



*Eurasian Coalition
on Male Health*

ANNUAL REPORT EURASIAN COALITION ON MALE HEALTH **2018**



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EURASIAN COALITION
ON MALE HEALTH**

2018



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
CCM	Country coordinating mechanism
CRG	“Communities, Rights, and Gender” Technical Support Program
CS	ECOM Communications Strategy
ECAT	ECOM Capacity Assessment Tool
ECOM	Eurasian Coalition on Male Health
EECA	Eastern Europe and Central Asia, region
EGHR	Expert Group on MSM Health and Rights in Ukraine
Global Fund	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people
MSM	Men who have sex with men
MSMIT	Implementing Comprehensive HIV and STI Programmes with Men Who Have Sex with Men: Practical Guidance for Collaborative Interventions
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PLH	People living with HIV
PrEP	Pre-exposure prophylaxis
PUD/PUID	People using (injecting) drugs
SC	ECOM Steering Committee
SOGI	Sexual orientation and gender identity
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
TB	Tuberculosis
TS	Technical support
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VL	Viral load
WHO	World Health Organization

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Colleagues, friends, associates!

I am pleased to present you with ECOM's achievements in 2018.

We were able to make rapid progress in the development of the Coalition and to maintain our momentum. The Coalition is dynamically developing in accordance with its Strategic Plan for 2017-2021.

Studies conducted by ECOM allowed for the collection of strategic information on the HIV epidemic among gay men, other men who have sex with men (MSM), and trans people, which was lacking in the evidence base in our region. The vast amount of data we collected related to the health of gay men, other MSM, and trans people is used by both the Secretariat, as well as by Coalition members and partners to advocate for access to HIV services, the primary and most important area of our activities.

The human rights work carried out by ECOM should also be highlighted separately. By analyzing available information, we were able to identify regional trends related to the observance of human rights, in particular the right to health of gay men, other MSM and trans people.

Activities related to technical support and informational work are rapidly developing.

In 2018, after an 8-year hiatus, ECOM organized a Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People, which helped to provide an overall picture of the situation in the region.

ECOM's Steering Committee works actively to oversee the activities of the Secretariat and to provide an overall strategic vision for the organization. The Secretariat is composed of prominent experts in their fields. As a result, ECOM received the highest rating from the Global Fund for the results of the second year of implementation of the grant for the regional program "Right to Health".

It can be noted with satisfaction that, with the help of ECOM, the community itself in EECA, and partnerships between the non-governmental and state sectors at the national and regional levels are being strengthened.

Of course, much remains to be done to fight the growing HIV epidemic among gay men, other MSM and trans people in the region. This report shows that ECOM and its partners have developed the necessary strength and experience to do this.

Vitaly Djuma,
Executive Director of the Eurasian
Coalition on Male Health

ECOM's MISSION

ECOM is an association of gifted and compassionate leaders and activists from all over the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, committed to promoting better health and human rights for men who have sex with men and trans people in their countries.

Eurasian Coalition on Male Health is an international non-governmental association, located in Tallinn, Estonia. We are a membership-based association, open for non-profits and individuals working in the field of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention and treatment for gay men and other men who have sex with men, and transgender people, in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA).

ЕКОМ объединяет



54

организации и физических лица

Члены ЕКОМ находятся в



15

странах мира

ЕКОМ реализует



7

проектов в регионе ВЕЦА

Albania

Eugert Aliaj

Armenia

PINK Armenia
> www.pinkarmenia.org

Humanitarian NGO "New Generation"
> www.ngngo.net

NGO "For Strong Future"

Azerbaijan

NGO "Gender and Development"

Belarus

Andrey Zavaley
> www.delopi.by

Bulgaria

NGO "Single Step Foundation"
> www.singlestep.bg

Denmark

Anton Mozalevskis

Estonia

NGO "Estonian Network of PLWH"
> www.ehpv.ee

Eestimaa Venelaste LGBT Kogukond
"VEK LGBT"

MTÜ Eesti Positiivse Tervise Liit

Maksym Kasianchuk

Vitaly Djuma

Georgia

Center for Information and Counseling on
Reproductive Health "Tanadgoma"
> www.tanadgoma.ge

Kazakhstan

Public Organization
"Human Health Institute"
> www.hhi.kz

Public Foundation "AIDS Foundation East-
West in Kazakhstan"
>> www.afew.kz

Vitaliy Vinogradov

Roman Dudnik

Amir Shaikhezhanov

Kyrgyzstan

Public Organization "Kyrgyz Indigo"
> www.indigo.kg

LGBT Organization "Labrys"
> www.labrys.kg

Lithuania

Association of HIV-affected Women and
Their Families

Anna Dovbakh

Moldova

Veaceslav Mulear

Russia

Socially-oriented Public Organization
"Phoenix PLUS"
> www.parniplus.com

Center for Social and Information Initiatives
"Action"
> www.center-action.org

"Sibalt" Health and Social Protection Center
(NGO "Pulsar" Project)
> www.pilsarrussia.ru

Charitable Foundation "For support of social
initiatives and public health"
> www.lasky.ru

"Positive Wave" Social Support and
Healthcare Foundation
> www.pozvolna.ru

Natalia Solovyeva
(T9 NSK Service Project for Transgender
People and their Close Ones)
> www.t9msk.org

Non-profit Partnership "PharmActa. Quality
and Standards"
> www.pharmacta.ru

Public Organization "Humanitarian Project"
> www.human.org.ru

Krasnodar LGBT Social Movement "Revers"

Kirill Barskiy

Vitaly Melkovskiy

Iurii Avdeev

Switzerland

Life4me.plus to fight AIDS, Hepatitis C and
Tuberculosis
> www.Life4me.plus

Ukraine

Charity Foundation "Future Without AIDS"
> www.fwa.od.ua

The Centre for Social Development and
Men's Health Support Foundation
(menZDRAV Foundation)
> www.PrEP.in.UA

Public Organization "ALLIANCE.GLOBAL"
> www.ga.net.ua

Christopher Adam Obermeyer

Youth Public Movement "Partner"
> www.mypartner.org.ua

All-Ukrainian Charitable Organization
"CONVICTUS UKRAINE"
> www.convictus.org.ua

Vitalii Lavryk

Petro Polyantsev

Anastasia Eva Domani

Ihor Kuzin

Gennady Roschupkin

HPLGBT
>> www.hplgbt.org

Sviatoslav Sheremet

Dmytro Kalinin

Oleg Alekhin

NGO Protego
> www.protego.org.ua



ECOM's SECRETARIAT

Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM)



PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOM'S STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Objectives of ECOM for 2017-2021

1. *Promote the development of activism, leadership, and community mobilization in the field of healthcare.*
2. *Ensure recognition of the issues faced by communities of gay, bisexual, other men who have sex with men, and trans people at different levels of decision-making, and ensure funding for HIV and health programs.*
3. *Contribute to the formation of legal and social environments that ensure the right to health.*
4. *Develop the capacity of ECOM.*

In 2018, the level of coverage by HIV prevention, diagnosis, and treatment programs for key populations, and for MSM and trans people in particular, did not allow for a significant impact on the HIV and TB epidemics in the region. EECA remains the only region in which the number of new HIV infections is growing, which is a result of the lack of access to the comprehensive package of services recommended by WHO for HIV prevention among key populations.

The EECA region as a whole represents the worst situation in the world with respect to the achievement of the "90-90-90" goals, and is lagging behind global targets for the percentage of PLH who know their HIV status, receive treatment, and who have reached an undetectable viral load (VL).

