



ANNUAL REPORT

2022

*ECOM — Eurasian Coalition on Health,  
Rights, Gender and Sexual Diversity*



### **Dear Friends!**



*This year has been difficult for all of us. Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine has affected LGBT communities throughout the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and has affected each and every one of us. In the very first days of the war, we conducted a needs assessment among ECOM's members and partners in Ukraine, and immediately began to provide support to representatives of the LGBT community, and to ECOM's members and partners. This included one-time individual humanitarian assistance, financial support to Ukrainian LGBT organizations and organizations in Moldova and Hungary, who help LGBT migrants, and a chatbot providing psychological assistance to LGBT Ukrainians, Ukrainian women, and to their relatives.*

*Despite challenges related to the war, ECOM continues to work and move forward. In 2022, a new strategic plan for the coalition for 2022-2026 was approved. We also welcomed new members; there are now 80 of us! ECOM continued to develop community activism, strengthen the knowledge and skills of partners in relation to the HIV response, and carry out unique research.*

*In 2022, we paid special attention to important topics for the community such as chemsex and pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV. We published a guide on working with people who practice chemsex, launched a corresponding training course for specialists, and conducted operational research on this topic. In April 2022, together with our partners, we opened a PrEP Resource Center in Almaty.*

*While continuing to help communities stay healthy, ECOM responded quickly to the outbreak of monkeypox (MPOX) in the world. For the first time in the region, we held a webinar and released an infographic with the most important information and recommendations to protect against infection.*

*Of course, we also monitor and document human rights violations and prepare reports to UN bodies in order to advocate for the interests of gay, other MSM and trans people at the international level.*

*While adapting to new challenges, ECOM continued to provide technical assistance to partner organizations not only in the EECA region, but also far beyond its borders, including in Jamaica!*

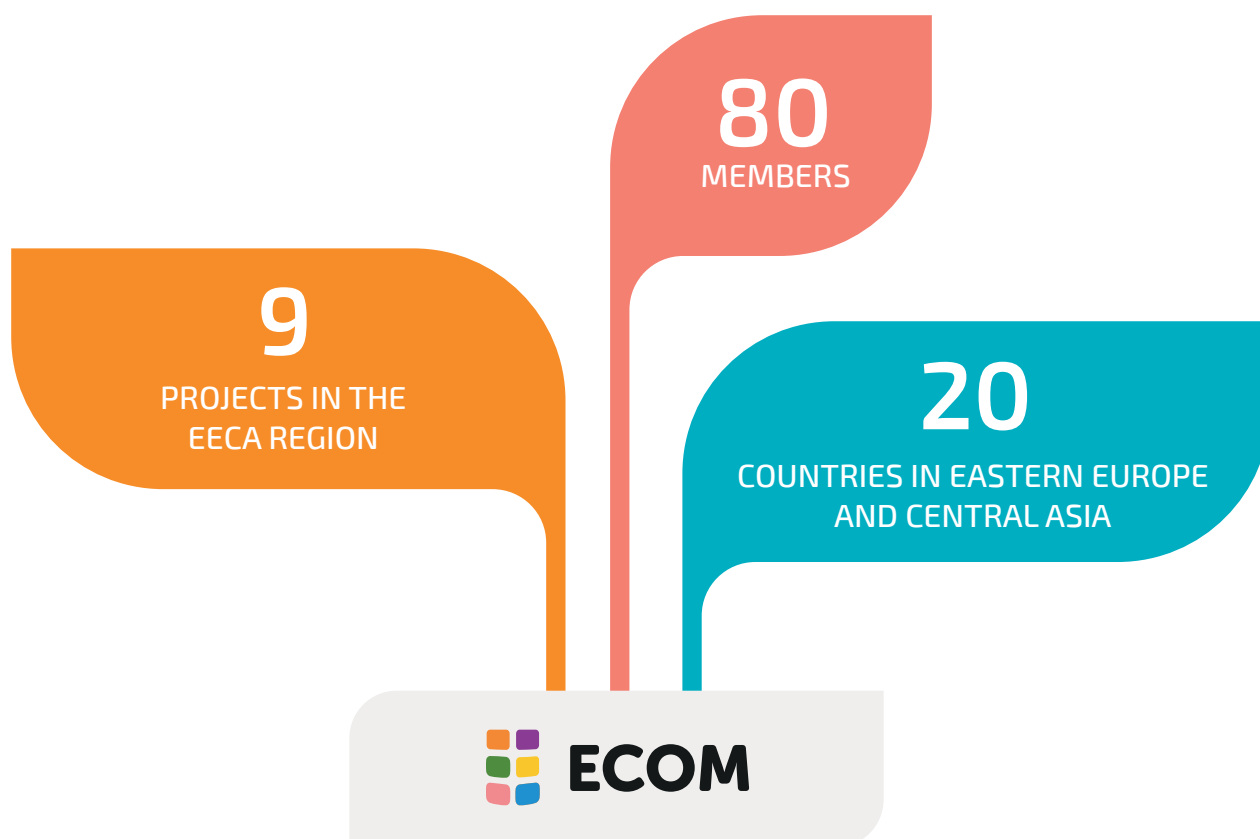
*The past year has shown the resilience of our communities and organizations. We were convinced again that together we can overcome any difficulties, and through common efforts, make the life of every member of the LGBT community better!*

**Vitaly Djuma,**  
Executive Director

**ECOM – The Eurasian Coalition on Health, Rights, Gender and Sexual Diversity** is an international, membership, non-governmental association open to non-profit organizations and activists working in the field of the rights and health of LGBT communities in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA).

ECOM is the leading regional LGBT community organization in EECA actively working on health and rights issues for gay, other MSM and trans people. Over the 11 years of its existence, ECOM has attracted US\$10 million from international donors, which has been used to build the capacity of national and local community organizations, advocate for amendments to homophobic laws, improve the quality of data on community needs, and to protect community activists in EECA.

***ECOM's goal is to ensure sustainable and active attention to LGBT+ health and human rights issues in national and international policies and programs, including the necessary funding and technical support for the development of community organizations in the countries of the EECA region.***





# ECOM IN 2022 — CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

## ECOM'S NEW MISSION

ECOM's mission is to support the development of national LGBT+ communities and their activism, promote human rights, and to protect the health and social well-being of gender- and sexually diverse people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

## ECOM'S NEW STRATEGY

MORE ABOUT THE STRATEGY



In 2022, ECOM's new **Strategic Plan** was approved with the following goal for 2022-2026:

- Ensure **sustained and active attention to LGBT+ health and human rights issues** in national and international **policies and programs**, including the necessary **funding and technical support** for the development of community organizations in the countries of the EECA region.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR THE PERIOD UP TO 2026

- 1 Support the sustainable development of effective LGBT+ community organizations and initiative groups working in the field of human rights protection in each country of the region, while taking national specificities into account.
- 2 Develop in the LGBT+ community the ability to effectively protect sexual and mental health, including in connection with HIV infection, STIs and other relevant issues.
- 3 Develop ECOM as an influential international (regional) LGBT+ community network working in the field of human rights and best governance practices.

## ECOM TOGETHER WITH UKRAINE

MORE



From the first days of the war in Ukraine, ECOM **supported** its members and partners, as well as all community representatives and Ukrainians in need. ECOM's attitude toward the war is reflected in this [position paper](#), which expresses **indignation at the military aggression** of the Russian Federation against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

## ECOM ASSISTANCE IN UKRAINE

### Needs assessment:

- Medium- and long-term among ECOM members and partners in Ukraine.
- Medium- and long-term among trans people in Ukraine (ongoing).

### Grants for Ukrainian LGBT+ organizations:

- **Gender Zed** provided humanitarian assistance to **600** LGBT people.
- **Gender Stream** provided shelter for **36** LGBT people, **250** evacuation consultations, financial assistance for **200** people, **20** trans people received hormone therapy.
- **Insight** (assistance for trans people): hormone therapy — **102** services, medical goods — **235**, direct living assistance — **186**, material support for relocation within the country — **105**, temporary shelter — **156**, psychological and legal support — **47**.
- **Cohort**: assistance for **160** trans people including direct humanitarian assistance, and payment for medical services.

