

Increase of HIV incidence among MSM in Europe: when, where, why?

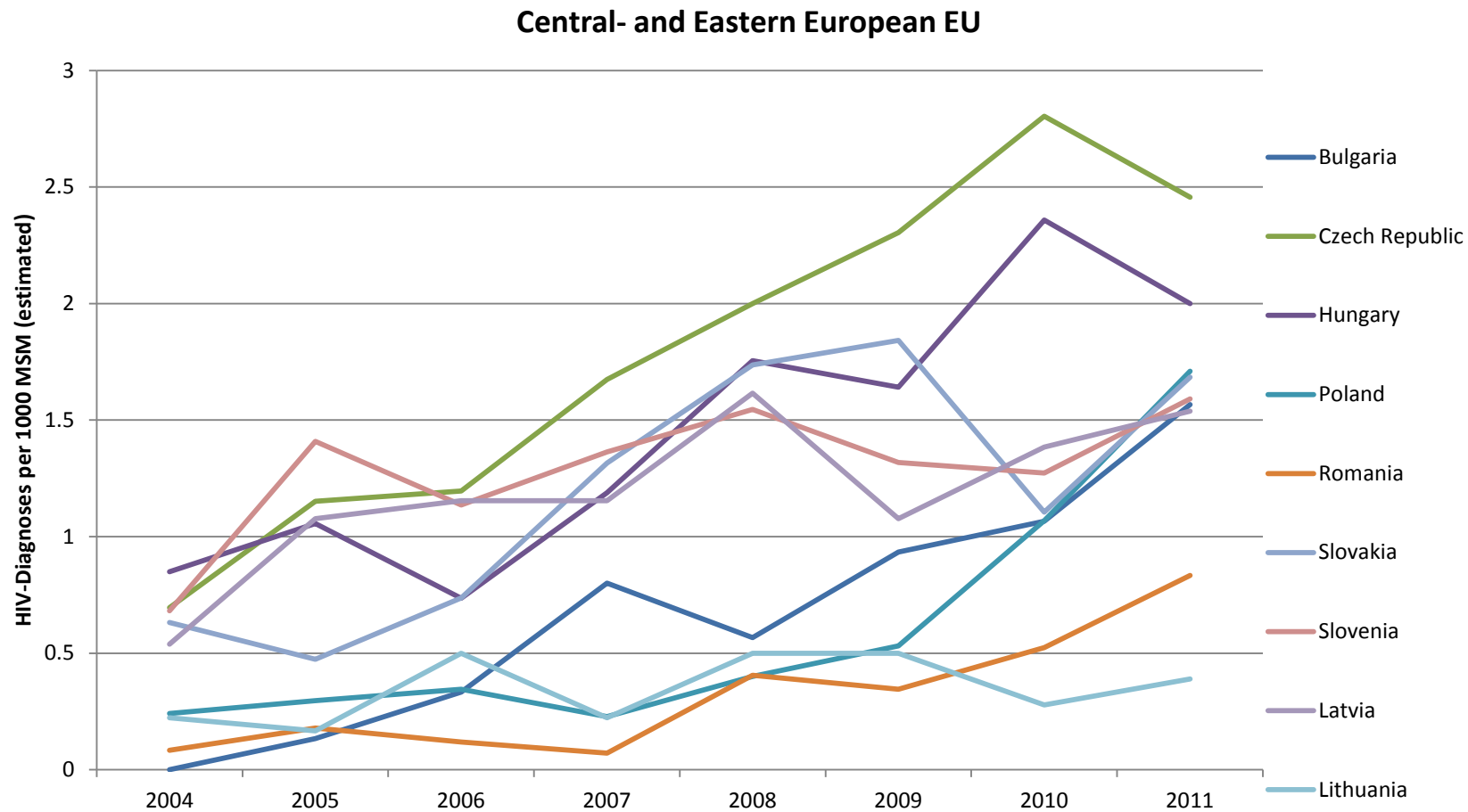
UNAIDS consultation,
Geneva Jan. 22-23, 2014
Dr. Ulrich Marcus
Robert Koch-Institute, Berlin

Overview

- Increase of HIV incidence among MSM: when, where, why?
 - Where has the increase occurred?
 - Increase of risk behaviour or expansion of the population at risk?
 - What are the effects of new ways of communication by internet on the spread of communicable diseases in sexual minorities?



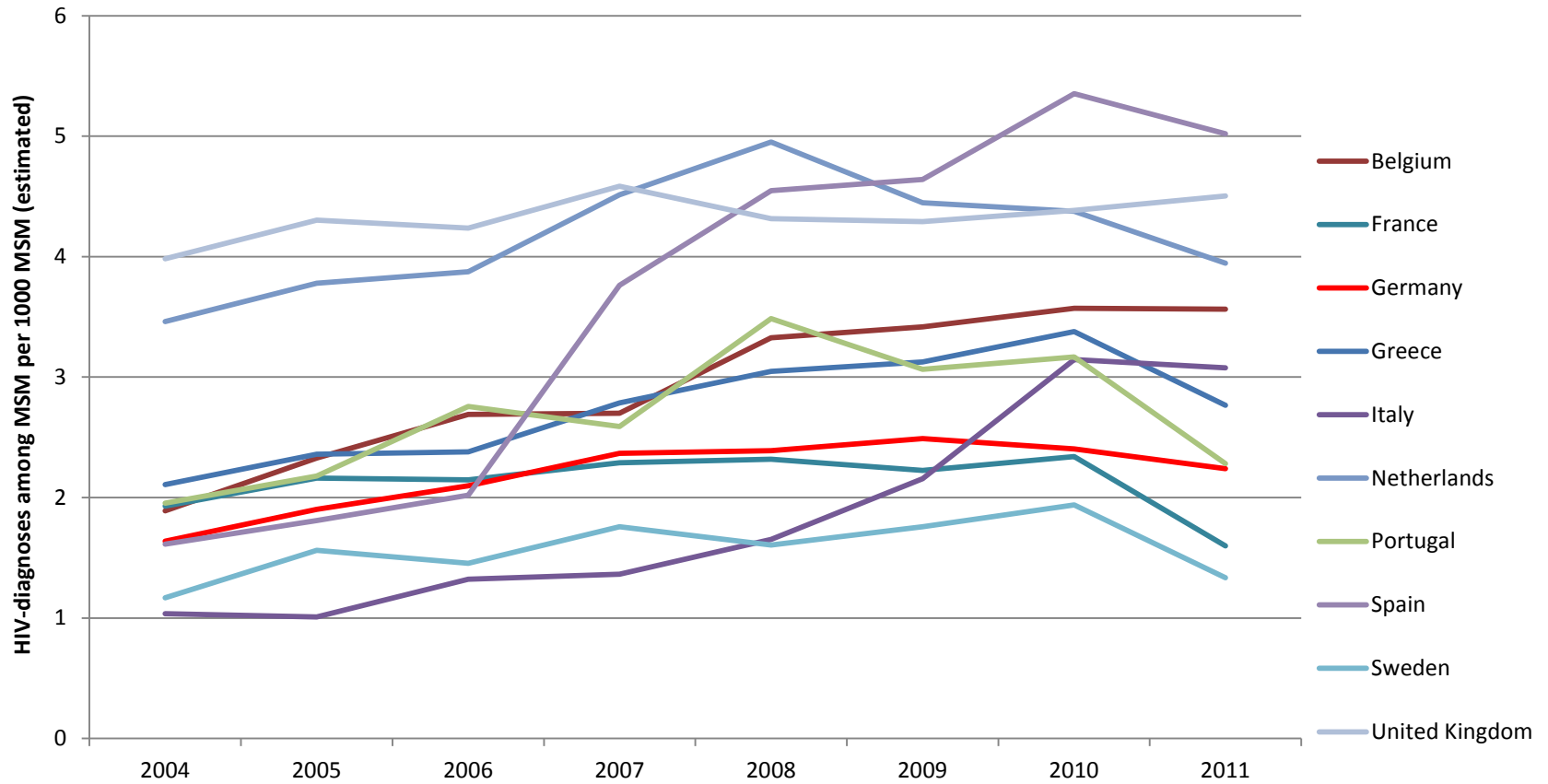
New HIV diagnoses among MSM in Central- and Eastern Europe (as reported to ECDC)





