

# Implication of Stigmatization: No NGO support for HIV-testing campaigns in prisons!

HIV in Europe Conference – Copenhagen, March 18-19, 2012

Authors: Peter Wiessner, Bärbel Knorr, Ferenc Bagyinszky

## Reasons for the need of VCT in prison:

HIV-prevalence in Germany's prisons is in average 16 to 24 times higher than in the general population. 14,3 to 17,6 % of prisoners are infected with Hepatitis C. A high percentage of prisoners belongs to most-at-risk populations (IDUs, migrants). It would be important to have VCT services in prison settings; comparable to community-based testing campaigns that are available outside prisons, like the successfully conducted nation-wide IWWIT-testing campaign in Germany!

## Why does the Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe NOT support VCT services in prison:

### Work place based discrimination:

Prisoners with HIV are singled out, discriminated against and excluded from certain job options (like kitchen, bakery or laundry). These practises have negative impact on income, education and training options.

### Discrimination to conduct recreational activities:

Prisoners are sometimes excluded from recreational activities, they cannot participate in sport activities or at the gym

### Violations of confidentiality:

in North-Rhine Westphalia prisoners with HIV are forced to declare their HIV status to other prisoners, in case they want to participate in social activities. If they don't declare this they cannot participate and will stay isolated (practise stopped in February 2012)

## The promotion of VCT testing services needs to be accompanied with measures against discrimination!



Source/foto: <http://www.xrel.to/2009-04-15/1109/Hannah-Montana-Mitgefilmt-und-abgefuehrt.html>



## TEST IT- BERLIN

HIV Counselling and Rapid Testing for drug users in Berlin



NGO based IWWIT HIV/STI testing campaign for MSM in Germany in 2009/2010 and

## Why does the Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe not support VCT services in prison:

Background: Germany is a federal state, uniting 16 states with own laws. Prisons are governed at state level, resulting into 16 different laws and practises. HIV-tests, as part of the medical examination at entry are organised differently, very often with complete disrespect of VCT standards and confidentiality. Many NGOs working in prison record legal abuses related to an HIV-status.



Source/foto: Gefängnisgitter (Bild: AP)

## Consequences:

the practices described violate prisoners' rights, and put them at risk to experience stigma and discrimination by other prisoners and staff. Measures against discrimination need to get established to secure the well-being of HIV-positive prisoners. Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe will not promote testing campaigns in prisons, as long as a HIV-test result does have negative and unforeseeable consequences for the prisoner. HIV-Testing must be accompanied with education and the promotion of human rights.

Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe e.V.  
Wilhelmstraße 138  
10963 Berlin  
Tel.: +49 30 69 00 87 - 0  
Fax: + 49 30 69 00 87 - 42  
DAH@aidshilfe.de  
Contact: Bärbel Knorr  
E-Mail: [baerbel.knorr@dah.aidshilfe.de](mailto:baerbel.knorr@dah.aidshilfe.de)  
Tel.: 030 69 00 87 - 0

[aidshilfe.de](http://aidshilfe.de)