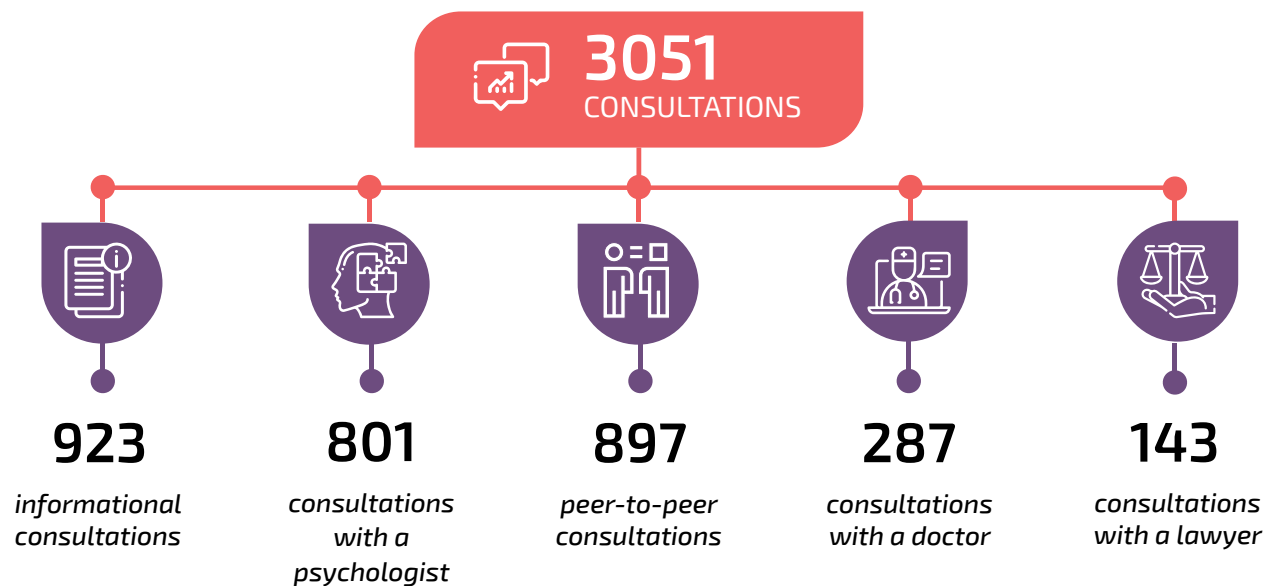
### Assistance for LGBT migrants:

- Assistance to the NGO GenderDoc-M (Moldova) — **183** LGBT people received support.
- Assistance to the NGO Háttér (Hungary) — hotline activities.

### ECOM direct assistance:

- Psychological and informational support for LGBT people from Ukraine;
- Consultations: peer-to-peer, doctors, and lawyers.

- Individual humanitarian assistance for the LGBT community (**17 requests totaling 1 953 090 hryvnas**);
- **3051** consultations through the @ecomwork\_bot chatbot were carried out, informational assistance to **197** people



## STORIES OF CHATBOT CLIENTS

- Gay guy, soldier. He was quite worried, because he feared he would be unable to see his boyfriend again, who is located in another city. After the consultation, he felt much better, and went off to fight a bit calmer.
- A transgender girl with acute gender dysphoria contacted the chatbot amidst the war and her inability to continue with her transition in the way she desired. She was experiencing difficulties due to her inability to complete the medical transition and obtain corresponding documents, as well as because she was identified as male in her documents and could be sent to fight. After working through her fear of violence with a chatbot psychologist, she began to experience much less anxiety.

*You have no idea how important and necessary this program is! You are doing a great job! I think there are a lot of grateful people; thank you very much! If there is an opportunity to extend the program, I think many more would be extremely grateful and happy.*

**Dasha,**  
chatbot client

*I contacted your employee via ECOM's Telegram chatbot. I needed to receive contraceptives and self-tests for STIs in complete confidentiality. Literally three days later, he fully complied with my request, and I was able to receive what I wanted by mail, for which I thank you very much. Finally, thank you for the moral support you gave me at this time. This is not an easy time, but your employee took me on and supported me, both in words and actions. I appreciate your concern and such employees.*

**Chatbot client**



*Self-help group meeting in Odessa, organized by the LGBT Association «LIGA»*



## ECOM'S ACTIVITIES IN 2022: IMPLEMENTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

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### OBJECTIVE 1. FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIVISM, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTHCARE

#### COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND VISIBILITY

Communicational work in 2022 was aimed at improving the visibility of ECOM's activities and focusing on key populations, shaping public opinion about the LGBT community in order to reduce homophobia in EECA countries, and raising awareness about the rights and health of community members.

##### ECOM'S INFORMATIONAL CHANNELS



#### MEDIA CAMPAIGNS



##### MEDIA CAMPAIGN #WEAREALIKE



Media campaign «*It seems we are alike*» (from 1 March 2022).

**Goal:** increase the visibility of trans people: tell the general public who trans people are, how they live and how they are no different from others:



- **30 videos** were developed for social networks (TikTok and Instagram) — both trans people themselves and specialists working with them appeared in the videos. The campaign received 52,600 likes on TikTok.
- The media campaign was developed and implemented by **trans and non-binary people themselves**.
- **Themes of the videos:**
  - Transgender transition issues;
  - Myths about being transgender and non-binary;
  - Stereotypes and perceptions about LGBTQI organizations that exist in society;
  - «Questions you should never ask a trans person»;
  - Issue of employment for trans people;
  - Responses to comments.



## INFORMATIONAL CAMPAIGN «RightTo» (continuation of the campaign)



**Goal** — raise awareness about the rights and health of gay people in the world with the involvement of well-known bloggers from the countries of the EECA region. In 2022, **7 new people** took part in the campaign: openly LGBT people and allies.

*I will not get tired of repeating that LGBT people, that all people, have the right to freedom of expression, security and protection of our rights. Let's change the world together.*

**Monroe,**  
TV presenter, actress, singer, blogger, activist (Ukraine)



## INFORMATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR IDAHOBIT



On the occasion of the International Day Against Homo-, Bi- and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), ECOM announced a call for proposals from ECOM partners and members to carry out informational and media campaigns under the general title «**Queer Summer: ECOM projects that help combat stigma**». As part of this campaign, nine diverse projects were implemented: from trainings for journalists to informational campaigns on TikTok. Each of the successfully implemented projects has changed the world around it, making society less homophobic and allowing LGBT people to live more openly.

Poster designed by CO  
«100% Life. Kyiv region»



## WEBINAR «DEVELOPING A MEDIA CAMPAIGN ABOUT OURSELVES AND OUR PARTNERS»



**Training** community representatives on the **basics of conducting media campaigns** — a webinar on how to develop a large-scale informational campaign, how to develop media campaigns taking into account the realities of the EECA region and the financial and human capabilities of local LGBT initiatives, and on how to monitor their effectiveness.





## REGIONAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN FOR LGBT YOUTH IN EECA ON DEVELOPING ACTIVISM SKILLS



«Blogger QUEERathon» (Istanbul, 30.08 – 2.09) for 13 amateur bloggers from different EECA countries — the first educational event in this format.

**Goal** — improve knowledge and skills of LGBT youth for effective communication, conveying information, and for forming public opinion through blogging and working with social media. Based on the results, 6 LGBT blog concepts were chosen that implement a media campaign on sexual and reproductive rights and health among young people.



