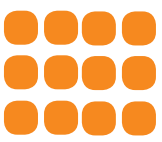




Eurasian Coalition
on Male Health



ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Dear friends!

Here is another annual report of ECOM. For us, 2017 was a year of further development, when we strengthened our positions and partnerships. One of the highlights of 2017 was start of the regional program "Right to Health" implemented in five countries of the region to provide equal and free access to HIV services for gay and bisexual men, MSM and trans people.

In 2017, this program and other projects allowed ECOM to support 24 big and small grants in 13 countries of the region. We are proud to be able to support community development and mobilization.

For us it was a year of growth –our Secretariat expanded, five new members joined the Coalition, and we became more visible not only at the regional level, but also at the national level in the countries where we work.

We carried out a regional study on the attitudes of key service providers (health professionals, law enforcers and social workers) to gay and bisexual men, MSM and trans people. Another unique study –not only for our region, but for the whole world –provided us with strong evidence that external stigma and discrimination, leading to the development of internalized homophobia, have a negative impact on the use of HIV services.

Findings of such studies will help our members and national partners to pursue their advocacy goals in a more effective and evidence-based manner.

ECOM sincerely hopes for your support and cooperation next year.

Together we can achieve any goal!

*With respect and solidarity,
Vitaly Djuma*



1. Strategic Goals for 2017-2021

Promote activism, leadership and community mobilization in health care.

Ensure recognition of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people's agenda at various levels of decision-making and allocation of funding within HIV and health programs.

Facilitate the development of legal and social environment supportive of the right to health.

Build the capacity of ECOM.

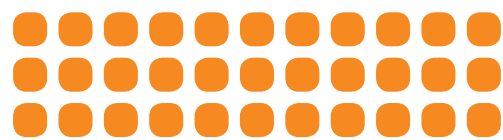
2. ECOM Activities in 2017



In 2017, the Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM) continued its work in the context of the growing number of HIV cases among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM) and trans people in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, while the efforts of governments and civil society were still insufficient to reverse the situation.

In 2017, ECOM maintained its focus on the issues of access to the health services related to HIV and their sustainability. The new ECOM strategy is aimed at uniting the efforts of civil society representatives in EECA based on the accurate and high-quality strategic information and human rights.





Objective 1.
**Promote activism, leadership
and community mobilization in
health care.**



ECOM is a community-based organization, so community mobilization and leadership are our key values. Developing activism allows the communities all over the region to take over the responsibility and get involved in HIV-related decision-making processes at the local and national levels.

Within the first objective, ECOM concentrated its efforts on developing national organizations through the small grants program and support of the national activities to build their advocacy potential. To study the involvement of gay men, other MSM and trans people in HIV-related decision-making processes, ECOM conducted a research to assess community engagement in the national coordination mechanisms in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia.

KEY ACTIVITIES

STUDY OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN THE AREA OF HIV AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The study carried out within the regional program "Right to Health" showed that gay, bisexual men, other MSM and trans people have limited impact on planning and management processes in the context of HIV response in five countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (CEECA): Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia.

In each of the five countries, at least one seat in the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) belongs to the representatives of MSM or trans community. Despite the fact that one vote does not always influence the decision-making process, the community has an opportunity to speak about its HIV-related needs at the government level. Nomination and election of the candidates to become CCM members follows an open and transparent procedure.

SMALL GRANTS

In October 2017, implementation of six out of the nine projects supported within the small grants component of the regional program "Right to Health" started (with three remaining projects to be launched in 2018). In total, 28 proposals from ten EECA countries were submitted within the call for proposals. The activities of the supported projects are aimed at developing and mobilizing the communities of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, trans people, HIV-positive MSM as well as sex workers from among MSM and trans people.

The menZDRAV foundation (Ukraine) launched a study to assess the needs of sex workers from among MSM and trans people in Kyiv and check what services they can receive in local civil society organizations. The study includes interviews with 15 heads of civil society organizations to allow analyzing the services available for sex workers in the city. The findings received will be used to prepare a position paper on access to services in this population. HPLGBT (Ukraine) received support to conduct workshops for the members of trans community to raise their awareness in advocacy, human rights, HIV and STIs.

Right side (Armenia) focused on strengthening its organizational capacity. Within the project, meetings were held with the leaders of trans community, which resulted in drafting the strategic and advocacy plans of the organization.

Mobilization of LGBT and trans community representatives engaged in sex work became the goal of the project submitted by Labrys (Kyrgyzstan), which held a number of meetings to discuss the above-mentioned problem as well as other cross-cutting issues. The discussion resulted in a conclusion that different stigmas may overlap, lowering the quality of life. It was noted that this problem should be more often raised at the meetings with representatives of different key populations.

