



HIV/AIDS in Georgia: The Current State, Achievements and Challenges

AKAKI ABUTIDZE MD, MPH, PHD

DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR RESEARCH

T. TSERTSVADZE INFECTIOUS DISEASES, AIDS AND CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGY RESEARCH
CENTER; ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, FACULTY OF MEDICINE, TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY

2025 Global AIDS Strategy targets

95-95-95

By 2025:

- ✓ 95% of the people who are living with HIV knowing their HIV status
- ✓ 95% of the people who know that they are living with HIV being on lifesaving antiretroviral treatment
- ✓ 95% of people who are on treatment being virally suppressed



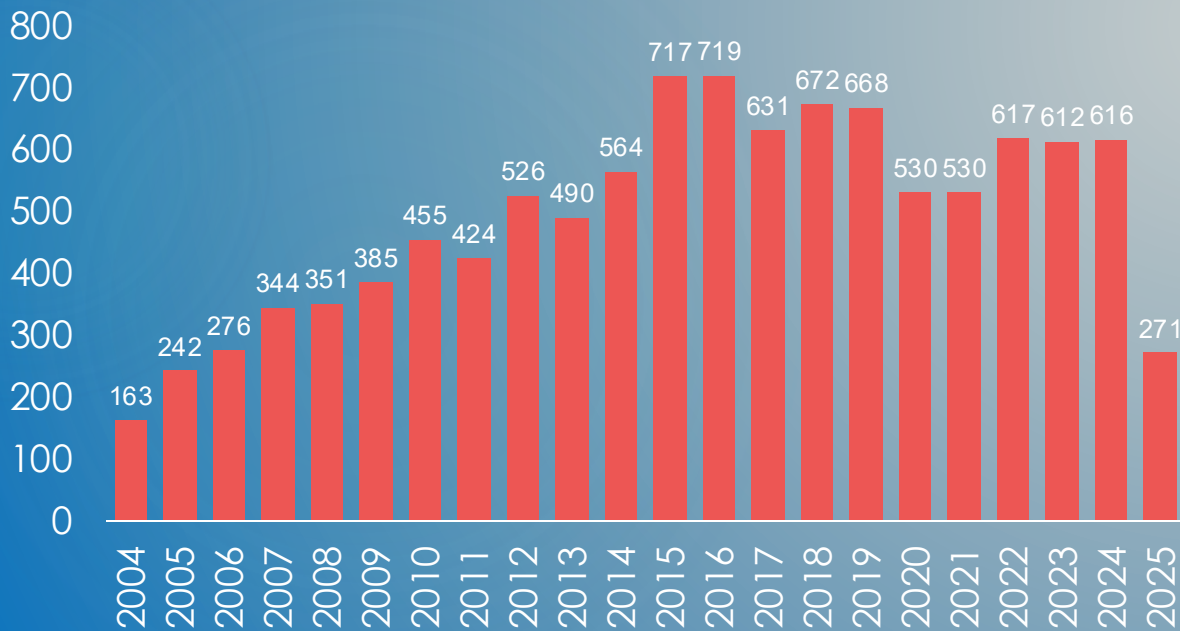
HIV/AIDS in Georgia

Number of registered HIV cases - **11 277**

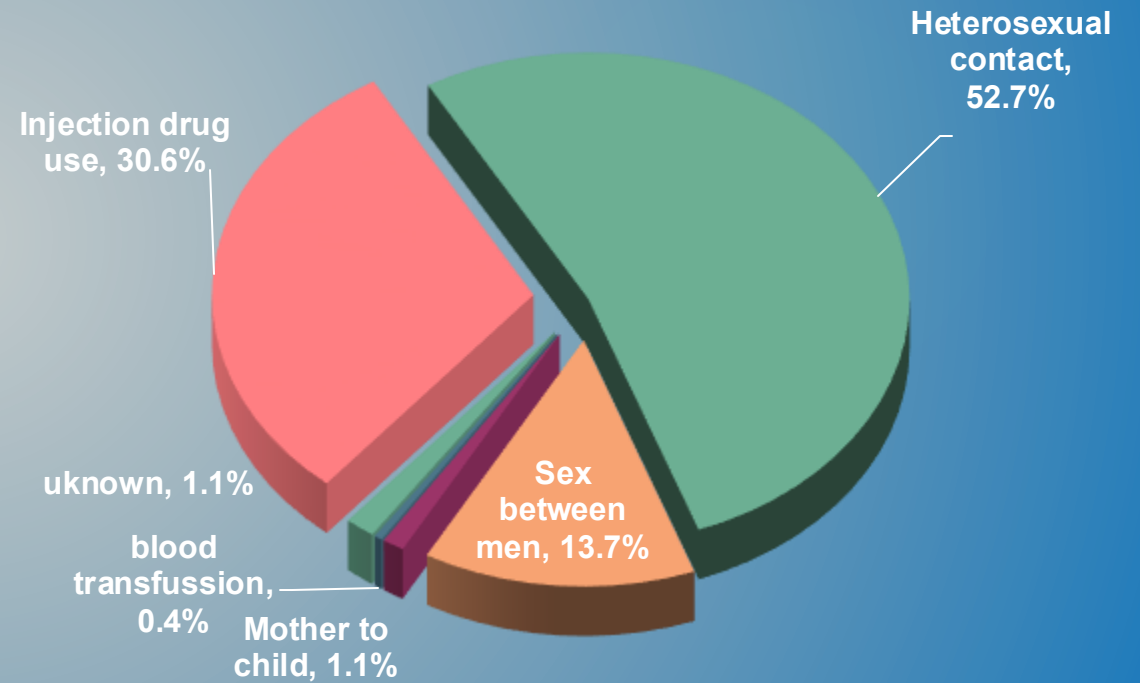
