IUSTI
INTERNATIONAL UNION AGAINST SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

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President's Letter



Prof Christopher Fairley - President of IUSTI

Dear Colleagues and IUSTI Members,

Let me start by thanking all those who made the 2026 IUSTI World Congress in Prague such an outstanding success. An immense thank you to Janneke Heijne and Andy Winter and their scientific chairs and committees for presenting us with such a superb program. Many people have come up to me and said how grateful they are for the outstanding science that was presented. Thank you to Jana Tresnak Hercogova, who was such a fabulous host to us all in Prague. Thank you all; those many early-morning and late-night Zoom meetings were worthwhile. Please see the photos of the many smiling faces at https://shutterhands.pixieset.com/iusti2026prague/ (you will need the password Prague2026). The excellent abstracts can be found at https://connectsci.au/sh/article/23/5/SHv23n5abs/279037/27th-IUSTI-World-Congress.

The planning for the 2027 ISSTDR and IUSTI STI&HIV World Congress, which will be held from the 21st to the 24th of October in New Delhi is also progressing well. Bobbie Van Der Pol and Ismail Maatouk are now working with their track chairs and members to develop the plenary and symposium program. Please contribute ideas for symposia at https://stihiv2027.org/call-symposia.php. The conference is shaping up to be magnificent. Our host, Sunil Seetha, has a lot in store at the conference, and India as a country has so much to offer.

As usual, I wanted to update you on the progress of the IUSTI and ISSTDR potential merger committee. We are currently focusing on an MOU to hold joint meetings with equal input into all aspects of the meetings. The joint meetings began in 2013 with IUSTI as a partner to the ISSTDR meetings. The committee felt that a process that shares decisions, financial risk and responsibility will hopefully benefit both organisations. The committee has completed this joint meeting MOU and it has been circulated to the ISSTDR board for review and discussion. The board will discuss it and then provide feedback to the committee, which will then circulate it to the IUSTI officers. If agreement can be reached, the plan would be for the MOU to begin a four-year trial period starting with the 2031 STI and HIV World Congress.

The merger committee is finalising four aspirational documents that would form the basis for future merger discussions. These include the structure of the new merged body, the structure of the conference organising committee, how funds would be handled and the culture of the new organisation. These four documents would sit alongside an MOU between IUSTI and ISSTDR about how merger discussions will proceed. It is planned to discuss this at a joint sitting of the ISSTDR board and IUSTI executive committee in India in 2027. The merger committee will meet again in November 2026.

I reported last time on a plan to develop a detailed document about running a conference that includes dealing with the professional conference organiser (PCO) and other outside organisations. It would contain detailed timelines, templates for MOUs, conference contracts and other key documents such as invitation letters for committee members and funders, as well as guidance on abstract management. Bobbie Van Der Pol, Kate Maddaford and I are working on this and hope to have it

available early in 2027. The objective is to make our conferences easier to organise and make them even better for our members.

Christopher Fairley, IUSTI-World President

News

IJSA Journal Email Alerts

We encourage IUSTI members to sign up for new content alerts from the International Journal of STD & AIDS. Emails are sent when new issues are published and when new OnlineFirst articles are available.

1. If you already have an account with Sage, sign in at https://journals.sagepub.com/action/showLogin under "Sage Journals profile". If you don't already have an account with Sage, you can create a free account at https://journals.sagepub.com/action/registration. A direct account with Sage is necessary to tie the alerts to your email address.
2. Once signed in, go to https://journals.sagepub.com/connected/STD#email-alert and select "new content" and "create email alert" to register. You will be notified via email each time a new issue publishes.
3. You'll then be taken to a "My Alerts" page, which will show a list of all journal alerts you have registered for. On the "New article alerts" tab, use the "frequency of alerts for articles-based alerts" dropdown to select how often you'd like to receive alerts for new articles published online. The options are monthly, weekly, daily, or never. Emails will only be sent if articles are published OnlineFirst during the selected time period.
4. You are now signed up for alerts and will receive an email the next time new content is published in the journal, according to your settings.

Regional Reports

Africa MENA



Dr Sara Lowe – Regional Director of IUSTI-Africa MENA

1. **IUSTI Africa MENA webinar series**
   Continuing the success of this year's launch of the IUSTI Africa MENA Webinar Series, Dr Remco Peters delivered the third webinar on the topic of "Reconfiguring STI Prevention." The joint FPD/IUSTI session focused on innovative, integrated, and person-centred approaches to STI prevention, including doxy-PEP and the evolving vaccine landscape.

   Looking forward, the final webinar of the series will be delivered by former Regional Director Dr Francis Ndowa. Scheduled to coincide with the start of World AMR Awareness Week (18–24 November), his talk will explore how to tackle the growing threat of gonococcal resistance through global policy and strategic action. All webinars will be available on the IUSTI Africa MENA regional webpage.

2. **Highlights from IUSTI World Congress Prague 2026**
   The regional committee were delighted to celebrate the successes of regional and EXCO committee member, Mandisa Mdingi, who was awarded the Elwyn Hopkin Scholarship for achieving high reviewer marks for her submitted abstract "Genetic Diversity and Macrolide Resistance–Associated Mutations in *Chlamydia trachomatis* in East London, South Africa" which was selected for oral presentation.

   Her successes also included sharing findings from a Foundation for Professional Development research study on the Epidemiology of STIs in individuals with genital ulcer disease or condyloma in South Africa. She was happy to connect and share these experiences with fellow Global SOS research colleagues.