Another way to combat stigma against trans people was chosen by Lavender Menace group (Ukraine). Its activists make educational videos for health professionals telling about the needs of trans people and correct interaction with patients from this group.

Special mention should be made of the work of the Light initiative group (Tajikistan). Despite the fact that the LGBT movement in the country is weak, its activists make efforts to reduce stigma against trans people and to raise the awareness of health professionals. One of the key steps within the project supported by ECOM was establishing cooperation with doctors of the Endocrinology Center at the Khudzhand City Hospital who were informed about the peculiarities of working with trans people.

Winners of the Call for Proposals: Small Grants within the program "Right to Health"

AGIHAS NGO
(Latvia)

Human to Human Initiative Group (through Charitable Foundation of Social and Legal Support 'Sfera') (Russia)

Center of Social Development and Support of Men's Health (menZDRAV) (Ukraine) in cooperation with HPLGBT (Ukraine)

Initiative Group 'Lavender Menace' in partnership with Inaya NGO (Ukraine)

Initiative Group 'Trans support group' (Coalition 'Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities') (Macedonia)

"Right Side" Human Rights Defender NGO (Армения)

Human Health Institute (Kazakhstan)

Labrys NGO (Kyrgyzstan)

LighT initiative group (Tajikistan)

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Within the support of community activities at the national level, ECOM became partner of the Tallinn Pride 2017, supported the 10th National Conference of MSM Services and LGBT Movement in Ukraine and the 2nd Russian Conference of HIV Service Organizations and LGBT Movement. ECOM members took part in Kyiv Pride 2017 and presented a report on the inclusiveness of LGBT NGOs in Baltic states and in EECA region.



ECOM actively supported Tallinn Pride 2017 (6-9 July 2017).

In the run-up to the Pride Festival, ECOM and Tallinn Pride NGO signed a Memorandum of Cooperation. Within the Conference "LGBT+ Community: Together in the Past, Present and Future", ECOM offered a workshop "Health as a Human Right: LGBT+ Perspective." Members of the Coalition from Estonia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine shared their experiences in advocacy for the rights of LGBT and people living with HIV in their countries.

With support of ECOM, the documentary "Listen to Me: Untold Stories Beyond Hatred" about the life and formation of the LGBT+ community in Armenia was screened within the cultural program of the festival. Mamikon Hovsepian from Pink Armenia (initiating production of the video) visited Tallinn to present the film. After the screening, Mamikon Hovsepian together with Sergey Gabrielyan, member of ECOM Steering Committee, and Paata Sabelashvili, ECOM Advocacy Coordinator, took part in the heated post-screening discussion on the situation with LGBT human rights in the South Caucasus.

"Just before the screening in Tallinn we learned that the film had been banned in its home country, Armenia. This fact vividly illustrates the level of stigma and discrimination towards LGBT in the Armenian society when we are even banned from speaking. We are sincerely thankful to the Baltic Pride 2017 for demonstrating solidarity and providing a platform for open discussion."

Vitaly Djuma, ECOM's Executive Director

Tallinn Pride Parade was the final event of the Baltic Pride held for the first time in 10 years in the streets of the Estonian capital. ECOM staff members and partners marched together with a slogan "Health is a Human Right."

Kyiv hosted the 10th National Conference of LGBT Movement "Diversity and Equality"

ECOM representatives took part in the 10th National Conference of LGBT Movement and MSM Services in Ukraine (19-22 October 2017, Kyiv), which brought together about 100 LGBT leaders and activists from various regions of Ukraine, heads and staff members of HIV organizations, human rights activists and experts from EECA countries.

The conference included workshops and discussions on sexual health, human rights, operation of community centers; mini trainings, panence of using intersectoral approach. Maxim Kasianczuk, ECOM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, presented findings of the basic assessment carried out within the study "Involvement of MSM into the decision-making processes in the area of HIV in five CEECA countries."

The conference provides guidance for the organizations working in HIV prevention and helps to promote rights and freedoms for LGBTQI community members in Ukraine. The outcome of the conference is a Roadmap with recommendations for organizations, donors and partners, which will be an effective tool to impleel discussions, role plays on the topics related to gay, bisexual and trans people, outreach work as well as various master classes.

"For the second year in row, ECOM supports the national LGBT conference in Ukraine, which is the annual and the largest event for MSM services and LGBT movement in the country. At the conference, organizations, leaders and activists can learn more about innovative interventions, data, and studies carried out in Ukraine. We are happy to be part of the largest program in the region to prevent HIV among MSM, share our knowledge and results of our activities with other participants and help them to find new approaches to the work they do."

