

HIV- and STI-testing in community-based VCT centres in Germany.

HALF-YEAR REPORT 1/2025



Contact

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Participating CBVCT Centres

Augsburg AH = Augsburger Aidshilfe | Berlin AH = Berliner Aids-Hilfe | Berlin CP = Checkpoint BLN | Berlin Fixpunkt = Fixpunkt. Drogenhilfe und Gesundheitsförderung in Berlin | Berlin MoM = Mann-O-Meter. Berlins schwuler Checkpoint | Bonn AH = Aids-Hilfe Bonn | Cottbus Katte = Katte. Rat & Tat Cottbus | Dortmund AH = aidshilfe dortmund | Dresden AH = Aids-Hilfe Dresden | Düsseldorf AH = Aidshilfe Düsseldorf | Emsland AH = AIDS-Hilfe Emsland | Erfurt AH = AIDS-Hilfe Thüringen | Frankfurt AH = AIDS-Hilfe Frankfurt | Freiburg CP = Checkpoint Aidshilfe Freiburg | Halle AH = AIDS-Hilfe Halle/Sachsen-Anhalt Süd | Hamburg CP = Hein & Fiete. Der schwule Checkpoint. Prävention | Hamburg ZSG = CASAblanca. Centrum für HIV und sexuell übertragbare Infektionen in Altona | Hannover CP = CheckPoint Hannover | Heidelberg AH = Aidshilfe Heidelberg | Heilbronn AH = Checkpoint Aidshilfe Unterland | Jena AH = AIDS-Hilfe Weimar & Ostthüringen. Beratungsstelle Jena | Karlsruhe AH = ZeSIA. Zentrum für sexuelle Gesundheit, Identität und Aufklärung Karlsruhe | Kiel AH = Aidshilfe Kiel | Konstanz AH = Aids-Hilfe Konstanz | Lübeck AH = Aidshilfe Lübeck für sexuelle Gesundheit | Magdeburg AH = Zentrum für sexuelle Gesundheit. Aidshilfe Sachsen-Anhalt Nord | Mannheim CP = KOSI.MA. Zentrum für sexuelle Gesundheit Mannheim | München CP = Checkpoint München | München Sub = Sub. Schwules Kommunikations- und Kulturzentrum München | Nürnberg CP = AIDS-Hilfe Nürnberg-Erlangen-Fürth | Offenburg AH = Checkpoint Aidshilfe Freiburg - Außenstelle Offenburg | Pforzheim AH = Fachstelle für sexuelle Gesundheit & Selbstbestimmung SPOTLIGHT Pforzheim | Potsdam AH = AIDS-Hilfe Potsdam | Potsdam Katte = Katte. Checkpoint Potsdam | Regensburg CP = Checkpoint Regensburg. Aidsberatungsstelle Oberpfalz | Saarbrücken AH = Aidshilfe Saar | Schleswig-Holstein AH = Aidshilfe Schleswig-Holstein | Schw.Gmünd AH = AIDS-Hilfe Schwäbisch Gmünd | Stuttgart AH = AIDS-Hilfe Stuttgart | Troisdorf AH = check-it. Aidshilfe Rhein-Sieg | Tübingen AH = Aidshilfe Tübingen-Reutlingen | Ulm AH = AIDS-Hilfe Ulm/Neu-Ulm/Alb-Donau | Weimar AH = AIDS-Hilfe Weimar und Ostthüringen. Beratungsstelle Weimar

CBVCT Centres in Germany

Summary

German CBVCT centres began online data collection in 2018. Since then, 93 436 counselling sessions with a valid test result have been documented.

In the 1st half of 2025, 10 036 counselling sessions with valid test results were recorded – 7 % less than in the same period of the previous year—the decrease is likely due to the withdrawal of Checkpoint BLN from the joint data collection. These sessions included 4673 men who have sex with men (MSM), 2243 other men (who do *not* have sex with men), 2526 women, and 269 persons with non-binary or other gender identities—representing 48.1 %, 23.1 %, 26 %, and 2.8 % of all CBVCT clients with information on gender identity and sexual orientation, respectively.

Overall in the 1st half of 2025, 783 sexually transmitted infections (STIs) were diagnosed (including syphilis, gonor-rhoea, or chlamydia). In 40 cases, the HIV antibody test was reactive or confirmed positive, and in 32 cases the HCV antibody test was positive. None of the groups showed evidence of a significant increase in STI diagnoses over time (2020–2025). However, data from the CBVCT centres now show only a slight increase in the number of swabs performed as part of STI testing, primarily outside the MSM group.

Testing services offered by the German CBVCT centres reach a broad and diverse spectrum of people—diverse in gender identity, sexual orientation, partnership status, migration background, health insurance status in Germany, involvement in sex work or its use, as well as sexual and preventive behaviours.

Background

Early diagnosis of HIV infection is essential for timely treatment to reduce mortality, morbidity, and transmission rates. Although healthcare access is universal in most European countries, people at risk do not necessarily actively seek HIV testing or face significant testing barriers within the formal healthcare system. According to the German AIDS Federation, every HIV test should be *voluntary* and accompanied by *counselling*. Community-based voluntary counselling and testing (CBVCT) is considered an effective model for improving health care access for the most vulnerable populations concerning HIV, Syphilis, and hepatitis C.

CBVCT centres are well-positioned to enhance all aspects of HIV/STI counselling and testing—including access, provision, uptake and effectiveness—for vulnerable individuals. Most CBVCT centres in Germany, often operating under the name *Checkpoint*, are members of the German AIDS Federation.

Since 2007, some large AIDS service centres have offered HIV rapid tests, a service quickly adopted and implemented by many other centres. A few years later, this was expanded to include rapid tests for syphilis and hepatitis C. In the 2010s, many German CBVCT centres began offering non-blood-based tests for gonorrhoea and chlamydia. A change in German law in March 2020 exempted rapid tests for HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis C from the "doctor's prerogative", lowering the threshold for testing. Since then, the presence of medical staff is no longer mandatory for performing rapid tests. This also makes it much easier to carry out testing as part of outreach work, for example, in prisons. However, further diagnostics, such as confirmatory tests, remain the responsibility of medical doctors.

In 2015, in cooperation with the *Checkpoints*, the German national epidemiological institution (Robert Koch Institute), developed a joint questionnaire [1]. Since 2018, this data has been collected directly online.

Methods

From the start of nationwide data collection in 2018 until the end of the 1st half of 2025 there were 144 014 entries in the CBVCT database. After excluding 1584 invalid entries, 142 430 valid entries remained. **Table 1.2** in the appendix shows the number of valid entries over time.

