

SC-02

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in the province of Catania: Syphilis and Gonorrhea cases in the 2024–2025 biennium

A. Aleo (1), G. Giorgianni (2), F. Fiorito (1), M. Fichera (1), E. Barbagallo (3), E. Esposito (3), E. Ricci (3), A. Mistretta (4)

(1) Residency Program in Hygiene and Preventive Medicine, University of Catania; (2) Public Health, Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine Unit, ASP of Catania; (3) Head of the Metropolitan and Provincial Vaccination Coordination Unit, ASP of Catania; (4) Director, Residency Program in Hygiene and Preventive Medicine, University of Catania

Introduction. The 2023 COA Report of the Italian National Institute of Health (ISS) highlighted a rising trend in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in Italy over recent years. Between 2021 and 2023, reported gonorrhea cases increased by 83.2%, while cases of primary and secondary syphilis rose by 25.5%. Analysis of demographic and geographical trends can help identify epidemiological patterns useful for guiding prevention strategies.

Materials And Methods. A descriptive analysis was conducted on cases of syphilis and gonorrhea reported to the Department of Prevention of the Local Health Authority (ASP) of Catania during 2024 and 2025. Notifications were primarily received from the four Infectious Diseases hospital units operating within the province of Catania. The following variables were analyzed: total number of cases, sex distribution, median age at diagnosis, and geographical distribution based on municipality of residence.

Results. A total of 204 syphilis cases (including 2 congenital cases) were recorded in 2024 (incidence: 15.3 per 100,000 population), compared with 175 cases (including 5 congenital cases) in 2025 (incidence: 12.2 per 100,000 population). In the municipality of Catania, 80 cases were reported in 2024 (incidence: 26.8 per 100,000 population) and 54 cases in 2025 (incidence: 18.1 per 100,000 population). Males accounted for 91.2% of syphilis cases in 2024 and 89.7% in 2025. The median age at diagnosis was 42 years in 2024 and 44 years in 2025. Variations observed in the other municipalities were minor and not statistically significant. Regarding gonorrhea, 4 cases were reported in 2024 and 8 cases in 2025.

Conclusions. Syphilis cases showed a marked male predominance, while the median age at diagnosis remained relatively stable over the study period. Although the small number of gonorrhea cases does not allow detailed subgroup analyses, the observed increase highlights the importance of maintaining a high level of epidemiological surveillance. Syphilis and gonorrhea continue to represent significant public health concerns. Strengthening surveillance systems remains essential to better define and implement effective prevention strategies.