Elena German, ECOM Program Director

Members of the ECOM Secretariat were involved in several sections of the conference. During the panel discussion "Intersectionality and inclusiveness of LGBT movement and HIV services", Elena German shared the ECOM experiment further activities in this area in Ukraine.

**ECAT
(ECOM CAPACITY
ASSESSMENT TOOL)**

Strong community is a vital resource for any country. To strengthen the organizational capacity of its sub-recipients, ECOM developed a special assessment tool (ECOM Capacity Assessment Tool or ECAT), including a protocol and relevant instruments, and conducted assessments of eight organizations in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia. Based on the data received, an individual technical support plan was developed for each of the organizations, which after its implementation in 2018-2019 will help to strengthen the administrative procedures and organizational policies, develop partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations, build the internal capacity and mobilize the community. In 2018, we plan to adapt this tool for its wider use.



TECHNICAL SUPPORT BY ECOM In 2017, ECOM enhanced the delivery of technical support to its members, sub-recipients and partners.

On the ECOM website, there is a page on Global Fund Technical Assistance Program on Community, Rights and Gender (CRG) and a special page with a form of request for Technical Support for sub-recipients.

Within the CRG program, ECOM provided technical support to its Georgian partners in drafting an information note for community and civil activists on implementing the Georgian plan of transition from the Global Fund grants to domestic funding. ECOM Advocacy Coordinator Paata Sabelashvili created an online tool with the activities of the transition plan. The tool was presented to the stakeholders in Georgia and was also shared with partners from other countries which have started or are starting transition to the national funding. There has been a great interest to replication and use of the tool in other countries of the region.



MAPPING OF THE ACTIVISTS FROM NATIONAL NGOS

To engage new volunteers and participants to the activities of LGBT organizations, ECOM developed a tool to map the communities of gay and bisexual men and other MSM and trans people, which helps organizations to draw human resources based on the organizational needs and priorities of the communities.

Involvement in mapping





Objective 2.

Ensure recognition of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people's agenda at various levels of decision-making and allocation of funding within HIV and health programs.



ECOM facilitates building the capacity of organizations of gay, bisexual men, other MSM and trans people to involve them in the national decision-making processes.

KEY ACTIVITIES

REGIONAL ADVISORY GROUP ON STRATEGIC INFORMATION

The first meeting of the Regional Advisory Group on Strategic Information (RAGSI) established within the ECOM regional program "Right to Health" was held on 12-14 September 2017 in Tallinn. This is the first group of such kind in the region. It is unique as its equal members are representatives of government agencies of the key ECOM partner countries (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia), representatives of civil society and community-based organizations and experts from international organizations and academic institutions.

Key RAGSI objectives:

- promote regular collection of the strategic information required to ensure effective response to HIV among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people in CEECA;
- coordinate data collection and research studies within different projects implemented in the region;
- provide technical support to collect high-quality research data;
- facilitate building the capacity of community-based organizations in data collection and use, in particular develop guidelines;
- review relevant strategic information on epidemiology in CEECA, analyze the level of community involvement in decision-making processes as well as the ways to improve the quality of information in the countries of the region.

RAGSI

Regional Advisory Group on Strategic Information

MEMBERSHIP

- 20 experts from 10 countries
- representatives of NGOs and government agencies from the main partner countries of ECOM, international experts and researchers

OBJECTIVES

- promote regular collection of strategic information for the effective response to HIV among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people in the region,
- coordinate research studies,
- facilitate building the capacity of communities and organizations in data collection and use

"I am glad that all the meeting participants made valuable contributions and helped RAGSI to develop and mature. The meeting was very intensive, interesting and, what is important, productive. It was important for the participants to be able to meet each other in person. It should be emphasized that we had an opportunity to exchange knowledge and the best practices of conducting studies in Italy, Ukraine and also Estonia and UNDP."