For these valid counselling entries, at least one test result (rapid or laboratory tests for HIV, HCV, or syphilis, or swabs for gonorrhoea/chlamydia) was documented in 111 461 cases (78.3 %; see **Table 1.3** in the appendix).

Not all entries could be assigned to one of the four groups used in this report (4133 entries lack information on gender identity or the gender of the sexual partners). Therefore, the sum of the four groups shown in **Tables 1.1** and **1.5** is slightly smaller than the total number of persons with valid entries.

From a methodological standpoint, it should be noted that some CBVCT centres do not participate in the joint electronic data collection or have discontinued participation (**Table 1.2**). Even among participating centres, it cannot be ruled out that some test results were not recorded or were incompletely recorded electronically (**Table 1.3**). Therefore, the analysed data are not fully representative of all CBVCT clients in Germany.

Unlike the home-sampling project *s.a.m health* described below, the available CBVCT data do not allow distinguishing between individual clients and test contacts. This results in an overestimation of the characteristics of people who use CBVCT services more than once per half-year, such as the proportion of PrEP users among MSM or the proportion with more than ten sexual partners in the previous six months.

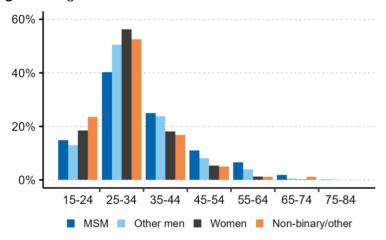
Over Time

Table 1.3 in the appendix shows the number of counselling sessions with documented test results over time. Restrictions on public life during the COVID pandemic resulted in a significant decline in CBVCT visits. In the first half of 2020, the number of tests conducted dropped by 42 % compared to the previous six months. Some CBVCT centres even temporarily suspended operations (**Table 1.2**). Part of the decline was offset by the *s.a.m health* project. It was not until the second half of 2021 that the number of CBVCT visits returned to pre-pandemic levels. (Data from before 2020 are no longer shown.)

Characteristics of CBVCT Clients in the 1st half of 2025

The majority of CBVCT clients were between 25 and 34 years old. MSM were also represented in older age groups (**Figure 1.1**). On average, women and persons with a non-binary gender identity were younger than men.

Figure 1.1: Age distribution of CBVCT clients in the 1st half of 2025



MSM: Cis and trans men who have sex with men. Other men: ...who do not have sex with men.

In 44.3 % of all test consultations in the 1st half of 2025, clients reported a migration background; 11.8 % of CBVCT clients did not have health insurance in Germany. For 28.5 % of clients, the visit to a CBVCT centre was their first HIV test, especially among men who do *not* have sex with men (47,4 %) and women (40,0 %). This underlines the importance of the low-threshold nature of this service.

Sex work in the previous six months was reported by 2.6 % of CBVCT clients; this proportion was highest among non-binary persons (8,8 %). Paying for sex was reported by 6.2 %; this proportion was highest among men who do *not* have sex with men (15,9 %). More than ten sexual partners in the previous six months were reported by 11.6 %. 13 % of visits were regular *screening* examinations recommended for PrEP; this mainly concerned MSM (30,7 %) and non-binary persons (6,4 %)—for methodological reasons (*cf.* above) these proportions are overestimated if corresponding CBVCT clients attend more than once per half-year.

Table 1.1: Characteristics of clients of CBVCT centres in the 1st half of 2025

	N	ISM	Othe	er men	Wo	omen	Non-b	inary/other
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	4 673	100.0 %	2 243	100.0 %	2 526	100.0 %	269	100.0 %
Gender identity								
Man	4 577	98.7 %	2 231	100.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
Trans man	62	1.3 %	1	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
Woman	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	2 444	97.8 %	0	0.0 %
Trans woman	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	56	2.2 %	0	0.0 %
Non-binary/other	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	269	100.0 %
Sexual identity								
Heterosexual	188	4.1 %	2 243	100.0 %	1 657	68.7 %	9	3.4 %
Bisexual	1 154	25.0 %	0	0.0 %	544	22.6 %	65	24.7 %
Gay	3 061	66.3 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	32	12.2 %
Queer	149	3.2 %	0	0.0 %	127	5.3 %	139	52.9 %
Lesbian	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	57	2.4 %	8	3.0 %
Other	68	1.5 %	0	0.0 %	26	1.1 %	10	3.8 %

Table 1.1: Characteristics of clients of CBVCT centres in the 1st half of 2025 (continued)

