action focuses on improving political and policy dialogue on human rights-related issues, needs of vulnerable groups and issues around stigma and discrimination. It puts emphasis on monitoring and data collection, on capacity building in the areas of human resources, clinical research and procurement policy, as well as on the need to create synergies with programmes promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.

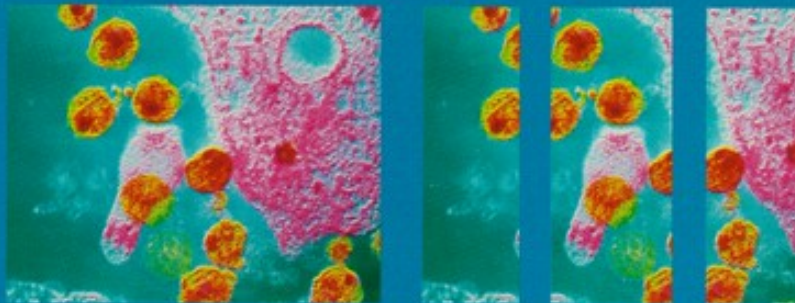
- At **global level**, the Programme for Action proposes to strengthen regional networks and cooperation, to promote affordable and safe pharmaceutical products, to reinforce the regulatory capacity of partner countries, to address the human resource crisis in health and to support research and development of new preventive and therapeutic tools. The Programme for Action calls for a strong partnership with key players and initiatives such as the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) and highlights the need to promote and defend internationally the European voice on issues related to these areas of intervention.

Programming decisions and budget allocations with respect to both global and country action proposed in the Programme for Action will be made in accordance with the new financial instruments (2007-2013).

## HIV/AIDS Research

HIV/AIDS research is a top priority for the European Union. The Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6, 2002-2006) allocates a total of €400 million to the three main poverty-related diseases, a four-fold budget increase in comparison with the previous Framework Programme (FP5, 1998-2002). Research on HIV/AIDS will continue being a priority under FP7 (2007-2013).

Projects financed by the European Commission on HIV/AIDS cover both prevention and treatment aspects, including research on new drugs, microbicides and vaccines.



### EC-funded research projects:

- **Highly innovative approaches** Proposals have an average of 5-6 partners and receive about € 1 million during 2-3 years. Both basic and preclinical research on prevention and treatment are financed.
- **Integrated projects**, covering research up to early human testing. Funded with an average of €10 million, these projects usually include 10-30 partners for a period of 5 years.
- **Networks of excellence**. Under the 6th Framework Programme, the European Commission will finance three broad networks of European researchers on HIV preventive technologies (vaccines and microbicides), therapeutic clinical trials, and cohort studies. Each of these networks receives funding in the range of € 8-15 million for a period of 4-5 years, and includes more than 100 researchers.

## EDCTP

In addition to basic, preclinical and early clinical research, the European Union is also financing capacity building and advanced clinical trials in Sub-Saharan Africa through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership. The EDCTP is an independent organisation based in The Netherlands, partnering with 14 European Member States plus Norway and Switzerland.

## Combating HIV/AIDS within the EU and in the neighbouring countries

The re-emerging of HIV/AIDS in Europe and its neighbouring countries highlighted the need for immediate European action through the adoption of a specific strategy in these regions. This led to the adoption of a policy document on *"Combating HIV/AIDS within the European Union and in the neighbouring countries, 2006-2009"* which firmly puts HIV/AIDS on the EU policy agenda.

The Communication, which is fully consistent with and contributes to implementing the overall policy framework<sup>1</sup>, sets out objectives and priorities for action and identifies areas where work at European level should be intensified, building on the orientations set out in the Commission's working paper *"Coordinated and integrated approach to combat HIV/AIDS within the EU and in its Neighbourhood"*<sup>2</sup>. Work is being taken forward in close coordination with stakeholders, international organisations and Member States.

### Key areas for action

- **Combating stigma and discrimination** through capacity building among health care workers and NGOs, promotion of voluntary counselling and testing, and awareness raising;
- **Prevention of new infections** through education, awareness raising, and facilitating the implementation of comprehensive prevention programmes reaching also the most vulnerable populations;
- **Improving HIV/AIDS surveillance** in close collaboration with the ECDC and the EuroHIV network, Member States, neighbouring countries and other partners;
- **Involving civil society** through the HIV/AIDS Civil Society Forum and other relevant structures in the development, implementation and monitoring of HIV/AIDS policies at all levels;
- **Working with neighbouring countries** includes continuous **political dialogue** with the Russian Federation and other partners under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) to facilitate the development of leadership and crucial collaboration between different authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Commission communication (COM (2004)726) "A Coherent European Policy Framework for External Action to Confront HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis"

<sup>2</sup> Commission working paper (C (2004) 3414) "Coordinated and Integrated Approach to Combat HIV/AIDS in the European Union and in its Neighbourhood"

## Channels of implementation of EC programmes in the area of HIV/AIDS

The European Commission supports HIV/AIDS related interventions in developing countries through several geographical and thematic instruments<sup>1</sup> mainly at country or regional level (through national and regional indicative programmes). Support to HIV/AIDS interventions at country level has to fit into the national or regional indicative programme which strategically delineates the scope and priorities of the EC development assistance with a partner country/region for a given period.

**Bilateral country support** is the main approach towards improved health outcomes in developing countries; the EC supports health sector reforms and health care delivery approaches ensuring improved access to and sustainability of basic services, including AIDS related services.

Due to the consequences of the HIV epidemic on people, control of HIV/AIDS is also a priority of the health system dialogue. As a result, HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed into other sector interventions of the EC, for instance, education, infrastructure and transport.

For the delivery of **thematic support** in the area of HIV/AIDS, the Commission has established procedures for the selection of projects through calls for proposals rather than supporting project proposals on an *ad hoc* basis. Through the definition of political priorities, the European Commission sets its targets while respecting the principle of the right of initiative of NGOs and international organisations.

Calls for Proposals are announced in March of each year in the Annual Work Plan outlining the priorities set for that specific year. Information concerning calls for proposals is available on <http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl>

The next call for proposals for "Aid for poverty-related diseases (HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) in developing countries" is indicatively scheduled for end of 2007.

<sup>1</sup> "Aid for poverty-related diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis)" and "Aid for policies and actions on reproductive and sexual health and rights"



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