HIV prevalence in general population

	Estimated %	Estimated number
anti-HIV+	0.3%	9,500

HIV/AIDS cases by year



Distribution of HIV/AIDS cases by mode of transmission

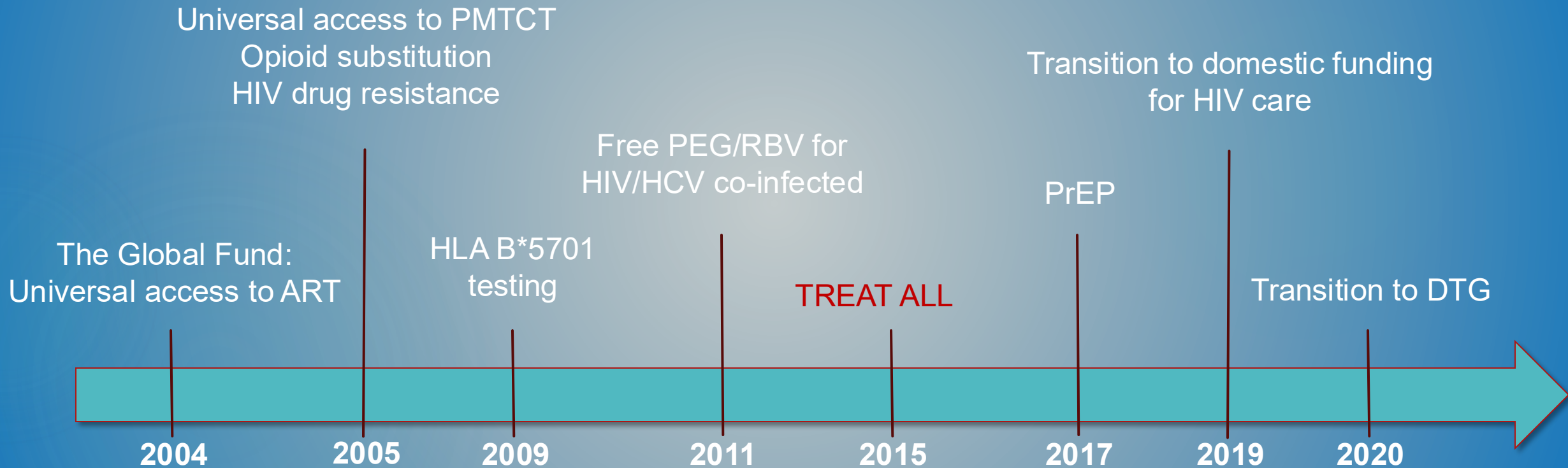


Prevalence of HIV in key populations: PWID - 2.3%; MSM - 16.2%; FSW - 0.9%.

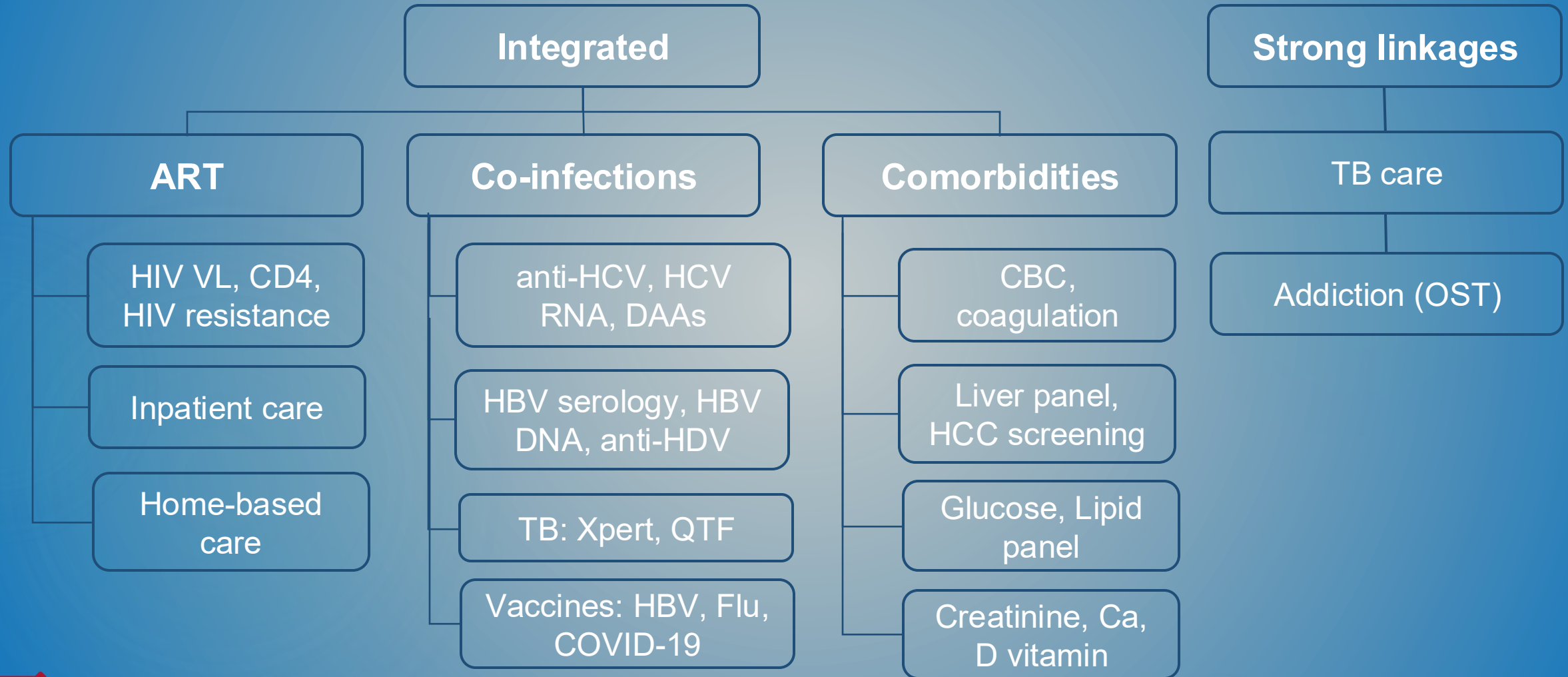
- ✓ Since 2004 Georgia remains the first Eastern European country that achieved and maintained universal access to ART.
- ✓ Since 2005, Georgia has ensured universal access to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. After 2007, no HIV-infected children were born from all HIV-infected mothers who received appropriate preventive treatment, and all children are still healthy.
- ✓ Since 2015, Georgia has been the first in Eastern Europe and one of the first in the world to introduce the principle "Treat All".