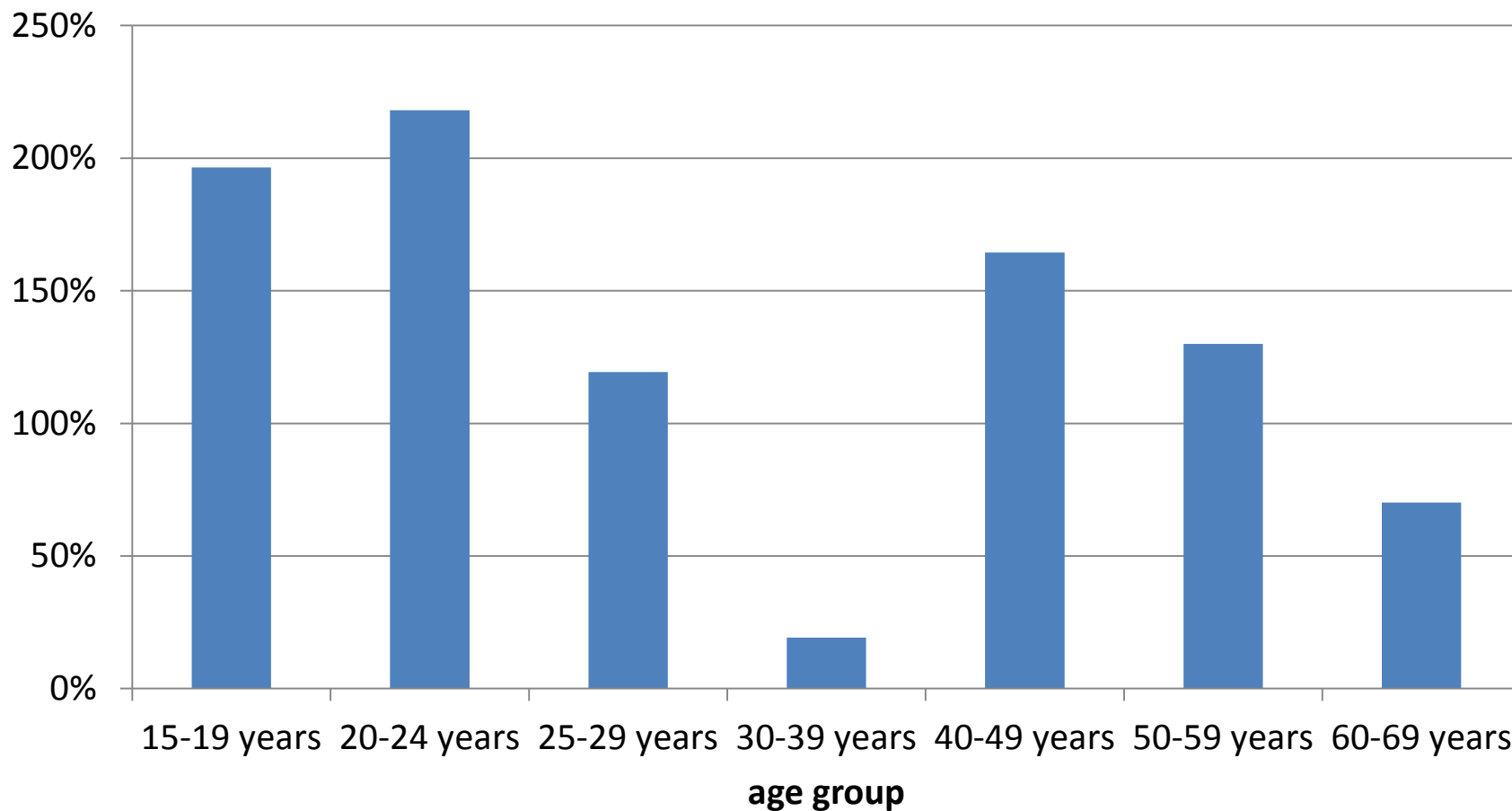
New HIV diagnoses among MSM in Western Europe