*The QUEERathon gave me an inner impulse. I am now very motivated to do even more activism than before. It also gave me a sense of solidarity and unity. Before, it seemed to me that I was the only one in the world trying to change something and do better for our community. But now I realized that I'm not the only one. Being in such a space with like-minded people gives me a feeling of unity that inspires me.*

**Artur,**  
QUEERathon participant (Kyrgyzstan)

## INFORMATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE COVID-19 VACCINATION AMONG THE LGBT COMMUNITY IN EECA

**An informational campaign to promote COVID-19 vaccination** among the LGBT community began in July 2022. 5 organizations from different EECA countries (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) were selected to implement it. Based on a survey of LGBT people on their reasons for not getting vaccinated, 25 promotional messages were developed using original illustrations featuring popular queer icons. Subsequently, messages and visual materials were translated into the partners' national languages and distributed through their social networks.



VISUAL MATERIALS FROM THE CAMPAIGN





### REGIONAL WORKING GROUP OF TRANS PEOPLE ON HIV AND SEXUAL HEALTH IN EECA (RGT)

The Working Group was established with the support of ECOM in May 2019. This is the only regional level group whose **members and experts are exclusively trans people**. The mission of the group is to improve the quality of life of trans people by increasing visibility, mainstreaming the needs of trans people in the context of HIV prevention and trans health in general, broadcasting the vision of the community to medical professionals and government institutions, and by providing access to trans-competent and trans-sensitive public health services.

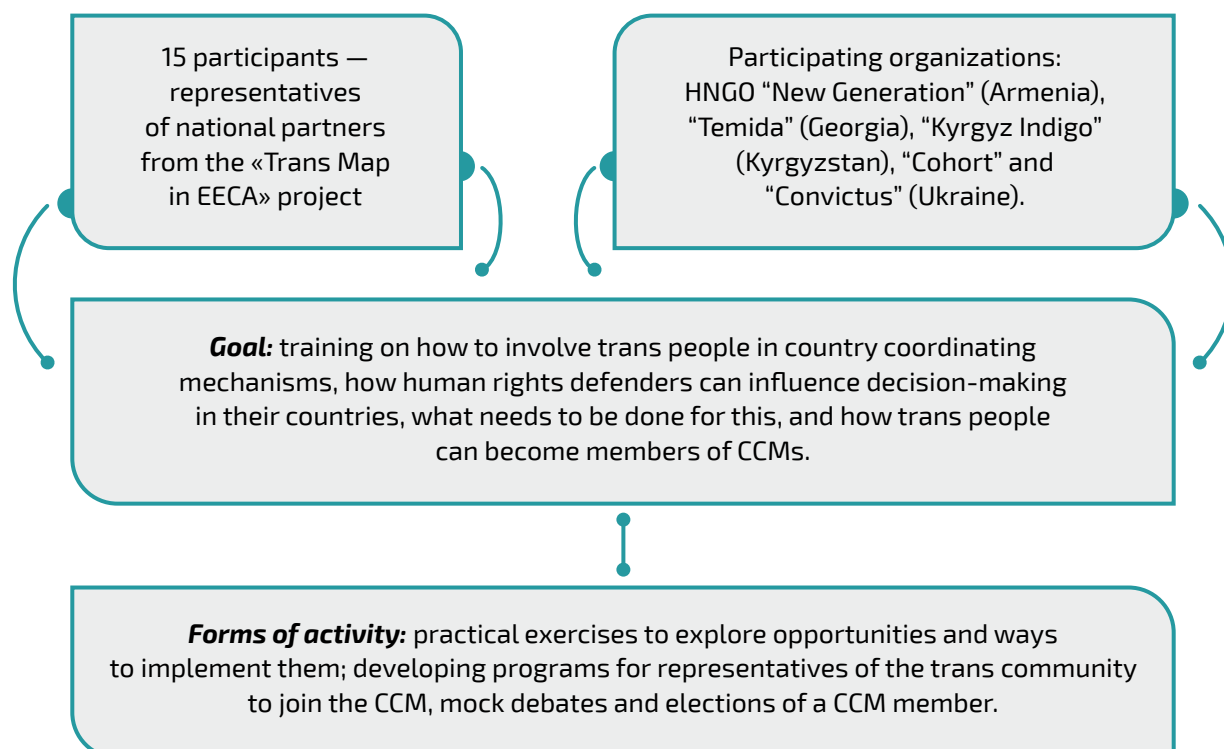
#### Activities in 2022:

- Participation in the development of ECOM's media campaign for the Trans Map project;
- Recording lessons for the online course on the TRANSIT tool;
- Working to document the changes taking place in the region through video about the stories of trans people.
- Meeting of the Regional Working Group of Trans People (August 2022). A new work plan for 2022-2023 was developed taking into account new realities.



### SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES IN NATIONAL HIV COORDINATING BODIES

#### Training for trainers on the TRANSIT and decision-making spaces (August 2022)





## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH DECISION-MAKERS TO INVOLVE TRANS PEOPLE AS COUNTRIES TRANSITION FROM ICD-10 TO ICD-11

### **Training module on trans competence**

This training module was born in response to a need to simplify trainings for physicians and decision-makers dealing with transgender issues. The target audience of such trainings are decision-makers (people who have influence over access to health services, as well as to legal and social benefits); healthcare professionals (medical professionals, as well as the administration of medical institutions, medical students and everyone else involved in providing medical services to transgender people). The goal of the trainings is to train specialists in relevant fields of activity on the principles of a trans affirmative/trans inclusive approach in order to reduce negative prejudices against transgender people and increase their access to medical services and other social benefits.

TEXT



## LEADERSHIP SCHOOL FOR TRANS PEOPLE



The leadership school is a guide to HIV decision-making processes in countries of the EECA region, which provides training on methods and tools for community mobilization.

TRAINING MODULE



ADDITIONAL MATERIALS



- In 2022, ECOM partner organizations held **national leadership training schools** on HIV for the community, which were attended by **91** trans people. **Trans people were involved** as volunteers or trainers in the process of organizing the schools and conducting the trainings. Many trainers participated in previous schools.
- The training module «**Leadership school for trans people**» includes 14 developed training sessions lasting from 3 to 5 hours.

## SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND WORK OF NEW LEADERS, HIV+, LGBT AND TRANS PEOPLE



### ONLINE COURSE ON PREVENTING PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT



#### Webinar themes:



- 1 Alchemy of stress: chemical, mental and physical components of stress; acute and chronic stress; adaptation mechanism; methods of regulation and self-regulation of stress.
- 2 Three pillars of emotional burnout: irrational guilt, superman syndrome, consequences of emotional burnout.
- 3 How to tame demons: the effects of anxiety, discouragement, workaholism, procrastination and self-doubt.
- 4 Psychosomatics: myths and truth; what does this symptom mean and what to do about it; work to reduce the consequences of possible trauma and prevent the development of PTSD.
- 5 Burnout — good or bad: life balance as a prevention of burnout; reversibility of burnout — myth or truth; revision of professional competencies; routine as a foothold.
- 6 Resource practices: a way to provide initial psychological self-help; laughter therapy; art practices; coping techniques for panic attacks.