Andrew Winter (IUSTI Treasure); Alison Footman (Chair of the Scholarship Committee); and the two Elwyn Hopkin Scholarship recipients





Mandisa Mdingi, Marcus Chen and Alex de Voux

3. Regional Insights: Recent Publications

Seroprevalence of HSV-1 and HSV-2 in Qatar

A collaborative study by Qatar University and the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar investigated the seroprevalence of herpes simplex virus types 1 and 2 (HSV-1 and HSV-2) in Qatar's urban population. Published in *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, the study by Nasrallah et al., titled "Seroprevalence of HSV-1 and HSV-2 in the urban population of Qatar: a population-based study," analyzed approximately 2,000 archived serum specimens collected through a population-based survey in 2020. The study found HSV-1 and HSV-2 seroprevalence of 40.4% and 5.0%, respectively, both lower than regional and global estimates. HSV-1 seroprevalence increased markedly from 16.4% among individuals aged 10–19 years to approximately 50% in older age groups, while HSV-2 seroprevalence increased gradually with age, reaching 13.2% among those aged 60 years and older. These findings highlight distinct age-specific patterns of HSV infection, with substantial HSV-1 acquisition by early adulthood and gradual accumulation of HSV-2 infection across adulthood, underscoring the need for strengthened STI surveillance, research into HSV-1-associated genital herpes, and vaccine development.

Citation: Nasrallah GK, Issa F, Nizamuddin PB, Trad F, Qotba HA, Zein N, et al. Seroprevalence of HSV-1 and HSV-2 in the urban population of Qatar: a population-based study. Sex Transm Infect. 2026 Sep 24. doi:10.1136/sextrans-2026-057048.
Weblink: https://doi.org/10.1136/sextrans-2026-057048

Chlamydia trachomatis Epidemiology in Canada

A study conducted by the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar systematically reviewed and analyzed *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) prevalence in Canada between 1981 and 2025. Published in *Sexual Health*, the study by Yousef et al., titled "Epidemiology of *Chlamydia trachomatis* in Canada: systematic review and meta-analysis, 1981–2025," identified 169 publications contributing 437 prevalence measures. The study estimated a pooled urogenital CT prevalence of 4.4% in general populations, with substantially higher prevalence among symptomatic women (18.6%) and men (24.3%). Meta-regression analyses indicated that prevalence was approximately 30% lower among individuals aged 25 years and older compared with those younger than 25 years, with no significant differences between sexes, and declined at a relative rate of approximately 3% per year. These findings highlight the persistent burden of CT infection in Canada and underscore the need for strengthened STI prevention, targeted screening, and continued investment in vaccine development to support long-term infection control.

Citation: Yousef M, Rob M, Ageeb RA, El-Khoury R, Harfouche M, Abu-Raddad LJ. Epidemiology of *Chlamydia trachomatis* in Canada: systematic review and meta-analysis, 1981–2025. *Sex Health.* 2026;23(4):SH26066. doi:10.1071/SH26066.
Weblink: https://doi.org/10.1071/SH26066

Neisseria gonorrhoeae Epidemiology in Jordan

A collaborative study by Biolab Diagnostic Laboratories in Jordan and the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar analyzed 11 years of laboratory-based *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (NG) testing data in Jordan. Published in *BMC Public Health*, the study by Abu-Dayyeh et al., titled "Epidemiology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* in Jordan: prevalence, incidence, and clearance from a national laboratory dataset, 2014–2025," included 8,779 individuals aged 15 years and older tested during 2014–2025. The study found low NG prevalence (0.4%) and incidence overall, including very low prevalence (0.1%) among individuals tested for visa-related medical screening, but no evidence of decline over time. NG positivity was substantially higher among individuals undergoing clinically motivated testing. These findings highlight the value of laboratory-based surveillance and the need for strengthened STI surveillance, targeted testing and treatment, and gonococcal antimicrobial resistance monitoring to support prevention and control efforts.

Citation: Abu-Dayyeh I, Al Tibi A, Ghunaim M, Hasan T, Abdelnour A, Abu-Raddad LJ, Chemaitelly H. Epidemiology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* in Jordan: prevalence, incidence, and clearance from a national laboratory dataset, 2014–2025. BMC Public Health. 2026; 26:2655. doi:10.1186/s12889-026-28197-0. Weblink: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-026-28197-0

Other Recent Publications

Martin K, Dziva Chikwari C, Ferrand R, Is control of sexually transmitted infections among adolescents and young people achievable through screening in high prevalence settings? The Lancet Regional Health – Africa, 2026
Web Link:
https://www.thelancet.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1016%2Fj.lanafr.2026.100168&pii=S3050-5011%2826%2900149-5

Larsson L, Kabongo J, Murewanhema G, et al Protecting mothers and their infants through screening and comprehensive management of sexually transmitted infections in antenatal care in Zimbabwe (PROMISE): study protocol for an open label individually randomised controlled trial BMJ Open 2026;16:e126249. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2026-126249
Web Link:
https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/16/10/e126249

Sara Lowe

Latin America



Prof Angelica Espinosa Miranda– Regional Director of IUSTI-Latin America

Recent activities in Latin America have brought together scientific exchange, professional education and public engagement, with a particular focus on syphilis and congenital syphilis prevention. These activities are carried out in partnership with institutions and organisations across the region, with IUSTI-LAC members contributing as collaborators or supporters. Together, these initiatives illustrate the range of approaches being used to connect knowledge, services and communities.