In 2018, ECOM's team focused its efforts on advocating for equal access to HIV services, ensuring their sustainability, as well as on addressing the problems of stigma and discrimination faced by people in all EECA countries.



Vitaly Djuma
ECOM Executive Director

"While the spread of HIV continues to grow, funding from international sources is declining: the Global Fund, which is currently the main source of funding for programs for MSM, is encouraging countries to transition to national funding for HIV programs. However, governments in the region refuse to fund targeted programs for MSM and trans people, arguing that, firstly, these two groups do not have a significant impact on the growth of HIV epidemics in countries, and, secondly, that prevention and treatment programs aimed at the general population are also effective for MSM and trans people. Changing the position of governments can only be done by mobilizing LGBT community organizations and activists for active advocacy, and by providing them with qualitative data about the impact of MSM and trans people on the epidemic and about the effectiveness of existing interventions."

ECOM Strategic Plan > ecom.ngo/what-we-do/stratplan/



DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIVISM, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTHCARE

The ability of representatives of key populations to communicate effectively and to engage in constructive dialogue with governments and other stakeholders to defend their right to health is key to addressing the public health problems they face and to ensure their access to treatment.

In order to achieve its first strategic objective, ECOM focused its efforts on the provision of technical support and on the development of national organizations through its technical support and small grants programs, and also provided support to national activities aimed at mobilizing communities and developing their advocacy capacity.



Key Activities

ECOM's Technical Support Platform

ECOM's Technical Support

More than 20 requests were received by ECOM's Technical Support Program (TS) in 2018. ECOM experts provided technical support to organizations in Armenia, Belarus, Estonia, Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine.

TS Areas: financial management, effective interventions, research among trans people (population size estimations), bio-behavioral research, monitoring field research, focus groups, strategic planning, fundraising, analyzing legal barriers, developing public speaking skills, organizational capacity in strategic management (ECAT recommendations), assistance in collecting best practices, training in project development.

> www.ecom.ngo/en/resource-center/tehnical-support/for-srs/

CRG

The Eurasian Coalition on Male Health, under its technical support program "Communities, Rights, and Health", is a prequalified provider and provides support to civil society and community-based organizations related to their participation in Global Fund activities, including on: CCBI/KA

- Situational analysis and planning;
- Participation in dialogue between countries;
- Program development;
- Monitoring and supervision of grant implementation;
- Participation in the development of a transition strategy for sustainable development.

> www.ecom.ngo/en/base/tech_support/srg/

Small Grants Program

The target groups of ECOM's small grants program are MSM/LGBT, HIV-positive MSM, and MSM-sex worker initiative groups. In 2018, ECOM received 22 small grant applications, of which 8 were approved. The total amount of small grant funding was 79,550 euros.

Grants were received by the following organizations:

- "Gender and Development", Azerbaijan;
- "For Strong Future", Armenia;
- "Help TG Belarus", Belarus;
- "Tanadgoma", Georgia;
- "Shelter", Kyrgyzstan;
- "Margins Skopje (TransFormA)", Macedonia;
- "Phoenix PLUS", Russia;
- "LighT", Tajikistan.

RPPR Group, and JESAP Strategy and Plan

ECOM's Regional Platform for Policy Reform (RPPR) in the field of HIV among MSM and trans people in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Regional Platform) aims to develop a shared vision of priorities, needs, and gaps to ensure the right to health and protect other rights of the target groups, including recognizing and putting an end to the HIV epidemics among these groups.

On 10-11 April, 2018, the first meeting of the RPPR took place in Tallinn, at which its regulations were approved. In addition, the first planning meeting for the development of the Joint Engagement Strategy and Action Plan (JESAP) took place.

The JESAP strategy and plan was developed and approved during the second RPPR meeting, which took place during the 2nd Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.



Alexandr Poluyan
Communications Officer

"2018 was a milestone in the development of ECOM and in the strengthening of even stronger ties between members of the Coalition and partners. The format of communication expanded significantly: we began to use social media more actively, updated the organization's website, and implemented a number of events at different levels, which were successful platforms for expanding interaction between ECOM and its partners.

In 2018, we developed and published a large number of informational materials, including on HIV prevention, protecting the right to health, and on the activism of gay men, other MSM and trans people.

In addition, the communications strategy (CS) of the organization was developed and adopted. It outlines all communication, both internal, and with external partners. The new CS allows for the gradual development and implementation of new communication tools that enable a wider range of target audiences to receive information about ECOM's work and data on the situation of gay and other MSM, and trans people in CEECA."

Promoting Regional Dialogue Media campaign "Chase the virus, not people!"

ECOM was a co-organizer of a regional media campaign.

Main results:

- ✓ the problems of gay men, other MSM, and trans people in EECA countries were given global attention;
 - ✓ cooperation was established with community networks in the region;
 - ✓ ECOM again had the opportunity to widely present the results of its work.
- The overall results of the joint campaign of 9 regional networks, **#chasethevirusnotpeople**: During the conference, more than 13,500 activists from around the world visited the pavilion of the EECA community networks;
 - The action was supported by opinion leaders and representatives of international organizations: Vera Brezhneva (UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador for HIV/AIDS in EECA countries), the artist Conchita Wurst, Peter Sands (Global Fund), Michel Kazatchkine (UN), Vinay Saldanha (UNAIDS), Elena Vovk (WHO);
 - 54 events were held at the platform for the EECA region, including sessions, discussions, meetings, workshops, presentations, and video clips about the problems of communities in EECA;
 - at the traditional **MARCH #aids2018**, the column of marchers from EECA was almost the largest and most noticeable. Vera Brezhneva also joined the march, leading a column of marchers in a t-shirt with the campaign logo.

Support for campaigns in countries

IDAHOT

17 May: on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, ECOM conducted an online media campaign to draw attention to the problem of homophobia and transphobia in EECA countries.

U=U

Life4Me+ organized a global awareness campaign in the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia aimed at disseminating scientifically proven information that an HIV-positive person with an undetectable viral load cannot be the source of an infection and cannot possibly transmit the infection to another person.

Baltic Pride 2018

As part of "Baltic Pride 2018", ECOM held a workshop on the integration of health issues into the agendas of LGBT organizations.

During the meeting, the results of research conducted as part of the regional program "Right to Health" were presented. ECOM participated in the Equality March, where it highlighted that LGBT health is an important part of public health.

Ukrainian LGBT Conference

In October 2018, the 11th National Conference of the MSM-service and LGBT Movement took place in Ukraine. ECOM participated in the work of the conference organizing committee, provided an opportunity for partners from the EECA region to participate in the conference, and held a meeting on strategic information.

Participation in and organization of international events

EECAAC 2018

Vitaly Djuma co-chaired a parallel discussion on **"The role of the community in the prevention and treatment of HIV infection among MSM"** and **presented the report** "The HIV epidemic among MSM: Visible, but Invisible".

AIDS 2018

AIDS 2018 is one of the largest events for professionals involved in HIV/AIDS prevention programs. ECOM took an active part in the conference events, including press conferences for the EECA region, meetings, and seminars. ECOM also held two of its own events, and assisted in the work of the EECA zone.

- Scholarships(7 people)
- ECOM participated in the creation of the EECA zone
- ECOM carried out 2 events at the EECA zone (game, discussion)
- Staff participated in more than 30 meetings and discussions
- ECOM together with MPact supported the photo exhibition "Double coming-out, double stigma"(Russia)



ENSURING RECOGNITION OF THE PROBLEMS OF MSM AND TRANS COMMUNITIES AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING AND ALLOCATING FUNDING TO HIV AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

As part of the implementation of the second objective of its Strategic Plan, ECOM is focusing its efforts on ensuring recognition of the problems of MSM and trans communities in countries of the region and is advocating for funding for public health programs





2nd Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

After an eight-year break, the 2nd Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia was held in Tbilisi (Georgia).