	ı	ИSМ	Oth	er men	W	omen	Non-b	inary/other
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	4 673	100.0 %	2 243	100.0 %	2 526	100.0 %	269	100.0 %
Age median (IQR)	33	(27-42)	31	(27—38)	29	(26 - 34)	29	(25 - 34)
Health Insurance								
Yes	4 136	88.5 %	2 030	90.5 %	2 180	86.3 %	221	82.2 %
No	537	11.5 %	213	9.5 %	346	13.7 %	48	17.8 %
Migration background								
Yes	2 445	54.2 %	838	39.2 %	895	37.8 %	126	50.8 %
No	2 070	45.8 %	1 298	60.8 %	1 471	62.2 %	122	49.2 %
Country/region of birth								
Germany	2 581	57.7 %	1 574	74.5 %	1 754	75.1 %	166	67.2 %
Other Europe	876	19.6 %	228	10.8 %	322	13.8 %	36	14.6 %
Middle East	222	5.0 %	71	3.4 %	42	1.8 %	13	5.3 %
Other Asia	279	6.2 %	117	5.5 %	70	3.0 %	7	2.8 %
Africa	90	2.0 %	67	3.2 %	42	1.8 %	3	1.2 %
Latin America	239	5.3 %	35	1.7 %	77	3.3 %	10	4.0 %
USA, CA, AU, NZ	184	4.1 %	20	0.9 %	28	1.2 %	12	4.9 %
Sex work*								
Yes	115	2.6 %	25	1.2 %	88	3.9 %	21	8.8 %
No	4 274	97.4 %	1 996	98.8 %	2 160	96.1 %	218	91.2 %
Client of sex work*								
Yes	264	6.0 %	322	15.9 %	12	0.5 %	8	3.4 %
No	4 142	94.0 %	1 704	84.1 %	2 212	99.5 %	227	96.6 %
Number of sexual partners**		3 110 70		0 111 70		33.3 70		30.0 %
0–2	917	20.5 %	1 142	54.7 %	1 260	55.4 %	82	34.3 %
3-5	1 541	34.5 %	667	32.0 %	689	30.3 %	75	31.4 %
6–10	1 086	24.3 %	201	9.6 %	237	10.4 %	44	18.4 %
>10	922	20.6 %	76	3.6 %	90	4.0 %	38	15.9 %
Number CAVI partners***	322	2010 70	, 0	510 70	30		50	1015 70
0-2	2 475	58.5 %	1 581	82.9 %	1 750	82.9 %	160	73.7 %
3-5	912	21.6 %	271	14.2 %	286	13.5 %	32	14.7 %
6-10	424	10.0 %	40	2.1 %	54	2.6 %	11	5.1 %
>10	419	9.9 %	16	0.8 %	21	1.0 %	14	6.5 %
Last HIV test	113	3.5 70	10	0.0 70		1.0 70		0.5 70
In the previous 6 months	1 350	29.6 %	138	6.3 %	132	5.4 %	32	12.2 %
Before	2 526	55.4 %	1 006	46.3 %	1 324	54.6 %	150	57.0 %
Never	686	15.0 %	1 030	47.4 %	970	40.0 %	81	30.8 %
PrEP	000	13.0 70	1 050	77.770	370	40.0 70	01	30.0 70
Yes	1 224	30.7 %	13	0.9 %	9	0.5 %	13	6.4 %
No	2 767	69.3 %	1 434	99.1 %	1 663	99.5 %	191	93.6 %
Hep. A vaccination	2707	05.5 /0	1 454	JJ.1 70	1 005	JJ.J 70	171	JJ.0 /0
•	2 464	56.7 %	726	36.4 %	01/	41.1 %	100	42.7 %
Yes No	1 880		1 269	63.6 %	914	58.9 %	134	
	1 000	43.3 %	1 209	05.0 %	1 311	30.9 %	134	57.3 %
Hep. B vaccination	2.607	C1 1 0/	022	40.70/	1 1 10	F0 2 0/	110	45.0.0/
Yes	2 687	61.1 % 38.9 %	832	40.7 %	1 149	50.2 %	110	45.8 % 54.2 %
No HBV vaccination	1 714	JO.9 %	1 210	59.3 %	1 142	49.8 %	130	54.2 %
HPV vaccination	760	2410/	117	0.0.0/	004	40.0.0/	74	40.0.0/
Yes	769	24.1 %	117	9.9 %	894	49.8 %	71	40.8 %
No Managaran	2 420	75.9 %	1 061	90.1 %	902	50.2 %	103	59.2 %
Mpox vaccination	4.676	26.424		4.0.07		4.6.07		4.4.4.24
Yes	1 078	26.4 %	29	1.8 %	30	1.6 %	29	14.1 %
No	2 999	73.6 %	1 578	98.2 %	1 824	98.4 %	176	85.9 %

CBVCT: Community-based Voluntary Counselling and Testing.

MSM: Cis and trans men who have sex with men. Other men: ...who do *not* have sex with men. IQR: interquartile range. *In the previous six months; **Sexual partners in the previous six months; **Sexual partners with condomless anal or vaginal intercourse in the previous six months. Column totals may differ from the overall total due to missing data, particularly for vaccinations against HPV and Mpox, as the corresponding questions were only introduced in 2024.

Vaccination against Hepatitis A and B was reported by 43.3 % and 49.2 % of clients, respectively; with the highest proportion among MSM—56,7 % and 61,1 %, respectively. The proportion of individuals vaccinated against HPV was significantly lower among men than among women and non-binary persons. Mpox vaccinations primarily involved MSM, with 26,4 % reporting having been vaccinated. **Table 1.1** provides an overview of these characteristics separately for MSM, other men, women and non-binary persons in the 1st half of 2025.

Figure 1.2 illustrates selected characteristics of clients over time. Due to changes in the composition of participating CBVCT centres, the proportion of MSM among clients has declined over the years. By contrast, the proportion of clients without health insurance in Germany has remained largely stable—with a slight decrease from 2025 onwards. On average, approximately every 5th non-binary person and every 7th MSM had no health insurance.

The proportions of MSM and women reporting sex work in the previous six months remained broadly stable at 3.2 % and 5.2 %, respectively. Similarly, the proportion of "other men" who *had paid for sex* in the previous six months remained stable over time, at 13.5 %.

The proportions of MSM and non-binary individuals with more than ten sexual partners in the previous six months also remained largely stable at 19 % and 19.9 %, respectively.

CBVCT Test Results in the 1st half of 2025.

In the 1st half of 2025, CBVCT centres recorded 74 active syphilis infections, 369 cases of gonorrhoea and 340 chlamydial infections. Syphilis and gonorrhoea particularly affected MSM and non-binary persons. In total, 783 tests were positive for one of these three STIs (STI prevalence among persons with swabs and syphilis test: 7.9 %; for comparison with *s.a.m health* clients, see below).

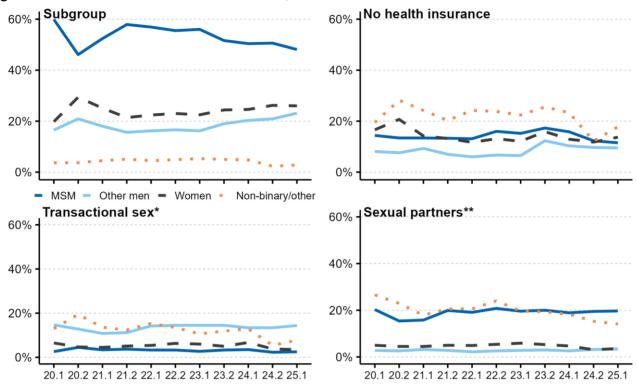
Figure 1.3 shows STI prevalences over time separately for MSM, other men, women, and non-binary persons. No evidence was found of a significant increase in STI prevalence in any of the four groups between 2020 and the 1st half of 2025. However, the average number of swabs performed per person has increased over time, particularly among men who do *not* have sex with men, women, and non-binary individuals. Pooled swabbing was counted as two swabs because in the past, most centres choose not to perform pharyngeal swabs—if pooled swabbing had been counted as three swabs, the increase would be even more pronounced.

In 40 persons in the 1st half of 2025, the HIV test was reactive—of which 72.5 % were among MSM. If a reactive test result was followed by a negative confirmation (control) test, it was removed from this category and classified as *negative*. Particularly in MSM, a reactive HIV test result is likely to indicate HIV infection (due to higher pre-test probability). However, we cannot exclude that some remaining reactive HIV test results were not confirmed externally. The category "reactive" may therefore still contain false positive cases.

In 32 persons in the 1st half of 2025, present or past HCV infections were detected (positive antibody test or positive PCR). If only one positive antibody test is present, it is unclear whether the infection is active or cured. A few centres, particularly in the context of PrEP monitoring, also offer tests for hepatitis B. In the 1st half of 2025, 7 cases of active HBV infections were detected.