Regional participation at the IUSTI Congress in Prague

Thirty-six participants from Latin America and the Caribbean attended the IUSTI Congress in Prague. The congress provided a valuable opportunity for colleagues from across the region to reconnect, exchange experiences and discuss shared priorities for STI prevention and care. It also offered a space to strengthen collaboration within IUSTI-LAC and consider opportunities for future joint activities.



Photo: Pamela Gaspar

Green October: bringing syphilis awareness to the football stadium

Brazil marks its National Day to Combat Syphilis and Congenital Syphilis on the third Saturday of October, alongside awareness activities throughout "Green October." This year, an awareness initiative at Maracanã Stadium in Rio de Janeiro reached 61,000 spectators attending a match between two major Brazilian football clubs. Highlighting the importance of partners' involvement in antenatal care, the campaign encouraged their active participation in testing, treatment and prevention, bringing the message of congenital syphilis prevention to a wider audience.



Translation: "Prenatal care for partners of pregnant women helps reduce congenital syphilis. Be an involved partner—do your part!"
Photo: Mauro Romero Leal Passos

Syphilis: art, science and citizenship in Belém

The exhibition "Syphilis: Art, Science and Citizenship" is running at the Evandro Chagas Institute Museum in Belém, Pará, Brazil, from 20 October to 15 December 2026. Bringing together art, history and science, the exhibition invites visitors to explore syphilis beyond the clinical setting and learn about prevention, diagnosis and treatment. It offers an engaging way to make

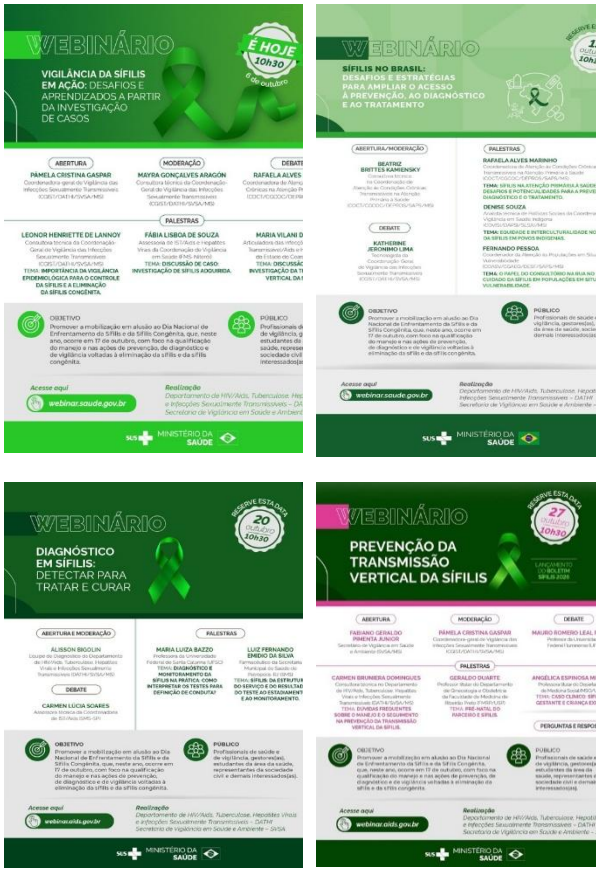
scientific knowledge accessible and encourage public discussion about sexual health.



Photo:
https://www.instagram.com/p/DerOl0CHEto/?img_index=1

Brazilian Ministry of Health webinar series

The Brazilian Ministry of Health held weekly webinars throughout October as part of the Green October campaign. Topics included surveillance and case investigation, access to prevention and care, diagnostic testing, and prevention of vertical transmission. The programme also addressed care for Indigenous populations and people experiencing homelessness, partner involvement in antenatal care, and practical clinical questions. The series recorded a total of 2,673 accesses and provided opportunities to connect national priorities with everyday challenges in service delivery. Recordings of the webinars will be available online, extending access to these discussions.



Medical education through the Rio de Janeiro Regional Council of Medicine

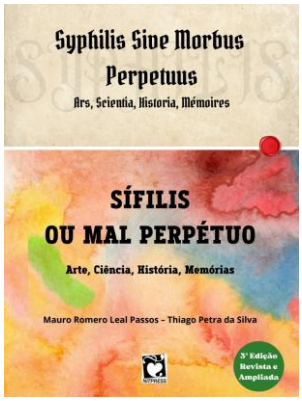
The Regional Council of Medicine of the State of Rio de Janeiro (CREMERJ) held a webinar to raise awareness of syphilis and congenital syphilis and support physicians in the clinical management of these conditions. The initiative provided a forum for professional education, drawing attention to the importance of timely diagnosis, appropriate treatment and continuity of care.



Webinar recording available at:
https://youtube.com/live/_CASSCoBjO8?feature=share

New edition of the book "*Syphilis Sive Morbus Perpetuus*"

The revised and expanded third edition of the book *Syphilis Sive Morbus Perpetuus*, by Mauro Romero Leal Passos and Thiago Petra da Silva, has been released. Bringing together art, science, history and memories, the book offers a broad perspective on syphilis and its continuing relevance to society and public health. The edition can be accessed through the QR code below.



"*Camaleón*": theatre for syphilis awareness in Argentina

In Argentina, the theatre project *Camaleón* uses the performing arts to raise awareness of syphilis and congenital syphilis. Written by Mauro Romero Leal Passos and Miguel Tilli and directed by Elsa Orrea, the play brings prevention messages to audiences through storytelling. A special performance on 30 October at Centro Cultural Espacios in Villa Ballester highlighted the importance of antenatal care and timely detection. The initiative offers a creative way to encourage discussion about sexual health and bring prevention messages beyond healthcare settings.