The Consultation was focused on analyzing the main challenges in the fight against HIV among MSM and trans people, understanding the most effective approaches to tackling this problem, and on strengthening the regional response to the epidemic.

The 130 participants from 22 countries not only had the opportunity to share experiences, knowledge, best practices, and innovative approaches in their work, but also to think together about further steps to reduce HIV prevalence among gay men, other MSM, and trans people.

Together, more than 60 people spoke at the event and presented their reports in 16 different sessions, including plenary and parallel sessions, as well as workshops.

Recommendations developed on the basis of the proposals of the speakers and participants of the Consultation were addressed to all stakeholders, including states, civil society organizations, and international organizations and donors, and were grouped according to key areas of the response to the HIV epidemic among MSM and trans people in the EECA region.

They included:

- strengthening the role of MSM and trans people in decision-making processes and their participation in the implementation of national HIV responses;
- funding and sustainability of services;
- human rights and inclusive environments;
- HIV/sexual health of MSM and trans people;
- standardization of services for MSM and trans people;
- innovative approaches in HIV responses;
- community mobilization and capacity building.

List of Recommendations › www.ecom.ngo/en/2nd-consultation/



MSMIT

Implementing Comprehensive HIV and STI Programmes with Men Who Have Sex with Men: Practical Guidance for Collaborative Interventions

ECOM continues its work on promoting this guide for implementing comprehensive HIV and STI programs among MSM.

The MSMIT tool was presented to 130 stakeholders at an informational discussion at the 2nd Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Tbilisi, 31 May-1 June, 2018).

In Georgia, ECOM supported the translation of the MSMIT into Georgian. Electronic and printed copies of the MSMIT in Georgian will be used as part of a training for medical workers and LGBT activists, which will be conducted by Equality Movement and the UNFPA country office in 2019.

In Kyrgyzstan, a new tool was developed to better structure and improve analysis of the results of the cascade of HIV services for MSM. The tool helps to organize and conduct structured expert meetings at which the data collected for the cascade is analyzed on the basis of recommendations contained in the MSMIT. The tool will be piloted in 2019.

In Belarus, a national MSMIT training plan was developed. With the support of UNFPA and the NGO "BelNetworks AntiAIDS" (БелСети АнтиСПИД), an agreement was reached with the Ministry of Health of Belarus according to which the training will be held for all members of the CCM. The Ministry will contribute to this training as well. In order to increase the interest of CCM members in the training, it was decided to present the MSMIT together with the IDUIT and the SWIT, as this is more in line with the epidemic situation in the country.

[Download document](#) ›

Study on the availability of PrEP in EECA countries

ECOM conducted a study on the availability of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The study included a review of PrEP projects being implemented in the region by the end of 2018, an elaboration of plans to expand these projects and to develop new ones, an identification of the main obstacles and barriers to introducing and expanding PrEP programs in the region, as well as the development of recommendations for eliminating these barriers.

The situations in 17 countries were analyzed as part of the assessment: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The assessment showed that there is still a low level of PrEP availability in the EECA region.

» [Download the document](#)

Analysis of funding gaps in HIV/AIDS programs for MSM in EECA countries

The analysis conducted by ECOM describes international approaches, studies analyzing funding gaps in HIV programs for MSM, and recommendations based on the example of a number of countries in the region: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan. The review summarizes available data on funding gaps in HIV prevention and treatment programs for gay men, other MS, and trans people in a number of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) in order to make informed recommendations regarding the funding of such programs.

» [Download the document](#)

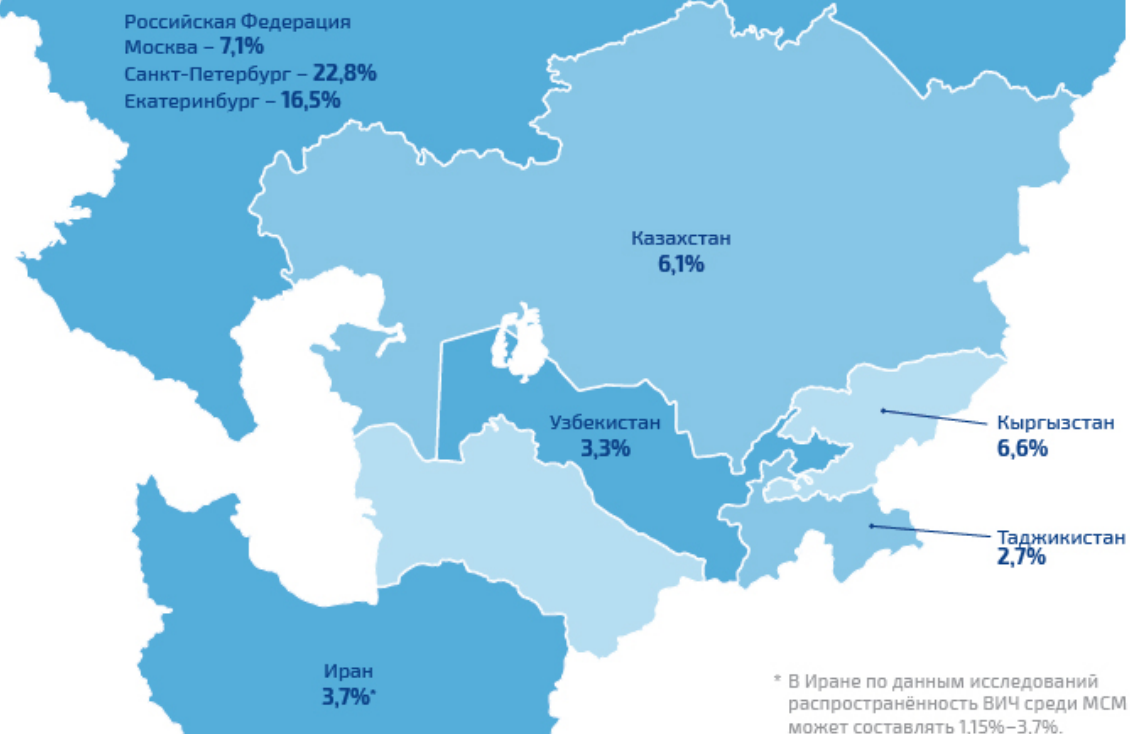
ТРЕНИНГОВЫЙ МОДУЛЬ

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ РУКОВОДСТВА «РЕАЛИЗАЦИЯ КОМПЛЕКСНЫХ ПРОГРАММ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ВИЧ И ИППП С МУЖЧИНАМИ, ИМЕЮЩИМИ СЕКС С МУЖЧИНАМИ» (MSMIT)

Европейская коалиция по мужскому здоровью при поддержке Фонда ООН по народонаселению

A training module on using the MSMIT was developed by ECOM and is intended for employees of public health institutions, managers of HIV and STI programs, representatives of community and civil society non-governmental organizations, as well as for healthcare workers. It may also be of interest to international donors, and to policymakers and advocates working in the healthcare field. It was based on WHO recommendations and developed using research data and best practices. Today, the MSMIT is the most up-to-date and comprehensive guide and is referred to by all international experts.