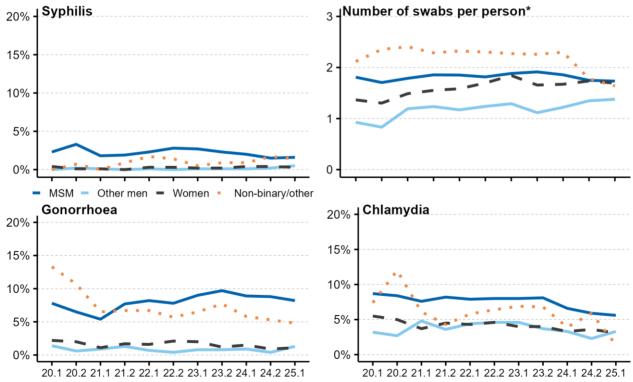
Table 1.4 in the appendix shows test results by CBVCT centres. **Table 1.5** in the appendix gives an overview of the CBVCT test results of the 1st half of 2025 separately for MSM, other men, women, and non-binary persons.

Figure 1.2: Characteristics of CBVCT clients over time, 2020–2025



MSM: Cis and trans men who have sex with men. Other men: ...who do *not* have sex with men. *Transactional sex: MSM, women, non-binary/other: Sex work in the previous six months; Other men: client of sex work in the previous six months. **More than ten sexual partners in the previous six months.

Figure 1.3: STI prevalences among CBVCT clients over time, 2020–2025



^{*}Average number of swabs per person in one test contact. PCR tests from urine were counted as urethral swabs. For pooled tests, two swabs per person were assumed.

s.a.m health

Summary

s.a.m health offers testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) through home sample collection (*home-sampling*), combined with qualified telephone counselling (or face-to-face counselling upon request) and result notification by a CBVCT centre. Clients mail their test kits by mail to an accredited laboratory (Medizinisches Labor Nord), which provides validated test results for HIV, syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia. This unique combination of user-friendly online ordering and medically trained individual counselling is currently unmatched in Germany, empowering adults to manage their sexual health autonomously. At the same time, it alleviates the workload of public health facilities, general practitioners, dermatologists specialising in venereology, and HIV specialists. Notably, in Germany, HIV specialists bear the main responsibility for HIV and STI screening according to national PrEP guidelines.

Since the project's launch in the second half of 2018, a total of 19 767 individuals have received 43 279 valid test results. This group included 4395 MSM, 7276 other men (who do *not* have sex with men), and 8096 women, representing 23.2 %, 38 %, and 42.7 % of the tested population, respectively. These categories correspond to the three different test kits offered. 13 individuals identified as "other (e.g. trans*, intersex, non-binary)"; see the note at the end of this report for details.

In the 1st half of 2025, 1697 individuals received 5142 valid test results through s.a.m health—representing 1.6 % less tests than in the same period the previous year. Of these, 214 tests (4.2 %) were positive for at least one of the three STIs included in the test kit (syphilis, gonorrhoea, or chlamydia). The HIV test was reactive in 2 cases. Across all groups, no significant increase in STI prevalence (syphilis, gonorrhoea or chlamydia) was observed over the period 2021–2025.

s.a.m health reaches a diverse range of people, including those living outside major cities. MSM—particularly those using PrEP—frequently utilise the service for regular HIV/STI testing. Additionally, s.a.m health offers many women and especially men who do not have sex with men the opportunity to test for HIV and other STIs for the first time in their lives.

Methods

By the end of the 1st half of 2025, since the project's inception, 53 044 initial telephone consultations had been conducted, followed by the delivery of 46 773 s.a.m health test kits to clients. Of these, 43 279 were returned to the laboratory, and CBVCT staff communicated the results to s.a.m health clients. Test kits that were ordered but never mailed to the laboratory—and thus not analysed—are excluded from this report.

Over Time

Table 2.2 in the appendix shows the number of *s.a.m* health test kits evaluated over time. Since Bavarian CBVCT centres developed and piloted *s.a.m* health in 2018 [2], they are listed first in the overview. The project expanded nationwide starting in the first half of 2020. During registration, clients choose from 15 *s.a.m* health CBVCT centres for their initial telephone consultation. The chosen centre subsequently provides the test results. Currently, not CBVCT centres from Bremen, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, or Thuringia, participate in *s.a.m* health.

Because many clients—partly due to the lower price for follow-up test kits—use *s.a.m* health regularly, the number of test kits evaluated is significantly higher than the number of unique clients. **Table 2.3** in the appendix shows the number of new *s.a.m* health clients over time. The number of new clients peaked during the COVID-19-related restrictions on public life. From the second half of 2021 onward, this number declined again. However, the total number of tests performed (**Table 2.2**) does not mirror this decline due ongoing follow-up testing by regular users.

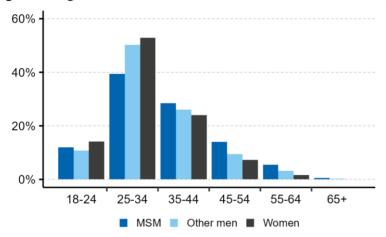
HIV-Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

s.a.m health provides an important option for medical support to PrEP users who are not covered by regular statutory health insurance services in Germany, as well as for those who find quarterly visits to an HIV specialist or outpatient clinic too burdensome—whether due to geographical distance or difficulties in securing appointments. In the 1st half of 2025, 249 test kits were analysed via s.a.m health for individuals using PrEP. **Table 2.4** in the appendix presents the number of s.a.m health test kits among PrEP users over time.

Characteristics of s.a.m health Clients

Most *s.a.m* health clients were aged between 25 and 34. MSM were also represented in older age groups (**Figure 2.1**). The majority of *s.a.m* health clients lived in large cities with populations over 100,000. However, one in 5 clients came from small towns or rural areas. This highlights *s.a.m* health as a valuable access point for regular HIV and STI testing outside urban centres.

Figure 2.1: Age distribution of *s.a.m health* clients at the first interview, 2018–2025



MSM: Men who have sex with men. Other men: ...who do not have sex with men.

Figure 2.3 on page 12 shows the distribution of *s.a.m health* users by postcode region in Germany. *s.a.m health* is used nationwide—in every single postcode region. The fewest users (each just under 20 people) live in the areas 02xxx (Lausitz/Görlitz), 03xxx (Cottbus), and 08xxx (Zwickau); the most (1400 and 1000 respectively) are found in the areas 10xxx (Berlin city centre) and 80xxx (Munich city centre). The northern part of Hamburg (22xxx) is also notably well represented, where—possibly coincidentally—the laboratory commissioned so far is located. Also worth highlighting are the areas 60xxx (Frankfurt am Main) and 04xxx (Leipzig).