Germany and other Western European EU countries



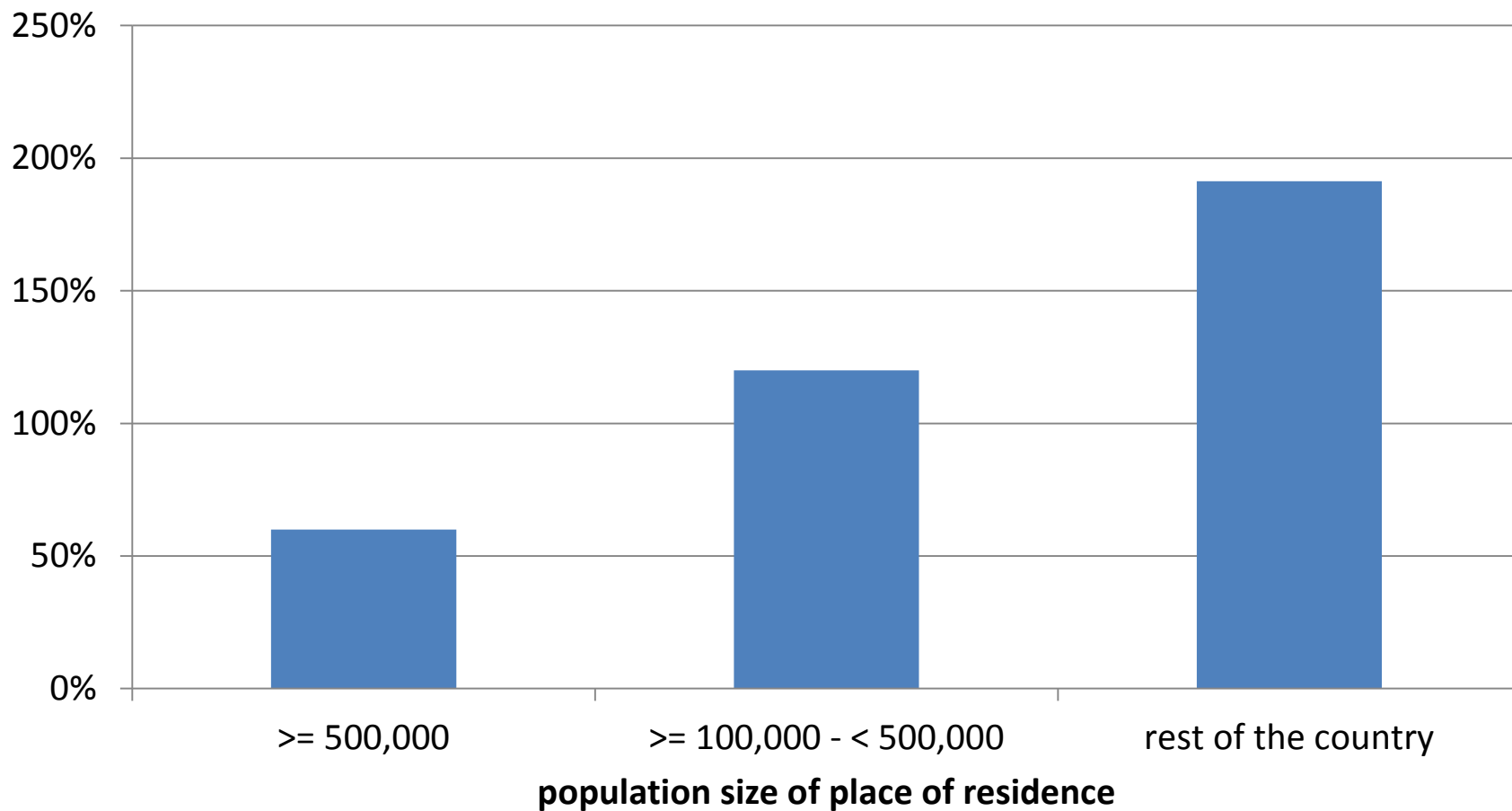


Proportional increase of newly diagnosed HIV infections in MSM in Germany between 2001-2003 and 2010-2012 by age group



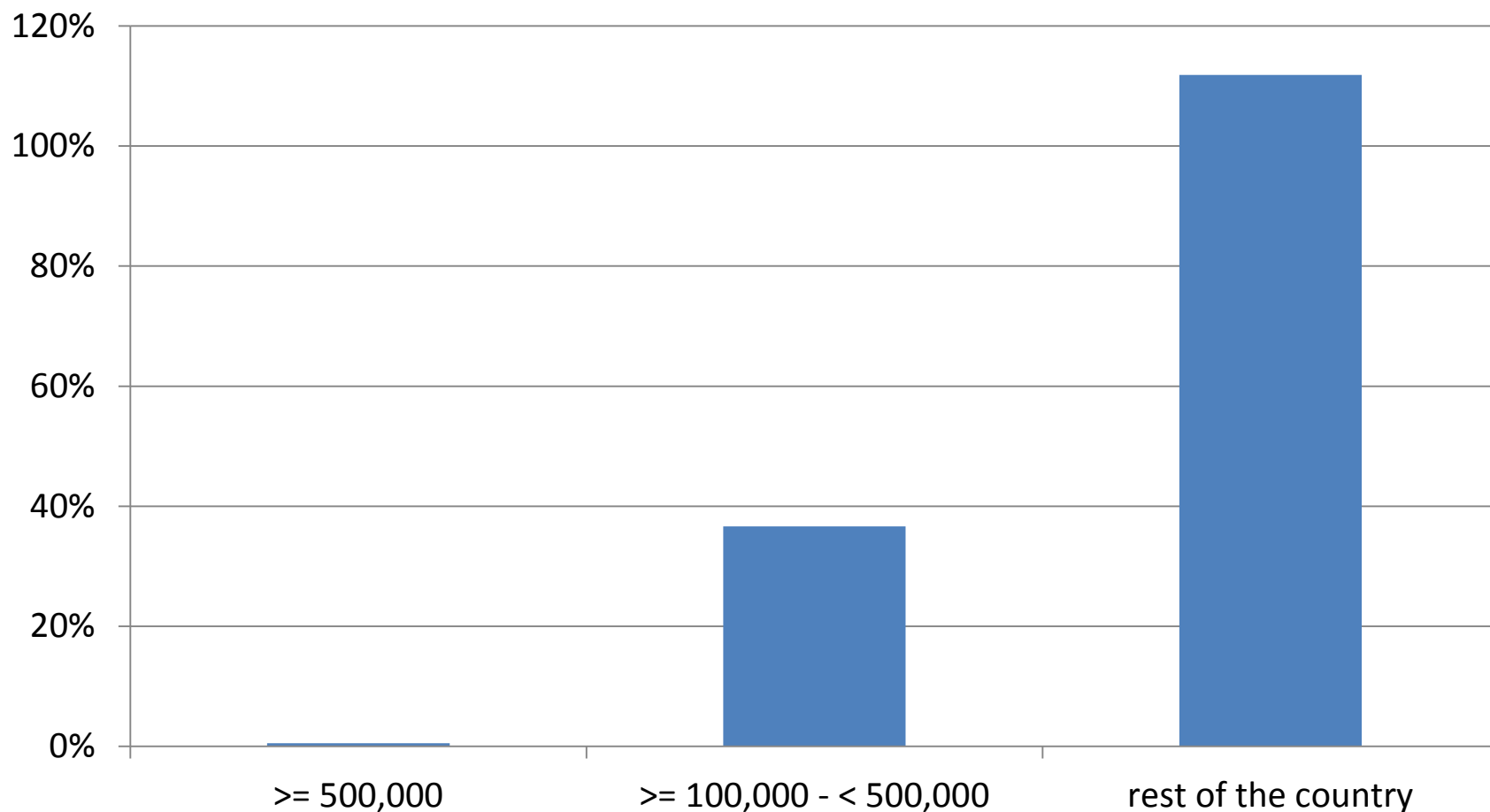


Proportional increase of newly diagnosed HIV infections among MSM in Germany between 2001-2003 and 2010-2012 by population size of the place of residency