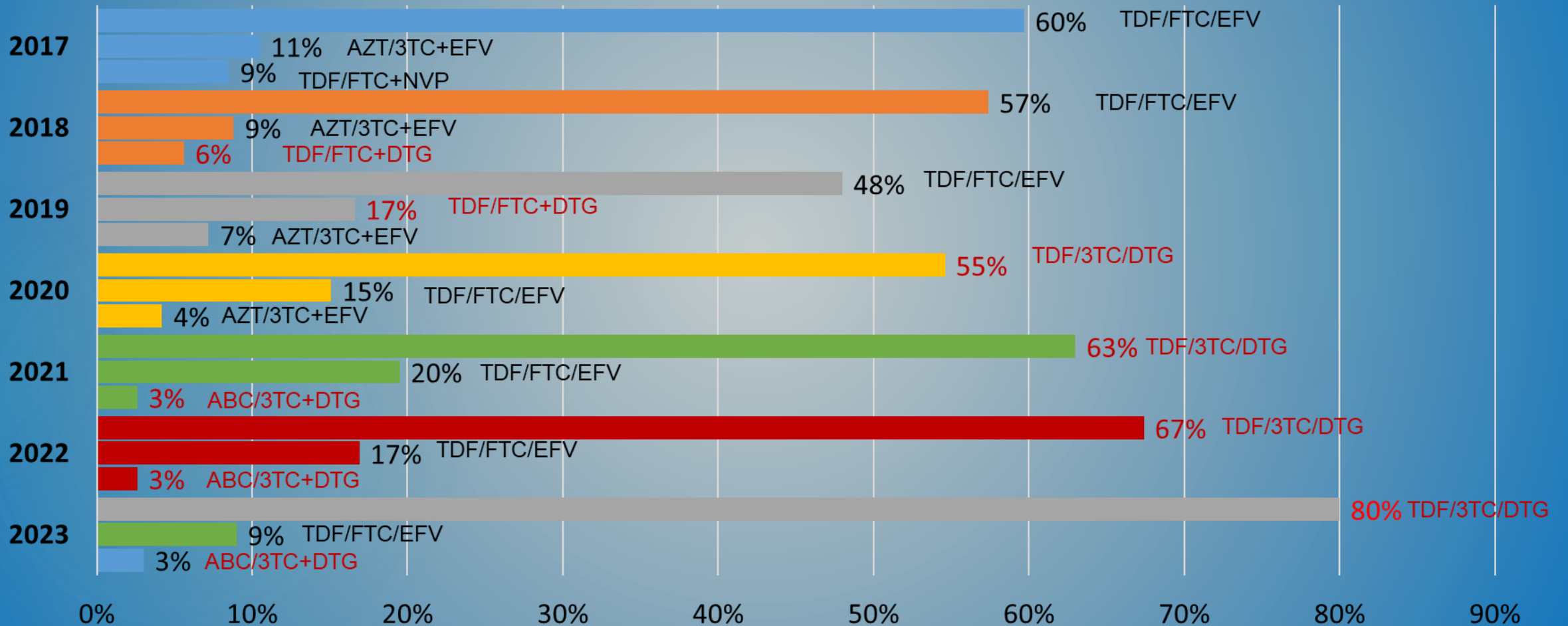
HIV Timeline: 2004-present



Comprehensive HIV Care Package

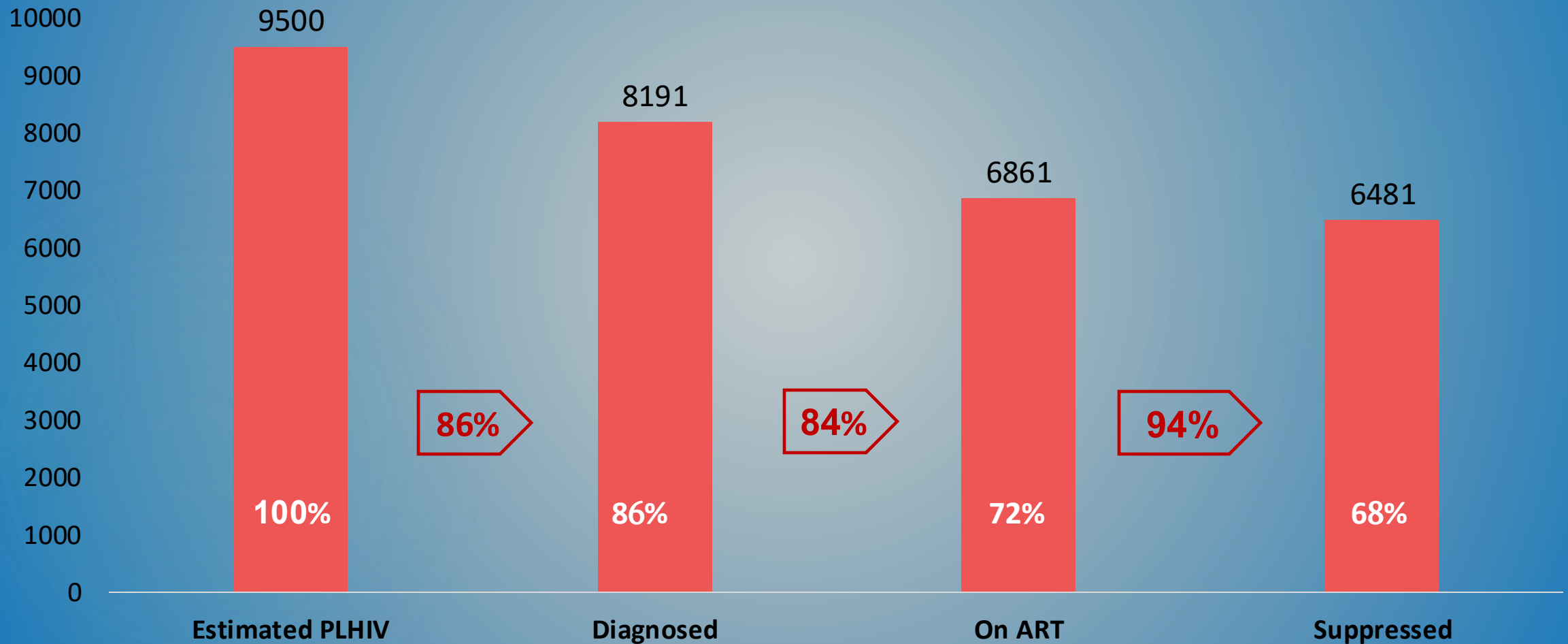


Most Common ART Regimens in Georgia, 2017-2024



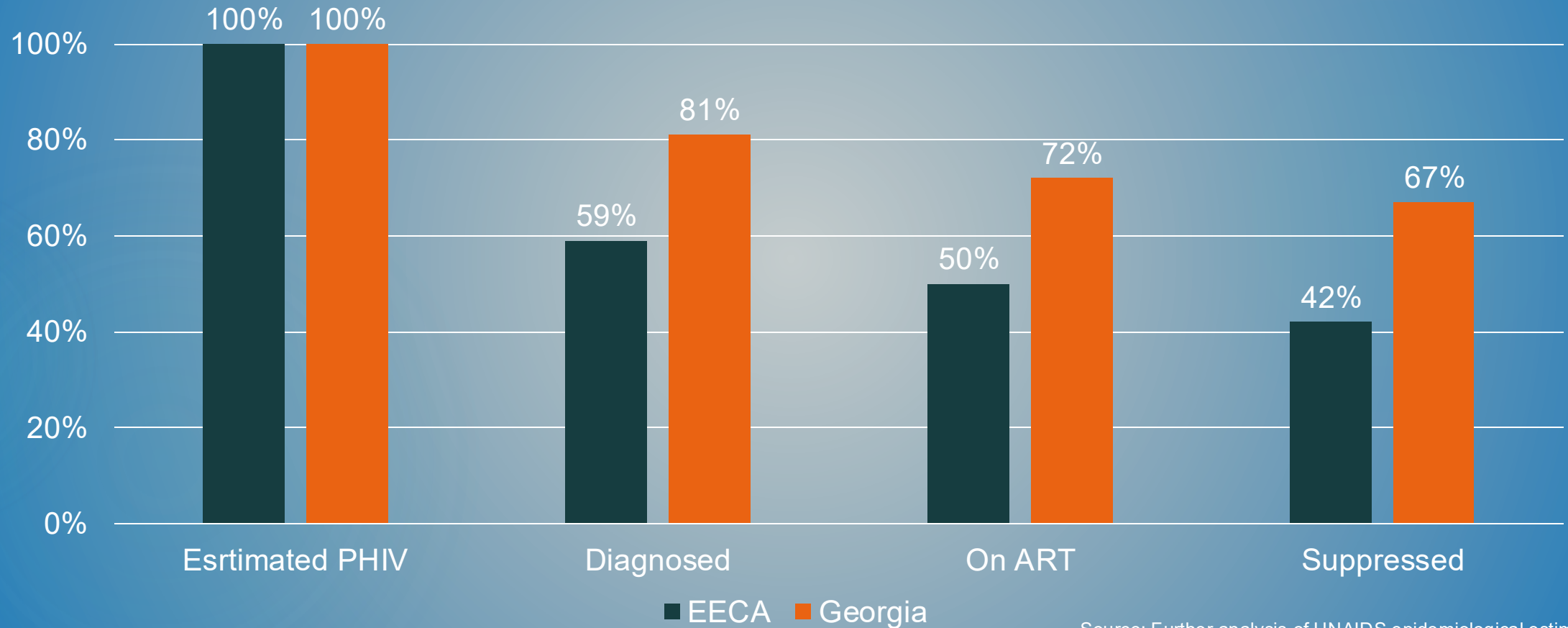
Also available in Georgia: DTG+3TC, RAL, DRV/r, ATV/r, LPV/r, ETV