The training module is available in Russian and English » www.ecom.ngo/en/projects/msmit/



Briefs on HIV among MSM and Trans People in the CEECA Region

The briefs reflect the HIV situation among MSM, measures taken to prevent HIV among this group, epidemic trends, difficulties in conducting prevention work, as well as recommendations on reducing HIV prevalence among gay men and other MSM in the country.

14 briefs were published:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine; in the future, more countries will be covered.

» www.ecom.ngo/en/country_briefs/



RAGSI: Regional Advisory Group on Strategic Information

The second RAGSI meeting was held in 2018. At the meeting, the results of research carried out in countries of the CEECA region were discussed, and a guide on strategic information, protocols for the final assessment of the "Right to Health" project, and protocols for new research were approved.

Support of the Expert Group on MSM Health and Rights in Ukraine (EGHR)

The group continues to provide technical support to Ukrainian partners and international organizations, assesses the HIV situation among MSM in Ukraine, and documents best practices in prevention interventions among MSM. An assessment of the participation of LGBT people in decision-making processes was also carried out.



MEASURES FOR THE FORMATION OF A FRIENDLY LEGAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT TO HEALTH



Meeting with the Independent Expert on SOGI

The UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Victor Madrigal-Borloz, conducted a visit to Georgia from 25 September to 5 October, 2018.

He held a separate meeting with ECOM's Legal Officer, Yuri Yoursky.

During the meeting, Yuri Yoursky presented the latest results of ECOM's research, which included data on Georgia, and also presented ECOM's work in the CEECA region.

As part of the regional program "Right to Health", national reports on rights violations, including the right to health of MSM and trans people, were developed. In total, 67 cases of rights violations were documented in 2018.

Reports to UN committees: experience of Belarus and Macedonia

The 124th session of the UN Human Rights Committee was held from 8-9 October, 2018 in Geneva, during which the official government delegation and a coalition of human rights organizations presented their reports on the observance of human rights in the Republic of Belarus. ECOM's Legal Officer, Yuri Yoursky, presented a report on the situation of LGBTI people in Belarus. The report was prepared in cooperation with the initiative group "Identity and Law" (Belarus).

The country received recommendations that are binding on the government. A separate block devoted to SOGI emphasized the problem of discrimination towards LGBT people in Belarus before an international audience, which, at the very least, ensures that the government cannot stay silent about the issue.

A report on violations of the rights of trans women sex workers in Macedonia was submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which resulted in direct recommendations to the country.

Referencing issues related to HIV, access to services, and legislation governing gender reassignment procedures, and highlighting the problem of discrimination towards the trans community in Macedonia before an international audience will force the government to take decisive measures to protect the rights of all its citizens.

Rights sensitization and activism skills training



The main focus of the training on legal literacy and activism skills was the use of UN treaty bodies by NGOs for advocacy purposes, collecting evidence, monitoring and documenting violations of the human rights of LGBT people, and Universal Periodic Review as a civil society advocacy tool.

During the training, participants from Armenia, Georgia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia learned how treaty bodies work, how they differ from other UN bodies and mechanisms, and why it is important and how to work with them at the national and international levels.



Sessions reviewing the goals and objectives of Universal Periodic Review (a UN mechanism) and its importance in advocating for the rights of the LGBT community reviewed the steps necessary for advocacy work with the UPR: from writing a report to promoting recommendations and their subsequent adoption by state parties. Data obtained was consolidated during a simulation of a preliminary UPR session for civil society.

Guide on the “secret client” methodology developed

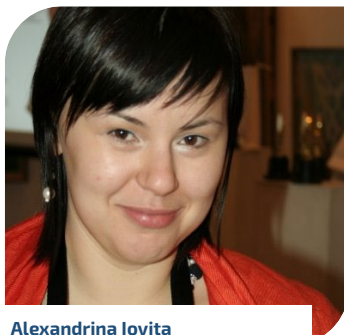
Quality and accessible services that are free from stigma and discrimination are a necessary component of a successful fight against HIV, especially among key populations.

The guide describes a methodology for evaluating health services that can be used not only by organizations working with MSM and trans people, but also by those working with other key populations.

Regional report on violations of the rights to health of gay men, other MSM, and trans people in the CEECA region in 2017

In 2017, the LGBT community monitored human rights violations, in particular the right to health, in 5 countries of the CEECA region as part of the regional program “Right to Health” implemented by ECOM. 35 such cases were documented in 2017.

High levels of homophobia and transphobia, social stigma, discriminatory legislation, and the failure of states to fulfill their obligations, are the main barriers to realizing the right to health.



Alexandrina Iovita
Global Fund Technical Consultant

“Baseline assessments conducted in two countries of the CEECA region, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, with the support of the GF show that gay and other MSM and trans people face high levels of homophobia and transphobia and related stigma and discrimination, in particular in medical institutions and in society in general. They also face violence, harassment by police, and a lack of protection. There are no specific antidiscrimination provisions that provide protections on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in the legislation of many countries of the region. Meanwhile, discriminatory laws or legislative attempts to ban “gay propaganda” will create further barriers to the protection of human rights and will increase vulnerability to HIV, other health problems, and human rights violations.”

The most common cases of violations of the right to health are the adoption of discriminatory laws, including both general laws (for example prohibitions on “gay propaganda”), as well as public health laws (for example, imposing criminal liability for HIV transmission), which indirectly limit the right to health of marginalized groups.



An analysis of national legislation related to LGBT rights and HIV was carried out

As part of the analysis, existing legislative barriers that prevent gay men, other men who have sex with men and trans people from realizing their right to health, and in particular, from accessing HIV prevention and treatment services, were identified

When analyzing legal practices, judicial practices, information from activists and organizations involved in documenting and fighting human rights abuses, communications in the press, and reports of non-governmental organizations to international human rights bodies were all taken into account.



National reports on violations of the rights to health of gay, bisexual, other MSM and trans people

National reports detail the protection of the right to health in national contexts, and describe the situation related to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity, the adoption of discriminatory legislation, and the complete or partial lack of health services.



International standards and principles on SOGI and HIV

This document contains information about international standards and principles related to SOGI and HIV.

It includes excerpts from UN recommendations, Council of Europe documents, UN international covenants, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international recommendations of UNAIDS, as well as from the Yogyakarta Principles.



Training module for civil servants

The module is intended for trainers and training groups planning to work with medical professionals, government officials, and law enforcement agencies.

The general idea of the module is to demonstrate to people upon whom the life and health of other people depend, how stigma and discrimination can affect the lives of others.

The training module was developed taking into account the existing experience of many experts working with MSM and trans people in EECA countries, as well as with regard to national characteristics, which allows the module to be adapted to the conditions of any country in the EECA region.

Before publication, the module was piloted in Armenia, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan, and demonstrated its effectiveness.

"In 2018, the training team from "Kyrgyz Indigo" conducted trainings for instructors from the Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Advanced Training (KGMiPK), and for professors and cadets of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The first two trainings were aimed at training instructors to take the recommendations of the module into account in their work.

The module consists of sections on forming tolerant attitudes of professional groups towards patients and citizens. As part of the training team, I applied the methods, tools, and advice that I received from the ECOM training module. For example, role playing, focusing on getting feedback, and adapting your session to your particular audience. The tool systematized our knowledge and helped to clearly understand what changes we want from our interaction with government officials."



Temir Oroztegin
NGO Kyrgyz Indigo



Comprehensive training module on fighting stigma and discrimination towards gay and other MSM and trans people

The training module may be useful for both experienced trainers and activists, as well as for those just starting out.

It can be used in its complete form, but can also be adapted in accordance with the goals, objectives, duration, and target audience of a specific training.