*Remember, every time we get on a plane, the flight attendants remind us: «First put a mask on yourself, then on the child». Because if you cannot take care of yourself and provide yourself with access to oxygen, then you will not be able to take care of those around you. In real life, we, give our best at work, then come home, read the news, connect to social networks, devote ourselves to everything going on, and sometimes care for others more than for ourselves.*

*We created our course on the prevention of emotional and professional burnout as such a «mask». During the course, we try out tools with participants that can prevent initial burnout, and help to recognize it not only in ourselves, but also in loved ones, and to understand that we need to act right now. Because simply having internal strength and resources will we be as effective as possible in overcoming the HIV epidemic, protecting our rights, and in our own lives.*

**Elena German,**  
ECOM Capacity Building Coordinator

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

COUNTRY	TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	CLIENT	RESULT
 <b>AZERBAIJAN</b>	Familiarizing NGOs with the international SWIT tool.	CRG	Assessment of the implementation of this tool in the country and development of recommendations for expanding the package of services to increase the coverage of sex workers.
 <b>BELARUS</b>	Strategic planning for a consortium of Belarusian NGOs.	CRG	Strategic plan and communication strategy developed. A webinar on CLM methods was held, where various methods were discussed, as well as their pros and cons for implementation in Belarus.
 <b>KAZAKHSTAN</b>	Development of a strategy for the development of the community of ex-prisoners, as well as community proposals for the national application to the Global Fund.	CRG	On 13-15 December, a training was held for the community to develop strategies for the active participation of community representatives in decision-making processes on HIV and to familiarize community representatives with Global Fund tools and mechanisms.
 <b>KAZAKHSTAN</b>	Educational activities for health professionals to counter stigma and discrimination.	Global Fund Project Implementation Team in Kazakhstan	As part of the «Time for Equality» informational campaign dedicated to World AIDS Day, an online training was held for doctors in Kazakhstan on the topic «Stigmatization and Discrimination».
 <b>MOLDOVA</b>	Advocating for changes to and relaxation of legislation to better implement harm reduction programs.	CRG	An analysis of drug policy, basic documents and the legal environment related to drug use was carried out, advocacy recommendations were developed.
 <b>JAMAICA</b>	Analysis and development of recommendations on the use of the «Secret Client» research methodology.	ITPC-Global	J-FLAG members were trained on the use of data, and advocacy recommendations were made based on the data received.

## 2

### OBJECTIVE 2. ENSURE RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITIES OF GAY, BISEXUAL, AND OTHER MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN, AND TRANS PEOPLE AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING AND THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDING AS PART OF HIV AND HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS

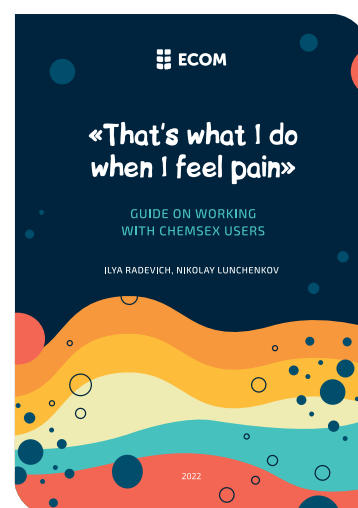
#### WORK WITH PEOPLE PRACTICING CHEMSEX



##### GUIDELINES ON WORKING WITH PEOPLE PRACTICING CHEMSEX

The guide «This is what I do when I feel pain» is an attempt to answer questions about what is different about working with people who practice chemsex versus people who use drugs, and how to organize help and support for people who practice chemsex.

It describes chemsex as a cultural phenomenon with its own history and specific substances, which substances clients use when practicing chemsex, and what chemsex is in the life of the LGBT community. It also contains best practices related to chemsex. According to the authors, the main value of this publication is five «live» stories of working with people who practice chemsex, which give examples of the different facets of chemsex and the place it occupies in the lives of different people who seek assistance.



##### TRAINING COURSE FOR SPECIALISTS WORKING WITH PEOPLE WHO PRACTICE CHEMSEX



«**Sex that people don't talk about**» is a basic online training course for employees of NGOs working and organizing services for MSM who practice chemsex. The course is intended to help professionals whose work may be related to people who practice chemsex: psychologists, peer counselors, social workers, doctors, and paramedics.



##### OPERATIONAL RESEARCH ON CHEMSEX

A research report was prepared with an overview of existing research in the EECA region. The report was reformatted into a scientific article and submitted to the International Journal of Drug Policy. This study is the first of its kind carried out with a systematic overview and meta-analysis.

## PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP)



### LAUNCH OF A RESOURCE CENTER ON PREP IN CENTRAL ASIA

MORE DETAILS



In April 2022, the **Resource Center for Pre-exposure Prophylaxis for HIV** was opened in Almaty, an important platform for the exchange of experiences and the transfer of best practices between countries within the region of Central Asia.

The uniqueness of this initiative lies in the opportunities for joint learning and the exploration of new topics, not only for employees of non-governmental organizations, but also for medical professionals. It also provides opportunities for dialogue between medical experts and community members.



*In the region of Central Asia, there are many very good practices in providing PrEP to MSM and trans people. In addition, we see the need and desire of community members to use this method of HIV prevention. Importantly, there are resources for this. However, work on the provision of PrEP was not coordinated, and there was no exchange of experiences or the dissemination of best practices. Therefore, the creation of a single space to share experiences will increase access to PrEP throughout the region, mobilize the community within the region itself, and provide it with support with minimal interference from «outside». Sharing experiences and learning new things is how I would characterize the essence of our center.*

**Nikolay Lunchenkov,**  
ECOM LGBT Health Coordinator

## MONKEYPOX

Despite the fact that only a few cases of monkeypox (MPOX) were reported in the EECA region in 2022, ECOM also focused on this disease.

- For the first time in the EECA region, the [webinar](#) «Monkeypox in EECA: what the LGBT community needs to know» was held.
- An [infographic](#) was developed by ECOM, which gathers all important information on MPOX, and on how representatives of the LGBT community can protect themselves.

## SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO ADVOCATE FOR COMPREHENSIVE, QUALITY HIV SERVICES: GRANTS

### SMALL GRANTS COMPETITION

(as part of the project «Moving Together Towards Quality and Equality: Improved Sustainable Services for ISPs in EECA» with the support of the Robert Carr Fund for Civil Society Networks).

### PARTICIPANTS

MSM-service and LGBT organizations, members of ECOM, primarily those who conducted the analyses of HIV service cascades for target groups from the following countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine.

### GOAL OF THE COMPETITION

advocacy to expand the access of MSM and trans people to quality HIV services, including by expanding the package of services.

### THE SMALL GRANTS ARE IMPLEMENTED BY (up to Q2 of 2023):



NGO "Gender and Development"  
(Azerbaijan);



PO "Human Health Institute (HHI)"  
(Kazakhstan);



PO "Kyrgyz Indigo"  
(Kyrgyzstan);



Humanitarian NGO "New Generation"  
(Armenia).

## CASCADES OF SERVICES



### CASCADE OF SERVICES FOR MSM

- In connection with the emergence in recent years of new strategic documents on combating the HIV epidemic, ECOM **updated the tool for analyzing the cascade of HIV services for MSM** (2018). In the new tool, the section on the PrEP services cascade is updated and expanded, and a separate file for data analysis was added.
- **The national cascades** for MSM in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine were **analyzed**. The results of the cascades will be analyzed at the level of regional changes; the regional analysis will be published in 2023.





## CASCADE OF HIV SERVICES FOR TRANS PEOPLE



- The cascade of services, as a tool, was discussed with the international organization GATE for a joint presentation at AIDS-2022 on the GATE Global Village platform. The English-language cascade was included in the list of documents to be distributed to trans activists participating in the AIDS-2022 conference.
- **Five national service packages** were developed (Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Ukraine) as part of the process of adapting the regional cascade.
- An analysis of the trans cascade in Armenia was completed; an analysis of the cascade of HIV services among trans people in Kyrgyzstan will be completed soon.

The package of services in Kyrgyzstan is already being developed as part of the national document, which creates good opportunities for subsequent lobbying and approval by the Ministry of Health.



## COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF HIV INTERVENTIONS FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



The interventions included in the package are based on the international recommendations of the TRANSIT, taking into account the social and legal specificities of the EECA countries. The publication presents a comprehensive, maximum set of trans-competent gender transition interventions, considered as methods of HIV prevention, as well as a set of motivational activities. This package of HIV interventions is a model, and requires adaptation to the conditions of a particular country for implementation at the national level.

## COURSE FOR TRAINERS ON THE SPECIFICITIES OF CONDUCTING ONLINE TRAININGS

On 7-9 June 2022, ECOM carried out for the first time a unique **training of trainers on the specifics of conducting online activities**. 19 trainers from among ECOM members, who already conduct both offline and online trainings, discussed what types of online training exist, how online training differs from offline training, whether group dynamics change in online trainings, and what tools can be used.

