

Poster Exhibition

## Social and behavioural science, marginalized groups, community aspects and community surveys

N. prog: P 281

**Title:** The two faces/directions of the Bergamo Check Point: young people and key populations

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### Abstract body

**Background:** Since 2019 Bergamo has joined the Fast Track City network. One of the main actions developed is the activity of testing for HIV, HCV and Syphilis, which is proposed in a specific location (check point) and on the territory in different settings.

At the network joined 6 public institutions and 13 NGOs and the contribution and specific experience of each one are fundamental to work on the territory, increasing the capacity of the network to deal with the HIV issue.

**Materials and Methods:** Since November 2021, through the Cobatest questionnaire, we have collected anonymous socio-demographic data and some about sexual health care habits and risk appetite of the population that did the test. From 2019 to 31st March 2023 we met n. 4530 people, carrying out n. 4514 tests for HIV and similar for HCV and Syphilis. The questionnaires collected concern 2124 answers.

**Results:** Analysing the data from November 2021 to the end of December 2022, 57% of the population is less than 30 years old and most of these are female (Panel A).

42% knew the service in another ways those presented by the questionnaire (Panel B):

- 361 people (16%) met us thanks to an email sent by the Consulta of University of Bergamo twice a year during the European Testing Week and on the occasion of the promotion of the test at university;
- 79 students (8%) decided to take the test after participating in training courses organized at their high schools on the theme of HIV at the check point or directly during two events organized at the same schools.

At the end of 2022, we make a collaboration with the Centro Provincia Istruzione Adulti of Bergamo, which organizes Italian and middle school diploma courses towards an almost completely foreign population. After organizing informative meetings with 540 students, 20% of them took the test directly at school.

The incidence of test reactivity in the youth people is almost nil.

For the key populations we started a project that, in the last three months of 2022, allow us to meet 192 marginalized people (sex workers, DU, homeless, migrants), which allowed us to achieve 6 HIV, 25 HCV and 6 syphilis positivity, attacking people with new infections at the hospital and helping to hang up those who were not being treated or struggling to maintain the therapy (Panel C).

**Conclusion:** The implementation of different ways of promoting and offering the test allows us to reach the entire population and the collaboration between institutions and NGOs is the key.

Among the younger people there is no positivity, but did the test generated awareness, an increased attention to their sexual health, the propensity to test and stigma reduction.

Among key populations it is much more frequent to find positive results.

The Check Point of Bergamo is doing an important educational role especially with regard to young people and a significant activity to bring out the submerged and support the retention in care of the most fragile people.



Attach