HIV Cascade in Georgia, 2024



HIV Cascade in EECA and Georgia, 2024

Percentage of Estimated PLHIV who are diagnosed, on ART and virally suppressed



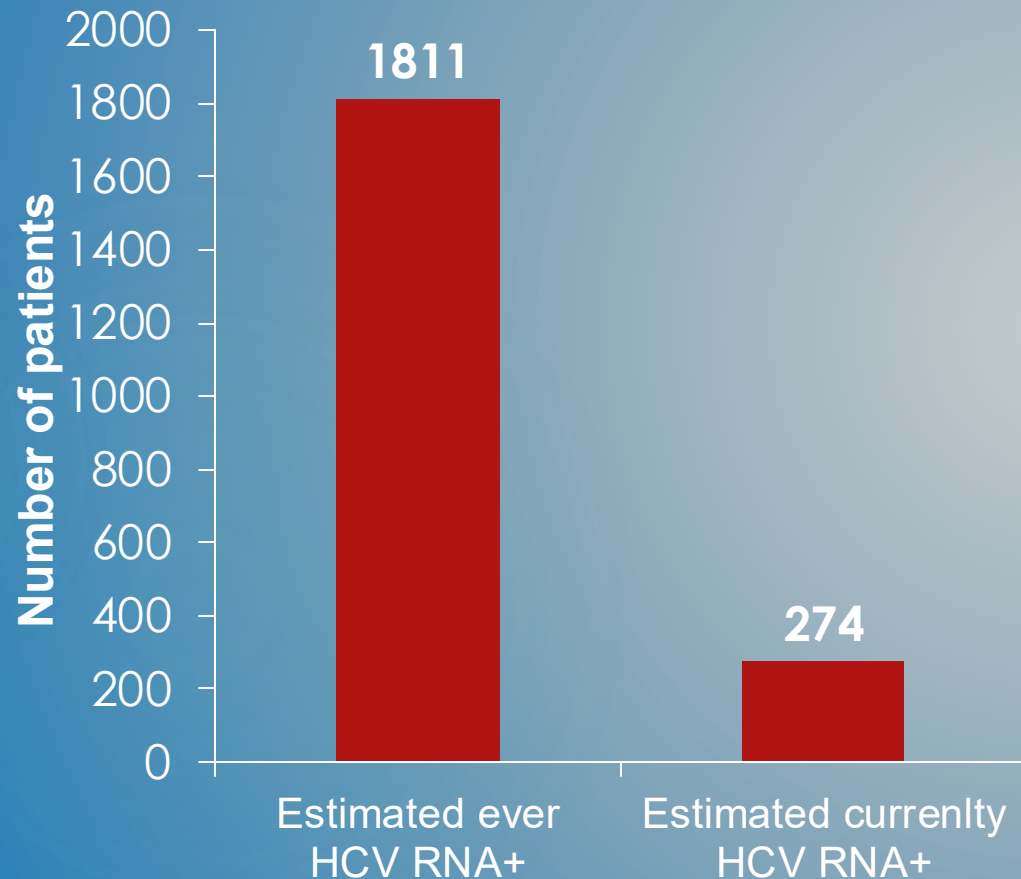
Source: Further analysis of UNAIDS epidemiological estimates, 2024.