Photo: Miguel Tilli

PAHO regional webinar on syphilis elimination

On 29 October, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) held the regional webinar "United for the Elimination of Syphilis and Congenital Syphilis in the Americas." The webinar focused on the need for coordinated regional action to advance the elimination of syphilis and congenital syphilis.



Angelica Espinosa Miranda

Europe



Dr. Claudia Heller-Vitouch – Regional Director of IUSTI-Europe

27th IUSTI World and 39th IUSTI Europe Joint Congress, Prague October 14-17, 2026



The Joint IUSTI World and European Congress in Prague brought together the international STI community for an excellent exchange of scientific knowledge and clinical experience. The scientific programme, shaped by Andy Winter and Janneke Heijne, covered current developments and emerging challenges in STI diagnosis, treatment and prevention, offering a broad overview of advances in the field.





Claudia Heller-Vitouch, Janneke Heijne, George-Sorin Tiplica, Andy Winter

IUSTI-Europe was delighted to present Andy and Janneke with the IUSTI-Europe Silver Medal in

recognition of their outstanding work as Co-Chairs of the Scientific Committee, accompanied, of course, by traditional Viennese Sachertorte.

Furthermore, IUSTI-Europe actively contributed to the congress, supporting young colleagues through eight congress scholarships with a total value of €5,000. A further 19 scholarships were provided by national IUSTI-Europe societies.

We congratulate the local organising committee and all those involved on a successful congress that brought our international STI community together.

Sexual Health Campaign at IUSTI Prague 2026
George-Sorin Tiplica, Claudia Heller Vitouch
On the occasion of the 27th IUSTI World Congress in Prague (14–17 October 2026), IUSTI-Europe and the Czech AIDS Help Society (Česká společnost AIDS pomoc - ČSAP) organised a Sexual Health Campaign offering free HIV and STI testing to the public. In two hours, 23 people were tested for HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B and C, and all results were negative. The campaign brought the expertise gathered at the Congress directly to the people of Prague. The testing point was set up in front of the Congress venue, the Prague Congress Centre, next to Vyšehrad metro station and its busy pedestrian area. Passers-by, local residents and Congress delegates could stop, talk with the team and be tested on the spot, free of charge and without an appointment. The testing ran smoothly and the public was open and communicative. Many visitors used the opportunity to talk about prevention and regular testing, not only to get a result.

Between 15:00 and 17:00, 23 people were tested and 66 tests were performed in total. Every result was negative (Table 1).

Table 1. People tested - Sexual Health Campaign at IUSTI Prague 2026

Test	People tested
HIV	23
Syphilis	19
Hepatitis C (HCV)	19
Hepatitis B (HBsAg)	5
Total tests	66

ČSAP is a Czech non-governmental organisation working in HIV prevention that has supported people living with HIV for more than 35 years. It offers free, anonymous testing for HIV and other STIs, a free helpline and online counselling. In 2023 ČSAP performed 42,100 tests, including 15,920 for HIV and 11,997 for syphilis. This expertise in low-threshold, community-based testing made ČSAP the ideal partner for the campaign.

Syphilis, viral hepatitis and HIV can remain silent for years, and late diagnosis still drives onward transmission and poorer outcomes across Europe. Free, anonymous testing in a public space reaches people who might never walk into a clinic. Each test is also a conversation about prevention, and every infection found early means earlier treatment and, for HIV, no further transmission once the viral load is undetectable (U=U).

For IUSTI-Europe, these campaigns express a simple principle: our scientific work must ultimately benefit the patient. By opening our congresses to the host city and partnering with local NGOs, we turn evidence into action where it matters most.

Looking ahead
IUSTI-Europe launched this initiative in 2025 in Athens, Greece, and Prague has confirmed that the model works. We are committed to continuing it: the next Sexual Health Campaign will take place during the IUSTI-Europe Congress 2027 in Porto, Portugal. We warmly thank ČSAP and its team, the Congress organisers and everyone who stopped by to get tested. See you in Porto!



The team of ČSAP, Claudia Heller-Vitouch, George-Sorin Tiplica

Advanced Course of IUSTI Europe at the IUSTI World Conference Prague, 14 October 2026
Angelika Stary and Marco Cusini (Chairs for Education)
The Advanced Course of IUSTI Europe is especially designed for early-career clinicians and healthcare providers (HCPs) who are interested in sexually transmitted infections (STIs). At the IUSTI World Conference in Prague the Advanced Course, organized by the Educational Officers of IUSTI Europe, took place on the day of the opening ceremony under the topic „Living in the Golden Age of STI Diagnosis?“

Leading experts in the diagnostic field provided the latest updates on STI-Diagnosis in three different sessions. The course was attended by a high number of 120 interested delegates and included a luncheon session and interesting interactive case discussions with active participant involvement, selected by Andy Winter. A certainly interesting pro&contra session on asymptomatic screening for STI was also an important part of the Advanced

Course and stimulated the active discussions of many delegates. Lunch packages and sweet Mozart Balls were offered to all participants and the abstract booklet is now ready to be sent out to the delegates.

We want to express our sincere thanks to the speakers and chairpersons for their contributions and for providing an overview of their talk for the abstract summary. The support of the local organising team was essential, and we want to thank the local team for their excellent support. And a big thank you to all delegates, who showed high interest in the topic of STI diagnosis.



