



**AIDS Accountability**  
International

# USA

# COUNTRY PROFILES

**AIDS Accountability Country Profiles are initially provided for a selection of 17 countries in order to give further commentary on their performance according to the AIDS Accountability Country Scorecard and the context in which the response takes place. For further details about the data or the methodology, please see our website [www.aidsaccountability.org](http://www.aidsaccountability.org)**

AIDS Accountability International (AAI) was established to increase accountability and inspire bolder leadership in the response to the AIDS epidemic. We do this by rating and comparing the degree to which public, private and civil society actors are fulfilling the formal agreements they have made to respond to the epidemic.

#### **Facts USA**

**Region:** North America and Western/Central Europe

**Population:** 303.8 million

**HIV prevalence:** 0.6% 15-49 years (UNAIDS)

**Gross National Income:** US\$ 44,710 per capita (2006)

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## Country Profile: USA

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### Introduction

The US has a significant HIV epidemic. More than one million people are currently living with HIV and more than 500,000 have died of AIDS since the disease was first identified. Initially, HIV particularly affected men who have sex with men (MSM), injecting drug users (IDUs), haemophiliacs (due to blood transfusions in early days of the epidemic) and Haitians. However, more recently the virus has been spreading increasingly through heterosexual contacts, particularly among African Americans and Hispanics. The response to HIV in the US has been highly controversial and has achieved mixed results. For example, progress on PMTCT has been excellent but restrictions on needle exchange programs, limiting prevention programs to 'abstinence-only' and mandatory HIV testing of immigrants, in the military and in some prisons have all been strongly criticized. Progress on provision of ART has been good but there is a marked difference between those who have health insurance and those that do not.

### What the scorecard reveals

The main problem with trying to apply this scorecard to the US is that the country's reporting to UNGASS is extremely limited. In fact, only two out of eight elements are able to receive scores. The low score for element 1 is due to inadequate reporting on several of the indicators. Only data on biological surveillance was submitted. Both in 2006 and 2008, the reporting was very poor (E). In 2006, the US only reported on condom use among MSM and, in 2008, only HIV prevalence in the general population.

In 2008, the US did not report on coverage of prevention programs among most-at-risk populations, its spending on its response to HIV/AIDS, its approach to coordination of the response, the environment created for civil society or human rights related to HIV/AIDS.

In 2005, the US reported that ART coverage was 70% (B) which is the second score received.

### *USA's Score*

Elements	2006	2008
1: Data Collection	E	E
2: Focus on most-at-risk populations		No data
3: Treatment	B	B
4: Prevention	No data	No Data
5: Coordination		No Data
6: Civil Society		No Data
7: Financing		No data
8: Human Rights Mainstreaming		No Data

*Explanation of scores: A= 81-100%, B= 61-80%, C=41-60%, D=21-40%, E=0-20%*

## Reporting –How can USA improve?

USA scores an E on the **AIDS Reporting Index**, which reflects a very poor level of reporting on the elements in the scorecard. The US has failed to report on almost all of the 161 indicators used in the scorecard as shown in the table below. Due to lack of a vast amount of data, a conclusion regarding the response in the US cannot be drawn from the scorecard. However, voices of critique in a shadow report by Global Youth Coalition HIV/AIDS paints a bleak picture of the response. Some of the issues brought up are lack of a formal AIDS strategy, struggle to access ART for uninsured, strong focus on abstinence-only as prevention method and laws prohibiting people with HIV to entering the US.

A failure to report does not always mean a failure to respond to AIDS. However, a failure to report is a failure to live up to a central principle of the *Declaration of Commitment*: namely, the need for transparency and effective monitoring. Data reporting is the precondition for monitoring and evaluating country progress and holding governments accountable for their promises.

Element	Reported indicators	Total indicators	% reporting
1	4	15	27%
2	0	3	0%
3	1	1	100%
4	0	3	0%
5	4	64	6%
6	3	32	9%
7	0	3	0%
8	0	40	0%

*Visit our website to make your own scorecard, read more information about the scorecard, check on the indicators on country level and to give your feedback to us. Make your voice heard at [www.aidsaccountability.org](http://www.aidsaccountability.org)*