



WHAT IS THE OVERALL STATE OF HARM REDUCTION POLICIES?

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Produced by



In partnership with



HIV Policy Lab Strategy

Laws and policies are critical tools in the fight against HIV/AIDS

The HIV Policy Lab

- Gathers, compares, & shares data on countries' laws/policies
- Uses data to hold governments accountable & support policy change activism

HIV Policy Lab Coding Process

For each policy...

- Identify global guideline/policy recommendation benchmark
- Gather info on a country's policy (policy doc, survey, etc.)
- Determine whether country has adopted/partially adopted/not adopted recommended policy
- Create an index by calculating policy adoption scores (% policies adopted) overall & for each policy area, for each country & region

Scores: most/many/some/few/very few

What is the **HIV** Policy Lab?

- Data, graphics, & policy library
- 33 law/policy indicators (52, including sub-indicators)
- 4 policy areas:
 - Clinical/treatment
 - Testing & prevention
 - Structural
 - Health systems
- 194 countries
- 5 years of data & counting...

The screenshot shows the HIV Policy Lab website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo 'HIV Policy Lab' on the left and links for 'Country', 'Map', 'Compare', 'Data', 'Background', and 'Reports' on the right. A 'Select Language' dropdown menu and a 'Help Us Update' button are also visible. Below the navigation bar, the main heading 'HIV Policy Lab' is centered. To the right of this heading, a blue box contains the text 'PRODUCED BY GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY'. Below the heading, a paragraph describes the platform: 'The HIV Policy Lab online platform systematically gathers and monitors laws and policies adopted by countries around the world—documenting where key HIV science has been translated into policy. It is an open, growing global public resource that builds data from legal documents, government reporting, and independent research. In-depth country pages, an interactive global map and comparison across issues and countries is available. Please click below to enter.' Below this text are three interactive buttons: 'Find a country' with a magnifying glass icon, 'Global map' with a location pin icon, and 'Compare countries' with a globe icon. Each button has a corresponding input field or action button below it.

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This tool is designed to be used in Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox.

Why is Policy data important?

To inform governments and shift a country's HIV response

- a reliable source of evidence-based policies and benchmarks,
- an understanding of where existing policies are lacking, and
- insights into which policies can drive a meaningful change to HIV outcomes for their populations and contexts.

Generating accountability and urgency through robust, reliable policy data that is timely and relevant can profoundly influence a country's HIV response and alter the course of the epidemic.

Why is Policy data on harm reduction important?

- **Support evidence-based policy making:** Help governments make informed decisions and support domestic actors in holding their leaders accountable.
- **Data monitoring:** A longitudinal dataset on HIV laws & policies helps compare the countries with sound harm reduction policies to those who have had criminalizing approach towards PWID, and the evolution of laws and policies over time.

Cost- savings from implementing Harm reduction strategies

- Atmosphere of dwindling financial support for an effective HIV response for People who inject drugs (PWIDs) in LMICs - Middle Income countries are most affected
- UNAIDS estimates the average cost of a needle and syringe programme (NSP) to be US\$23–71 per person per year in the US -several hundred magnitudes lower than the cost of HIV treatment in the country.
- Research from China found NSPs to be cost-effective and cost-saving. The US\$1.04 million spent on NSPs between 2002 and 2008 is estimated to have saved US\$1.38-1.97 million in HIV treatment and care costs due to the number of infections prevented

“Economic analyses should not be the only basis on which budget decisions are made. Sustainable financing for health and harm reduction requires equity, human rights and community to be central.”