The training module was piloted by ECOM during the organization and carrying out of a training for managers of the project "Together for our rights", which took place in June 2017 in Kvareli (Georgia).



ECOM's PROJECTS



REGIONAL PROGRAM "RIGHT TO HEALTH"

GOAL – contribute to an increased uptake and retention across the continuum of HIV care for MSM and trans people in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

OBJECTIVE 1. Contribute to increasing MSM and trans community participation in decision-making in national HIV responses.

OBJECTIVE 2. Contribute to building the capacity of MSM and trans organizations by strengthening organizational structures, technical competence and fundraising capacity.

OBJECTIVE 3. Strengthen enabling environments for HIV services for MSM and trans people, through fighting stigma and discrimination, promoting and protecting human rights, and removing legal and policy barriers.

PARTNERS in countries: Humanitarian NGO "New Generation" (Armenia), Republican Youth Public Organization "Vstrecha" (Belarus), Equality Movement (Georgia), Public Organization "Kyrgyz Indigo" (Kyrgyzstan), and Stronger Together, Association for Support of People Living with HIV (Macedonia).

DONOR: Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.



Elena German
Program Director

"2018 was a year of confident and very productive implementation of the regional program "Right to Health". Using only two words, I would describe this year as "unique" and a "first".

For the first time in the region, we developed and presented a unique training module on countering stigma and discrimination towards LGBT people by government officials. This is absolutely work demanded in countries of the region. It has already been successfully implemented by our partners in Armenia, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan.

Also for the first time, our team was able to collect unique data on the region: a cascade of HIV services for MSM. Their analysis showed visible gaps in the provision of such services in countries, which we are actively working to eliminate.

The 2nd Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People in the EECA region, held 8 years after the first one, was a very significant event for ECOM and an absolute success. What about this is "unique" or the "first"? For the first time, an event of this level was initiated and carried out not by international or UN organizations, but by the community itself at the initiative of ECOM. For the first time in many years, countries in the region received direct recommendations from UN committees on improving the life of the LGBT community.

And, of course, the coming together of 9 regional community networks around the unique campaign "Chase the virus, not people!" to advocate for the elimination of stigma and discrimination in EECA countries was a hallmark of our 2018. Today, the problem of discrimination towards communities has emerged more clearly than ever before: its key role in overcoming the HIV/AIDS epidemic is being discussed at the highest levels. I am convinced that access to services is impossible without respectful and nondiscriminatory attitudes towards all people.

2018 helped to form a very powerful advocacy base for ECOM, which we will actively use in the future."

With support of

 **Глобальный фонд**

MONEY CAN BUY HEALTH IF YOU BUDGET FOR IT

OBJECTIVES:

1. Build the capacity of regional networks and their members who represent PUD, MSM, trans people, PLH, and those who work in their interest in EECA to influence investment in sustainable, effective responses to HIV, which address the needs of the target communities.
2. Advocate for strategic, sufficient, and sustainable investments in responses to HIV, which address the needs of PUD, MSM, trans people, and PLH.

EURASIAN REGIONAL CONSORTIUM: ECOM, EHRA, ECUO

GEOGRAPHY: Armenia, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan

DONOR: Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund (RCNF)



Paata Sabelashvili
Advocacy Coordinator

"The Eurasian Regional Consortium has become a unique platform for conducting advocacy on problems related to access to HIV services and the protection of human rights common to different communities. Three communities (MSM/trans people, PUD, and PLH) began to carry out common activities, not just at the regional level, but at the national level as well. Thanks to the consortium approach in countries, coordination, solidarity, and cooperation between communities became possible, not only at the level of community leaders as before, but also between members of the communities."

As part of the project, a new tool for coordination and cooperation between communities was developed. This tool is designed for leaders and activists who want to establish effective interaction between communities of key populations vulnerable to HIV.

The uniqueness of this tool lies in the fact that it is not just a methodological guide, but also contains an interactive roadmap that allows you to identify helping or hindering factors at each stage of cooperation.

<http://together.ecom.ngo>

With support of



DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY OF KEY AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

GOAL: support the meaningful participation of representatives of key populations in processes related to projects supported by the Global Fund.

OBJECTIVES:

- Developing and disseminating information about the work of the Global Fund and about country projects supported by the Global Fund to gay and other MSM and trans people.
- Mobilizing the community to participate in decision-making on issues related to HIV prevention in the community and to projects implemented with Global Fund support.
- Organizing and conducting a regional consultation on the meaningful participation of community representatives in the planning and implementation of national sexual health programs, in particular HIV and STI prevention among gay and other MSM and trans people.

COUNTRY PARTNERS: AFEW-Kazakhstan, GenderDoc-M, Kyrgyz Indigo.

GEOGRAPHY: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova.

DONOR: MPact.



Геннадий Рошупкин,
Координатор развития систем сообществ для охраны здоровья

“Challenges and objectives in different countries are often similar, but, nevertheless, the situation in each country is unique. For example, in Moldova, LGBT organizations are actively involved in the work of the CCM, and for a long time have been productively cooperating with NGOs of other key populations and PLH. In Kyrgyzstan, experts from LGBT NGOs are among those developing state standards on prevention work, and working in teams carrying out national research. In Kazakhstan, LGBT activists are also actively involved in research and in the implementation of the national HIV program. In addition, the government of Kazakhstan has been funding outreach programs for MSM for several years (the amount is modest, but the programs are still being funded). Aside from sharing common problems, in all countries, community organizations are platforms where new experiences are gained.

The goal of this small project is not to create something radically new, but rather to strengthen the ongoing work that ECOM's members and partners are carrying out. We carefully consider which ongoing processes need to be supported, so that they have a greater effect than they would without additional support. We managed to achieve a lot with the support of fairly modest project funds, from which each country received 5,000 USD in 2018.

In Kazakhstan, for example, the project supported elections, which were transparent and open to all stakeholders, to select an MSM representative for the CCM of the country. In addition, a working group on MSM and trans people was created at the CCM, which included more than 15 gay activists from different cities of the country. The project supported cooperation between the National AIDS Center, the Network of PLH, and LGBT activists for the preparation and holding of a school of activists to strengthen HIV prevention among MSM and trans people. More than 20 activists and young outreach workers took part in the school, where they were able to meet with each other and with experts from government institutions, and to learn the basics about communication and advocacy. In addition, short educational materials on the benefits of the national HIV program for MSM and trans people and on how activists can influence the content and funding of this program were developed and disseminated through LGBT websites and social media pages.

In Moldova, the project works to inform communities about how the government and international organizations are planning and launching pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) services for HIV. With the support of UN agencies and thanks to active cooperation between LGBT organizations and organizations representing PLH and other key populations, funding was received from the National Agency for Insurance Medicine for HIV prevention projects targeting key populations, including MSM.

In Kyrgyzstan, the project supports efforts to raise awareness among MSM and trans people in Bishkek and Osh about what the national HIV program does for their health, and about how they can influence the content of the program using tools such as the MSMIT, for example, and by regularly participating in the work of the CCM. In addition, the project supports the regular and active participation of representatives of the LGBT community in the development of new laws that will regulate the state social order system in the country.”

With support of



PrEPare EECA

In the EECA region, PrEP is still not widely available. PrEP should be available, not only in all medical and HIV-service institutions, but also through community NGOs that serve the target populations.

GOAL – Support the leadership of community organizations in promoting and providing pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV to gay and other MSM, and trans people in EECA.

OBJECTIVE 1. – Contribute to increasing demand for pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV within in the community.