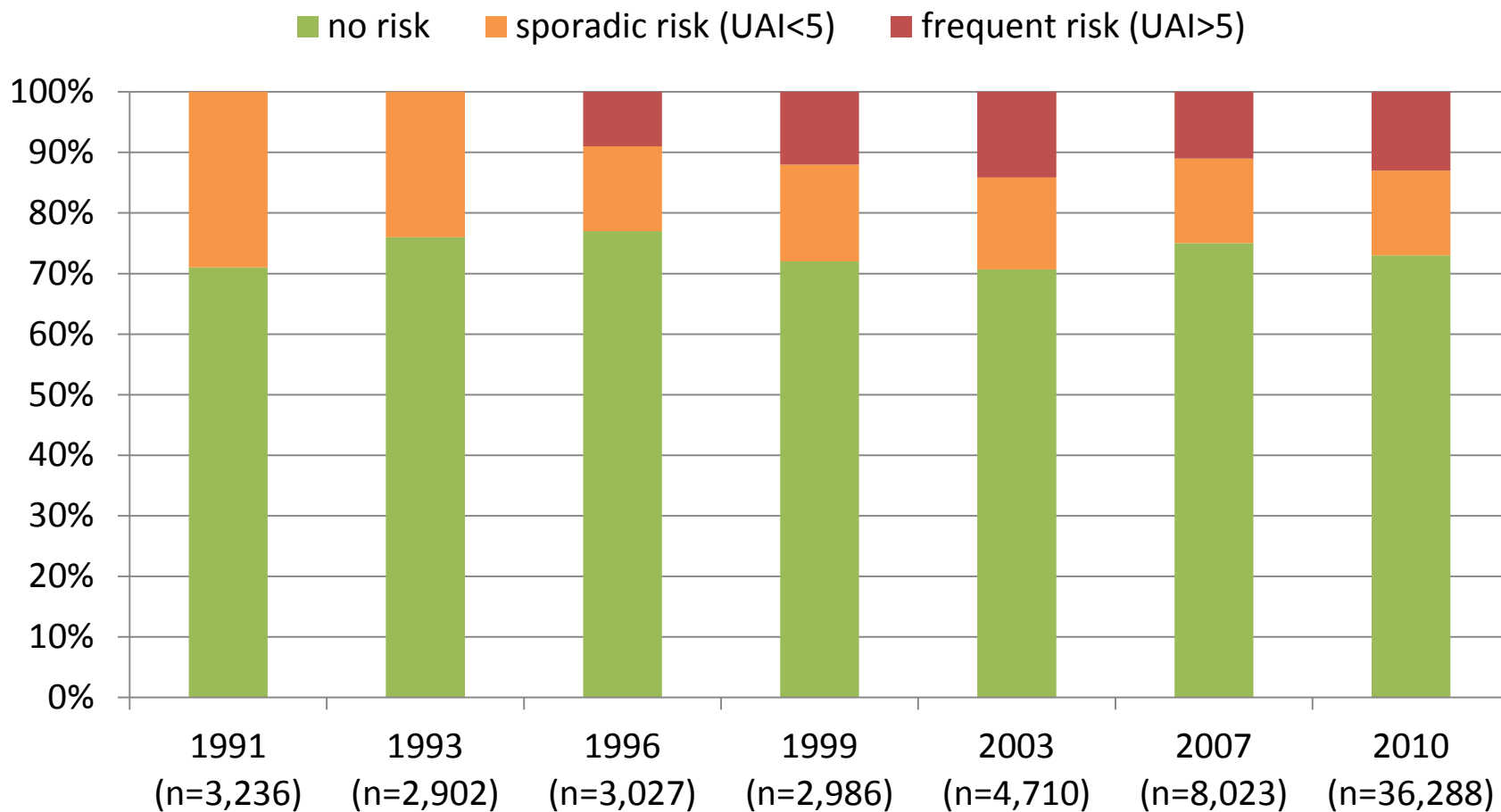


Proportional increase of newly diagnosed HIV infections among MSM aged 30-39 in Germany between 2001-2003 and 2010-2012 by population size



