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Sexually transmitted diseases: An unprecedented global overview of their prevalence

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Introduction & Objectives:

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) represent a major public health issue, with marked disparities according to age, geographical region and socio-economic factors. This large-scale study is the first to provide a global overview of STIs, underlining the crucial importance of appropriate management by

Materials & Methods:

The ALL PROJECT is a large-scale study of individuals representative of the adult population in 20 countries on five continents In each of the 20 countries surveyed, representative and extrapolable samples of the general population aged 16 and over were interviewed. The questionnaire focused on patient experience. It collected information on demographics and the presence of a Sexually transmitted infections (STIs in the last 12 months.

Multivariate logistic regression was used to assess the relationship between the presence of an STI and the explanatory variables: gender [male vs. female], location [living in an urban area vs. a semi-urban or rural area], world region [Europe vs. North America, Latin America, Asia, Middle East, Africa], whether or not the respondent had a higher education qualification, and declared ethnic origin [mixed vs. black, white, Asian, other]. Statistical analysis was performed using EasyMedStat (version 3.36; www.easymedstat.com).

Results:

50552 people were interviewed: 3.07% [n=1552] said they did not know and 3.82% [n=1931] admitted to having had an STIS in the last 12 months [males 1087 (4.28%) vs females 844 (3.35%) p-value <0.001

The presence of STISs is significantly higher the younger the person is: 5.36% among those aged 30 and under [n=664]; 4.11% among those aged 30 to 55 (n=1017) and 1.47% among those aged 55 and over [n=178]. Prevalence rates by region and ethnicity are shown in Table 1.

In multivariate analysis, the absence of a degree (OR=1.32, [1.15 ; 1.51], p <0.0001), compared to living in Europe in North America (OR=1.47, [1.2 ; 1. 8], p= 0.0002), Asia (OR=1.6, [1.2 ; 2.14], p= 0. 0016), or the Middle East (OR=1.72, [1.33 ; 2.23], p <0.0001) were associated with higher rates of STISs.

Compared to a Mixed ethnicity, reporting an Asian (OR=0.43, [0.33 ; 0.58], p <0.0001) or White (OR=0.53, [0.44 ; 0.65], p <0.0001) ethnicity, Compared to living in Europe living in Africa (OR=0.61, [0.42 ; 0.88], p= 0. 0089) or Latin America (OR=0.74, [0.6 ; 0.92], p= 0.007) declaring a low income (OR=0. 51, [0.46 ; 0.58], p <0.0001), living in a rural area (OR=0.68, [0.59 ; 0.79], p <0.001), were associated with lower rates of STISs.

In multivariate analysis, being male or female was not associated with reporting an STIS.

Conclusion:

This study, the first of its kind on such a large scale, provides valuable information on the prevalence of Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in 20 countries across five continents. With over 50,000 participants, the survey provides a global and comparative overview, highlighting significant differences by age, geographical region, level of education and ethnic origin. The results show an increased prevalence of STIs among young people, people with no education and in certain regions of the world, particularly Europe, where rates are comparable to those reported in the EADV 20221study. This work should serve as a reminder of the importance of dermatologists in the management of STISs and the need to raise awareness of these issues at a global level. These data, from the first study of this size, should lead to a re-evaluation of STIS prevention and treatment strategies worldwide.

Table 1

Variable	EUROPE N = 20502	ASIA N = 10500	NORTH AMERICA N = 7500	LATIN AMERICA N = 6501	AUSTRALIA N = 2000	AFRICA N = 1800	MIDDLE EAST N = 1750	p-Value
Gender								<0.001
Man	10127 (49.4%)	5437 (51.78%)	3762 (50.16%)	3173 (48.81%)	994 (49.7%)	880 (48.89%)	1015 (58.0%)	
Woman	10374 (50.6%)	5063 (48.22%)	3738 (49.84%)	3328 (51.19%)	1006 (50.3%)	920 (51.11%)	735 (42.0%)	
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs	581 (2.83%)	536 (5.1%)	296 (3.95%)	258 (3.97%)	63 (3.15%)	69 (3.83%)	128 (7.31%)	

Variable	WHITE N = 25544	ASIAN N = 11175	MIXED N = 4344	BLACK N = 3099	OTHERS N = 1004	NO RESPONCE N = 5387	p-Value
Gender							<0.001
Man	12532 (49.06%)	5909 (52.88%)	2131 (49.06%)	1660 (53.57%)	558 (55.58%)	2598 (48.24%)	
Woman	13012 (50.94%)	5266 (47.12%)	2213 (50.94%)	1439 (46.43%)	446 (44.42%)	2788 (51.76%)	
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs	684 (2.68%)	529 (4.73%)	277 (6.38%)	214 (6.91%)	57 (5.68%)	170 (3.16%)	