*The skills, tools and practical knowledge gained at this training showed that online training can be interesting, and allow you to keep the attention of the audience. It can also be safe, effective and motivational; and life hacks provided by the trainers will help to increase the productivity of these trainings and your professional level as a trainer.*

**Oliver,**  
training participant

## PUBLICATION OF PRACTICAL GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES FOR THE WORK OF LGBT NGOS



### BEST NGO PRACTICES FOR ALTERNATIVE FUNDRAISING: WORKING WITH EMBASSIES

One of the main tasks of ECOM is to help expand funding for national LGBT community organizations and other organizations providing services for LGBT people in EECA countries. An important component of this task is to analyze the experience of alternative fundraising means to improve the quality of life of LGBT communities in EECA countries, including through work with foreign embassies.

Interviews with representatives of non-governmental organizations of EECA countries, as well as information from open sources were used in drafting the report. The selection of respondents was carried out by open invitation of ECOM members; respondents described practices they considered the most significant in reflecting their experiences cooperating with embassies.



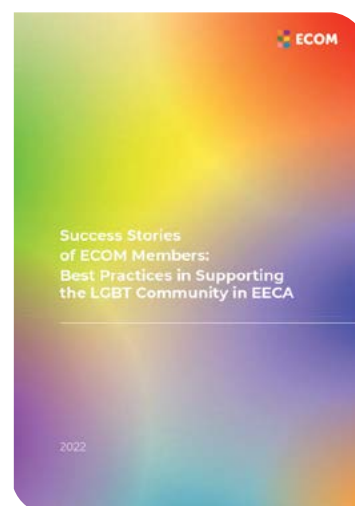
### BEST NGO PRACTICES FOR ORGANIZING SERVICES FOR MSM PRACTICING CHEMSEX

This publication contains descriptions of the best practices of NGOs in the EECA region in organizing services for MSM who practice chemsex. It describes the experiences of Ukraine (NGO «ALLIANCE.GLOBAL»); Russia (NGO «Support of Social Initiatives and Public Health» (LaSky) and (Andrei Rylkov Foundation for the Promotion of Health Protection and Social Justice); Georgia (NGO «Equality Movement»); and Moldova (NGO «Equality Movement») and (Information Center «GENDERDOC-M»).



### ECOM MEMBERS' SUCCESS STORIES: COLLECTION OF BEST PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING THE LGBT COMMUNITY IN THE EECA REGION

The brochure details the successful practices of ECOM's member organizations, initiatives, and individual activists, who fight every day to improve the quality of life of LGBT people in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It is a collection of stories about different approaches to improving the quality of life of LGBT people in EECA: including working with the state to update the estimated number of MSM in the country, working with bloggers and influencers, as well as organizing public events and protests.



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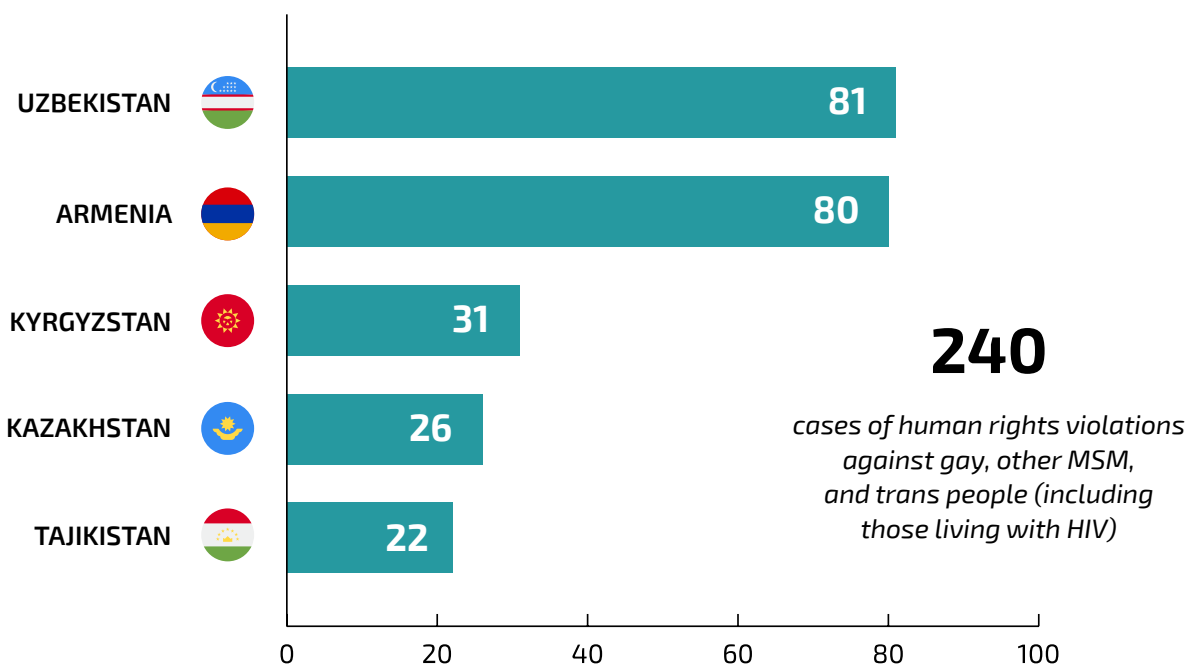
## OBJECTIVE 3. CONTRIBUTE TO THE FORMATION OF LEGAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS CONDUCIVE TO THE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

Young men, gay men, trans men, male sex workers and their male clients, men in migration and humanitarian crises, men in penal institutions, men from indigenous and ethnic minority backgrounds, and men who use drugs and other psychoactive substances are INVISIBLE. Many of them belong to several groups at the same time. All of these men demand that we use an intersectional lens when planning any intervention. All of these men require our global solidarity and shared responsibility, as their right to the highest attainable standard of health can only be achieved with public support, tolerance and respect for human rights. They didn't choose to be INVISIBLE, they were forced to become so in order to save themselves from public hatred and violence.

**Yuri Yoursky,**

*ECOM Human Rights Coordinator, at the opening of the thematic session "HIV and Men" at the 51st meeting of the UNAIDS Program Coordinating Council*

### MONITORING AND DOCUMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND THE QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED



Community activists, in cooperation with ECOM members and partners, carry out documentation of rights violations:

- In Armenia, cases of human rights violations were collected in cooperation with the Human Rights NGO "Pink", the Humanitarian NGO "New Generation" and the Human Rights NGO "National Trans Coalition".
- In Kazakhstan, cases of rights violations were collected by a documenter from the NGO "Human Health Institute".
- In Kyrgyzstan, the collection of cases was assisted by the Initiative Group "MyrzAiym".

## ALTERNATIVE REPORTS TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES ON RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EECA COUNTRIES



RECIPIENT	REPORT	RESULTS
<b>UN Human Rights Committee</b>	<a href="#">Alternative report</a> on <b>violations of the rights of LGBT people</b> in Georgia. The report was developed in partnership with the organizations "Tbilisi Pride" and "Equality Movement".	The Committee made final <a href="#">recommendations</a> on the country, which included points raised by ECOM and its partners during the briefings.
	<a href="#">Alternative report</a> on <b>rights violations based on SOGI</b> in Kyrgyzstan in co-operation with the LGBT organization "Labrys" and the trans initiative group "MyrzAiym".	In the recommendations, the Committee expressed concern and recommended that the state adopt an integrated approach to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination based on SOGI.
<b>UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</b>	<a href="#">Alternative report</a> on <b>violations of the rights of LGBT people</b> in Kyrgyzstan (according to the list of issues).	In the <a href="#">List of Issues</a> , the Committee requested statistical data disaggregated by sexual orientation, HIV status, and by other characteristics related to discrimination in the workplace, including in the public sector. It also asked for comments on existing or planned normative acts aimed at protecting LGBT people from discrimination on the part of private landlords when exercising the right to housing.