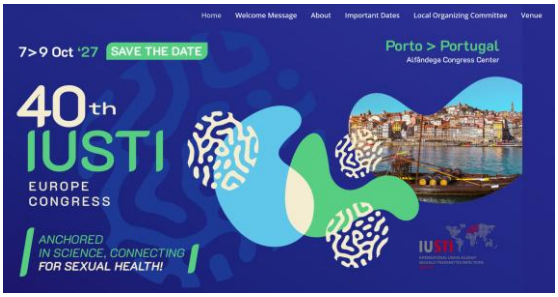


George-Sorin Tiplica, Eija Hiltunen-Back, Thomas Quinn, Charlotte Gaydos at the Course

We also look forward to organise again an Advanced IUSTI Europe Course at the next IUSTI Europe Conference in Porto in 2027!

Looking Ahead: IUSTI-Europe Congress 2027 in Porto

The 40th IUSTI-Europe Congress 2027 will be held in Porto, Portugal, from 7–9 October 2027 in the Alfandega Congress Center (https://iusti2027.com/).



The Congress will be hosted under the leadership of Congress President Carmen Lisboa, with Georg Stary serving as International Scientific Chair. Together with the local organising and scientific committees and IUSTI-Europe, they will continue the tradition of delivering a high-quality scientific programme covering the latest advances in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and public health aspects of sexually transmitted infections.
Please find further information here: https://iusti2027.com/

Looking Further Ahead: IUSTI-Europe Congress 2028…

The 2028 IUSTI-Europe Congress will take place in Antwerp, Belgium, with Chris Kenyon and Thibault Vanaelen serving as Congress Presidents and Henry de Vries as Chair of the Scientific Committee.

…and beyond

The call for expressions of interest in hosting the IUSTI-Europe Congresses in 2030, 2031 and 2032 will be circulated in due course. We warmly encourage interested colleagues to submit their applications.

IUSTI-Europe Webinars: A New Season

Derek Freedman and George-Sorin Tiplica
IUSTI-Europe Editors

Now in its sixth season, the IUSTI-Europe webinar series continues to bring free, practical STI education to clinicians worldwide on the last Wednesday of each month. This Report covers Webinars 35–37 and the programme for the 2026–2027 season.

Recent webinars

Webinar 35 "The Lions from the Waiting Room" (25 March 2026) focused on the less common and more challenging STIs that we see only occasionally in practice. Dr Johnny Boylan addressed male pelvic pain, Prof. Daniel Richardson reviewed enteric STIs, and Prof. Barbara Van Der Pol answered the question patients so often ask: "What's the best STI test for me?".

Webinar 36 "Bridges of Prague: STI Practice and Research" (29 April 2026) closed the 2025–2026 season as a prelude to the IUSTI World Congress. Prof. Jana Tresnak Hercogova traced the history of venereology in the Czech Republic, Dr Hana Zákoucká presented what is new in Czech STIs, and Dr Jan Hugo gave an update on HPV. Andrew Winter and Janneke Heijne, chairs of the Prague Scientific Committee, concluded with "Challenges Ahead – Prague Responds".

Webinar 37 "STI Challenges 2027" (28 October 2026) opened the new season with a global panorama: fourteen experts in short presentations on the challenges ahead in STI care and control. Remco Peters set the world scene and Barbara Van Der Pol discussed rolling out point-of-care testing. Magnus Unemo, Jorgen Skov Jensen and Khalil Ghanem covered gonorrhoea, *Mycoplasma genitalium* and syphilis; Henry de Vries asked

whether to screen or not; Raj Patel looked at HSV and Marc Steben at vaccine hesitancy. Valeska Padovese spoke on STIs in migrants, while Pingyu Zhou (China), Mikhail Gomberg (Russia) and Angelica Espinosa Miranda brought regional perspectives. Cara Saxon – BASHH President, reflected on working within a national health system and Christopher Fairley on the challenges of IUSTI World and his experience as President of this organization. The webinar can be viewed at https://www.iusti-europe.eu/web/index.php/webinar-recordings/webinar-37/238-sti-challenges-2027.

Coming up in 2026–2027
The 2026–2027 season continues with five more webinars:

- Webinar 38 "HIV/AIDS Today and Tomorrow" (Wednesday 25 November 2026), dedicated to World AIDS Day on 1 December.
- January webinar (27 January 2027) "Highlights from Prague" dedicated to the "27th IUSTI World Congress" with highlight presentations from this important event for those who could not attend, and a refresher for those who did.

Further webinars on 24 February, 31 March remain an open book. We welcome suggestions for speakers and content. The season will finish in April with "Porto Beckons", where Carmen Lisboa – Congress President and Georg Stary – Chair of the International Scientific Committee of the Congress, will represent an hors d'oeuvre of what beckons for the 2027 IUSTI Europe Congress Porto in October.

All recordings remain freely available in the IUSTI-Europe webinar archive (https://www.iusti-europe.eu/web/index.php/webinar-recordings). Suggestions for themes and speakers are always welcome, especially from countries that have not yet contributed.

The IUSTI-Europe webinar editorial team is working to invite essential speakers for every STI and HIV topic and run each session live. We thank BASHH for its continued support, and every speaker who has generously shared their time and expertise with our community.

