



3^я РЕГИОНАЛЬНАЯ КОНСУЛЬТАЦИЯ

по ВИЧ среди МСМ и транс*людей в ВЕЦА

18-19 ноября 2019 года | Таллинн, Эстония



Проводится совместно
с Европейским региональным бюро ВОЗ

Sex and sexuality of transgender people in the context of the HIV response

Results of a study from 2017-2018





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Igor Burtsev, Saint-Petersburg, Russia

Graduate Student Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia.

Research areas: gender, transgender, sexuality, masculinity, well-being.

Administrative coordinator Trans*Coalition in the Post-Soviet Region.

Psychologist Initiative Group “Human to Human”.

ECOM Member. WPATH Member.





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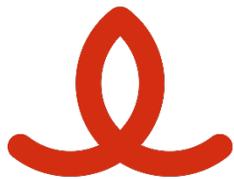


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Depathologization and challenges

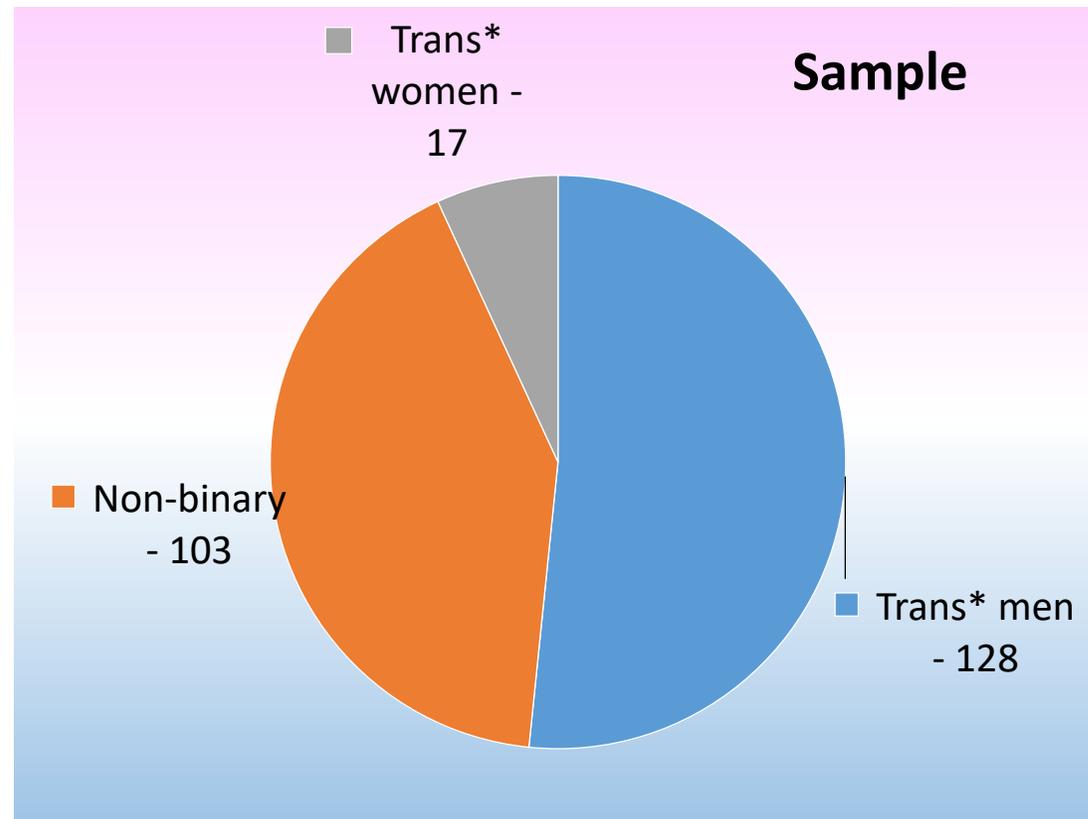
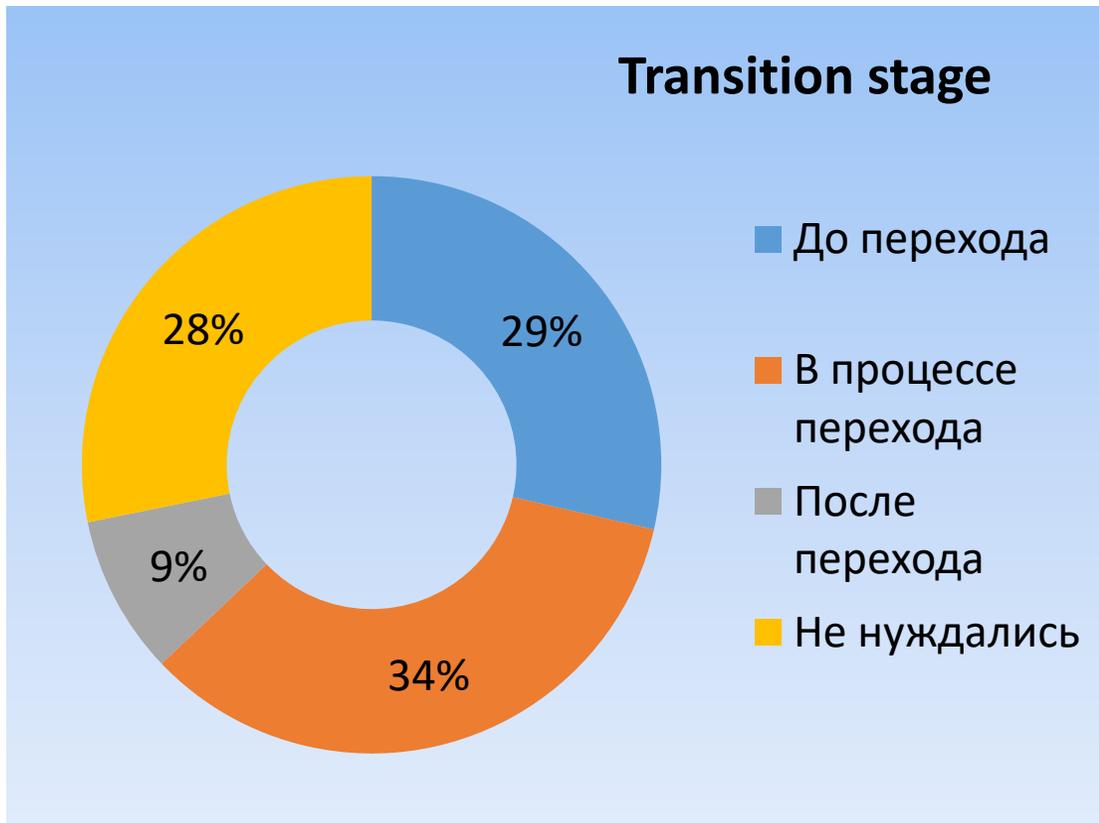
- The sexuality of transgender people is an important component of their quality of life.
- The inattention of official medicine and a lack of knowledge in this area leads to an increased risk of HIV and STI infection.
- Before us, the issue of risky sexual behavior among various groups of trans* people had not previously been studied in Russia.





