



3rd REGIONAL CONSULTATION
on HIV among MSM and Trans*People in EECA



Co-sponsored by
WHO Regional Office for Europe

3rd Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans*People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Concept

18-19 November 2019

**Park Inn by Radisson Meriton Conference & Spa Hotel Tallinn
Tallinn, Estonia**

Background

The HIV epidemic continues to grow rapidly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) with MSM and transgender people being among the most affected key populations. The HIV prevalence among MSM has reached the level of a concentrated epidemic in most countries of the region and in all sub-regions: South Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Baltic countries, South Caucasus, and Eastern Europe proper.

With support from the Global Fund and other donors, countries, both governments and civil society, have developed services and infrastructure crucial for effective prevention and treatment of HIV infection. However, as international donors are leaving the region, there is risk of losing the infrastructure and experience, especially those aimed at key populations. Governments increasingly support importance of collaboration with organizations of key population communities and other NGOs. However, this understanding has not yet led to sustainable domestic funding for HIV programs targeting MSM and trans*people.

While there is a long-awaited increase in availability and effectiveness of ARV treatment of HIV infection in the region, there is no active discourse about developing and implementing effective national HIV prevention strategies among key populations, and limited efforts to address human rights-related barriers to services, including stigma and discrimination.

While some countries of the region introduce protective legislation, their enforcement lags behind. Other countries continue enforcing restrictive laws and policies that limit the rights of LGBT people and reduce access to HIV services for MSM and trans*people.



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International cooperation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals has not resulted in increased space for meaningful dialogue and cooperation between governments and civil organizations. In several countries in the region, the space for civil society continues shrinking, and ability for civil society to access domestic funding is limited.

It is clear that the level of existing HIV response in the region is insufficient to achieve the 90-90-90 goals.

In response to this situation, key players in the EECA region need to identify the ways of moving forward, take stock of effective responses, apply tools for strategic cooperation, knowledge transfer and implementation. Key factors to achieving success are strengthening the knowledge base, developing a common regional information space and strengthening capacity for HIV interventions.

Cooperation between various stakeholders including state health structures, community organizations, academia, pharmaceutical companies, medical associations, is crucial for an effective response to the HIV epidemic.

To address these issues, Eurasian Coalition on Male Health — ECOM is initiating the Third Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans*People in EECA.

Goal of the 3rd Regional Consultation

The overall goal of the 3rd Regional Consultation is to develop multi-stakeholder approaches for acceleration of national and regional responses to the HIV epidemic among MSM and trans*people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Objectives of the 3rd Regional Consultation:

- **To take stock of the current status of regional response to HIV epidemic among MSM and trans*people and community engagement in EECA**
Recent data on the status of HIV epidemic among MSM and trans*people in EECA will be presented, including data on HIV prevalence, size estimations of key populations, impact of migration, as well as programmatic responses that work. Results of implementation of ECOM's Regional Program "Right to Health" supported by the Global Fund, will be presented.
- **To discuss accessibility of funds and scope of HIV programs among MSM and trans*people in EECA**



National and international experts and leaders will share and discuss best practice in, and perspectives of, financial sustainability of HIV programs targeting MSM and trans*people. The focus will be placed on diversification of resources primarily through increasing accessibility of national and other funding alternative to the Global Fund. In addition, the Consultation will facilitate the discussion on topics such as implementation of innovative approaches such as PrEP, community testing and self-testing, U=U and “test and treat”, as well as integration between HIV, STIs and hepatitis services, patient-centered approaches and other key WHO’ recommendations.

- **To present changes in legislative environment and best legislative and regulatory practices related to SOGI and HIV in EECA**

Based on information from ECOM and other stakeholders, community and government representatives will discuss ways of cooperation and partnership aimed at creating favorable legislative environment and enforcement mechanisms and capacities, as well as milestones along that pathway, where representatives of key populations, including gay men and MSM and trans*people, can receive timely HIV support and take meaningful participation in planning and implementation of the national HIV responses.

- **To agree on roadmaps to accelerate and sustain national and regional responses to the HIV epidemic among MSM and trans*people in EECA**

Based on presented achievements, best practices, tools, and lessons learned, participants will discuss ways of strengthening and scaling up the national and regional HIV responses.

Key Topics

- Achievements, best practices and lessons learnt in the HIV response;
- Community participation in the design and implementation of national health and human rights policies;
- Domestic funding: today and tomorrow. Accessibility of state funding and sustainability issues of HIV programs targeting MSM and trans*people;
- Strategic information. Differences in approaches and data quality in sub-regions;
- HIV services: standards, accessibility, services cascade, country experiences in provision;
- Health and rights issues of trans*community;
- Legal environment related to access to HIV services for MSM and trans*people in EECA;



- Stigma and discrimination. Human rights protection mechanisms and tools in EECA in 2017-2019;
- New challenges and approaches in community work (chemsex, PrEP, U=U, etc.).

Co-sponsored by

- World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe.

Organizers

- Eurasian Coalition on Male Health — ECOM;
- United Nations Joint Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) – EECA Regional Support Team;
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) - EECA Regional Office;
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – HIV, Health and Development Team, Istanbul Regional Hub;
- MPact Global Action for Gay Men’s Health and Rights.

Organizing Committee

The Organizing Committee, consisting of representatives of civil society, governmental structures, and UN agencies, guides ECOM in preparation of the Regional Consultation by providing advice on the content and planned outcomes of the Consultation.

Financial Support

The Consultation is financially supported by:

- Eurasian Coalition on Male Health – ECOM;
- Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;
- World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe;
- MPact Global Action for Gay Men’s Health and Rights.

Participants

Over 120 participants are expected at the Consultation representing LGBT community-based and other non-governmental organizations, governmental agencies, international and donor organizations, and UN agencies.



Agenda

The agenda is developed by ECOM and the Organizing Committee with input from stakeholders in the region. ECOM conducted a survey to identify preferences and areas of interest. The organizers have been inviting suggestions for presentations as well as reaching out to particular experts to talk on specific topics.

Final Documents

ECOM will prepare a final Report of the Regional Consultation.

Technical coordination is provided by the ECOM Secretariat.

Focal point for the Regional Consultation at ECOM:

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