Sergo Chikhladze, group facilitator

MSMIT

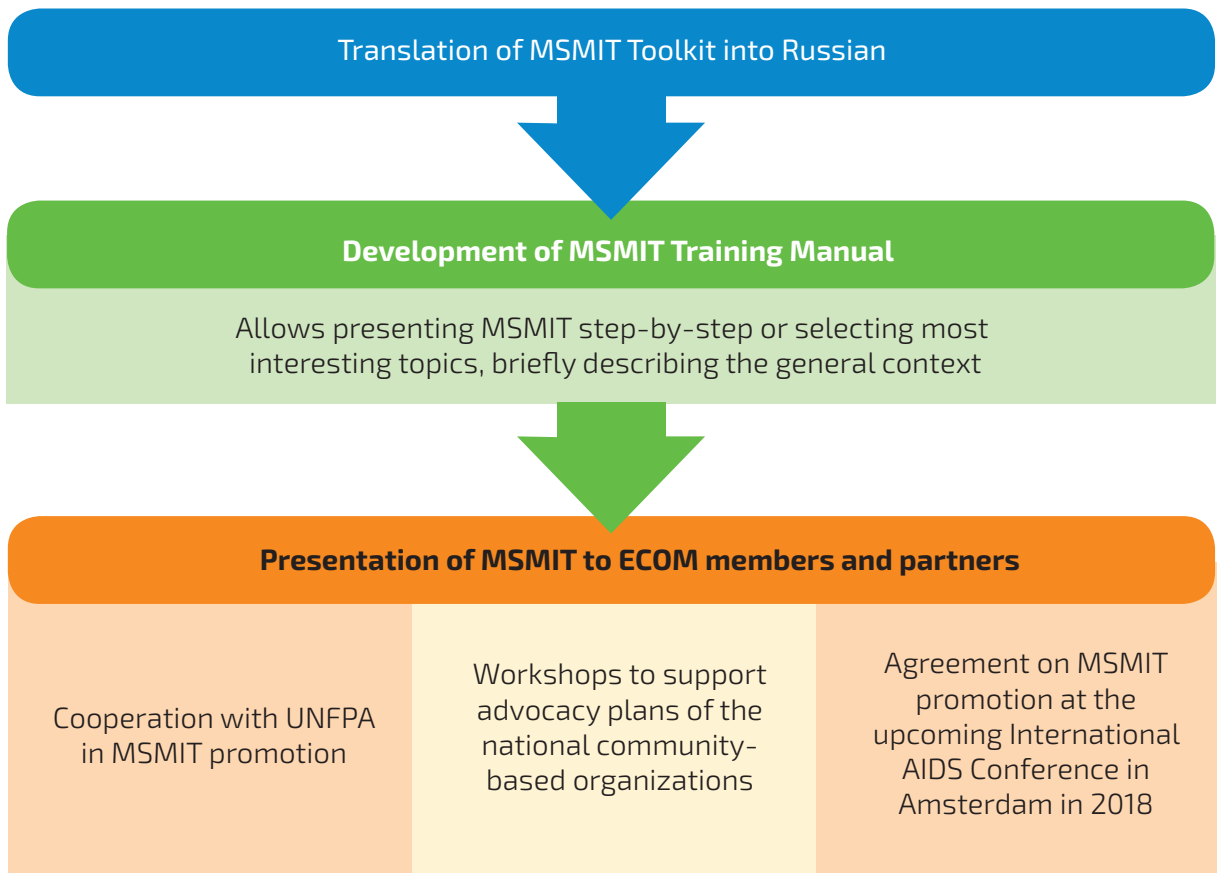
Standardization of HIV and STI prevention services for gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people in the region is one of the key components of ECOM activities. To launch standards of services in the national HIV programs, ECOM shares and promotes the Toolkit "Implementing comprehensive HIV and STI programmes with men who have sex with men" (MSMIT) developed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), defining the principles of implementing HIV programs in this target population.

This toolkit is based on the WHO recommendations developed using the data of research studies and best practices. Currently, MSMIT is the most up-to-date and comprehensive guidance used by all the international experts.



To facilitate the use of MSMIT, ECOM consultants with support of UNFPA developed and piloted a Training Manual, which helps promoting MSMIT among experts and public officials from municipal health care institutions; professionals involved in health-related activities with gay, bisexual men, other MSM and trans people; and community activists.

Promoting MSMIT



SUPPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON HEALTH AND RIGHTS OF GAYS AND OTHER MSM IN UKRAINE (EGHR-UKRAINE)

EGHR-Ukraine was established in 2007 to provide technical support to LGBT and MSM organizations in Ukraine. Since 2017, ECOM has been supporting EGHR-Ukraine within the program "Right to Health" to strengthen the national HIV response and share best practices throughout the region. In particular, last year EGHR-Ukraine facilitated and supported the elections of a member of the National TB and HIV/AIDS Coordination Council to represent the MSM community. Andrii Chernyshev, who was elected as a member of the National Council through voting of the Ukrainian community members is also part of the ECOM Steering Committee.



SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL ACTIVITIES ON BUDGET ADVOCACY

Regional project “Money Can Buy Health If You Budget For It” supported by the Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (RCNF) is implemented by the Eurasian Regional Consortium, which brings together three regional networks: Eurasian Harm Reduction Association (EHRA) representing the interests of people who use drugs (PWUD) Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM) representing the interests of gay, bisexual men, other men who have sex with men and trans people and the East Europe and Central Asia Union of People Living with HIV (ECUO) representing the interests of people living with HIV (PLWH). The consortium collaborates with inadequately served populations and builds the capacity of communities in budget advocacy and cooperation with government agencies. The projects empowers the communities to raise funds to finance the HIV services, which they prioritize for their country and their population. Within the project, national consortiums of community-based organizations in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Estonia were supported.

National consortiums:

Kyrgyzstan

Anti-AIDS Association of Legal Entities

Otkroveniye NGO

RANS Plus Charitable Foundation

Armenia

Public Information and Need of Knowledge NGO (PINK Armenia)

Real World, Real People (RWRP) NGO

Awakening Potential NGO

Estonia

VEK LGBT - Russian-speaking LGBT community of Estonia

Estonian Network of People Living with HIV (EHPV)

Estonian Association of People Who Use Psychotropic Substances LUNES

HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS

One of the achievements of Kyrgyzstan national consortium was involvement in organizing and conducting the High-Level Conference on Budget Advocacy "New Challenges of HIV and TB" (18-19 September, Bishkek). At the session "Multisectoral approach in the response to HIV and TB epidemics", ECOM Advocacy Coordinator Paata Sabelashvili shared the experience of providing technical support to the civil society and government partners in Georgia within the national HIV response.

On 12-13 December, a high-level meeting was held in Tallinn under the auspices of the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, concentrating on funding of the programs and services to fight the spread of HIV and tuberculosis. The participants were discussing the opportunities for smooth transition from funding through foreign aid programs to sustainable state funding. Experts from Estonia and beyond outlined the best practices, challenges, opportunities and risks related to integrating HIV and TB programs into the national healthcare systems. ECOM was represented by its Executive Director Vitaly Djuma, who was talking about the growing epidemic of HIV among MSM in the region and about the need for the national governments to support relevant programs.



TRAINING ON ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

The key objectives of ECOM within the project "Money Can Buy Health If You Budget For It" funded by the Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund are strengthening the effective interaction of communities, their organizational development and involvement in the national HIV-related processes. This topic was covered at the special workshop (24-26 July, Tallinn) for 15 consortium members from Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Estonia.

Its focus was building partnerships among the organizations working with key vulnerable populations (gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people, PWUD and PLWH). The workshop gave a start to development of the guidelines, which will contain different algorithms to help build partnerships among the organizations to resolve the problems occurring in the countries within the advocacy efforts. It will also be helpful for other countries of the region.

STUDIES

To conduct the basic situation assessment within the regional program "Right to Health", studies were carried out to assess strategic information, the level of internalized homophobia and the attitudes to LGBT among key service providers (police, health and social workers) in five countries of the region.

Assessment of the existing strategic information on HIV among MSM and trans people.

Goal	Geography	Partners	Timeframe
Collect strategic information on HIV in the target population by key components: population size assessment, condom use, HIV prevalence, coverage with services and advocacy	Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia	RAGSI experts in every country Civil society organizations working on MSM health issues	Research findings will be published in 2018 Assessment results and recommendations shared with stakeholders in five target countries and at the regional level in CEECA

Main conclusions:

- The quality of strategic information and satisfaction of the needs in such information is assessed at the level of 33-37% (with the rates changing depending on the country).
- The data on the size of MSM population are not always accurate, while no trans population size assessments were conducted in any of the countries where the study was conducted.
- There are no legal barriers, which hinder civil society organizations in conducting HIV testing or providing prevention services, but all programs are mostly financed by international donors.
- The level of involvement of community organizations and activists in advocacy depends on the country, with some examples of successful advocacy campaigns.

Internalized homophobia (internalized homonegativity) study:

Goal	Geography	Partners
Identify linkages between the internalized homophobia and safe sexual behavior, condom use, HIV testing and receiving services offered by civil society organizations	Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Estonia The first study to such a wide range of countries with different cultures, social and political conditions and legal frameworks	dating services Hornet and Bluesystem.ru, civil society organizations working with MSM health issues, LGBT organizations, other initiatives

Main conclusions:

- The average level of internalized homophobia among the respondents in all countries was low. Most respondents accepted their own homosexuality and sexual identity. The lowest level of internalized homophobia was observed among the respondents from Macedonia and Lithuania/Estonia. The highest – in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Russia.
- Higher levels of internalized homophobia were registered among bisexual, heterosexual persons and people with other identities and among those whose sexual preferences were less known to other people as compared to homosexual respondents.
- In about half of the countries, there was a significant correlation between higher degree of religious commitment and higher internalized homonegativity.