Georgian Implementation Fellowship Training Summer Bootcamp

Tbilisi, Georgia – July 30 – August 2, 2025

HCV Micro-elimination Among PLHIV Aware of Their HIV Status



- ▶ Free HCV treatment since 2011
- ▶ 6.6-fold decrease in viremic infections
- ▶ Prevalence decreased from 27% to 4.1% – **85% reduction**
- ▶ Reinfection rate: 2.55/100 PY

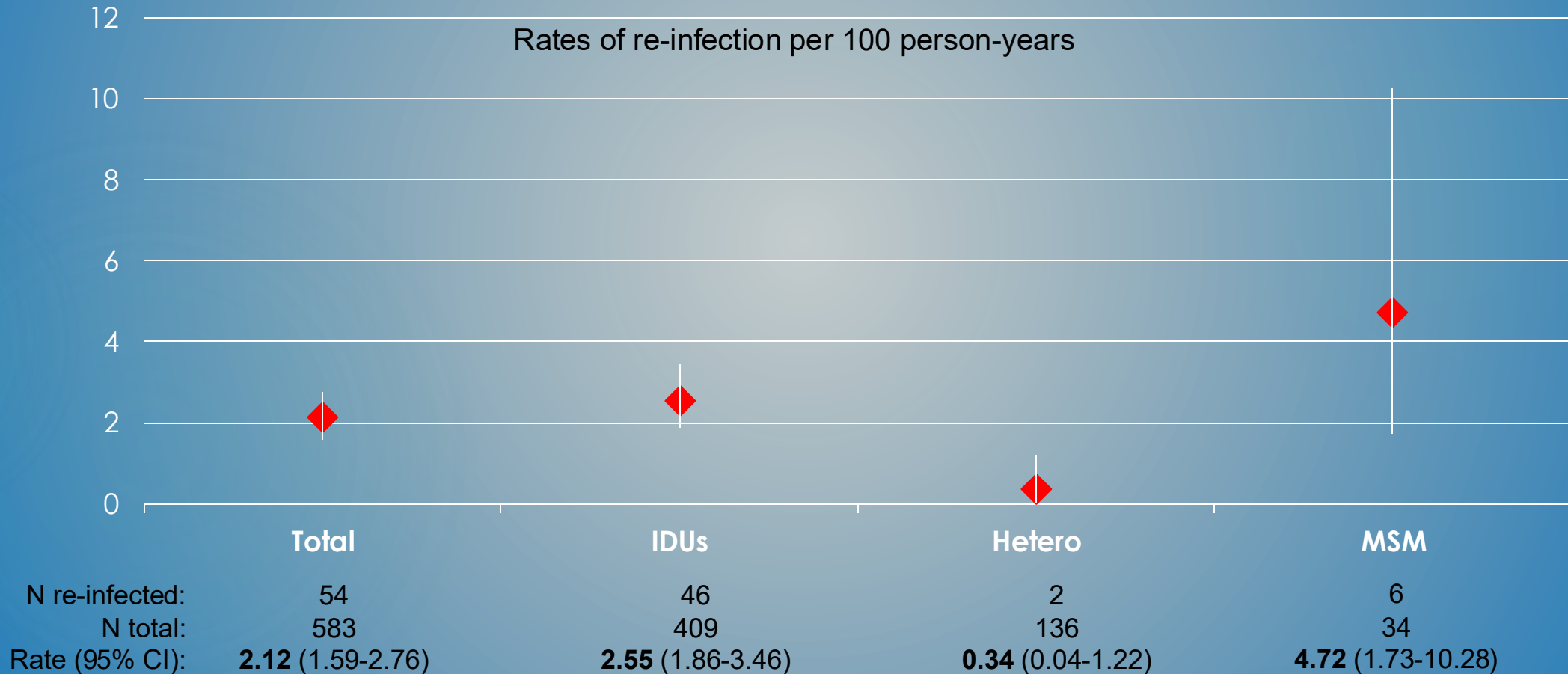


Mortality among PLHIV in Georgia



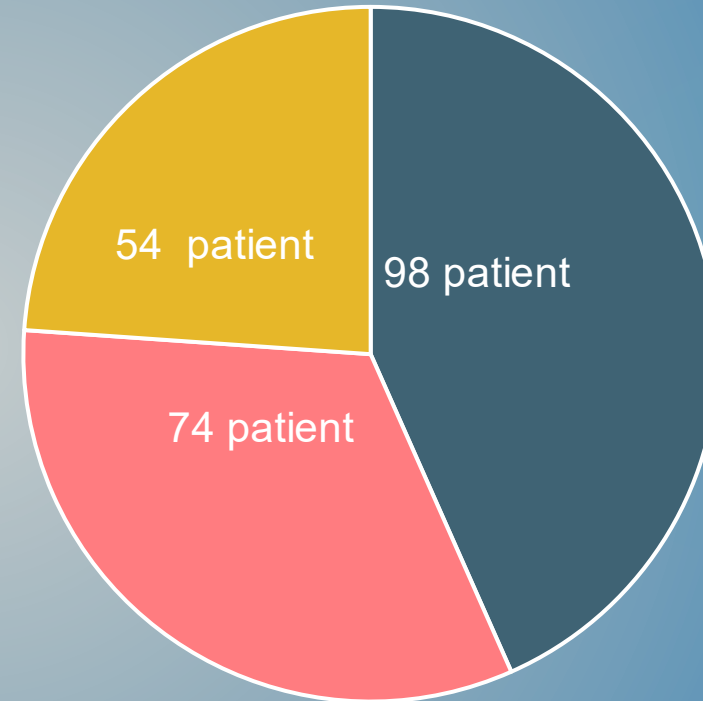
HCV re-infection among people living with HIV