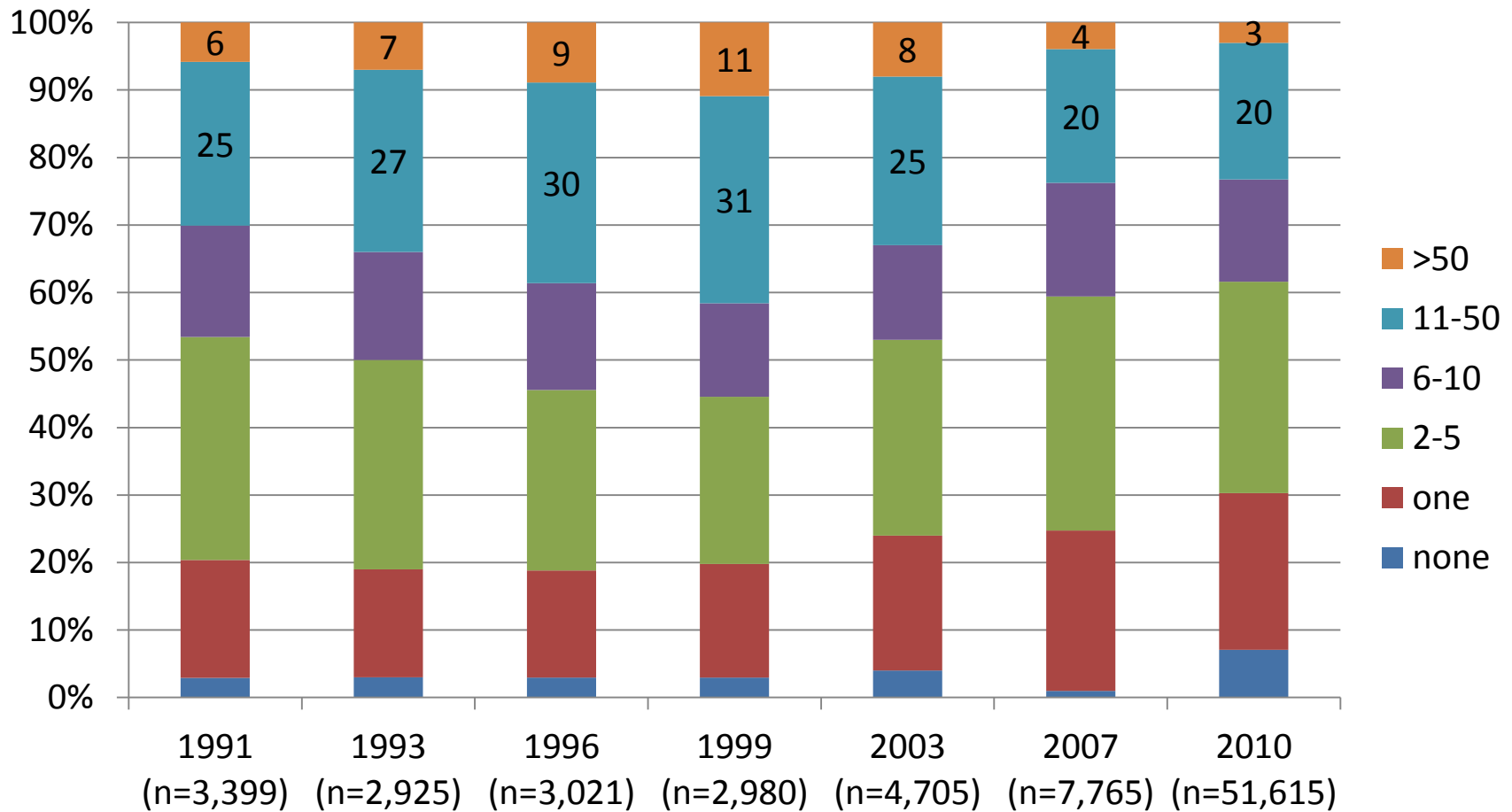


Germany, behavioural surveillance among MSM: Proportion reporting HIV transmission risk behaviour in the preceding 12 months in different surveys



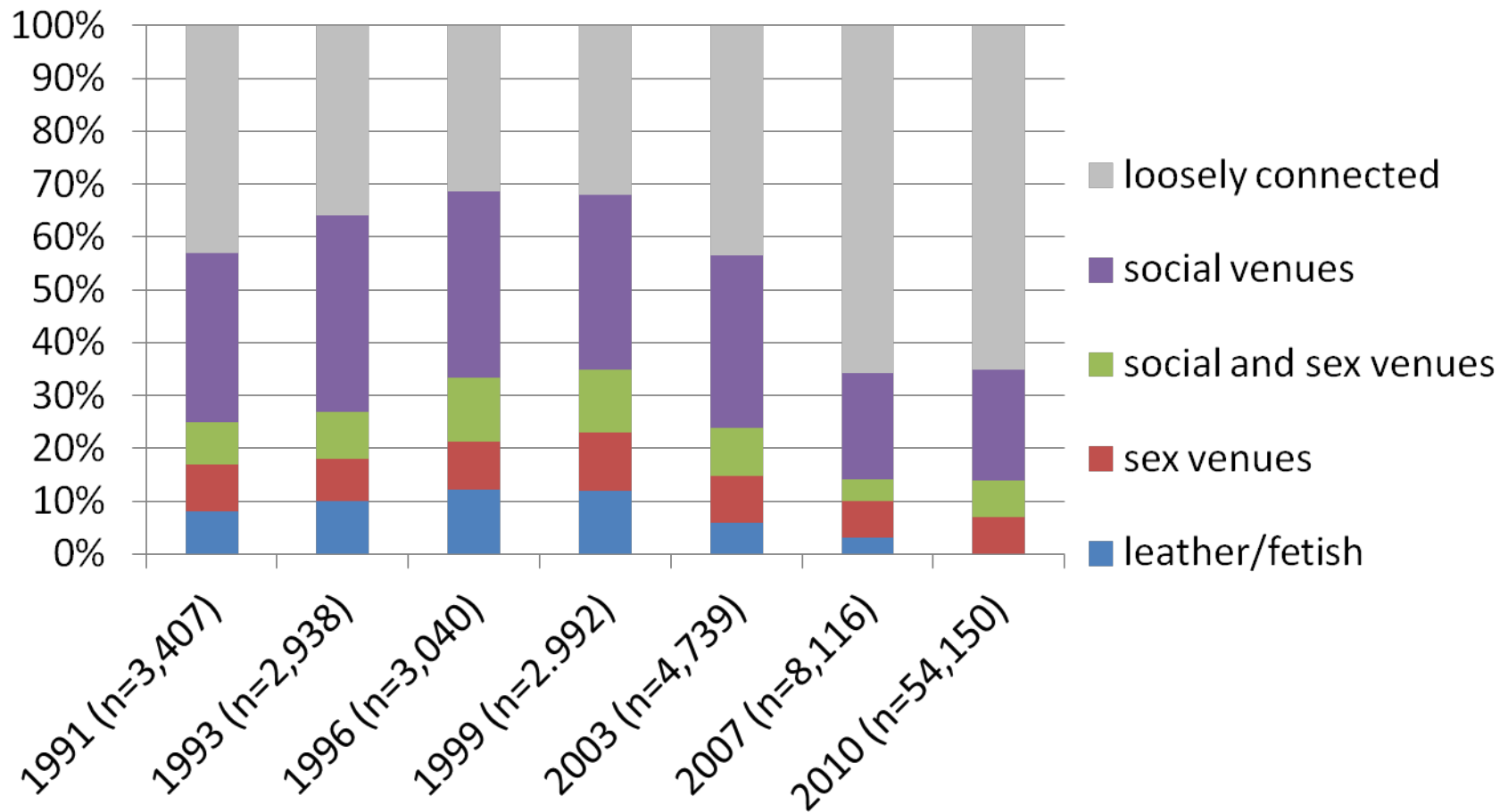


Germany, behavioural surveillance among MSM: Number of male sex partners in the previous 12 months in consecutive surveys