Study of the attitudes to LGBT among key service providers in five CEECA countries

Goal	Geography	Partners
Assessment of attitudes to LGBT among three key service providers (professional groups) – health and social workers, police Assessment was conducted in two areas: personal attitude to LGBT and respondent's assessment of the attitudes to LGBT among the members of his/her professional group	Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia	regional partners from social research agencies NGOs implementing ECOM projects

Main conclusions:

- Findings of the study demonstrated positive attitudes of the respondents in all five covered CEECA countries and in almost all professional groups (except police in Kyrgyzstan).
- The level of detachment towards LGBT was average or below average among the respondents from all five CEECA countries.
- In general, the respondents supported the idea of equal rights for the members of LGBT community and all other citizens. However, the readiness to accept the rights of gay couples to registration of marriages and adoption/parenting is not high.



SUCCESS STORY: Zaporizhzhia activists checked the attitudes of health workers to MSM

For four months, activists of Zaporizhzhia regional charitable foundation "GenderZ" together with Zaporizhzhia AIDS Center visited hospitals, clinics and confidential counseling rooms in the city and in the region. Their goal was to assess the attitudes of health professionals to the members of LGBT community and check the quality of HIV counseling and testing services offered by service providers.

During four months, the activists visited 95 health facilities – 41 in Zaporizhzhia and 54 in the region. They came to hospitals or clinics and asked at the registration desk where they could get tested for HIV. Then they proceeded to testing and in the course of the procedure informed the doctors that they were gay.

Such inspection identified not so much homophobia or negative attitude of doctors to the LGBT community, but rather problems in access of people to HIV testing in general. Only in every third case, the activists were able to get tested for HIV.

Besides, in almost 90% of cases the testing procedure (pre-test counseling, self-testing, post-test counseling) was not followed: doctors often did not care about confidentiality or emotional state of people and sometimes were lacking knowledge on HIV.

There were also some instances of homophobia: in a youth-friendly clinic (!) in Khortitsky district of Zaporizhzhia, a man was called a "sodomite" and was told that young people overgrow "this" with time. In one of the Ukrainian cities, a doctor shamed a young man, advised him not to tell anyone about it and said: "you should take this secret to your grave."

However, there were not only negative, but also positive findings. For example, in a youth-friendly clinic in Kommunarovsky district the services were provided at a very high level. The counselor had a rather neutral reaction when the client disclosed his homosexual orientation, offered information about the specific risks for gay men and instructions on how to use condoms.

Based on the results of the monitoring visits, GenderZ together with the regional AIDS center will hold joint workshops for Zaporizhzhia health professionals and will develop guidelines on working with MSM, which will be approved by the Health Department of Zaporizhzhia Regional State Administration and will be used in further work.



Objective 3.

Development of legal and social environment supportive of the right to health.



ECOM pays a lot of attention to the development of supportive legal environment for communities and to the integration of HIV and communities' right to health agenda in the activities of specialized and human rights organizations.

KEY ACTIVITIES

ASSESSMENT OF LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

Assessment of legal environment was conducted in five EECA countries (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia) within the regional program "Right to Health." Findings of the national assessments were translated into the respective languages and became the basis for the national plans to change legal environment for the communities of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people.

REGIONAL RIGHTS SENSITIZATION TRAINING

On 21-23 August, a rights sensitization training for the activists of LGBT and HIV organizations was held in Erevan within the program "Right to Health." The training participants from Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia identified the most pressing issues related to stigma and discrimination, violation of the rights of gay men and other MSM and trans people in EECA region which could be addressed within the national and international legal mechanisms (ECHR, UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies).

"The training gave me an opportunity to review the international human rights mechanisms, discover the possibilities to cover our activities and find the ways to be heard and make others listen to us. The training also helped me to gain a different perspective on current situation –through the lens of people from other countries."

Hayk Hayrapetyan, New Generation NGO, Armenia

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATING CASES

In 2017, ECOM together with its partner organizations conducted monitoring of the cases of violation of the right to health among gay, bisexual men, other MSM and trans people in EECA countries. In total, 35 cases were documented. The most frequent violations were related to discriminatory legislative acts (prohibition of "gay propaganda"), criminalization of HIV transmission, complete or partial lack of medical services for trans people, physical inaccessibility of health institutions, high cost of medicines, lack of information about HIV in health facilities, failure of medical staff to comply with the principles of confidentiality and medical ethics as well as direct discrimination.



HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES

ECOM joined the calls of the Russian LGBT Network and the UN agencies not to conceal the facts of violence and torture of gay men in Chechnya and insist on such cases to be investigated. In its statement, the Coalition also called on the authorities and citizens of the European Union and Canada to provide urgent asylum to gay refugees from Chechnya and addressed the UN agencies asking to protect the journalists who were brave enough to tell the truth about what was going on. Together with its partner organizations, ECOM held a protest rally in Tallinn at the Embassy of the Russian Federation.

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIP WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

To bring together and share the best practices of cooperation among the key players in the area of health care, human rights and support of gay and other men who have sex with men and trans people in EECA, ECOM develops cooperation with regional and international organizations and initiatives, taking part in awareness-raising campaigns, initiating and implementing joint studies, projects and programs at the regional and national levels:

- Cooperation has been established with the UNAIDS Secretariat, in particular with the Human Rights Division: ECOM is presented on the ZERO Discrimination website.
- ECOM became a member of IGLYO (The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Youth & Student Organisation), which is the world's biggest youth and student LGBTI network, bringing together over 95 members from 40 countries.
- At the annual ILGA-Europe conference in Warsaw, ECOM together with EATG delivered a workshop on health and HIV.

TRAINING TOOLKIT ON COMBATING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION


The Training Toolkit for Public Officials on Human Rights and Combating Stigma and Discrimination against Gay Men, Other MSM and Trans People is aimed at trainers and trainer groups working with health professionals, public officials and law enforcers.

The main idea of this Toolkit is to show people who may influence the life and health of others what impact stigma and discrimination may have on the life of an individual; how negative attitude of a doctor may lead to the risk of contracting HIV; how prejudice of a police officer may hinder investigation of a crime; how one decision of a public official may put thousands of people in a city at risk.

It is also aimed at showing them how they may be game changers using their power and authority. In 2018, ECOM will deliver training of trainers on using this Toolkit. The next step will be establishing the national teams to use the Toolkit based on the national context.



Human Rights and Health of Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia



In the run-up to the International Day of Transgender Visibility, ECOM presented a position paper "Human Rights and Health of Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia", declaring the approach of the Coalition to human rights and health of trans people. Recognizing their particular vulnerability, stigmatization, discrimination and violation of their human rights, inter alia in terms of their access to health services, ECOM reaffirms its commitment to promote:

- Health of trans people and realization of their human rights.
- Mobilization and strengthening of the trans community.
- Cooperation and solidarity between trans people and other communities vulnerable to HIV.
- Better understanding of trans people's needs in the society and improving legislation to ensure equality, respect for human rights and dignity of trans people.



Objective 4.

ECOM capacity building



It is not possible to achieve the strategic objectives set forth by ECOM without building the capacity of the Coalition. The important tasks for 2017 were developing and approving a new Strategic Plan of ECOM for 2017-2021, improving the existing policies and procedures, and supporting the ECOM members.

KEY ACTIVITIES

NEW MEMBERS

As of the end of 2017, there were 46 members of ECOM. The following new members joined the Coalition: Human Health Institute, Single Step (Bulgaria), Petro Polyantsev (Ukraine) and Vitalii Lavryk (Ukraine).

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the newly elected Steering Committee (SC) was held in Kyiv in February 2017. Oleg Eryomin, who has an extensive experience in HIV prevention, in particular among MSM, was elected as the Chairman of the Steering Committee.

Report of the Steering Committee 2017



In 2017, the Steering Committee held two face-to-face and four remote meetings.

The main areas of SC activities in 2017 were review of applications for ECOM membership and control of program implementation. The SC accepted the quarterly interim reports submitted by the Secretariat on implementation of the Operation Plan based on the Strategic Plan of ECOM, approved and presented the Annual Report 2016 to the General Meeting.

The SC was involved in the development of a number of documents, such as the ECOM Strategic Plan for 2017-2021, Operation Plan, and Code of Ethics. In 2017, the SC approved the Regulation on Secretariat, Operation Plan, ECOM Budget 2017, and Position Paper on Human Rights and Health of Trans People.

The SC approved the selection results within the Calls for Proposals held in 2017: three national consortiums within the project "Money Can Buy Health If You Budget For It", five proposals within the small grants program "Together for Our Rights" and nine proposals under the small grants project within the program "Right to Health." Besides, experts' recommendations to support the Expert Group on Health and Rights of Gays and other MSM in Ukraine were approved.

