

WRITTEN QUESTION P-5507/07  
by Jan Marinus Wiersma (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: World AIDS Day, 1 December 2007 and VAT on condoms

World AIDS Day is on 1 December. Figures from the WHO European Region suggest that the level of newly diagnosed cases of HIV infection in Europe is rising. Figures from UN AIDS confirm that new infections are increasing throughout EU Member States, particularly in the 15-25 age group.

Safe sex and the use of condoms are basic elements in preventing HIV transmission. Condoms should therefore be readily accessible and as cheap as possible. Levels of VAT levied by Member States on condoms vary, however, from 25% to 5.5%.

VAT is in many ways a European tax and the provision exists to reduce rates on products which prevent disease.

Would the Commission consider proposing a Europe-wide reduced rate of VAT on condoms in order to encourage safer sex and reduce HIV transmission?