



## Eurasian Coalition on Male Health

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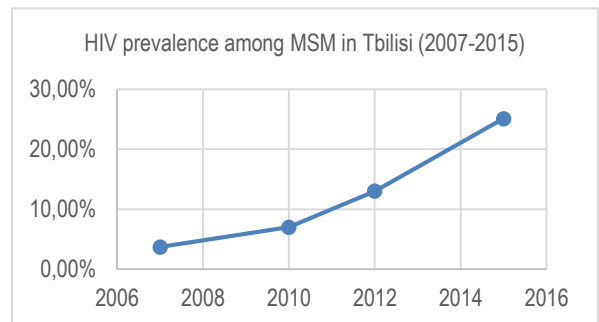
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### **HIV Rates among MSM Continue Rapidly Increasing in Georgia**

*A quarter of new HIV cases in first months of 2017 are among MSM. Only rights-based approach, innovative prevention and community engagement can stop the epidemic.*

As reported by the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health of Georgia, 180 new HIV cases were registered in this country in the South Caucasus from the start of the year as of April 19, 2017. This number is comparable to that of last year. However, what is striking now is that 42 new cases are among gay, bisexual or other men who have sex with men (MSM) - 23.3% compared with 11% in 2014. In other words, every 4th person who tested positive in Georgia in 2017 so far, belongs to gay men and other MSM.

According to a 2015 [study](#) (n=415), a whopping 25.1% of men who have sex with men tested positive in the capital city of Tbilisi. Studies from previous years indicated a constant twofold increase every 3-4 years.



ECOM is glad to note that Georgia is undertaking several initiatives which can bring the national HIV response to a level sufficient to stop the epidemic among MSM. We welcome introduction of community-based testing in 2016. ECOM also supported Georgian counterparts in rolling out a Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) intervention. ECOM continues supporting Georgian community's participation in national HIV response through its Regional Program "Right to Health" funded by the Global Fund.

ECOM calls on the Georgian government to improve protection of health and human rights of LGBTI people in the country. We believe that only a combination of rights-based approach, innovative prevention methods, and direct community engagement in program design and delivery can stop the rising HIV epidemic among MSM in Georgia.

ECOM remains committed to continue supporting Georgian community, civil society and governmental counterparts in these efforts.

Sources:

Georgian Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center (IDACIRC)  
National Center for Disease Control and Public Health of Georgia (NCDC)  
Curacio International Foundation (CIF)