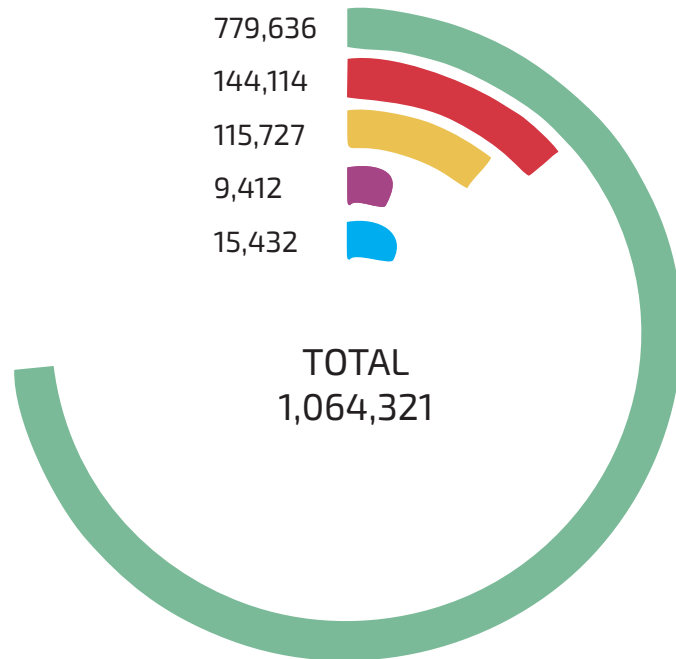
On 21-23 August, Oleg Eryomin, Chairman of the Steering Committee, met with ECOM members in Armenia and with representatives of trans community, other NGOs and initiative groups in Erevan.

The SC members represented the interests of ECOM at various events: Yevgeny Pisemsky took part in the regional consultation to present and discuss the conditions of the next round of regional projects to be supported by the Global Fund (13-14 November 2017, Minsk), and Sviatoslav Sheremet - in the Forum of the National Key Populations Platform (11-12 December 2017, Kyiv).



4. Financial report

Financial results in 2017



- Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Right to Health)
- Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (Money Can Buy Health If You Budget For It)
- Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (Together for Our Rights)
- Alliance for Public Health (Fast-Track Cities)
- Other projects

Breakdown of Expenditures by Categories in 2017

34%

Human Resources

25%

Subgrants

16%

Travel related costs

14%

External Professional services

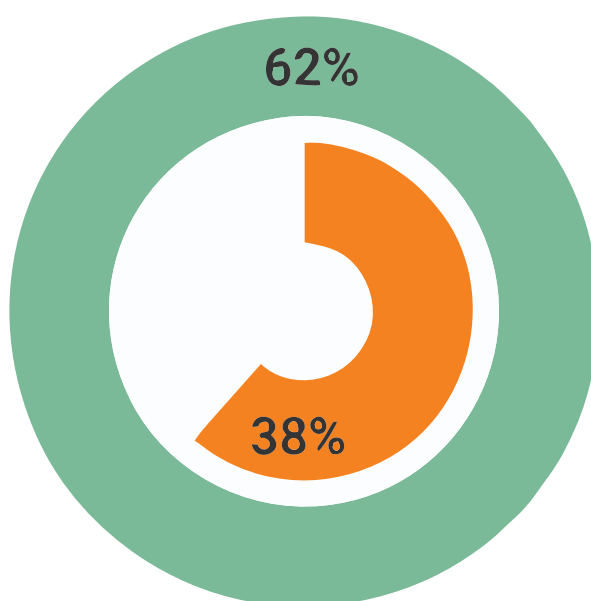
11%

Administration costs (incl. equipment, infrastructure and communication materials)

Financial results of the Global Fund program "Right to Health", 2017

Global Fund component	Global Fund intervention	Expenditures, EUR
Community system strengthening	Advocacy for social accountability	110 382
	Community-based monitoring for accountability	54 507
	Social mobilization, building community linkages, collaboration and coordination	41 266
	Institutional capacity building, planning and leadership development	135 956
Removing legislative barriers	Policy and legal advocacy	24 546
	Legal and political environment assessment and legislative reform	36 390
	Legal support and legal literacy	52 695
	Human rights education for public officials	19 389
	Community-based monitoring of human rights	26 315
Program management	Grant management	39 153
	Policy, planning, coordination and management	239 036
Total		779 636

Breakdown of Expenditures for Program "Right to Health" in 2017



● Regional Level Activities ● National Level Activities

Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM)

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