583 HIV/HCV co-infected persons treated in 2015-2021 and followed through June 2023
54 (9.3%) persons re-infected with a rate of 2.12 (95% CI: 1.59-2.76) cases per 100 PY



Enrolment of citizens of foreign countries in HIV treatment and care services

- ▶ After the Russia-Ukraine military conflict, IDACIRC provided HIV care to 226 citizens of foreign countries.
- ▶ All patients are provided with physician's consultation and antiretroviral therapy.



▣ citizens of Russian Federation ▣ citizens of the Ukraine ▣ citizens of other countries



Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

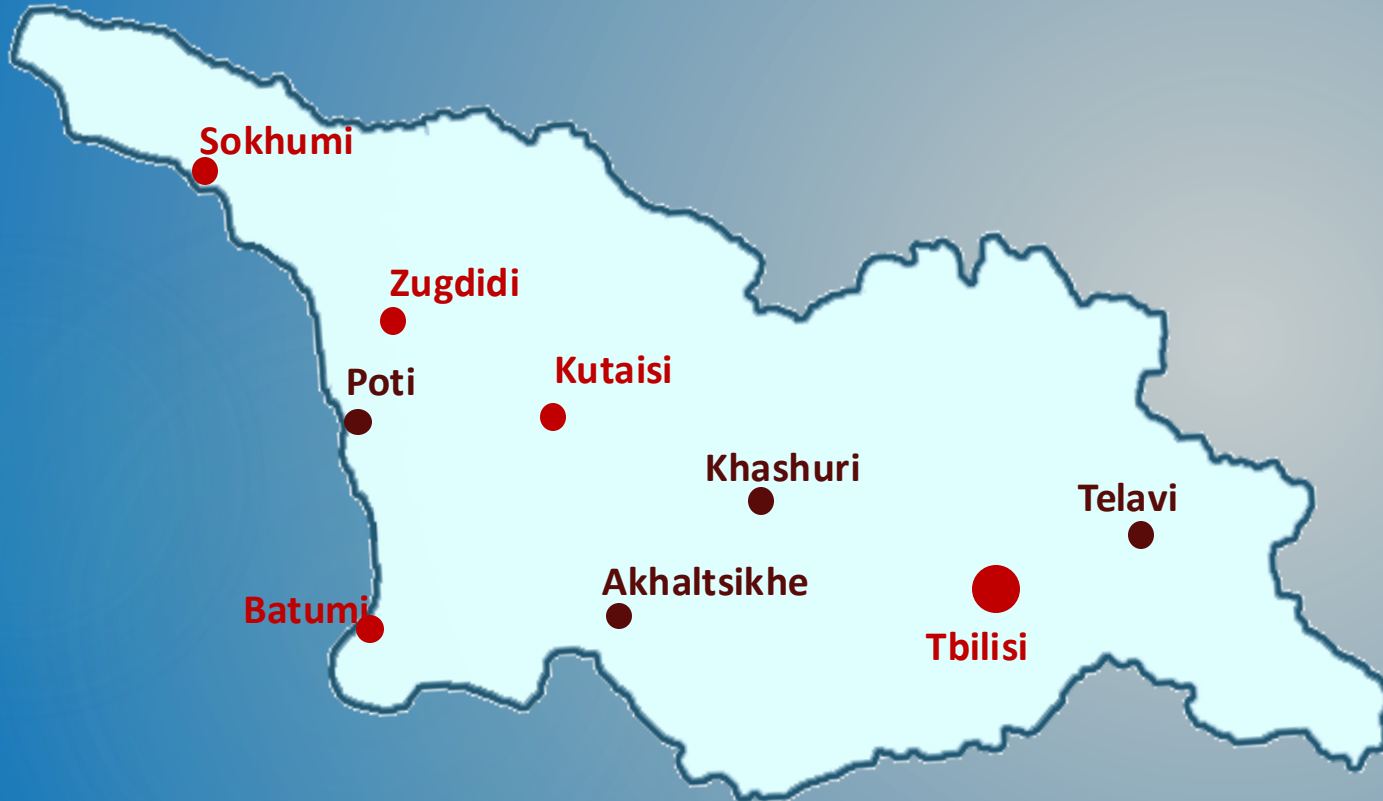
- ✓ In 2017, Georgia was the first in the Eastern European region to start implementing the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) program for high-risk individuals.
- ✓ The program is implemented by the community organization Equality Movement.



Cumulative number of persons enrolled in PrEP program



Expanding geographic coverage of HIV/AIDS treatment services



Since 2024 HIV treatment sites were expanded in additional 4 cities of Georgia.