OBJECTIVE 2. Advocate to ensure the availability of pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV to gay, other MSM, and trans people in countries of the region.

BARRIERS to implementing PrEP:

- lack of demand due to the low level of awareness about and experience with PrEP,
- significant disconnect between potential clients and key people "controlling access" to the drug, including medical professionals and public health officials.

DONOR: ViiV Healthcare Positive Action



Evgeny Pisemskiy
Board Member

"In the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, NGOs are actively developing pre-exposure prophylaxis projects targeting gay men and other MSM. The greatest success in this work was achieved by the organization "Alliance.Global" (Ukraine). They piloted a project in Kiev and now have wide coverage across Ukraine. A pilot project was also conducted in Georgia. In the country, the opportunity to build upon the success of this PrEP project is now being considered. It is very important to develop and share experiences in implementing PrEP programs with other countries. In this regard, ECOM is implementing an informational campaign aimed at PrEP service providers.

Meanwhile in Russia, the government is considering the possibility of piloting a project, and the organization "Phoenix PLUS" has launched an informational campaign for PrEP clients. The website [PrEP.Love](#) is under development, and will provide information on how gay men and other MSM can use PrEP correctly, including video instructions, an interactive risk assessments test, and a detailed guide for clients with an extensive question and answer rubric."

With support of



Fast Track – Healthy Cities

GOAL: development of models of a sustainable response to HIV and tuberculosis epidemics among key populations in EECA that will contribute to a large extent to achieving the “90-90-90” goals to combat HIV/TB among key populations.

ROLE OF ECOM:

- a regional network representing key populations that facilitates the involvement of key populations in the project's activities at both the regional and city levels;
- provision of technical support to representatives of key populations at both the regional and city levels; coordination of the work of focal points in the project countries: Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Ukraine.

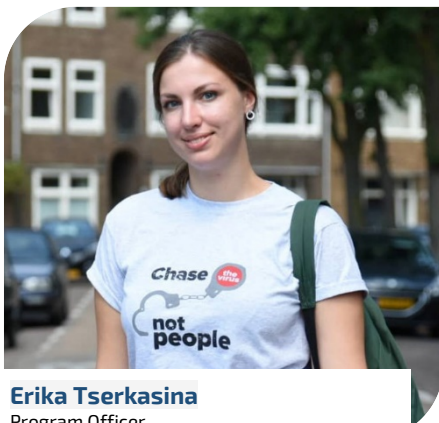
PR AND PARTNERS: Public Health Alliance (Ukraine) together with the organizations AFEW International (Netherlands), licit and Stop TB Partnership (Switzerland) under the technical guidance of UNAIDS EECA.

DONOR: Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

“ECOM's role in the project “Ending the AIDS and TB epidemics in cities of Eastern Europe and Central Asia” consists primarily of supporting MSM in effective and sustainable interaction with municipalities in order to jointly counteract the HIV epidemic in the cities of Almaty, Balti, Odessa, and Sofia. By the end of the second year of the project, a well-established mechanisms for working with municipalities has been put in place in each of the cities: urban programs to combat the HIV epidemic among key populations were developed and adopted, and MSM regularly hold working meetings with the mayor's office and other stakeholders. The main task for the near future is lobbying for municipal funding for HIV services targeting MSM in order to ensure the sustainability of such services.

In addition to work with municipal institutions, as part of this project, ECOM facilitates activities for MSM, such as peer support groups, the provision of legal assistance in cases of rights violations, and informational campaigns on HIV prevention and testing, and on other topics.

Significant progress was achieved, especially in the cities of Sofia and Balti, where, during the implementation of the project, the capacity of several young gay activists was developed. These activists are now actively involved in the project and are working effectively for the benefit of MSM in their city.”



Erika Tserkasina
Program Officer

With support of



TOGETHER FOR OUR HEALTH

GOALS:

- reducing stigma and discrimination, and decreasing the number of rights violations faced by gay men, other MSM and trans people in the health sector, in particular in the field of HIV services;
- expanding access to medical services through cooperation with health professionals and administrations, as well as with local authorities.

OBJECTIVES:

- strengthen the capacity of HIV-service and LGBT NGOs to identify and document cases of stigma, discrimination, and rights violations in the health sector, in particular in the field of HIV services;
- study cases of stigma and discrimination, monitor rights violations in the health sector, in particular in the field of HIV services;
- advocate for the elimination of barriers in the health sector, including in the field of HIV services, relevant to gay men, other MSM and trans people;
- cooperate with health workers and officials to overcome stigma and discrimination, and to decrease the number of rights violations in the health sector, including in the field of HIV services;
- participate in the development of health policies at the local and national levels.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS: "Gender Zed" and "Alliance.Global" (Ukraine), "Equal Opportunities" (Tajikistan), Yug-Antilopa (Kyrgyzstan), "Positive Wave" (Russia), "Kyrgyz Indigo" (Kyrgyzstan)

DONOR: MPACT

"One of the goals of this project was to expand access to medical services through cooperation with healthcare workers and administrations, and with local authorities. Fortunately, we were able to do this in some places, such as the Zaporozhye region in Ukraine. Through team efforts, we were able to influence the revision of a protocol on improving the provision of HIV services to gay men and other MSM, and to convince local authorities to sensitize the staff of medical institutions on issues related to SOGI. Based on the practical experience of colleagues from Ukraine, we developed a manual on the "secret client" methodology for assessing the quality of HIV services in medical institutions, which, after being distributed among the partners of the MPact global consortium, was implemented in countries of North Africa.

Other achievements include the training of healthcare workers on issues related to SOGI and HIV in Tajikistan, as well as the development of brochures by the Latvian organization Agihas for HIV-positive gay men who recently learned about their status.

Nevertheless, we cannot boast about such significant results in all project countries, as a high level of stigma in society, in particular among employees of medical institutions, as well as insufficient legislative protections still create significant obstacles to expanding access to medical services for gay, other MSM, and trans people in the region. But, this is not a reason to give up, and ECOM will not stop at what has already been accomplished."