The distribution relative to the resident population shows a similar pattern: the lowest usage rates are found in West Saxony, South Brandenburg, and Lausitz, while the highest are in the inner-city areas of Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, and Frankfurt. Cologne (50xxx) and Düsseldorf (40xxx), by contrast, are in the middle range both in absolute numbers and relative to the resident population.

High usage numbers are therefore found especially in cities where a local s.a.m health counselling centre exists — such as Checkpoint and Sub Munich, Berliner Aids-Hilfe, AIDS-Hilfe Frankfurt, as well as Hein & Fiete and CASAblanca in Hamburg. The frequently expressed notion that s.a.m health usage rates are particularly high far from the CBVCT centres was not confirmed.

Overall, 9.4 % of all *s.a.m* health clients reported having had more than five sexual partners in the previous three months. In the six months prior to registering with *s.a.m* health, 16.8 % had already undergone testing for HIV or other STIs. For 31.4 %, using *s.a.m* health was the first time they had ever tested for HIV or other STIs—particularly for men who do *not* have sex with men (43,4 %) and among women (27,1 %).

At the time of their first interview, 2.4 % of *s.a.m health* clients reported taking PrEP to protect themselves against HIV, and 37.2 % stated that they used condoms regularly. A total of 9.5 % reported using intranasal or intravenous drugs. **Table 2.1** provides a breakdown of these characteristics separately for MSM, other men, and women.

s.a.m health Test Results in the 1st half of 2025

As part of *s.a.m health*, clients test for HIV, syphilis, gonorrhoea, and chlamydia. They collect capillary blood samples from their fingertips (for HIV and syphilis testing), and take swabs from the anus, pharynx, and vagina or provide a urine sample for gonorrhoea and chlamydia testing. Individuals with a penis who do *not* have sex with men are generally not provided with anal or pharyngeal swabs. Swabs (or the urine sample) are tested in a pooled fashion for each individual, meaning it is not possible to determine at which site—anus, pharynx, or urethra/vagina—an infection with gonorrhoea or chlamydia has occurred. The exception to this is among men who do *not* have sex with men, where the urethra is usually the only site tested.

In the 1st half of 2025, s.a.m health detected 28 active syphilis infections, 63 cases of gonorrhoea, and 123 chlamydia infections. Syphilis and gonorrhoea were diagnosed almost exclusively among MSM. In total, 214 tests kits returned a positive result for at least one of these three STIs included in the test panel—corresponding to a prevalence of 4.2 %. This is considerably lower than the prevalence among CBVCT clients who had both a swab and a syphilis test (7.9 %), largely due to differences in the composition of the client groups. However, when comparing

within the same subgroups—MSM, other men, and women—as shown in **Figure 2.2** and **Figure 1.3**, it becomes clear that STI prevalences for individual infections were very similar between *s.a.m health* users and CBVCT clients.

Figure 2.2 presents STI prevalences over time for MSM, other men, and women using *s.a.m health*. No significant increase in STI prevalence was observed in any of these three groups between 2020 and 2025.

Table 2.1: Characteristics of s.a.m health clients, 2018–2025

	N	ИSM	Oth	er men	W	omen
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	4 395	100.0 %	7 276	100.0 %	8 096	100.0 %
First users 1/2025	309		681		707	
Age median (IQR)	34	(28-42)	32	(27-39)	31	(26-37)
City size						
Large city (100,000+)	2 643	60.2 %	4 470	61.4 %	5 202	64.3 %
Medium-size (20,000-100,000)	786	17.9 %	1 173	16.1 %	1 263	15.6 %
Small town/rural	965	22.0 %	1 633	22.4 %	1 631	20.1 %
Last HIV/STI test						
In the previous 6 months	1 526	34.7 %	657	9.0 %	1 140	14.1 %
Before	2 015	45.8 %	3 462	47.6 %	4 762	58.8 %
Never	854	19.4 %	3 157	43.4 %	2 194	27.1 %
Number of sexual partners*						
0–2	1 860	42.3 %	4 668	64.2 %	4 849	59.9 %
3-5	1 724	39.2 %	2 096	28.8 %	2 498	30.9 %
>5	767	17.5 %	434	6.0 %	662	8.2 %
Prefer not to say	44	1.0 %	78	1.1 %	87	1.1 %
Condomless anal/vaginal intercourse						
Yes	2 513	57.2 %	4 507	61.9 %	5 390	66.6 %
No	1 882	42.8 %	2 769	38.1 %	2 706	33.4 %
PrEP						
Yes	426	9.7 %	22	0.3 %	34	0.4 %
No	3 969	90.3 %	7 254	99.7 %	8 062	99.6 %
Intranasal / intravenous drugs						
Yes	375	8.5 %	768	10.6 %	738	9.1 %
No	4 020	91.5 %	6 508	89.4 %	7 358	90.9 %

MSM: Men who have sex with men. Other men: ...who do *not* have sex with men. IQR: interquartile range. *Sexual partners in the previous three months.

In the 1st half of 2025, STI prevalence among MSM using *s.a.m health* (8.5 %)—defined as testing positive for syphilis, gonorrhoea or chlamydia—was slightly lower than figures reported in systematic studies in German-speaking countries (16.3–22.0 %) [3]. This also applies to past syphilis infections (8,5 % in *s.a.m health* vs. 13.6 % in [3]). For women, the results were comparable to those observed in other systematic studies in German-speaking countries [4].

Among MSM who use PrEP, the prevalence of gonorrhoea and chlamydia was in line with other data on this group in Germany [5]—with gonorrhoea found in 7.9 % of s.a.m health users (vs. 7.8–10.1 % in [5], and chlamydia in 8.2 % (vs. 8.7–11.1 % in [5]; see also **Figure 2.2**).

In the same period, the 1st half of 2025, 2 persons had a reactive HIV test. If a control test did not confirm the result, the case was reclassified as *negative*. In MSM, a reactive HIV test result is more likely to indicate a true infection due to a higher pre-test probability. However, since *s.a.m* health does not track external confirmation of test results, it is possible that the remaining reactive results include false positives. Known HIV-positive results were almost exclusively reported among MSM. Approximately one in every 32 test kits returned to the laboratory contained an insufficient or missing blood sample, which meant the HIV and syphilis tests could not be carried out.

Table 2.5 in the appendix shows the *s.a.m health* test results by CBVCT centre.