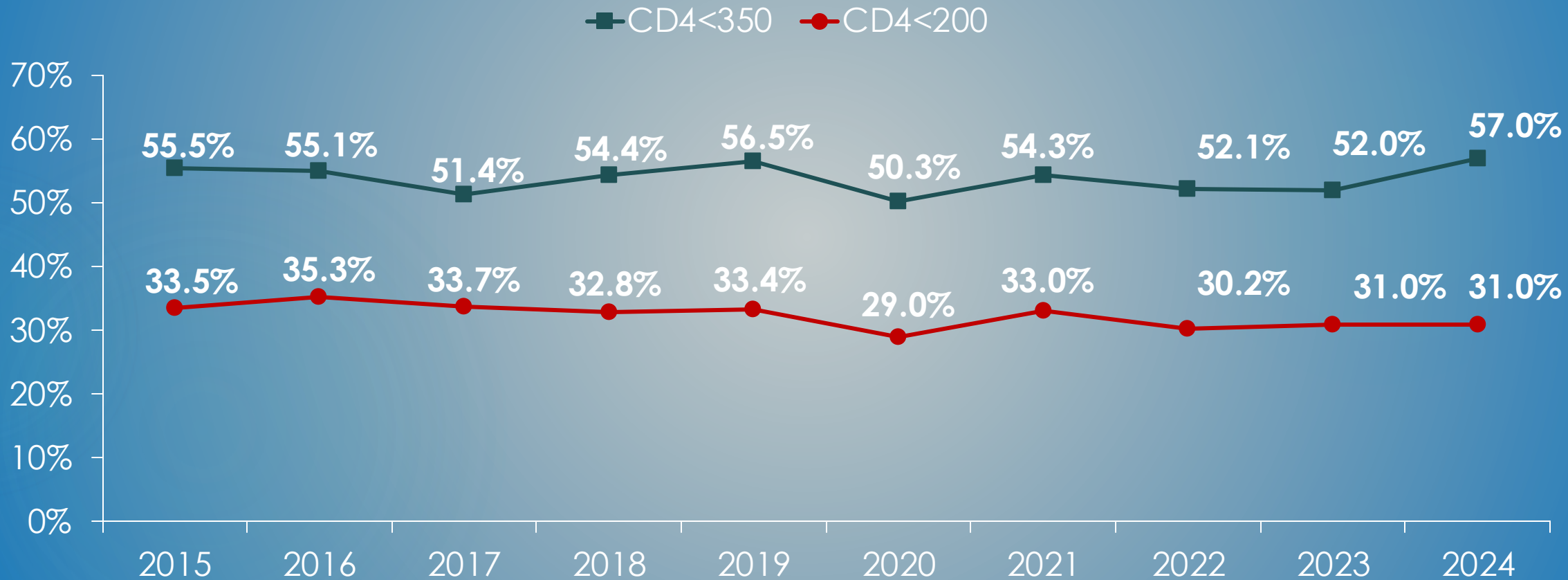


Main HIV programmatic challenges

- ▶ Diagnosing of HIV-infected persons, especially in hard-to-reach populations
- ▶ Late diagnosis of HIV/AIDS



HIV Late Presentation in Georgia, 2015-2024



Source: NCDC, 2024. National AIDS Center 2024



Georgian Implementation Fellowship Training Summer Bootcamp

Tbilisi, Georgia – July 30 – August 2, 2025

End the AIDS epidemic in Georgia

✓ Diagnose all and as early as possible:

- ▶ Strengthening HIV testing of key populations at community organizations;
- ▶ Expanding HIV self-testing to members of target populations and their sexual partners;
Expanding the possibility of ordering an HIV self-test through an online ordering platform;
- ▶ Integration of HIV testing in healthcare facilities (clinics, primary care, etc.), non-governmental/community organization bases, field (outreach) programs, etc.;

Source: NCDC, 2024. National AIDS Center 2024



Georgian Implementation Fellowship Training Summer Bootcamp

Tbilisi, Georgia – July 30 – August 2, 2025

End the AIDS epidemic in Georgia

✓ **treat everyone and as soon as possible:**

- ▶ Improving geographic access to HIV treatment services
- ▶ Use of innovative models of delivery of ARV medications (courier service through the mail, cooperation with non-governmental organizations in order to find patients with adherence problems and deliver medicines, strengthening of mobile ARV treatment groups, etc.);
- ▶ Continue to optimize ARV treatment regimens and increase the proportion of Dolutegravir-based regimens across the country;
- ▶ Strengthening of integrated care mechanisms for HIV/TB/Hepatitis C and substitution therapy for effective management of co-infected patients.

Source: NCDC, 2024. National AIDS Center 2024



Georgian Implementation Fellowship Training Summer Bootcamp

Tbilisi, Georgia – July 30 – August 2, 2025

End the AIDS epidemic in Georgia

✓ Provide high coverage with preventive measures:

- Promotion of PrEP - raising awareness and increasing demand for PrEP among key populations (MSM, transgender persons, sex workers, PWID and their partners);
- Increasing access to PrEP (at clinics, NGO/community organizations or individual level) for HIV key populations and others at risk of HIV infection;
- Improving the scale and quality of harm reduction services (syringe exchange, methadone replacement therapy, etc.) for PWID, women sex workers, MSM, transgender people and their partners;
- Ensuring the safety of blood and its products by universal screening of donors for HIV infection