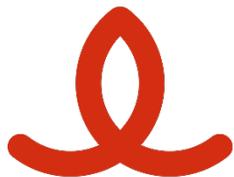
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Sample comprised of 248 transgender people between the ages of 16 and 44



* In relation to trans* women, we can only talk about existing trends.





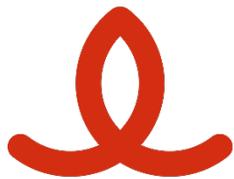
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Methodologies

1. Utrecht Gender Dysphoria Scale.
2. General Health Questionnaire, GHQ-12.
3. Sexual Attitudes for Self and Others Questionnaire.
4. Sexual Arousability Inventory – SAI.
5. SDI Questionnaire.
6. The Multidimensional Sexual Self-Concept Questionnaire.
7. Body-Image Questionnaire (BIQ).
8. Body Self-Image Questionnaire.



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Non-binary persons

- The most important result of the study was the identification of a number of factors contributing to risky sexual behavior among non-binary people, a group that is usually not taken into account when dealing with risks related to HIV and STIs.
- Non-binary persons have a better general attitude towards their physicality, therefore they feel quite free during intimate contact, and much less frequently and to a lesser extent experience body dysphoria, which is mainly connected to external assessments (and in this sense, it is quite strong and triggering, since it largely prevents their socialization).