- Harm Reduction International, 2020

HIV Policy Lab

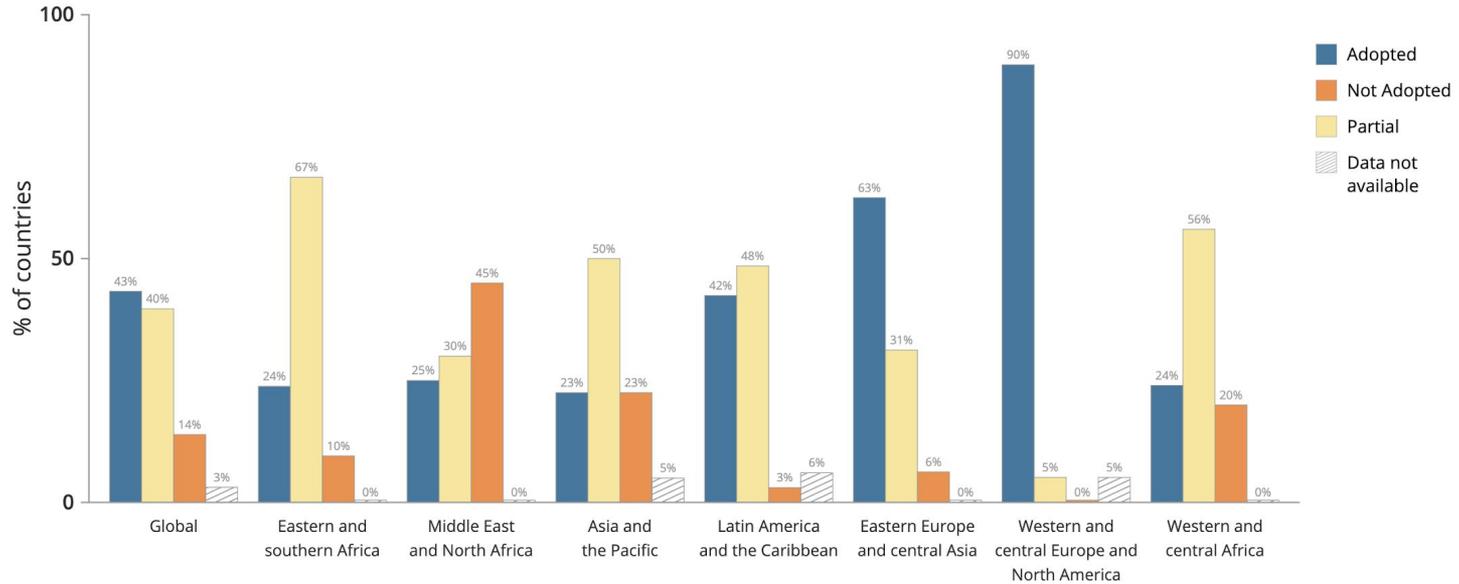
Does national law and HIV policy incorporate key harm reduction strategies, including avoidance of criminalizing syringe possession? (TP 6)

Adoption status by region

Compare regional TP6 adoption status for the most current data

Choose global view or compare regions

Find a country



TP 6 (i) Is harm reduction included in national policy & service packages for people who inject drugs?

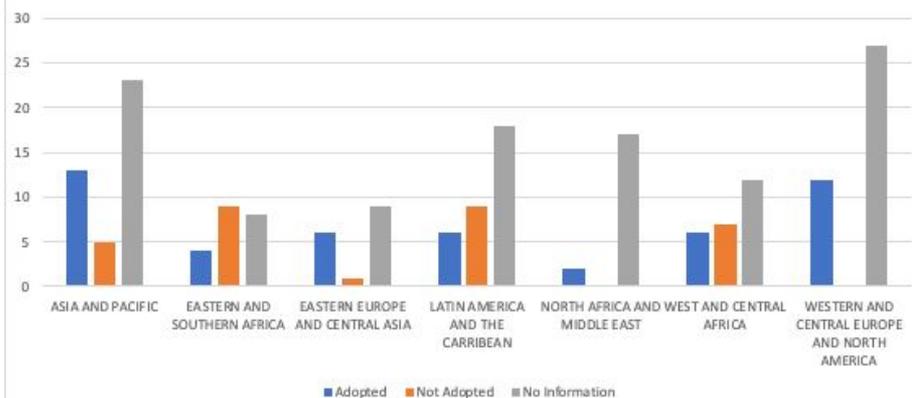
Adopted

Harm reduction services are included in national policy and service packages for people who inject drugs

