

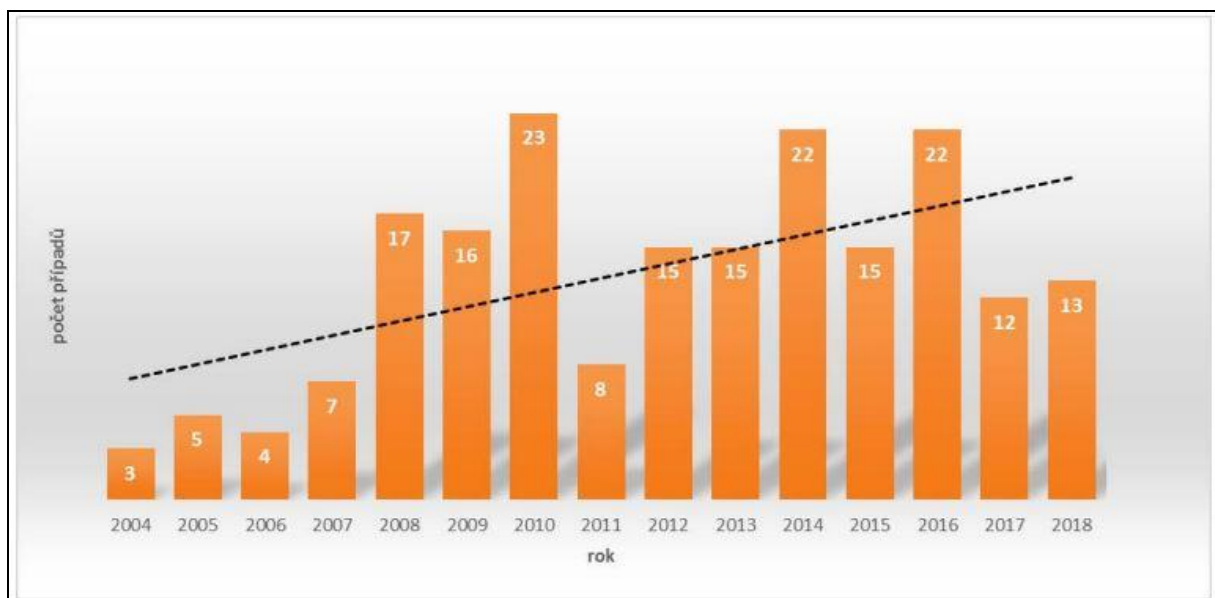
## Pleasure, but at what price?

HIV / AIDS is one of the top 10 health risks for humanity, according to a recent WHO report. Infected and sick continue to increase and growth has not yet stopped. The total number of infected cases is estimated to be about 37 million, and about 25 million have succumbed to it since the disease was discovered in 1981. Every year about 1 million people succumb to the disease and about 1.8 million people are newly infected every year.

HIV is most commonly transmitted through sexual contact, blood, semen or vaginal secretion. The infected person is contagious almost immediately after the HIV virus has entered the body, even in the incubation period before the development of the acute infection. Worldwide, the AIDS pandemic is being spoken, and the numbers of the sick and infected and their increase in sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern European countries are alarming.

As of 31 December 2018, the Czech Republic reported a total of 3,814 HIV-positive persons, of which 3,208 are men and 606 are women. In 677 people, AIDS has already occurred and 299 people have succumbed. Last year there was an increase of 208 newly found HIV positive persons. Males predominate among infected persons, especially MSM (men having sex with men), the most affected age group are persons aged 20-49.

From 1988 to the end of 2018, we registered 231 HIV-positive persons in the MS region. Of these, 203 infected men and 28 women. In 2018, 13 newly diagnosed HIV positive persons were reported in the MS region, in all cases men. In the whole monitored period since 1988 the most patients were in Ostrava (108), Karviná (36) and Frýdek-Místek (32).



Graph nr. 1: HIV positive person, MS region, 2004 – 2018

## **HIV/AIDS prevention**

There are HIV / AIDS counseling centers operating in the MS region, where free and anonymous HIV antibody testing including counseling is performed, namely the AIDS Center at the Infectious Clinic of the University Hospital in Ostrava and the Public Health Institute based in Ostrava, which also has a branch located in the premises of the Silesian Hospital in Opava. In addition to these permanent centers, sometimes the Public Health Institute and other organizations in Ostrava also run preventive health one-off events in the region against HIV / AIDS. Every year as part of the World AIDS Day, which is on 1 December, "AIDS Tram" goes to the streets of Ostrava, and the Regional Public Health Institute of Moravian – Silesian Region staff also participate in this event. Preventive actions aim to acquaint the public with possibilities of disease prevention and treatment. However, it should be remembered that while the current available treatment can effectively suppress clinical manifestations in the long term, the disease is still incurable. Effective vaccination is not yet available and its development has not yet progressed significantly. Thus, the only reliable protection remains the prevention of infection by adhering to the principles of safe sexual life (sexual restraint, partner loyalty and protected sexual intercourse).