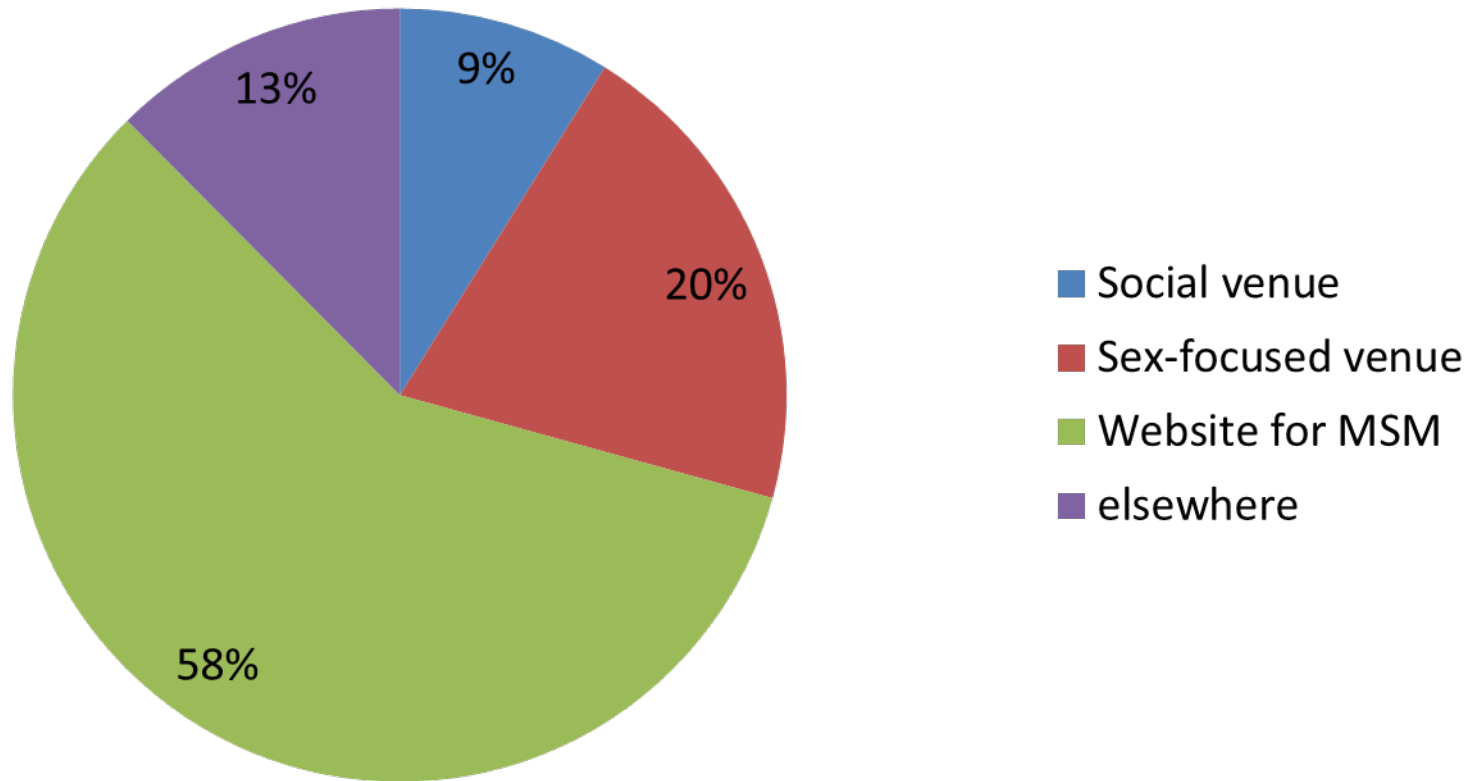


Germany, behavioural surveillance among MSM: Connectedness with gay subculture in different surveys