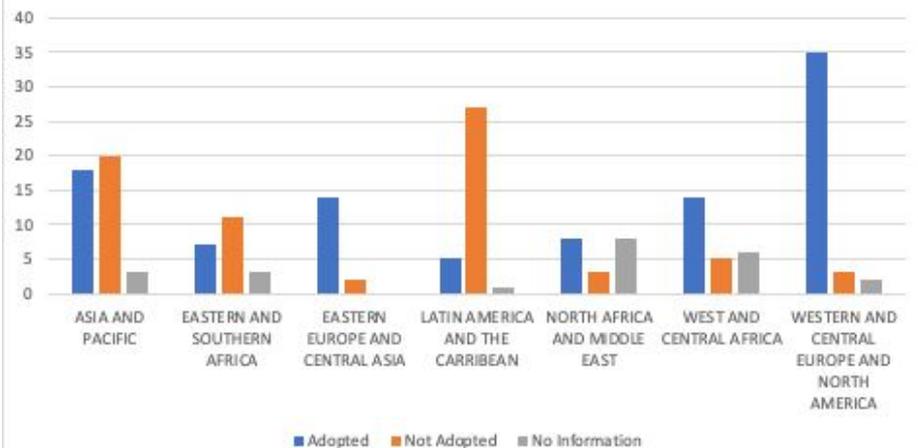
**Not
adopted**

Harm reduction services are not included in national policy and service packages for people who inject drugs

Harm Reduction in National Policy - 2021



Harm Reduction in National Policy - 2022



TP 6 (ii) Does national law avoid imposing criminal penalties for possession of syringes and associated paraphernalia?

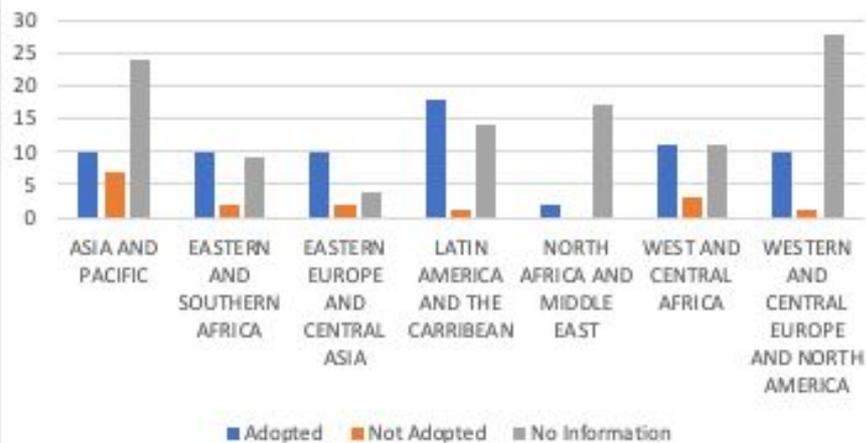
Adopted

National law avoids criminalizing possession of syringes and associated paraphernalia

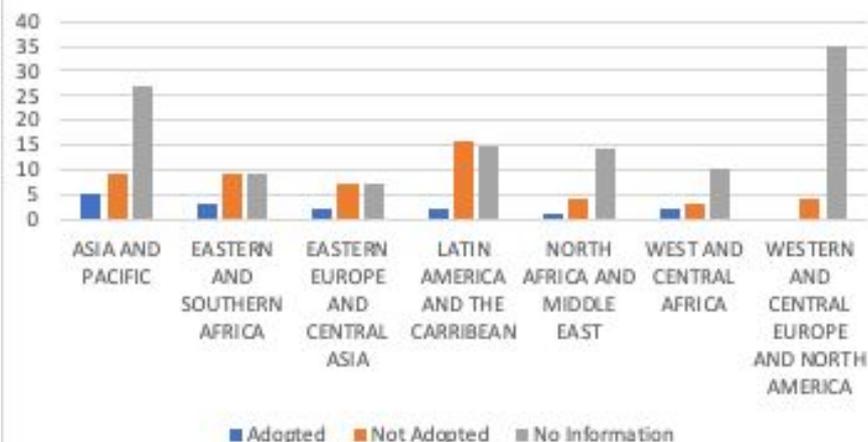
**Not
adopted**

National law criminalizes possession of syringes and associated paraphernalia

Syringe non-criminalisation- 2021



Syringe non-criminalisation- 2022



The HIV Policy Lab is a valuable tool to

1. Understand the overall HIV policy environment in a country
2. Assess whether countries have enabling environments for a specific populations in the context of other related policies
3. Drawing meaningful conclusions using Epidemiological data

Harm reduction policies - Prisons

- Globally, 15 million people report injection drug use, and PWIDs are 22 times more likely to have HIV than the general population.
- Around the world, PWIDs continue to face criminalisation, stigma and discrimination that prevents access to services - and certain specific populations, more acutely so.