RECIPIENT	REPORT	RESULTS
<p><b>UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</b></p>	<p>Alternative report on <b>violations of the rights of LGBT people</b> in Uzbekistan.</p>	<p>Taking into account previous Concluding Observations, the Committee asked for information on the implementation and dissemination of guidelines on providing medical and social assistance to trans people (2017).</p> <p>In its <a href="#">Concluding Observations</a>, the Committee expressed concern about the criminalization of sexual relations between consenting adult men under Article 120 of the Criminal Code, as well as about the prevalence of intimidation, harassment, violence and stigma against LGBT people, which infringes upon their economic, social and cultural rights. The Committee recommended that awareness-raising campaigns be carried out among the public, healthcare professionals, law enforcement officers, and other government officials to eliminate negative stereotypes and the stigmatization of members of marginalized groups, such as people living with HIV and LGBT people.</p>
	<p><a href="#">Alternative report</a> with data on <b>rights violations based on SOGI</b> with special attention to the right to health in Tajikistan</p>	<p>In its <a href="#">final recommendations</a> the Committee recommended effective protection against all forms of SOGI-based discrimination and violence that hinder the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.</p>
<p><b>UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</b></p>	<p>Alternative report on human rights violations on the basis of SOGI in Azerbaijan.</p>	<p>In its <a href="#">Concluding Observations</a>, the Committee recommended that Azerbaijan adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation within a clearly established timeframe.</p>

RECIPIENT	REPORT	RESULTS
<b>UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</b>	<a href="#">Alternative report</a> on <b>human rights violations based on SOGI</b> in Armenia. The report was prepared by ECOM in partnership with the Humanitarian NGO "New Generation". Main topics: the lack of anti-discrimination legislation enshrined in the criminal code in Armenia, the concept of hate crimes, as well as the absence of a documented procedure for legal gender recognition.	In its <a href="#">recommendations</a> , the Committee recommended that Armenia take legislative and policy measures to combat gender-based violence and discrimination against LGBTQI women, including hate speech and physical, verbal and emotional abuse; protect the human rights of LGBTQI women in all areas covered by the Convention, and conduct awareness-raising activities to combat their stigmatization in society; ensure the right of transgender persons, including women, to change the gender marker in their passports and other identification documents; ensure that LGBTQI women can freely participate in political and public life, and exercise their right to freedom of peaceful assembly without intimidation or repression.
<b>UN Committee Against Torture</b>	<a href="#">Information on subsequent measures</a> « <b>Hate crimes and torture in relation to LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan</b> ». The report includes cases collected by ECOM documenters in Kyrgyzstan.	Data submitted for the Follow Up procedure will assist the Committee in compiling the subsequent List of Issues for the country.
<b>UN High Commissioner for Human Rights</b>	Report on violations of the rights of LGBT people in the EECA region based on data from ECOM on <b>human rights violations in the context of HIV</b> .	ECOM's input was included in the <a href="#">annual report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights</a> regarding (quote) «the invisibility and exclusion of trans people, which leads to insufficient HIV testing, and a lack of specific HIV programs and funding». (para. 47, p. 13).
<b>UN Independent Expert on SOGI</b>	Report on the EECA region based on data from ECOM on violations of the right to health <b>for the report on violations of the right to health of LGBT people</b> .	Data on EECA was included in the report.
<b>UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders</b>	Alternative report on behalf of the public in Tajikistan with data on violations of the rights of LGBT human rights defenders on the basis of SOGI.	Corresponding recommendations were made to the Special Rapporteur in a summary <a href="#">communiqué</a> .

RECIPIENT	REPORT	RESULTS
OSCE	Report on the results of monitoring and documenting human rights violations in the EECA region in 2021. This annual document reflects the latest data from the world's largest database on hate crimes and contains statistical and other information, as well as an analysis of the hate crimes situation throughout the OSCE region.	<b>37 cases from ECOM were published</b> in the <a href="#">OSCE's annual report</a> on hate crimes

## REPORTS ON RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

**Alina MIRZOYAN**, Human Rights and Advocacy Coordinator, New Generation Humanitarian NGO



[Regional report on violations of the right to health](#) of gay, other MSM and trans people in the EECA region in 2021

This document was prepared based on the results of a consolidated analysis of data collected by ECOM consultants as part of the monitoring of violations of the right to health in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. All cases are linked by the SOGI or HIV status of the victims, on the basis of which there was a violation of human rights.

[Research report on violations of the rights of trans people](#) in Armenia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan during the COVID-19 pandemic

Findings from a combined study on the situation and data of trans people during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was conducted based on a hypothesis of insufficient research on the situation and on the needs of trans people in normal times. The goal of the study is to identify and describe human rights violations, including the right to health, experienced by trans people during the COVID-19 pandemic; and to develop a set of recommendations on developing possible protocols for responding to global challenges, which should contain instructions specific to key populations, including trans people.



## TORTURE, BLACKMAIL, DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION: REPORT ON VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHTS OF GAY PEOPLE IN UZBEKISTAN

MORE DETAILS



ECOM together with the Association for Human Rights in Central Asia (AHRCA) and the International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) prepared a [report](#) on human rights violations against gay and bisexual people in Uzbekistan «Like Living on Another Planet: Gays, bisexual men and trans people vulnerable to abuse, imprisonment and discrimination in Uzbekistan». The report shows that a large number of gay men live under the threat of persecution due to Article 120. Our joint report documents that police use threats of prosecution under Article 120 for purposes of intimidation and extortion. The report also documents the police practice of torture and ill-treatment of gay and bisexual men.

*It's like we live on another planet where it's okay to hate, imprison, discriminate against, and kill people just for who they are.*

**Young gay man from Uzbekistan**

*This is the first unique document that analyzes in depth the systematic violations of the rights of gay and trans people in Uzbekistan.*

**Yuri Yoursky,**  
Human Rights Coordinator

## REGIONAL STATEMENTS/POSITION PAPERS ON REGIONAL BARRIERS AND VIOLATIONS

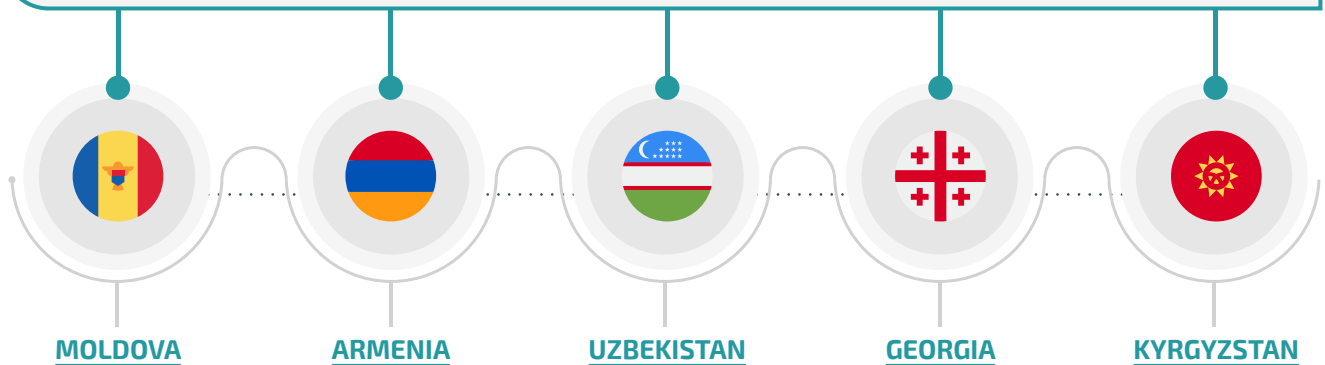
- [Position paper](#) on Russia's military invasion of Ukraine.
- [ECOM's position](#) on a draft law on compulsory medical examination of persons with suspected HIV infection in Uzbekistan.
- [ECOM's position](#) on homophobic statements by the General Secretary of the Belarusian Red Cross Society, which contradict the fundamental principles of the movement itself, in particular, the principle of humanity and impartiality.
- [Position](#) on the decision of the Belarusian authorities to withdraw from the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which means that Belarusians have lost the right to make individual complaints to the UN Human Rights Committee.
- [Position](#) on the adoption of a new law on the prohibition of «gay propaganda» in Russia.
- [Video statement](#) from a consortium of SHAG organizations representing the EECA region, Latin America, West and Central Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa, dedicated to Human Rights Day in 2022. The central theme is bodily autonomy, the fundamental idea that every person has the right to control their own body.