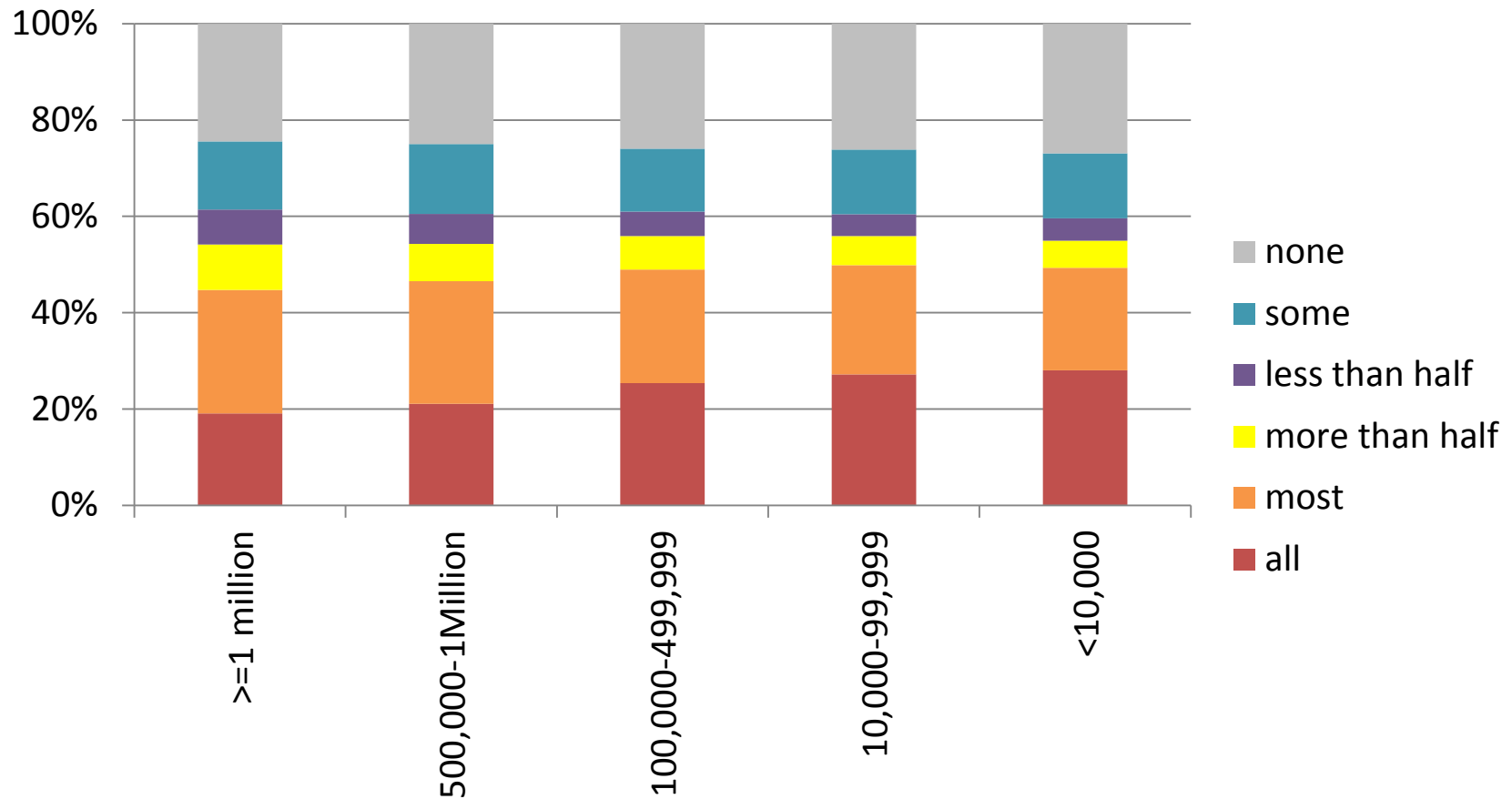


Where EMIS-respondents met their last non-steady partner



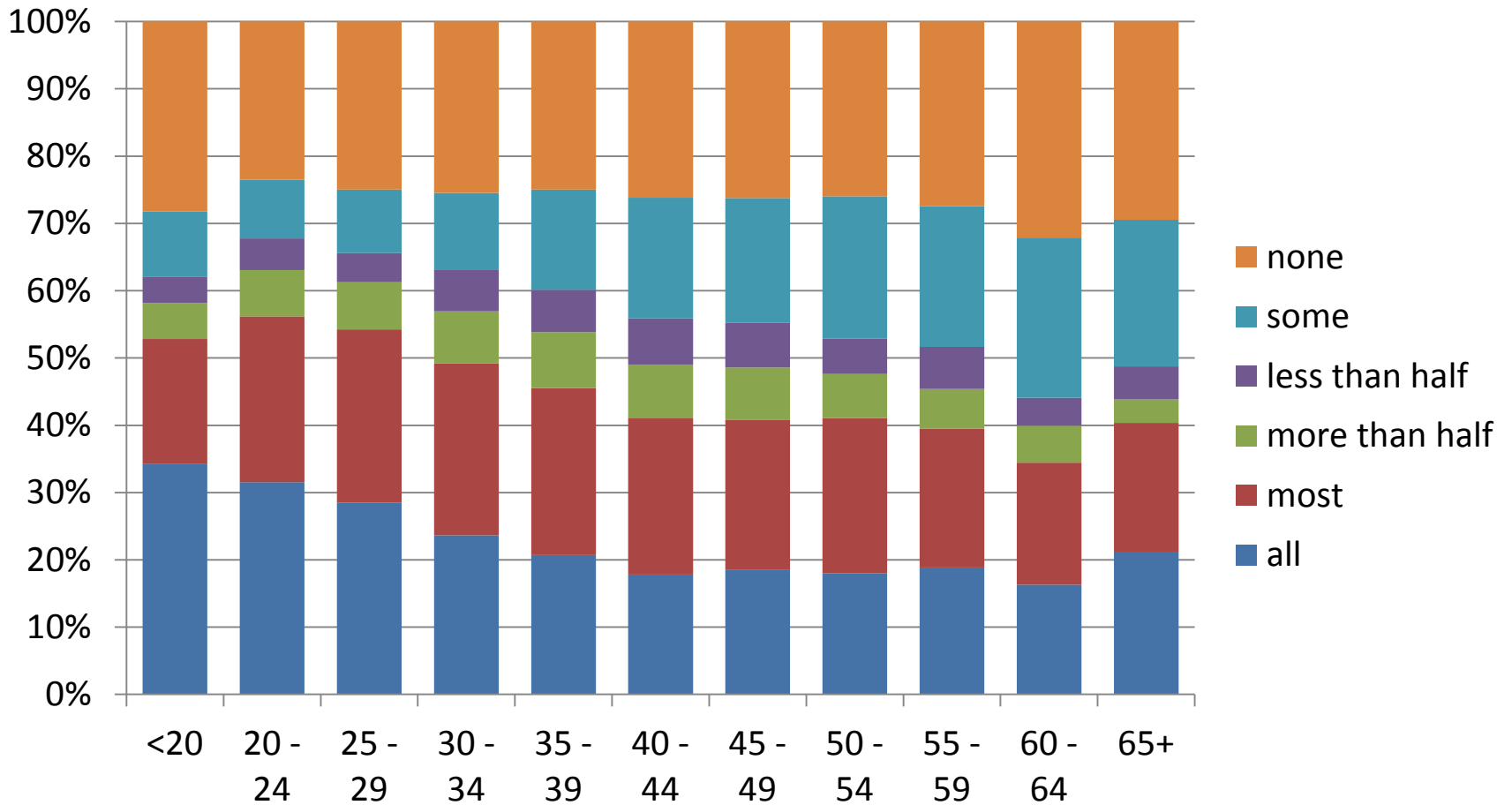


Proportion of non-steady partners met online by population size of the place of residence