Source: NCDC, 2024. National AIDS Center 2024



Georgian Implementation Fellowship Training Summer Bootcamp

Tbilisi, Georgia – July 30 – August 2, 2025

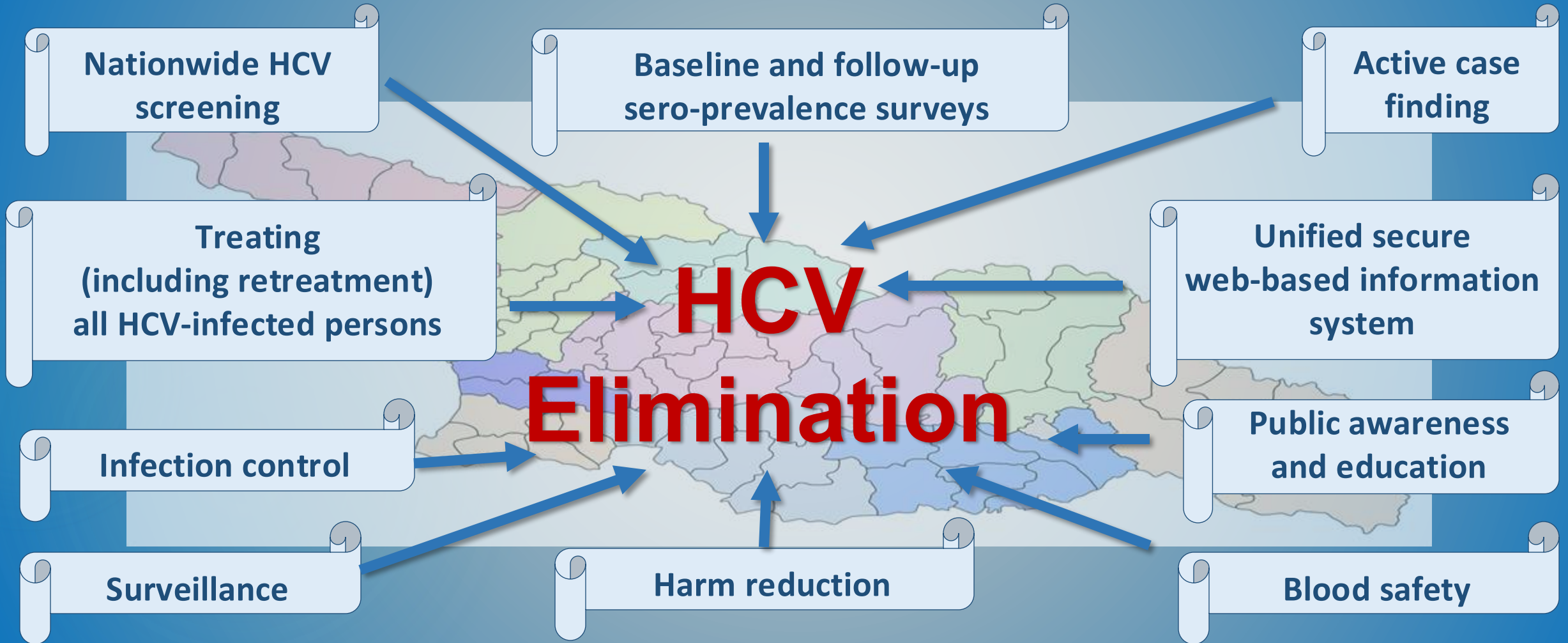
National Hepatitis C Elimination Program

Launched in April 2015



Gilead committed to supply the elimination program with Sofosbuvir, Ledipasvir/Sofosbuvir and Velpatasvir/Sofosbuvir free of charge.

Georgia's HCV elimination program builds on delivering a comprehensive response

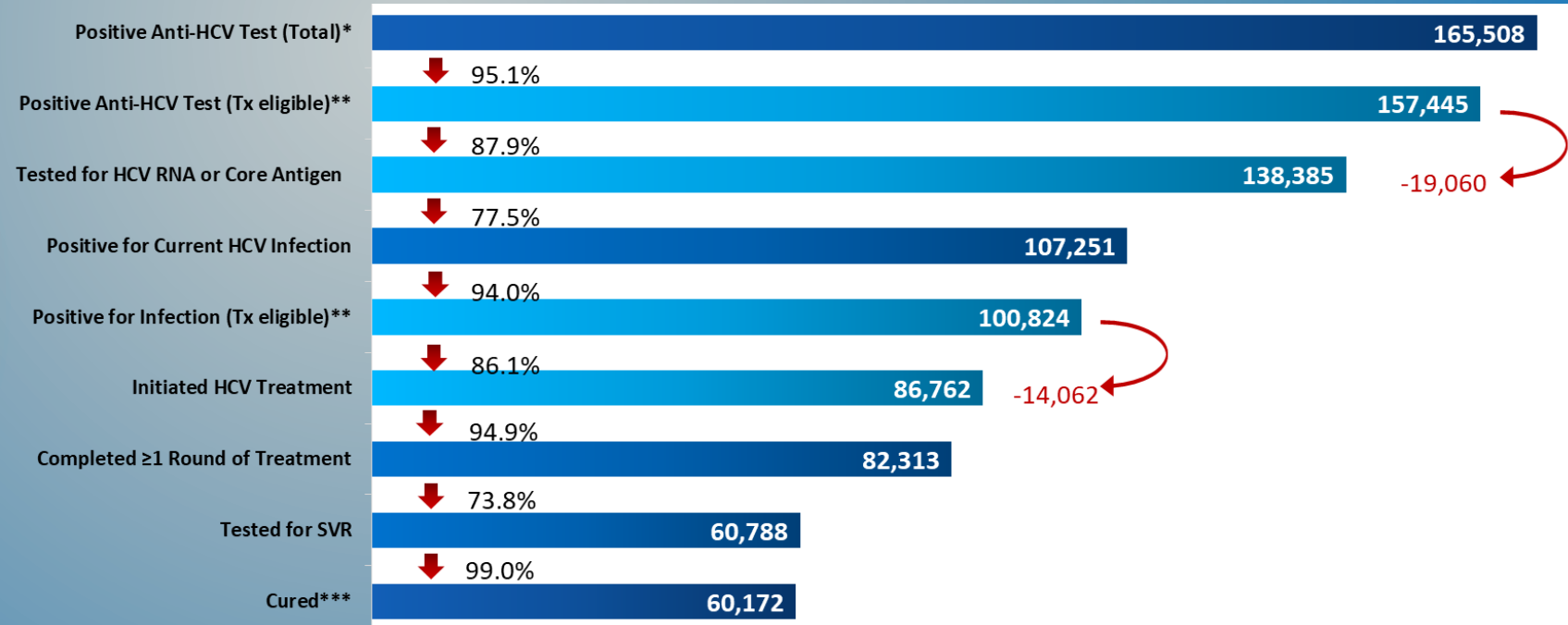


2015 and 2021 national seroprevalence surveys for hepatitis C in Georgia:

	2015	2021
Anti-HCV	7.7%	5.9%
HCV RNA	5.4%	1.8%

67% reduction in chronic HCV prevalence

Georgia Hepatitis C Elimination Program Care Cascade



Acknowledgement



INFECTIOUS DISEASES, AIDS
& CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGY
RESEARCH CENTER



MINISTRY OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED
PERSONS FROM THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES, LABOUR, HEALTH AND
SOCIAL AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA



Regional AIDS Centers in Kutaisi,
Batumi, Zugdidi and Sokhumi