## ANALYTICAL DOCUMENTS

Updated reports assessing the legal environment were published: ***an analysis of national legislation*** related to SOGI and HIV in a number of EECA countries.

**Goal:** identify **legal barriers and issues** in countries that **have necessary legislation**, but where legislation does not fully provide gay, other MSM and trans people the opportunity to exercise their rights and freedoms. Judicial practice and government statistics were taken into account, as well as communications from activists, NGO data, press reports, and reports to international bodies.



## SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION IN TAJIKISTAN

Deputies of the lower house of the Parliament of Tajikistan adopted a **«Law on equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination»**, which is a great achievement for the country in the field of human rights protection. Since 2017, ECOM has been contributing to the promotion of anti-discrimination legislation in the country.

The law was developed as part of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Member States of the UN Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review procedure (second period) for 2017-2020. For the first time, the bill introduces new concepts such as: «discrimination» (Article 1), «direct and indirect discrimination» (Article 5), «sexual harassment» (Article 6), and others. Unfortunately, «sexual orientation» and «gender identity» are not included as characteristics protected from discrimination. However, the existence of such legislation is a huge step forward in the field of human rights protection!



## ECOM'S ROLE IN THE ADOPTION OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION IN TAJIKISTAN:



In addition, **76 cases of violations of the rights of LGBT people** were documented in Tajikistan, which serve as evidence of the systematic violations of the rights of the community in the country, and as grounds for the adoption of legislation.

## LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY FOR IMPROVING THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT, AND SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS AND INITIATIVE GROUPS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PROTECT RIGHTS THROUGH STRATEGIC LITIGATION

### ARMENIA (case example)



On 3 June, 2020, a group of people attacked A.'s house, where he was staying with friends, and began to insult him using obscene language because of his alleged sexual orientation and gender identity. The attackers beat A. with their hands, feet and stones on different parts of his body, including his head. On the same day, A. filed a complaint with the police about the incident.



The preliminary investigation ended on 6 April, 2021, and the case was sent to court. Court hearings were scheduled in violation of reasonable time limits for the proceedings. The trial in the first instance ended on 7 June, 2022 with a decision of the judge to terminate the criminal prosecution due to the expiration of the statute of limitations.





On 3 August, 2022, a lawyer from the NGO "New Generation" filed a cassation appeal against the court decision, and ECOM began providing support for the case. On 22 August, 2022, the RA Court of Appeals decided to accept the complaint for proceedings, however, the Court of Appeals ruled that no violations of procedural norms were committed by the court of general jurisdiction.



ECOM and Armenian partners have begun the second stage of the process: an appeal to the Court of Cassation.

## EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL ACTIVITIES



### TRAINING ON MONITORING AND DOCUMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST LGBT PEOPLE

18

activists



5

EECA countries



Based on the [manual](#) developed by ECOM on monitoring and documenting human rights violations against LGBT people



During the training, participants learned how to collect evidence when monitoring and documenting human rights violations against LGBT people, and how to systematize and classify human rights violations. They received theoretical and practical knowledge about monitoring and the process of documenting cases, were familiarized with the applied theory of collecting and documenting evidence, and learned how to use photo and video evidence in their work.



**ECOM monitors registered more than 240 cases of rights violations and discrimination against LGBT people in the REAct database.**

This year, we began working together with the Alliance for Public Health: we started adding cases of human rights violations against LGBT people to the REAct online database. We conducted this training as part of this activity. Participants in the training identified monitoring objectives for each country. In the future, information collected about violations will become a source for advocacy in countries and with international mechanisms.

**Elvira Tilek,**  
ECOM Human Rights Officer






## WEBINARS WITH MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY TO DISCUSS ACHIEVEMENTS AND BARRIERS TO IMPROVING THE SITUATION IN EECA COUNTRIES

In total, **12 webinars** were held, including:

WEBINAR THEME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">How to deal with hate speech based on sexual orientation and gender identity</a>	<b>Joanna Szymańska</b> a human rights expert who worked at the PACE Secretariat in the Equality and Non-Discrimination Unit and with the PACE Rapporteur on LGBT+ Rights	How is hate speech defined? What kind of hate speech should be prohibited? The presenter shared examples of successful campaigns that helped fight hate speech against LGBT+ people.
<a href="#">Strategic litigation to protect human rights</a>	<b>Maksim Olenichev</b> human rights lawyer. Handles strategic litigation for the protection of LGBT people in national courts and the European Court of Human Rights	How to plan, select cases, and carry out strategic litigation — an important tool in the field of human rights protection to achieve equality, bring about legislative and social change, and establish precedents.
<a href="#">Stigma and discrimination: how to recognize and fight it</a>	<b>Angelica Frolova</b> , LGBT activist, coordinator of the lobbying and advocacy program of the Information Center "GENDERDOC-M"	The webinar discussed how to recognize stigma and discrimination and how to deal with it. The speaker also shared best practices, and answered participant questions.

WEBINAR THEME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">Transfeminism: how it changes our view of the world</a>	<b>Mira Tai</b> is a non-binary trans person and an independent sociologist and researcher.	What is transfeminism? Background and history of transfeminism. What are the main principles of transfeminism? What is transmisogyny? Why is transfeminism relevant to today's politics?
<a href="#">Right to health for LGBT people: submission of alternative reports to UN treaty bodies</a>	<b>Ana Aptsiauri</b> , «Equality Movement» Legal Protection Officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Right to equality and violations of the human rights of LGBTQI people in Georgia</li> <li>2. HIV/AIDS: overview of legislation and main issues</li> <li>3. Working with UN treaty bodies.</li> </ol> Discussion of cases related to violations of the right to health.

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND INITIATIVE GROUPS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY ISSUES IN EECA, INCLUDING ON MITIGATING THE CONSEQUENCES OF COVID-19

COUNTRY	REQUEST	RESULT
 <b>Uzbekistan</b>	Technical support in the field of digital security. Due to COVID-19, all activities had to be moved online, new digital threats appeared.	Gay and trans communities significantly improved their cybersecurity and protected their communication channels.
 <b>Georgia</b>	Support for the LGBT organization "Tbilisi Pride" at EuroPride 2022.	Raised the issues of the rights of LGBT people in Georgia, the impact of COVID on society, and access to healthcare.
 <b>Group of ECOM consultants</b>	Increasing knowledge about cybersecurity.	A group consultation providing an understanding of the basics of cybersecurity, and demonstrating competencies on the most important and primary digital protection measures, and the acquisition of digital immunity to the preventive activation of cyberprotection capacities. Individual consultations and practical implementation of the acquired knowledge with the help of a digital security expert.