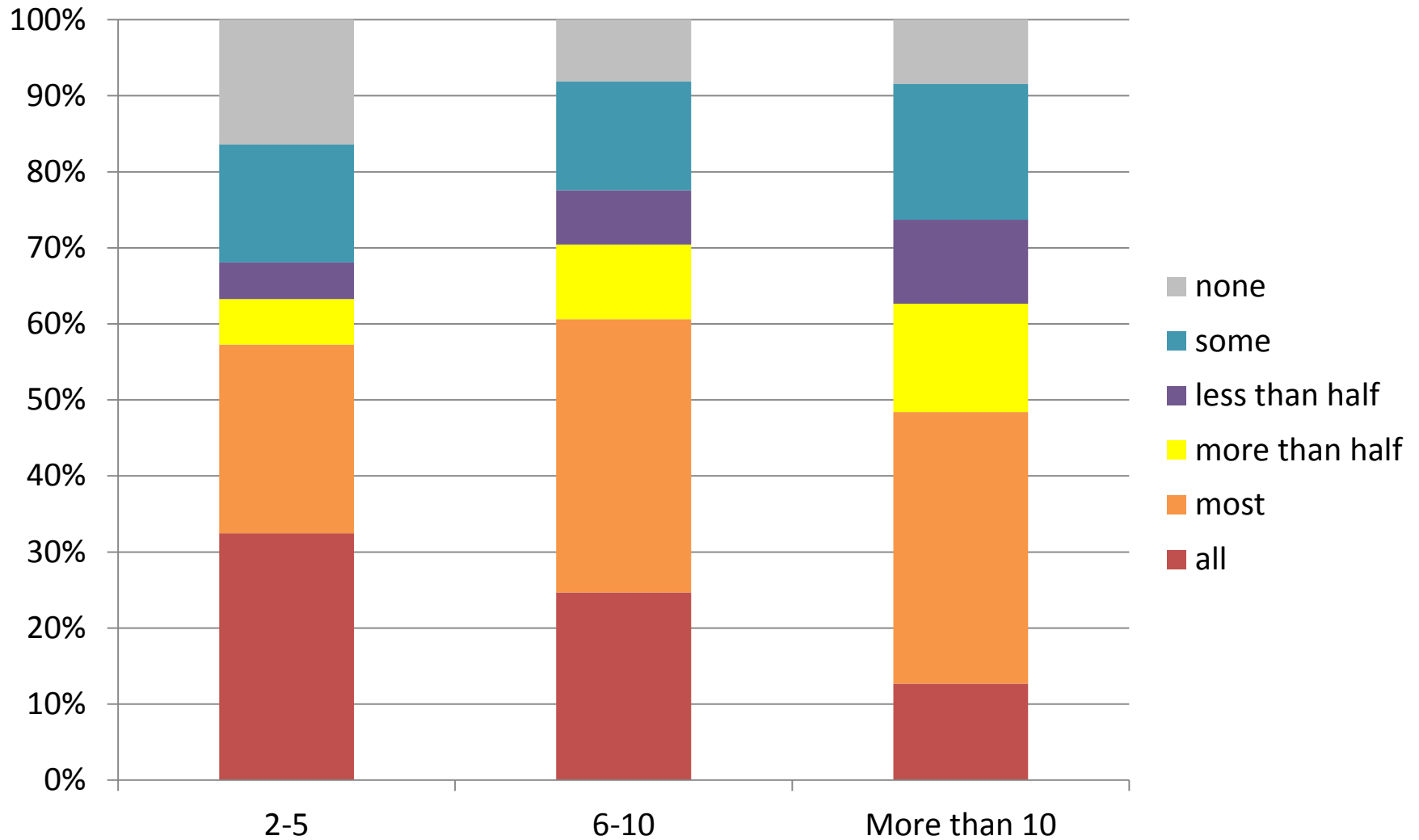


Proportion of partners met online by age group



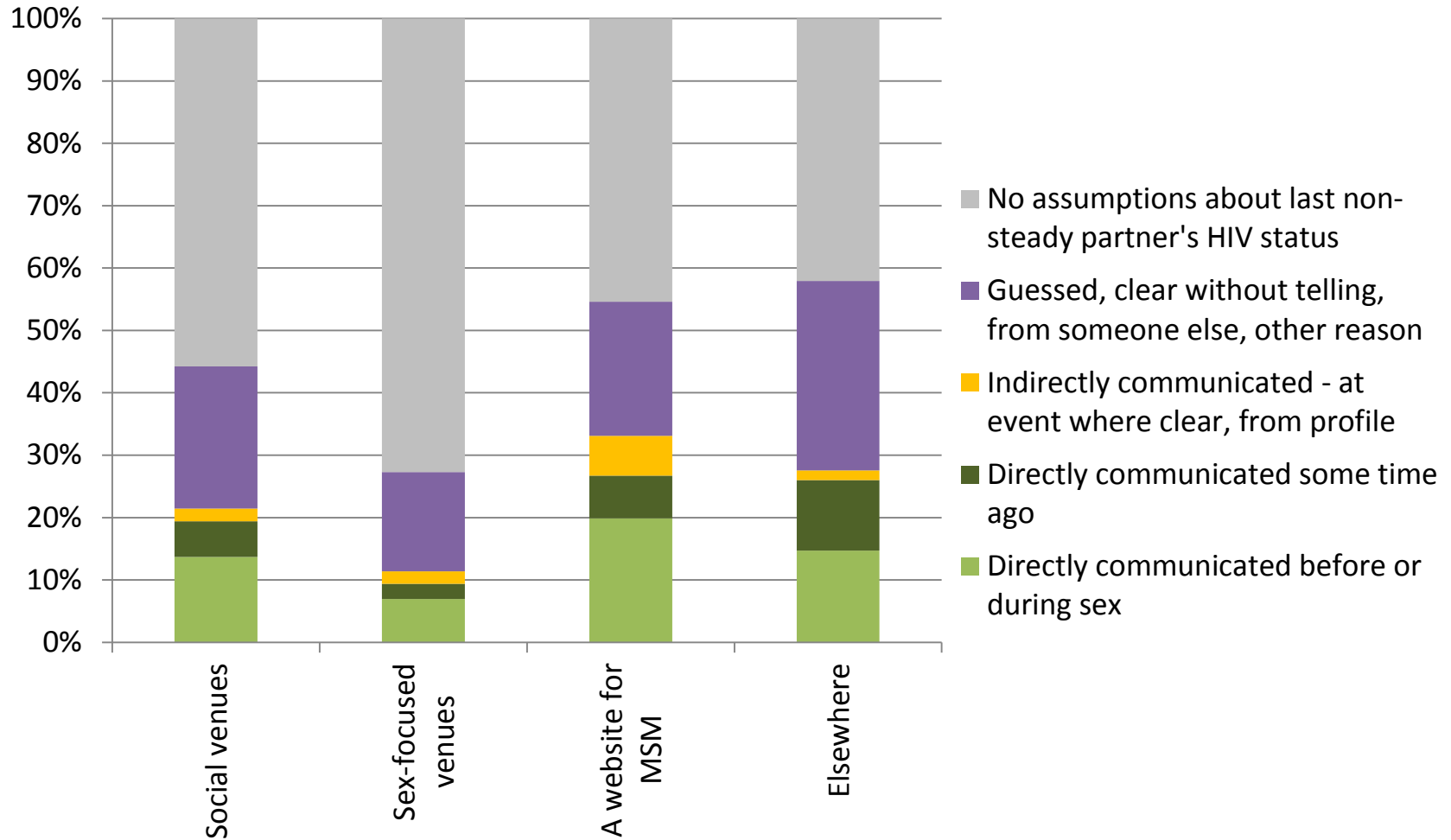


Proportion of non-steady partners met online by number of partners





Serostatus communication and meeting places



Summary (1)

- European MSM meet a large proportion of their non-steady partners online
- Seeking partners online is particularly frequent in regions with less developed gay commercial infrastructure (rural areas, East- and Southeast-Europe)
- Young MSM and MSM with low numbers of non-steady partners find a particularly high proportion of these partners online
- Non-steady partners met online are more often multiple-times-partner and there is more HIV serostatus communication with online partners than with venue-partners
- Risk avoidance is less frequent with online partners

Summary (2)

- Online surveys reach a large proportion of non-gay-venue affiliated MSM
- The possibility to seek and find sex partners online may result in larger and denser sexual networks
- Increasing connectedness of MSM by online communication may facilitate the spread of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV to MSM subpopulations previously at lower risk for these infections – the size of the population connected by sexual networks increases (which may explain increasing HIV incidence)

Conclusions

- Restricting online communication for MSM (e.g. by site censorship) as a means to prevent spread of HIV/STI is not an option
- MSM websites can be used to disseminate prevention messages, encourage testing for HIV and STI, offer counselling and support, facilitate partner notification etc.
- We must value MSM websites as important partners in prevention, and not see them as a problem

Acknowledgements

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