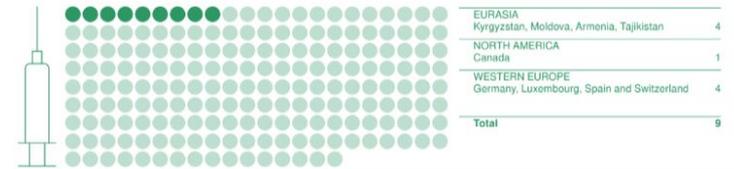
TP8 Prisoners prevention	
Question	Are both condoms/lubricants and syringe access/exchange programs available to prisoners as a matter of policy?
Possible values	Definition of values
Adopted	Both condoms/lubricants and syringe access/exchange programs are available to prisoners
Partially adopted	Either condoms/lubricants or syringe access/exchange programs are available to prisoners, but not both
Not adopted	Neither condoms/lubricants nor syringe access/exchange programs are available to prisoners
Policy recommendation	Global Commission on HIV and the Law, Risks, Rights & Health, 2012.

ii Prisons-Needle & syringe programs

Question Are syringe access/exchange programs available in prisons as a matter of national policy?

Possible values	Definition of values
Adopted	Needle/syringe programs are available in prisons as a matter of national policy
Not adopted	Needle/syringe programs are not available in prisons as a matter of national policy

Needle and syringe programmes (NSPs) in prisons



^b In 2018 and 2020, the *Global State of Harm Reduction* reported the existence of prison NSP in North Macedonia. However, new reports from national civil society organisations show that prison NSP never been meaningfully implemented in the country.

**M1.1 GLOBAL AVAILABILITY OF NEEDLE AND SYRINGE PROGRAMMES (NSPs)
IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN PRISONS**



Only Canada, Spain, Germany, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have NSPs in the communities and prisons

Laws and Policies around drug use non-criminalisation

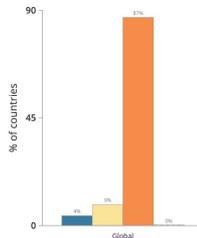
- Structural policies that influence and enable social movement are critical for harm reduction
- Data from the policy lab can help us understand the overarching enabling/disabling policy environments

S3 Drug use non-criminalization

Adoption status by region

Compare regional S3 adoption status for the most current data

Choose global view or compare regions Find a country
Select Regions Find a country



Country ↑↓

S3

Drug use non-criminalization

↑↓

TP6

Harm reduction

↑≡

Germany		ADOPTED	ADOPTED
Netherlands		ADOPTED	ADOPTED
Pakistan		ADOPTED	ADOPTED
Portugal		ADOPTED	ADOPTED
Uruguay		ADOPTED	ADOPTED

Only 5 countries have adopted both policies

*2021 data from the HIV Policy Lab

Research using the HIV Policy Lab data shows decriminalisation environments positively influence HIV outcomes

- In criminalising environments, a smaller portion of PLHIV knew their status, and even fewer had suppressed virus.
- Countries that have adopted protective laws that advance non-discrimination, human rights institutions and responses to gender-based violence have done better towards the 90-90-90 goals.

[BMJ Glob Health](#). 2021; 6(8): e006315.

Published online 2021 Aug 2. doi: [10.1136/bmjgh-2021-006315](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2021-006315)

PMCID: PMC8330576

PMID: [34341021](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34341021/)

Law, criminalisation and HIV in the world: have countries that criminalise achieved more or less successful pandemic response?

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Conclusion

- The global harm reduction response is stronger than in the past with 101 countries including supportive references to harm reduction in their national policy
- More countries opened NSPs, and no country has stopped implementing NSPs since 2021
 - While most countries in EECA, North Americas and Western Europe implement NSP, they are widely absent in Africa, LAC and MENA regions
- Policies that address structural barriers have staggeringly low adoption rates undermining a country's HIV response
- *Longitudinal policy data is a powerful advocacy, research and programmatic support tool that can help establish causal associations with HIV outcomes*

THANK YOU!

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