EADV HPV Infection Task Force: Sharing Knowledge, Raising Awareness
On behalf of the EADV HPV Task Force members: Mihael Skerlev and Arne Wikström
Chair and Co-Chair of the EADV HPV Task Force
Since its founding, the EADV HPV Infection Task Force has continuously and progressively advanced collaboration on HPV-related topics, focusing mostly on the genital HPV-infections. Many IUSTI Europe members (and Council members in particular) are involved in the work of the HPV task force. Different activities have taken place. We are convinced that the members of our HPV Infection Task Force do the utmost to fulfil the objectives of our mission: "Sharing Knowledge, Raising Awareness" through (among many other activities) dedicated educational initiatives—such as EADV Courses for residents and advanced Courses (Athens 2023; Turin 2025), by taking part in the official EADV and IUSTI Europe Scientific Programme and by "creating" the sessions at major scientific meetings, such as IUSTI Europe Advanced Course for residents (E. Nicolaidou, M. Skerlev: "The HPV typing of males: why does it matter?"), taking place, for example, this year (2026) in Prague, under the auspices of the IUSTI World and Europe Congress. We believe that offering advanced HPV courses to enthusiastic young members enabled interested colleagues to become more familiar with diagnosis, treatment and, what is the most important, prevention of HPV-associated diseases. Our mission is to do our best to empower health care professionals (dermatovenereologists definitely included) with advanced expertise in the field of the HPV-associated diseases. We ourselves learn that way, too.





EADV HPV Task Force Meetings

The HPV task force members meet at least once a year (this year in the hybid form, during the EADV congress), and besides that, we have online meetings and many contacts via mail.

We firmly believe that IUSTI Europe members must play a pivotal role in multidisciplinary HPV vaccination and prevention strategies. Looking ahead, the Task Force will build on this momentum with another upcoming HPV Course scheduled for

September 13–15, 2027, in Vienna, Austria (Chairs: Claudia Heller-Vitouch and Mihael Skerlev).



The HPV Task force works in close cooperation with IUSTI Europe. Some members of the Task Force are currently working with the update of the IUSTI HPV treatment guidelines (chaired by A. Wikström), which are usually later published in the corresponding relevant journals. We hope that the work will be ready for presentation next year. We are deeply convinced that our HPV Infection Task Force members across all career stages—from senior experts to junior members—will remain actively engaged in shaping the future of the HPV prevention!

HPV vaccination has become a cornerstone in cancer prevention, an area in which organisations such as the IUSTI and the EADV, play a significant role. Contact has been taken with key groups such as the European Parliament, and we plan to be more visible on social media, in order to reach the younger age groups. As IUSTI has the same goal, it gives opportunities to work closely in the future.

Sexual Health in Europe: Key Updates
Andy Winter, Chair for Communication
European Testing Week: 23 – 30 November 2026
This twice-yearly event encourages organisations throughout Europe to unite to increase testing efforts for hepatitis, HIV and sexually transmitted infections: hundreds of organisations acting together for one week to shift norms, reach people and save lives. The 2030 goals to end the epidemic of HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs as a public health threat are slipping away from us: late diagnosis remains unacceptably high. Of interest to IUSTI Europe members may be the support tools for introducing integrated testing in health care settings.

AIDS Action Europe – Report on Access to PrEP in Europe
A June 2026 community-sourced mapping exercise set in EU/EEA reports substantial variation in HIV PrEP availability, affordability and service design across xx countries. Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta have introduced national reimbursement. Seven EU Member States still provide no formal public coverage: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. Barriers include restrictive eligibility, hospital-centred provision requiring paid-for referrals to access, and stockouts. Keeping people out of the formal healthcare system results in missed opportunities for HIV & STI testing, vaccination and health monitoring, with reliance on pilots and NGOs. Valeksa Padovese from Malta was one of the IUSTI Europe members contributing.

European Partnership on One Health Antimicrobial Resistance – 18 Nov 2026
Illustrating the growing importance of AMR, this EU co-funded partnership brings 33 funders from 26 countries (including Australia and the UK) together to make €28million available to support transnational research and innovation projects on understanding, modelling and stopping antimicrobial transmission. Pre-proposal deadline is 1 February 2027.

mpox continues
ECDC continues to publish mpox case numbers monthly across EU/EEA, Western Balkans and Türkiye, noting an increase since June 2026 mostly of **clade I** cases. In September 206, a total of 342 clade I MPXV were reported by 17 countries. and 3 clade II MPXV cases were reported in Denmark, France and Portugal. In the last year some 13% of people with clade I were hospitalised, and 73% had no history of vaccination. Increasing vaccination uptake is the single most important measure recommended, which also involves health promotion interventions and community engagement to ensure high vaccine acceptance.

EACS – Standard of Care for HIV and Co-Infections in Europe 2026
EACS biennial Standard of Care meeting was this year held in Budapest, Hungary, co-led by IUSTI Europe Albania National Representative Prof. Arjan Harxi and local chair Botond Latakos . It reviewed progress in HIV care in these two countries. Worryingly, Hungary is still to achieve routine antenatal HIV testing. In Albania only generic 'TLD' is available for treatment first line, and only 73% of diagnosed people are thought to be currently on ART. In 2025, only 57% of people on ART had had a viral load test in the previous year.

A health-care worker stigma survey reported at the meeting found that only 41% of those surveyed across Europe had heard of HIV PrEP, while just 61% agreed that people living with HIV on treatment with undetectable viral load cannot transmit the virus. There was some good news reported: as a result of advocacy from the 2024 meeting in Athens there were improvements in epidemiological monitoring for HIV in Türkiye and better provision of PrEP in Greece.

Condom quality…
On 2 November, France recalled 7 million ultra-thin condoms after finding manufacturing defects that

may lead to bursts or rips. These have been supplied from a Malaysia manufacturer right across European market with unwanted pregnancies already reported. Multiple brands are affected. Government advice suggested anyone who used one of the affected condoms to seek testing for STIs.