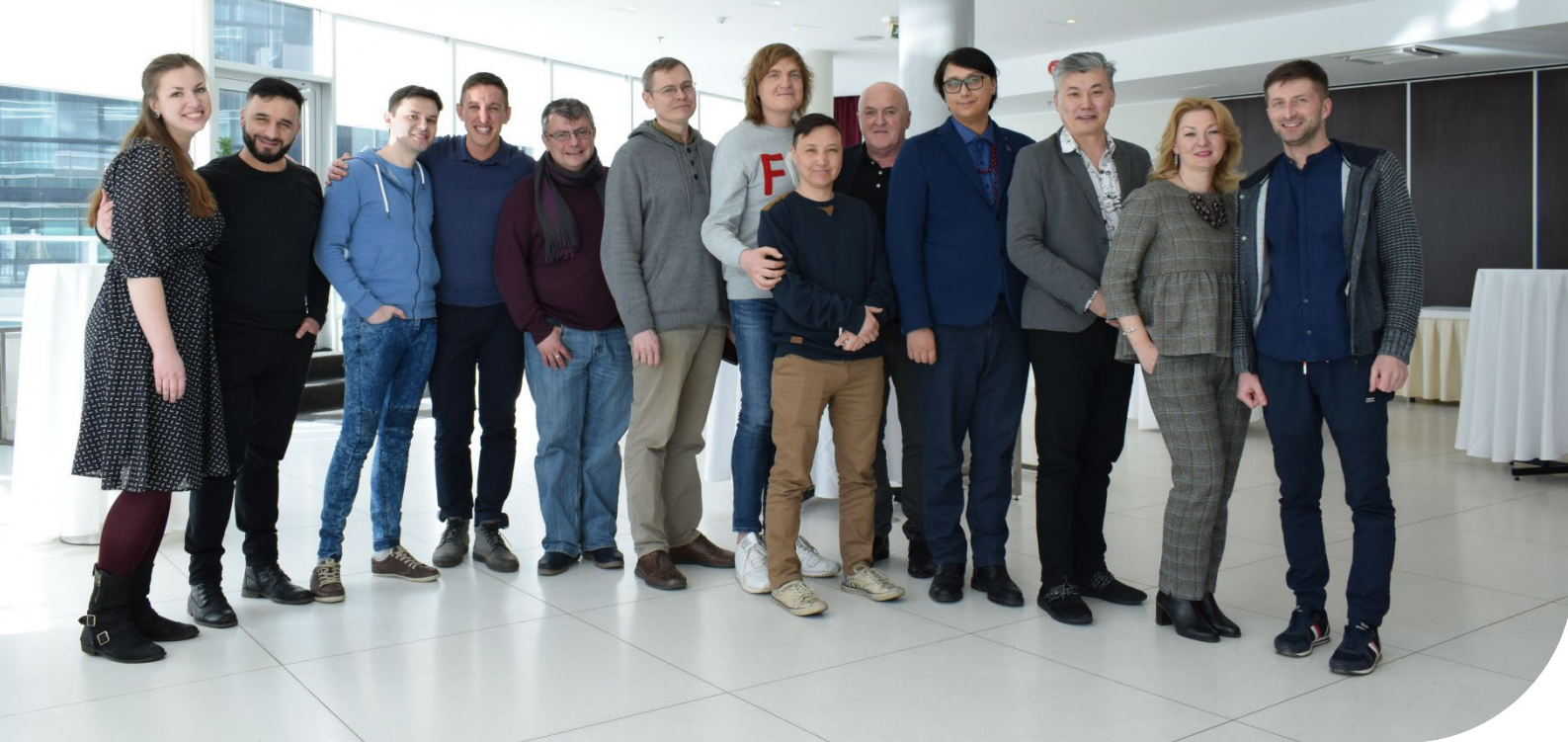


Yuri Yoursky

Human Rights and Legal Issues Coordinator

With support of





Report of ECOM's Steering Committee

In 2018, ECOM's Steering Committee (SC) held two in-person meetings: on 5-6 April (Tallinn) and on 8-9 November (Istanbul). During the reporting period, two SC meetings were held via teleconference (3 August, and 3 October), as well as 6 meetings via e-mail voting.

In accordance with amendments to ECOM's Charter and a decision of the General Assembly of ECOM Members from 08.10.2018 (Protocol No. 2 of the meeting of the General Assembly of ECOM Members by voting carried out on the surveymonkey.com platform) the term of ECOM's current SC was extended until 1 December, 2019.

In accordance with its main responsibilities as established in "Regulations of the Steering Committee", ECOM's SC carried out the following activities in 2018:

1. Review and approval of ECOM membership applications

9 organizations and 8 individuals were accepted as new members of ECOM. One person renewed his membership. One organization was not accepted as a member of ECOM due to doubts about the ethical and professional behavior of representatives of the organization in relation to the LGBT movement. A coalition not registered as a legal entity was also not accepted as an ECOM member, since ECOM members must either be a legal entity or a natural person.

In accordance with the Charter of the Eurasian Coalition on Male Health, the Secretariat conducted an annual audit of ECOM members in February 2018. As a result of the audit, the Steering Committee suspended the membership of 5 ECOM members.

2. Search for candidates for positions on the Board/Management Group.

The management group was working over the past year, so there was no need to search for new candidates. At the request of the SC, members of the Board/Management Group took part in in-person meetings of the SC.

3. Supervision of program implementation

The SC received quarterly interim reports from the Secretariat on the implementation of the Operational Plan of ECOM's Strategic Plan, and approved and submitted an annual report on the work of the organization for 2017 to the General Assembly. In 2018, the SC conducted a survey of ECOM sub-recipients about their interaction with the Secretariat during the course of program implementation. During the survey, the sub-recipients gave procedures and interaction with ECOM a rating of 3.77 points (average score using a 5-point system), and the work of ECOM staff (ECOM's Secretariat) 4.15 points.

4. Approval of the organization's strategies, guidelines, and policies.

The SC participated in the development of a number of documents, such as Regulations "On ECOM membership", the "Code of Ethics of ECOM", the "Communications Strategy of ECOM", the "Safety Guide for ECOM and its Partners", and "ECOM's position paper on the spread of HIV among gay men, other MSM, and trans people in Russia, 'Protection and cooperation'".

In 2018, the SC approved "Amendments to the grant procedures of ECOM", Regulations "on ECOM membership", "ECOM's Budget for 2018", and "ECOM's position paper on the spread of HIV among gay men, other MSM, and trans people in Russia, 'Protection and Cooperation'". The "Regulations of ECOM's Steering Committee", Regulations "on ECOM membership", and the "Code of Ethics of ECOM" were put to a vote (June 2018) and approved by the General Assembly.

ECOM's SC considered the need for re-branding ECOM and proposed to raise this issue before the General Assembly.

5. Approval of applications for project support based on the recommendations of the Selection Committee.

The SC approved small grant funding under the project "Together for Our Rights".

The SC approved sub-recipients of the regional project "Strengthening the participation of MSM and trans representatives in processes related to the Global Fund" with support of the Global Forum on MSM and HIV.

6. Support for strategic partnerships with key organizations and institutions at the national and international levels

On 28-30 August, 2018, the Chair of the SC, Oleg Eryomin, held meetings with ECOM members in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), as well as with other NGOs and initiative groups. On 14 September, the Chair of the SC, Oleg Eryomin held a meeting with activists from ECOM member organization "Partner" in Odessa (Ukraine). SC members also held other meetings with ECOM members in Armenia and Ukraine.

ECOM's SC approved the criteria for selecting countries for the regional application of the Regional Consortium of EECA Community Networks.



Financial Report 2018



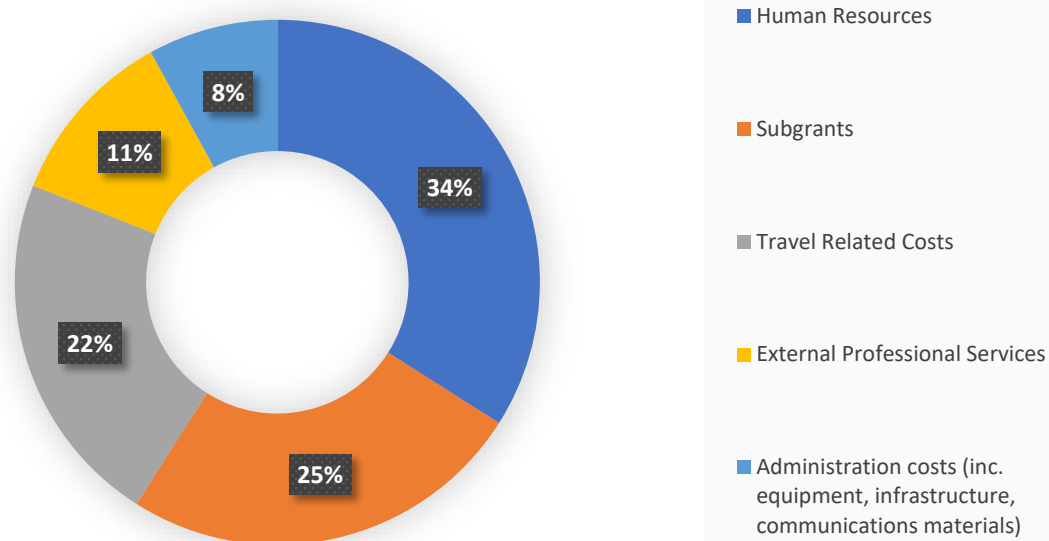
Financial Performance in 2018

Donor (project)	Funds Utilized, EUR
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS (Right to Health)	960 417
Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (Money Can Buy Health If You Budget For It)*	194 971
Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (Together for our rights)**	67 796
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS (Strengthening the Capacity of KP Networks)**	9 719
Alliance for Public Health (Fast-Track Cities)	22 606
Total	1 255 509