Table 2.6 in the appendix gives an overview of the *s.a.m health* test results of the 1st half of 2025, separately for MSM, other men and women.

All STIs **Syphilis** 20% -20% 15% 15% 10% 10% 5% 5% 0% 0% MSM Other men Chlamydia Gonorrhoea 20% 20% 15% 15% 10% 10% 5% 5%

Figure 2.2: STI prevalences among *s.a.m health* clients over time, 2020–2025

MSM: Men who have sex with men (including PrEP users). Other men: ...who do *not* have sex with men.

References

0%

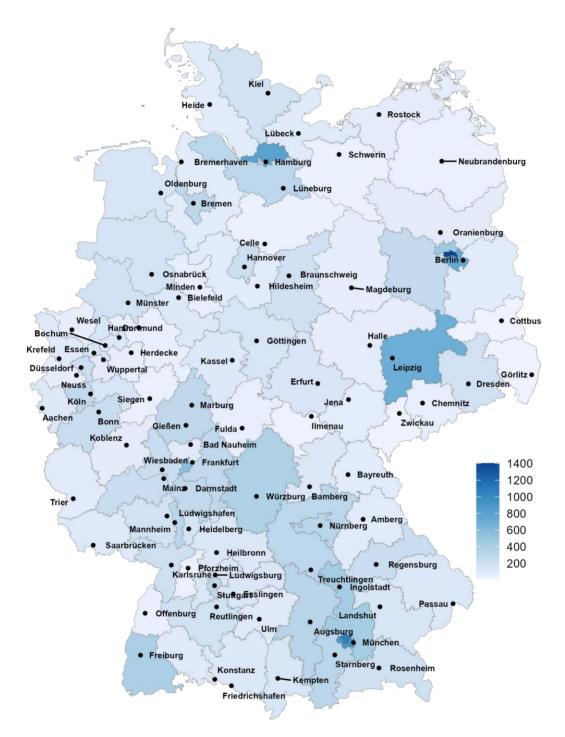
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0%

20.2 21.1 21.2 22.1 22.2 23.1 23.2 24.1 24.2 25.1

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Figure 2.3: s.a.m health users by postcode region, 2020–2025



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Appendix Table 1.2: Documented **counselling** contacts by CBVCT¹ centre and half-year, 2020–2025

Half-year	2020.1	2020.2	2021.1	2021.2	2022.1	2022.2	2023.1	2023.2	2024.1	2024.2	2025.1
All CBVCT centres	6 665	6 244	7 308	9 676	9 917	10 982	11 083	12 399	12 295	10 769	11 121
Berlin AH	616	693	670	788	981	1 063	1 073	1 024	1 124	914	1 062
Berlin CP	1 828	1 920	1 921	2 466	2 507	2 520	2 922	2 306	2 122		
Berlin Fixpunkt	174	100	67	81	20						
Berlin MoM	893		1 094	1 838	1 895	2 235	2 307	2 412	2 336	2 478	2 219
Cottbus Katte	4	40	2	57	42			57	14		14
Düsseldorf AH	289	261	312	351	421	435	532	348	476	473	461
Erfurt AH	29			25	62	112	118	151	186	127	134
Freiburg CP	410	529	543	702	706	799	810	896	844	992	931
Halle AH	35	7	31								
Hamburg CP	731										
Hannover CP	129	213	174	174	238	230	218	247	300	321	358
Jena AH	91	112	113	126	122	95	97	89	79	65	72
Kiel AH	16	50	111	157	200	242	99	177	181	393	344
Konstanz AH	83	145	87	221	148	171	142	148	93	157	129
Lübeck AH	13	13	26	6	3						
Magdeburg AH	99	88	83	125	113	132	153	182	190	212	227
Mannheim CP	176	349	403	405	453	521	461	387	324	285	484
München Sub	188	203	231	362	198						
Nürnberg CP	289	520	469	510	481	563	548	866	679	981	770
Pforzheim AH	46	58	40	82	33	76	55	62	62	82	84
Potsdam Katte	16	54	9	24	92	45					31
Regensburg CP	113	195	177	262	242	238	205	313	253	341	222
Saarbrücken AH	125	140	162	186	181	188					
Schw.Gmünd AH	44	40	25	34	42	179	47	204	88	288	72
Troisdorf AH	62	88	139	178	227	282	397	348	363	314	447
Ulm AH	166	269	259	326	296	377	431	368	360	306	625
Augsburg AH		88	97	125	143	154	218	188	240	216	232
Potsdam AH		69	63	65	71	90	72	97	95	143	139
Heilbronn AH						4	25	102	113	110	97
Offenburg AH						2	37	37	17	21	33
Tübingen AH						229	112	283	466	283	316
Karlsruhe AH							2	397	531	426	428
Stuttgart AH							2	522	503	476	532
Heidelberg AH								188	244	202	262
Dortmund AH									12	162	180
Schleswig-Holstein AH										1	147
Weimar AH											69

¹Community-based voluntary counselling and testing.

Table 1.3: Documented counselling and **testing** contacts¹ by CBVCT² centre and half-year, 2020–2025

Half-year	2020.1	2020.2	2021.1	2021.2	2022.1	2022.2	2023.1	2023.2	2024.1	2024.2	2025.1
All CBVCT centres	4 972	5 194	6 333	8 456	8 349	9 254	9 379	10 908	10 786	9 769	10 036
Berlin AH	4 972 548	5 194	603	8 456 731	8 349 926			1 0 9 0 8	10 786		1 036
Berlin CP	1 518	1 606	1 728	2 211	2 277	999 2 275	1 034	2 085		877	1 034
						22/5	2 499	2 085	1 828		
Berlin Fixpunkt Berlin MoM	131 765	82	49 1 003	71 1 684	16 1 709	2.05.4	2 102	2 200	2.162	2 224	2.106
	765	37		57		2 054	2 102	2 208 57	2 162	2 331	2 106
Cottbus Katte Düsseldorf AH			2 297		41 410	410	400		14	461	14
	263	239		334		419	486	333	449		443
Freiburg CP	365	476	507	668	673	737	771	816	789	932	839
Halle AH	26	4	2	450	220	126	245	200	470	4.40	246
Hannover CP	103	181	157	159	220	136	215	200	178	143	346
Jena AH	69	89	99	109	96	60	88	70	79	64	70
Kiel AH	11	46	99	59	63	84	20	38	149	374	326
Konstanz AH	79	144	87	221	147	167	141	148	93	157	128
Magdeburg AH	66	58	60	79	67	56	50	29	58	139	152
Mannheim CP	125	179	192	199	229	297	236	318	290	276	398
München Sub	179	193	224	344	8						
Nürnberg CP	275	499	454	490	462	541	533	840	659	965	746
Potsdam Katte	16	54	9	21	73	41					31
Regensburg CP	108	195	177	261	242	236	205	311	253	341	222
Saarbrücken AH	109	124	139	169	161	177					
Schw.Gmünd AH	40	38	25	31	42	174	47	196	86	286	71
Troisdorf AH	54	70	116	162	213	256	362	314	335	311	442
Ulm AH	118	170	163	200	22	75	58	138	273	285	363
Augsburg AH		77	89	112	123	142	179	153	169	3	217
Potsdam AH		64	52	59	67	86	66	90	91	134	127
Erfurt AH				25	62	109	114	149	183	126	133
Heilbronn AH						1	24	98	107	107	94
Tübingen AH						132	111	269	278	267	310
Offenburg AH							37	37	16	20	31
Stuttgart AH							1	492	435	340	403
Heidelberg AH								144	222	200	254
Karlsruhe AH								372	493	409	409
Dortmund AH									1	142	167
Pforzheim AH									20	79	71
Schleswig-Holstein AH											21
Weimar AH											68