Claudia Heller-Vitouch

North America



Dr Caroline Cameron – Regional Director of IUSTI-North America

From the American STD Association (ASTDA)

- The ASTDA launched a new Peer Review Academy in partnership with the *Sexually Transmitted Diseases* journal. This is a year-long mentored program for early- and mid-career STI professionals to become confident peer reviewers and future editorial leaders through mentored reviews, cohort learning, and individualized feedback. The first cohort includes six members.
- In partnership with NCSD and ASHA (the National Coalition of STD Directors and American Sexual Health Association), the ASTDA facilitated a meeting of STI partner organizations in conjunction with the 2026 STI Prevention Conference. The group is working to define areas for increased collaboration going forward.
- The ASTDA Board met in Atlanta in September 2026.



Back row, left to right: Caroline Cameron, Jason Zucker, Barbara Wilgus, Patricia Kissinger, Alison Footman, Stacey Griner, Olusegun Soge, Chase Cannon. Front row, left to right: Susan Tuddenham, Elizabeth Torrone, Arlene Seña, Julie Dombrowski, Abigail Norris Turner, Preeti Pathela. Not pictured: Suzanne Bevan, Karen Lithgow, Leandro Mena, Hilary Reno

- We are recruiting our next cohort of ASTDA Summer Fellows. More information available at: https://astda.org/engage/summer-fellowship-program/

IUSTI Canada Board news:

- IUSTI Canada Welcomes Two New Board Members:
- Angela Jackson, PhD Student, University of Victoria, Treasurer
- Hani Rukh-E-Qamar, Medical Student, Early Career Member-At-Large

Find out more about the board at IUSTI Canada. Visit Meet the Team — IUSTI-Canada: https://www.iusti-canada.ca/meet-the-team

Activities of IUSTI Canada:

The Launch of a New Mentorship Program: Can-STIMM:

- IUSTI-Canada has launched a mentorship program – Our new Canadian STI Mentorship & *Knowledge* Mobilization (Can-STIMM) Program will match early career professionals with senior STI researchers in Canada. We are currently matching mentee-mentor pairs, which will be featured on our website in the coming months.

Continuation of our successful Webinar Series:

- IUSTI Canada's 2026 webinar series – please join us to hear exclusive webinars that explore cutting-edge research, community engagement and advocacy for STBBIs/STIs. More information and details

about how to register can be found on the IUSTI-Canada website.
- Recent Webinars
- Dr. Gina Ogilvie "The ASPIRE Research Program: Lessons learned from two decades of HPV and cervical cancer research in the global setting"
- Dr. Troy Grennan "Wassermann's Ghost: Moving Beyond the RPR in Syphilis **Diagnostics"**

Upcoming Webinar
- Clarissa Klenke "ECR Highlight Series: Genomic and Epidemiological Surveillance of Bacterial STIs in Kenya". November 24, 2026 12:00PM – 1:00PM Eastern Time. Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0hd7V-mvSFGgIUaKkiGTVg

Scholarship support available from IUSTI Canada:
- IUSTI-Canada supported the attendance of early career professionals at the following conferences:
  - STI Prevention Conference in Atlanta, Georgia (August 31-September 2, 2026)
  - IUSTI-World Congress in Prague, Czech Republic (October 14-17, 2026)
- IUSTI-Canada will continue to prioritize support for attendance of early career professionals at IUSTI-national and international meetings, including the upcoming 2027 STI & HIV World Congress in New Delhi, India (October 21-24, 2027).

IUSTI Membership drive:
- IUSTI Canada actively welcomes new members to join its membership. Membership tiers include standard membership, trainee, and retiree membership. We also welcome group, network and not for profit memberships. For details regarding registration, please visit: https://www.iusti-canada.ca/join-iusti-canada; or contact IUSTI Team.

American Sexual Health Association asha

From the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA)
- ASHA partnered with NCSD and ASTDA to convene a pre-conference session at the STI Prevention Conference focused on strengthening coordination across organizations participating in the STI Workgroup and/or receiving CDC STOP STDs funding. Participants worked together to build connections, share organizational priorities and visions for STI prevention, identify key challenges facing the field, and determine areas where collaboration could have the greatest impact in FY27.

  The group identified six priority areas for ongoing collaboration and established short-term workgroups focused on: strategic funding opportunities, policy and advocacy coordination, STI workforce development, public-facing messaging, healthcare professional education and engagement, and conferences and convenings.

  Organizations interested in joining one of these workgroups should contact Becca Karpinski at beccakarpinski@ashasexualhealth.org.

- As part of our new website design, we've created a user-friendly landing page to make it easier to find trusted information about sexual health, HIV, and PrEP. Our Be PrEPared landing page covers the basics of PrEP, HIV prevention, testing, and other ways to take charge of your sexual health.

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- **On October 27, 2026**, the CDC released the 2026 update to the Antimicrobial Resistance Threats Report (AR Threats Report), which provides CDC's most comprehensive estimate of the impact of drug-resistant pathogens on human health in the United States to date.
- **On September 21, 2026**, the FDA granted Pfizer's request to extend the shelf life of Bicillin® L-A. Updates are available on FDA's website.
- **Syphilis Tools** is a new, free app that healthcare providers can use as a clinical reference for syphilis screening, testing, and treatment. Use interactive tools to interpret serologic tests, identify syphilis stages, determine treatment regimens, and monitor titers, all from one app. Download the Syphilis Tools app from the Apple Store or the Google Play Store or access it via the National STD Curriculum.
- **Own the Awk Campaign Materials** Available for Download and Purchase: Help young adults build confidence to talk about relationships and sexual health by putting

engaging, accessible resources directly into their hands. Programs can download free, printer-ready materials from the Own the Awk website or purchase ready-to-use materials from the Own the Awk online store (card decks, posters, key chains, etc.). Please spread the word.