* - funded through Eurasian Harm Reduction Association

** - funded through MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights

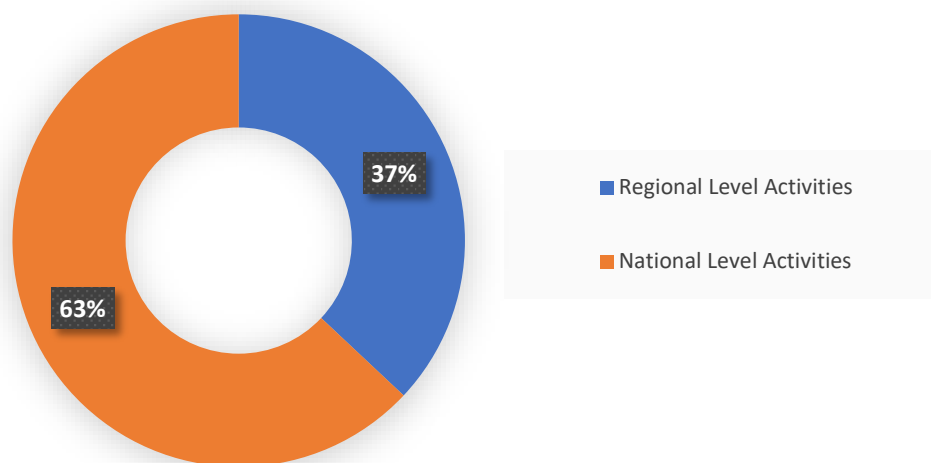
Breakdown of Expenditures by Categories in 2018



Financial Performance for the Global Fund Program "Right to Health" in 2018

Global Fund Module	Global Fund Interventions	Funds Utilized, EUR
Community systems strengthening	Community led advocacy	194 646
	Community-based monitoring	47 877
	Social mobilization, building community linkages, collaboration and coordination	62 806
	Institutional capacity building, planning and leadership development	154 336
Removing legal barriers to access	Policy advocacy on legal rights	52 685
	Legal and policy environment assessment and law reform	32 990
	Legal aid services and legal literacy	50 962
	Training on rights for officials, health workers and police	23 993
	Community-based monitoring of legal rights	36 187
Program management	Grant management	44 944
	Other	21 885
	Policy, planning, coordination and management	231 974
<i>Expenses recognized in 2018 according to Estonian accounting standards, but recognized in other periods according to the GF standards</i>		5 134
Total		960 917

Breakdown of Expenditures for Program "Right to Health" in 2018



REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR to members of MTÜ "Eurasian Coalition on Male Health"

Opinion

We conducted an audit of the financial statements of MTÜ / Non-governmental association "Eurasian Coalition on Male Health" (Association), which includes a report on the financial situation as of 31 December, 2018, which includes a statement of the financial position as of 31 December, 2018, as well as a statement of profit or loss, a statement of cash flows, a statement of changes in net assets for the year ended, and any notes to financial statements, including a summary of basic accounting operations.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements reliably reflect in all material respects the financial position of the Association as of 31 December, 2018, as well as its financial results and cash flows for the year ended in accordance with Estonian financial reporting standards.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Estonia) (ISAs (EE)). Our responsibilities in accordance with these standards are described in more detail in the "Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of Financial Statements" section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (Estonia), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other information

Management is responsible for other information. Other information includes information included in the management report, but does not include financial statements and the report of our auditor on the financial statements.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not apply to other information, and we do not express any form of assurance on the validity of other information.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read other information and decide whether it is substantially incompatible with the financial statements or with our knowledge obtained during the course of the audit, or in any other way, which seems to be substantially distorted

If, on the basis of our work, we come to the conclusion that there is a significant distortion of other information, we are obliged to report this fact. We have nothing to report in connection with this.

Responsibilities of management in relation to financial statements

Management is responsible for preparing and fairly presenting financial statements in accordance with the Estonian financial reporting standard, as well as for such internal controls that management believes is necessary for the preparation of financial statements without material misstatements, whether due to fraud or error.

When preparing financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the ability of the Association to continue its activities on an on-going basis, disclosing any issues related to the continuity of operations when appropriate, and for the use of the principle of continuous accounting operations, unless management intends to liquidate the Association or terminate operations, or if it has no real alternative but to do so.

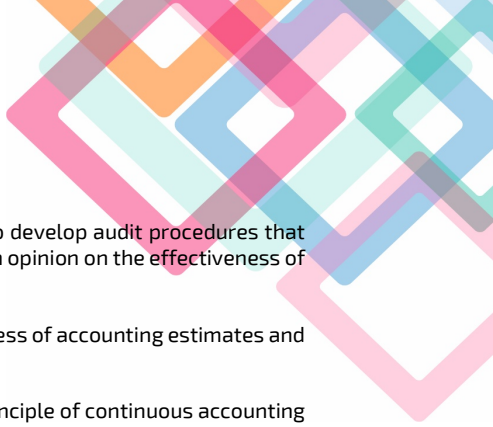
Responsibility of the auditor for the audit of financial statements

Our goals are to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements as a whole do not contain material misstatements caused by fraud or error, and to issue an audit report that includes our opinion. Reasonable confidence is a high degree of confidence, but it does not guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (EE) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements may arise as a result of fraud or error and are considered material if it can be expected that, individually or collectively, they can affect the economic decisions of users being taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit carried out in accordance with ISAs (EE), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and evaluate the risks of material misstatements of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, develop and execute audit procedures that respond to these risks, and obtain audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to substantiate our opinion. The risk of not detecting material misstatements resulting from fraud is higher than for misstatements caused by error, since fraud can include conspiracy, falsifications, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or redefining internal controls.

- 
- Gain an understanding of the internal controls related to the audit in order to develop audit procedures that are appropriate to the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal controls.
 - Evaluate the correctness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
 - Make a conclusion about the appropriateness of management's use of the principle of continuous accounting operations, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether there is significant uncertainty associated with events or conditions that could cast serious doubt on the Association's ability to continue operations in the foreseeable future. If we conclude that there is material uncertainty, we must highlight in the audit report relevant disclosures in the financial statements, or, if such disclosures are inadequate, then change our opinion. Our findings are based on audit evidence obtained prior to the date of our audit report. Nevertheless, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease operations in the future.
 - Evaluate the overall presentation, structure, and contents of the financial statements, including disclosures, and whether the financial statements present basic transactions and events in such a way that ensures an accurate presentation.
 - Communicate with persons vested with managerial authority, including about the planned scope and timing of the audit, as well as about any significant results of the audit, including any significant deficiencies in internal controls that were identified as part of the audit.

The full version of the report of the independent auditor is available at [this link](#).