



Eurasian Coalition on Male Health

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FACTSHEET

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- Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM) works in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) which includes 15 countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine.
- Same-sex sexual relations between men have long been criminalized in this region, first under Tsarist Russia and then for much of the Soviet era.ⁱ Today, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan continue to criminalize homosexual behavior.ⁱⁱ
- Russia and Kazakhstan have enacted laws banning the dissemination of information about nontraditional sexual orientations among minors. Kyrgyzstan is currently considering enacting a similar bill.ⁱⁱⁱ
- In Russia, this law has been used in a number of different situations, including the prosecution of LGBT rights activist, Elena Klimova and the dismissal of a teacher in St. Petersburg.^{iv}
- No country in the region has implemented marriage equality.^v However, the Estonian Parliament passed a Cohabitation Act in 2014 that provides legal recognition for same-sex cohabiting couples.^{vi}
- Only Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia, and Moldova have enacted legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.^{vii}
- The High Specialized Court of Ukraine for Civil and Criminal Cases recently ruled that discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited under Article 2-1 of the Ukrainian Labor Code, however, antidiscrimination measures protecting LGBT people have yet to be codified in Ukrainian legislation.^{viii}
- Only two countries have existing legislation on hate crimes. Lithuania prohibits hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation, while Georgia prohibits hate crimes on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender identity.^{ix}
- Every country in the region imposes abusive requirements on transgender people wishing to change their legal gender. This ranges from psychological, medical, or surgical interventions to forced sterilization to outright bans on amending one's legal gender.^x
- At the end of 2013, there were estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The number of new HIV infections in Eastern Europe and Central Asia has consistently increased in the last decade.^{xi}
- The majority of early cases of HIV in EECA were identified among MSM in the late 1980s.^{xii}
- The prevalence of HIV among men who have sex with men (MSM) has been increasing in EECA over the past several years. Surveys in many areas of the region show that HIV prevalence is up to 10 times higher among MSM than among the general population.^{xiii}

- HIV prevalence among MSM in Russia has tripled over the last five years.^{xiv}
- In Ukraine, MSM are expected to comprise nearly a quarter of all new HIV cases by the end of 2015.^{xv}
- In all EECA countries, except Latvia and Lithuania, laws exist criminalizing HIV transmission.^{xvi}
- Russia and Turkmenistan continue to restrict the entry, stay, and residence of people living with HIV.^{xvii}

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