

# ESTONIA

# DHAPP

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HIV/AIDS  
PREVENTION PROGRAM

REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF HIV/AIDS  
AMONG UNIFORMED PERSONNEL IN  
SELECTED AFRICAN NATIONS AND  
BEYOND

## WINNING BATTLES IN THE WAR AGAINST HIV/AIDS

### BACKGROUND

#### Country Statistics

The estimated Estonian population is 1.3 million people, with an average life expectancy of 73 years. Estonian is the official language, and the literacy rate is estimated at 99%, evenly distributed between men and women. Forcibly incorporated into the USSR in 1940, Estonia regained its freedom in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since the last Russian troops left in 1994, Estonia has been free to promote economic and political ties with Western Europe. It joined both NATO and the European Union in spring 2004. Estonia, a 2004 European Union entrant, has a modern, market-based economy and one of the highest per capita income levels in Central Europe. The economy benefits from strong electronics and telecommunications sectors and strong trade ties with Finland, Sweden, and Germany. The GDP per capita is \$21,900.

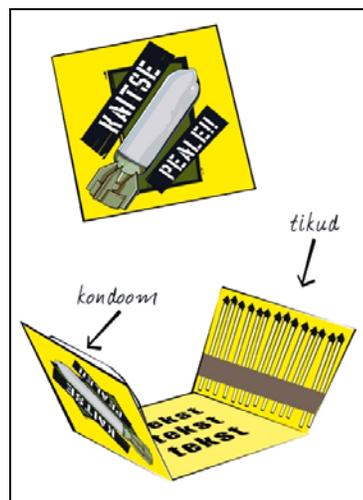
#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Estonia's general population is 1.3%, with 9,900 people currently living with HIV/AIDS. The main driving force behind the epidemic in Estonia is intravenous drug use. Youths and young adults are more severely affected than other age groups. Other vulnerable groups include commercial sex workers, men who have sex with men, and prisoners.



### Military Statistics

The Estonian Defense Forces (EDF) is estimated at approximately 4,000 members. There is compulsory military service in Estonia, and about 1,500 conscripts are active for training during any 8- to 11-month cycle. Estonia allocates 2.0% of the GDP for military expenditures. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.



### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### In-Country Ongoing Assistance

DHAPP staff members have continued collaborative efforts with Estonian military officials and the US ODC to establish a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention program for military members. In FY08, the Estonian Anti-AIDS Association (local NGO) was awarded a grant through DHAPP to work with the EDF.

### OUTCOME & IMPACTS

#### Prevention and Care

Since the grant was awarded in late FY08, no activities had occurred. The activities are planned for FY09 and will include providing infrastructure and equipment for HIV counseling and testing services and care centers, developing HIV laboratory diagnostic and monitoring capabilities, and increasing testing of all EDF personnel.

