


# Syphilis and gonorrhoea among people with HIV during pandemic times: a report from Athens, Greece

Varvara Vasalou ,<sup>1</sup> V Paparizos,<sup>1</sup> Evangelos Daskalakis,<sup>1</sup> Eleni Paparizou,<sup>2</sup> Sofia Kourkounti,<sup>1</sup> Alexander Stratigos<sup>2</sup>

In response to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, Greece adopted two nationwide lockdowns (March to May 2020, November 2020 to May 2021). We compared new diagnoses of syphilis and gonorrhoea among people with HIV (mainly men who have sex with men) made in 2020 with those from the previous 2 years in an HIV clinic with 1500 patients in follow-up. Syphilis was diagnosed on the occurrence of symptoms or during routine 6 monthly screening; diagnoses dropped at the beginning of the first lockdown but increased in subsequent months (figure 1), totalling 94 in 2020 vs 57 in 2018 and 83 in 2019. Gonorrhoea was diagnosed on the occurrence of symptoms or by contact tracing; numbers, although small, showed an upward trend (9 in 2018, 17 in 2019, 23

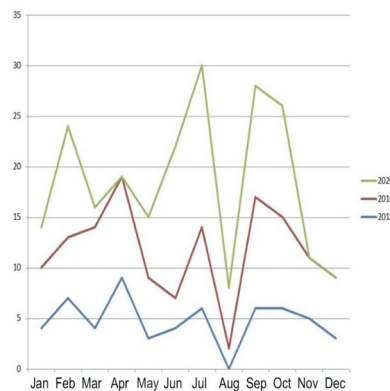
in 2020). Studies are needed to understand the influence of lockdowns on sexual behaviour and partner selection across Europe, where it seems that no significant changes were made.<sup>1 2</sup>

**Handling editor** Anna Maria Geretti

**Acknowledgements** We thank Dr Georgia Vrioni (Associate Professor of Microbiology, Medical School, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) for all the expertise and assistance throughout all aspects of our study.

<sup>1</sup>Sexually Transmitted Infections Unit, 1st Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Andreas Syggros University Hospital of Athens, Athens, Attica, Greece  
<sup>2</sup>1st Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Andreas Syggros University Hospital of Athens, Athens, Attica, Greece

**Correspondence to** Dr Varvara Vasalou, Sexually Transmitted Infections Unit, 1st Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Andreas Syggros University Hospital of Athens, Athens 16121, Attica, Greece; vvasalou@gmail.com



**Figure 1** Monthly distribution of syphilis cases per year.

**Contributors** VV—planning, conduct, writing and review. VP—planning and conduct. ED—writing. EP—references. SK—review and supervision. AS—supervision. VV and VP—responsible for the overall content as guarantors.

**Funding** The authors have not declared a specific grant for this research from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

**Competing interests** None declared.

**Patient consent for publication** Not required.

**Provenance and peer review** Not commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

**Data availability statement** Data are available upon request

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**To cite** Vasalou V, Paparizos V, Daskalakis E, et al. *Sex Transm Infect* 2021;**97**:627. Published Online First 19 August 2021

*Sex Transm Infect* 2021;**97**:627. doi:10.1136/sextrans-2021-055095

## ORCID iD

Varvara Vasalou <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4081-1890>

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