¹Only contacts with at least one documented test result were counted. ²Community-based voluntary counselling and testing.

Table 1.4: Reactive/positive test results in the 1st half of 2025, by CBVCT¹ centre

	HIV	Syphilis	Gonorrhoea	Chlamydia	HCV*
Augsburg AH			2	8	
Berlin AH	10	2	14	32	6
Berlin MoM	6	23	210	128	
Cottbus Katte	1		3	1	
Dortmund AH	3	2	4	5	
Düsseldorf AH	3	3	30	15	1
Erfurt AH		2			
Freiburg CP	1	4	15	24	
Hannover CP	2	2	7	8	
Heidelberg AH		1	1	6	1
Heilbronn AH			3	3	1
Karlsruhe AH		6	11	13	
Kiel AH	2	1	3	12	
Konstanz AH			2	2	2
Magdeburg AH	1		4	4	
Mannheim CP	3	3	6	5	9
Nürnberg CP	1	12	28	31	1
Offenburg AH	1	1		2	
Pforzheim AH			5	4	
Potsdam AH		1		2	
Potsdam Katte			6		
Regensburg CP			1	11	1
Schleswig-Holstein AH	1				
Schw.Gmünd AH	1	1			
Stuttgart AH	1	1			3
Troisdorf AH	1	1	7	12	
Tübingen AH	1	2		3	1
Ulm AH	1	5	6	9	6
Weimar AH		1	1		

¹Community-based voluntary counselling and testing. *Antibody or PCR positive.

Table 1.5: Documented test results of CBVCT clients in the 1st half of 2025

	N	ISM	Oth	er men	Wo	omen	Non-b	inary/other
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	4 673	100.0 %	2 243	100.0 %	2 526	100.0 %	269	100.0 %
HIV								
Reactive	20	0.4 %	4	0.2 %	3	0.1 %	1	0.4 %
Confirmed positive	9	0.2 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
Negative	3 279	70.2 %	1 985	88.5 %	2 209	87.5 %	226	84.0 %
Not tested*	1 365	29.2 %	254	11.3 %	314	12.4 %	42	15.6 %
Syphilis								
Positive**	56	1.2 %	8	0.4 %	5	0.2 %	3	1.1 %
Serological scar	245	5.2 %	3	0.1 %	7	0.3 %	9	3.3 %
Negative	3 211	68.7 %	1 685	75.1 %	1 851	73.3 %	209	77.7 %
Not tested*	1 161	24.8 %	547	24.4 %	663	26.2 %	48	17.8 %
Gonorrhoea								
Positive	308	6.6 %	22	1.0 %	21	0.8 %	10	3.7 %
Negative	3 435	73.5 %	1 641	73.2 %	1 891	74.9 %	194	72.1 %
Not tested*	930	19.9 %	580	25.9 %	614	24.3 %	65	24.2 %
Chlamydia								
Positive	210	4.5 %	56	2.5 %	59	2.3 %	3	1.1 %
Negative	3 538	75.7 %	1 638	73.0 %	1 863	73.8 %	204	75.8 %
Not tested*	925	19.8 %	549	24.5 %	604	23.9 %	62	23.0 %
HCV								
Positive (AB)	6	0.1 %	8	0.4 %	7	0.3 %	2	0.7 %
Positive (RNA)	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	1	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
Negative	633	13.5 %	525	23.4 %	532	21.1 %	55	20.4 %
Not tested*	4 034	86.3 %	1 710	76.2 %	1 986	78.6 %	212	78.8 %
HBV								
Current infection	1	0.0 %	5	0.2 %	1	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
Past infection	2	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	2	0.1 %	0	0.0 %
Negative	257	5.5 %	244	10.9 %	288	11.4 %	20	7.4 %
Not tested*	4 413	94.4 %	1 994	88.9 %	2 235	88.5 %	249	92.6 %

^{*}Not tested or result not documented in the database. **Syphilis in need of treatment, or further diagnostics initiated. Persons with confirmed positive HIV antibodies do not appear in the 'reactive' line, and persons with detected HCV RNA do not appear in the line for the positive antibody test ('Positive (AB)').

Table 2.2: Evaluated s.a.m health **test kits** by CBVCT¹ centre and half-year, 2020–2025

Half-year	2020.1	2020.2	2021.1	2021.2	2022.1	2022.2	2023.1	2023.2	2024.1	2024.2	2025.1
All s.a.m health centres	1 299	2 448	3 455	3 378	3 802	3 752	4 071	4 438	5 224	4 970	5 142
Berlin AH	91	281	493	489	541	568	611	751	931	967	911
Bonn AH	34	80	47	33	12						
Dresden AH	38	131	204	200	218	219	213	221	274	261	277
Emsland AH	5	20	57	83	73	53	12	1			
Frankfurt AH	107	296	475	528	622	517	495	542	531	415	444
Freiburg CP	17	107	175	174	166	141	161	180	231	240	228
Hamburg CP	25	63	87	81	79	86	85	102	116	95	108
Hannover CP	28	98	260	196	275	288	356	379	402	391	423
Magdeburg AH	10	22	71	94	101	107	164	164	224	179	192
Mannheim CP	21	41	11	56	193	231	313	379	665	631	668
München CP	492	731	756	705	704	776	820	815	902	810	809
München Sub	137	140	141	103	116	99	104	104	98	95	107
Nürnberg CP	195	261	314	273	251	237	273	292	283	285	289
Regensburg CP	99	113	119	108	112	94	108	107	130	110	120
Hamburg ZSG		64	245	255	310	272	285	333	379	379	369
Lübeck AH					29	38	48	37	58	92	157
Potsdam AH						26	23	31		20	40

¹Community-based voluntary counselling and testing.