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Non-binary persons



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- Non-binary persons often engage in a variety of sexual practices – polyamory, swinging, anal/oral/vaginal sex, chemsex, BDSM practices, etc.
- At the same time, a careless attitude towards safe sexual contacts is observed.
- Non-binary people have the lowest level of self-control and reflection compared to other groups.
- They are preoccupied with sexual/erotic aspects and think a lot about their sexuality, but in practice, do not think about safety, focusing rather on sex or on their partner.



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Non-binary transgender people, being largely a **“blind zone”** for society and something incomprehensible, and “unhealthy” to many specialists, raise serious concerns about their situation with regard to **risky sexual behavior and the risks of HIV and STI infection.**

Unfortunately, it should be noted that there are only a few references to the **importance of prevention work** and support among this group.



Trans* men

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- Sex-related tension is higher among this group due to body dysphoria and the lack or poor quality of operations.
- Often, trans* men will take advantage of any sexual contact, if their body and sexuality will be accepted and “can be tolerated” by their partner.
- Their sexuality is rejected by society, which makes them more willing to take advantage of random opportunities.
- However, trans* men are preoccupied with their health and are aware of the importance of visiting doctors, even despite their dysphoria and the shame associated with it.



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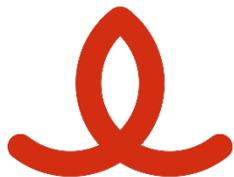
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Trans* men



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- Engage in anal, vaginal, and oral sexual contact.
- If their body is accepted, their level of anxiety decreases sharply, and serious risks may arise.
- At the same time, visits to specialists (for trans* men, these include gynecologists) cause protest and bouts of dysphoria.
- The normative pattern “men are never sick” also works.



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Trans* women

Due to the small sample size, we can only detail trends observed during our study

- Trans* women experience the greatest discomfort of all groups due to their bodily characteristics.
- However, they manage their sexual behavior very well and highly value themselves as a sexual partner. At the same time, their level of satisfaction with their sexual contacts is the lowest.
- They also showed the lowest level of fear related to sexual contacts, and the highest level of confidence that they can protect themselves from sexual problems.
- Thus, the level of anxiety that could help protect against unwanted sexual contact and the danger of infection is reduced.



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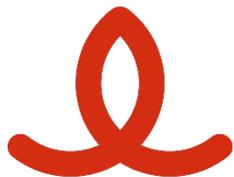
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Trans* women



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- Avoid visits to doctors, and if they do visit doctors, they experience discomfort due negative attitudes.
- Their sexual contacts are often dictated by random circumstances.
- Their low rates of visiting doctors is the reason that diseases and infections are not detected in a timely manner.



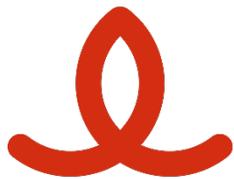
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Conclusions

- Trans* people are not only at risk, but are also **deprived of the opportunity to receive information** about their sexuality.
- In addition, trans* people are unwilling to visit doctors due to the **high degree of distrust** and **the lack of understanding of the specifics** of working with them.
- We want to note: **without studying the characteristics of the sexuality and sexual behavior of transgender people, it is not possible to develop high-quality prevention programs for them.**
- **Social stigmatization and pathologization** are significant factors that increase risks, and force trans* people to avoid caring for their health and discussing their sexuality with doctors, to be ashamed of their bodies, and to fail to seek medical care.



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Conclusions



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- It is important to pay attention to the **group of non-binary people, whose level of risky sexual behavior is very high.**
- Non-binary people **do not fall under** the radar of many specialists and researchers, and remain unnoticed. However, their unique situation may **pose risks for their sexual and mental health.**
- It is equally important to pay attention **to the group of transgender men.** In the post-Soviet region, this group is quantitatively about three times larger than the group of transgender women, which distinguishes our region from Western countries. However, this group is still overlooked by researchers, and often **most specialists are not even aware** of their existence and their problems.



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Thank you!

Igor Burtsev, Saint Petersburg

Initiative Group “Human to Human”

Trans*Coalition in the Post-Soviet Region

igor.burtsev@outlook.com

+7-911-737-29-50 (telephone, Telegram, WhatsApp)



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