Caroline Cameron

Asia Pacific



Dr Pingyu Zhou – Regional Director of IUSTI-Asia-Pacific

2026 Year in Review

Regional HIV and STI Situation
In 2026, rapidly rising HIV diagnoses in Fiji and Papua New Guinea, continuing transmission in the Philippines and persistent STI control challenges reinforced the need for coordinated regional action. Fiji's epidemic has been driven by injecting drug use, prevention barriers and delayed diagnosis, with infections among women and children underscoring antenatal testing, prevention of vertical transmission and early infant diagnosis. Priorities include accessible testing, reliable antiretroviral supplies, linkage to care, viral load monitoring, harm reduction and community-led prevention.

Key Meetings

- **Pacific HIV Symposium, Fiji (17–18 August):** Organised by ASHM, the inaugural symposium brought together health professionals, policymakers, communities and development partners. It emphasised prevention, testing, treatment, workforce development and coordination, and its Call to Action urged multisectoral engagement, sustained investment and accessible services.
- **Australasian HIV&AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health Conferences, Melbourne (September):** The joint programme attracted approximately 980 delegates. Sessions covered HIV epidemiology, health inequities, antiretroviral therapy, cure research, coinfections and disengagement from care, alongside syphilis, innovative testing, diagnostic challenges, community-led approaches and nurse-led models of care. A Pacific HIV Symposium report-back linked regional priorities to the wider Australasian community.
- **New Zealand Sexual Health Society Conference, Auckland (26 September):** Under the theme "Riding the waves," the 47th conference addressed the Fiji HIV crisis, Pacific sexual health, STI management in primary care, transgender and non-binary sexual health, treatment-resistant Candida, doxy-PEP, PrEP and syphilis contact tracing.

UNDP/ASHM Programme for Pacific Island Countries
The programme supported clinical education across 12 Pacific Island countries through webinars, masterclasses and case discussions on HIV diagnosis and treatment, viral load monitoring, prevention of vertical transmission, paediatric HIV, tuberculosis coinfection and opportunistic infections, helping identify gaps in diagnostics, medicines and workforce capacity.

Wider Regional Priorities and IUSTI Collaboration
Syphilis, gonorrhoea, antimicrobial resistance and unequal diagnostic access remain major priorities, alongside the need for sustainable national investment and strong community partnerships. The planned IUSTI Asia-Pacific Congress in the Philippines was cancelled; an online IUSTI Asia-Pacific symposium on 28 November 2026 offers an alternative for maintaining professional connections.

Public Engagement: Gonorrhoea on Malaysian Television
Dr Ng Rong Xiang (Universiti Malaya Medical Centre) discussed gonorrhoea and STI awareness on TV3's *Malaysia Hari Ini* in September 2026, highlighting timely testing, treatment and prevention, and the value of mainstream media in translating clinical knowledge into accessible public health information.

From the Japanese Society for Sexually Transmitted Infections (JSSTI)
STI numbers in Japan remain high, although the rise in syphilis has settled; JSSTI recommends proactive screening and continued public awareness. A nucleic acid amplification test for *Mycoplasma genitalium* has been reimbursed since June 2022, and JSSTI is working to enable treatment based on resistance-related mutations given high macrolide and quinolone resistance. A 9-valent HPV vaccine was approved for males in August 2025, but male vaccination remains very low; JSSTI has proposed routine male HPV vaccination. The 38th annual meeting was held in Nagoya in December 2025 with over 800

participants; the 39th is scheduled for Tokyo in November 2026.

Looking Ahead to 2027
Priorities include reducing late HIV diagnosis, improving treatment coverage and viral suppression, preventing vertical transmission, strengthening harm reduction and addressing antimicrobial resistance. We look forward to the Joint 27th ISSTDR & 28th World IUSTI Congress 2027 in Delhi.

IUSTI-AP Online Symposium 2026: Would You Make the Right Diagnosis?



Join the IUSTI Asia-Pacific Region on Saturday, 28 November 2026 (11:00 AM–2:00 PM Malaysia Time) for a free online symposium exploring genital ulcer disease, mpox and challenging STI cases across the Asia-Pacific region.

Featuring speakers from Australia, India and Malaysia, the programme will also include updates from the World IUSTI Meeting. A certificate of attendance (3 hours) will be available upon completion of the post-event evaluation.

Join via Zoom:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87807597706

We look forward to your participation.

Pingyu Zhou

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:

IUSTI-AP Online Symposium 2026: Would You Make the Right Diagnosis?
28 November 2026
Join via Zoom:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87807597706

IUSTI-Europe Congress 2027
7–9 October 2027
Porto, Portugal
https://iusti2027.com/

Joint Congress of 27th ISSTDR & 28th IUSTI 2027, World Congress on STIs
21-24 October 2027
New Delhi, India
www.stihiv2027.org

STI Global Update is published by the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections. Its aims are to provide an international perspective on the management and control of sexually acquired infections.
Prof. Jonathan Ross, Editor
jonathan.ross@uhb.nhs.uk
Further information on the activities of IUSTI available at www.iusti.org