Table 2.3: Number of new *s.a.m health* **clients**¹ by CBVCT² centre and half-year, 2020–2025

Half-year	2020.1	2020.2	2021.1	2021.2	2022.1	2022.2	2023.1	2023.2	2024.1	2024.2	2025.1
All s.a.m health centres	784	1 627	2 265	1 787	1 892	1 571	1 676	1 758	2 025	1 871	1 697
Berlin AH	90	233	365	280	269	271	268	335	428	437	328
Bonn AH	34	56	4	2							
Dresden AH	35	107	154	126	113	102	87	93	108	103	105
Emsland AH	5	17	47	48	30	16	1				
Frankfurt AH	101	240	346	311	311	157	138	169	94	59	52
Freiburg CP	17	101	145	111	84	58	71	68	100	100	86
Hamburg CP	25	49	50	29	40	31	27	29	33	26	35
Hannover CP	27	91	209	119	155	152	163	145	158	160	139
Magdeburg AH	10	17	61	70	62	57	107	98	118	71	76
Mannheim CP	21	36	1	39	148	146	180	188	397	318	265
München CP	223	387	382	289	287	282	277	270	246	217	210
München Sub	58	31	43	22	24	11	22	23	15	20	19
Nürnberg CP	89	134	176	96	95	75	108	107	93	89	75
Regensburg CP	49	64	49	43	32	20	33	33	36	30	39
Hamburg ZSG		64	233	202	214	139	139	159	162	165	139
Lübeck AH					28	30	36	19	37	62	107
Potsdam AH						24	19	22		14	22

¹With evaluated test results. ²Community-based voluntary counselling and testing.

Table 2.4: Evaluated s.a.m health test kits among **PrEP users**, 2020–2025

Half-year	2020.1	2020.2	2021.1	2021.2	2022.1	2022.2	2023.1	2023.2	2024.1	2024.2	2025.1
All s.a.m health centres	118	157	185	175	186	208	214	239	274	244	249
Berlin AH	5	16	16	19	17	29	29	32	37	38	33
Dresden AH	4	5	9	5	5	8	10	7	3	5	8
Frankfurt AH	5	9	12	21	23	24	25	30	38	27	28
Hamburg CP	1	5	5	6	13	9	7	14	19	15	10
München CP	57	61	80	57	57	63	57	55	78	65	62
München Sub	25	24	23	16	18	20	17	25	22	20	18
Nürnberg CP	17	23	16	10	9	8	10	8	10	5	9
Regensburg CP	4	4	4	7	6	3	5	5	3	2	2
Bonn AH		6	5	5	3						
Freiburg CP		1	1	3	2	3	5	3	2	6	3
Hannover CP		2	8	7	7	5	7	9	10	9	13
Magdeburg AH		1	3	7	4	9	8	9	4	6	7
Emsland AH			2	10	6	6	1	1			
Hamburg ZSG			1		3	1				1	2
Mannheim CP				2	11	17	31	39	47	39	48
Lübeck AH					2	3	2	1	1	5	5
Potsdam AH								1		1	1

Table 2.5: Positive s.a.m health test results in the 1st half of 2025, by CBVCT¹ centre

	HIV	Syphilis	Gonorrhoea	Chlamydia
Berlin AH		4	9	13
Dresden AH		2	1	7
Frankfurt AH		_	4	6
Freiburg CP		2	4	9
Hamburg CP		_	1	6
Hamburg ZSG			4	7
Hannover CP		2	4	18
Lübeck AH			1	2
Magdeburg AH		2	1	1
Mannheim CP		5	10	18
München CP	1	8	14	19
München Sub		2	1	5
Nürnberg CP	1	1	6	6
Potsdam AH			2	
Regensburg CP			1	6

¹Community-based voluntary counselling and testing.

Table 2.6: s.a.m health test results in the 1st half of 2025

	- N	ISM	Oth	er men	Wo	men
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	1 703	100.0 %	1 570	100.0 %	1 869	100.0 %
HIV						
Newly positiv*	1	0.1 %	0	0.0 %	1	0.1 %
Known positive	38	2.2 %	0	0.0 %	2	0.1 %
Negative	1 549	91.0 %	1 518	96.7 %	1 776	95.0 %
No result	115	6.8 %	52	3.3 %	90	4.8 %
Syphilis						
Positive**	25	1.5 %	0	0.0 %	3	0.2 %
Serological scar	145	8.5 %	6	0.4 %	8	0.4 %
Negative	1 461	85.8 %	1 530	97.5 %	1 803	96.5 %
No result	72	4.2 %	34	2.2 %	55	2.9 %
Gonorrhoea						
Positive	47	2.8 %	4	0.3 %	12	0.6 %
Negative	1 645	96.6 %	1 562	99.5 %	1 853	99.1 %
No result	11	0.6 %	4	0.3 %	4	0.2 %
Chlamydia						
Positive	72	4.2 %	19	1.2 %	32	1.7 %
Negative	1 620	95.1 %	1 547	98.5 %	1 833	98.1 %
No result	11	0.6 %	4	0.3 %	4	0.2 %

MSM: Men who have sex with men. Other men: ...who do *not* have sex with men. *May contain false-positive test results (external confirmation test negative). ** VDRL-confirmed. The category 'serological scar' is based on self-report, in which case a VDRL test was performed.

Note

For s.a.m health, the components in the test kits are compiled depending on the reported genitalia and the gender of the sexual partners. The current s.a.m health questionnaire unfortunately automatically assigns a penis or vagina to people who do not identify as "other (e.g. trans, intersex, non-binary)" but as "men" or "women". Only people who ticked "other" were asked about their genitals. Overall, we therefore assume an under-recording of trans persons. We will correct this problem in the next adaptation of the questionnaire. The number persons who ticked "other" (total N=13) is too small to be included in a separate column. Nevertheless, in order not to exclude them from this evaluation, the 13 "others" were categorised according to their presumed target gender as "women" if they ticked "penis" when asked about their genitals, or as "men" if they ticked "vagina". Therefore, at present, due to the available data, we unfortunately cannot avoid incorrect assignments, especially of intersex and non-binary clients.

If users of *s.a.m* health request a termination of the service with data deletion according to the GDPR, all personal data and test results will be deleted – this may subsequently correct the figures downwards. *AIDS-Hilfe Potsdam* had to temporarily leave *s.a.m* health as a partner in the 1st half of 2024 for personnel reasons; active users were assigned to *Berliner Aids-Hilfe*.