## INTERACTIVE VISITS WITH ACTIVISTS, ORGANIZATIONS AND INITIATIVE GROUPS IN ECA COUNTRIES



### ARMENIA

(3 – 4 November, 2022)

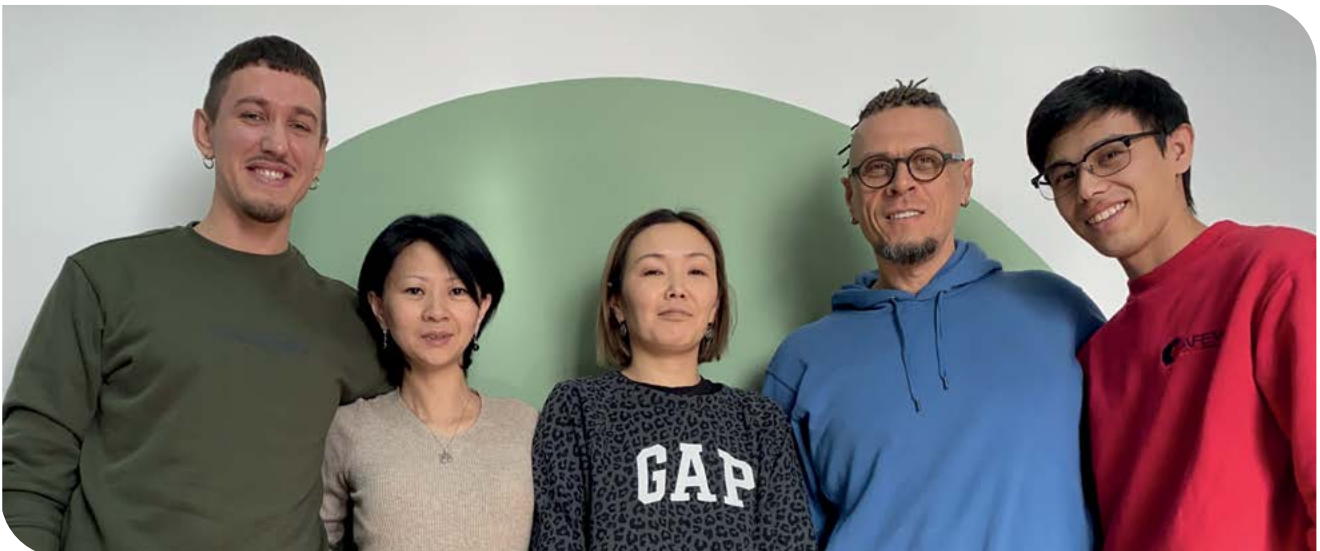


### KAZAKHSTAN

(15 -19 November, 2022)

### **Objectives of the meetings:**

- Mapping activists, organizations and initiative groups, potential allies, and current stakeholders.
- Presenting the new strategic plan to the organizations of Armenia and Kazakhstan and discussing the possibility of further cooperation.
- Identifying the main challenges and issues faced by NGOs.



### **Decision by ECOM to assist the NGOs participating in the working visits to implement the following activities:**

- Advocacy for legal gender recognition;
- Advocacy to combat bullying (Armenia);
- Advocacy for the adoption of antidiscrimination laws;
- Support for strategic litigation;
- Provision of technical assistance to organizations that need it.

# 4

## OBJECTIVE 4. DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF ECOM

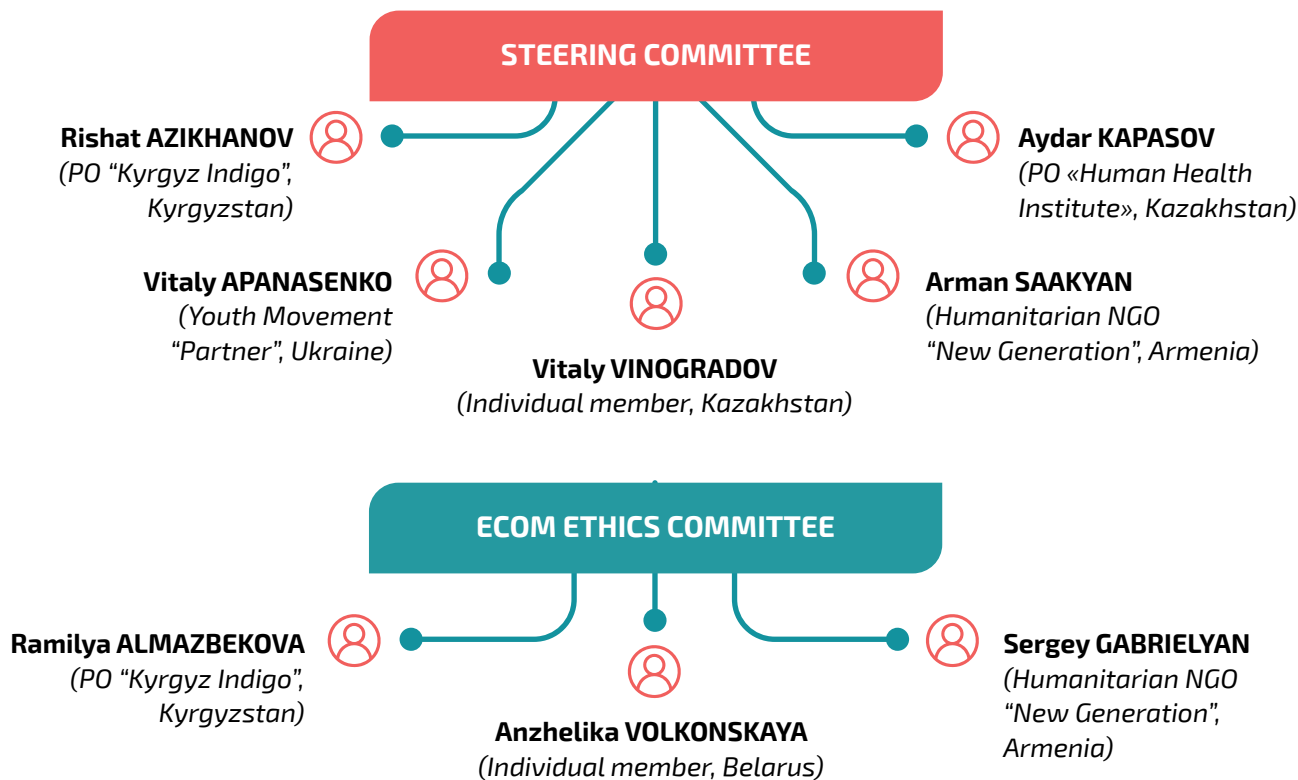


### ELECTION OF THE NEW COMPOSITION OF ECOM'S STEERING COMMITTEE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

In 2022, the three-year term of the previous composition of **ECOM's Steering Committee** ended. As a result of online elections, the new composition of the Steering Committee and Ethics Committee was elected.

The main objective of the **Steering Committee** is to monitor the implementation of the Strategy of the organization approved by the General Meeting of ECOM Members.

The main objectives of the **Ethics Committee** are: promote compliance of ECOM members, staff of ECOM's Secretariat, and ECOM sub-recipients and consultants with ECOM's Code of Ethics; the resolution of ethical conflicts between ECOM entities; and assistance with resolving such conflicts between ECOM entities and third parties.



## NEW MEMBERS OF ECOM

In 2022, the following became members of ECOM:

- Háttér Society (Hungary);
- "Informational and Educational Organization Queer MEDIA" (Georgia);
- Anna Redko (Ukraine);
- Queer Association "Temida" (Georgia);
- Vadim Antipin (Kazakhstan);
- Milan Zagoruyko (Ukraine);
- IG "Centre T" (Russia);
- Public Association "Gay and Lesbian Alliance" (Kazakhstan);
- Public Organization "Tbilisi Pride" (Georgia).

## IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOM'S COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The **communication strategy** was finalized taking into account recommendations received and feedback from the Secretariat staff; the communication plan for 2022 was updated and approved.

An effective SMM strategy for ECOM's social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) was developed and implemented.

As part of its implementation, ECOM's Twitter account was launched in the second quarter, where tweets about important ECOM events are published in English.

- An analysis of the organizational needs of ECOM in relation to communication activities was carried out.

- A monitoring and analysis process for ECOM's communication activities was introduced and implemented.

In the second quarter, a quarterly digest of ECOM's events in Russian and English was launched for donors/partners and ECOM members.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF MEMBERS OF ECOM'S SECRETARIAT AND FOR ECOM MEMBERS

As part of the implementation of the communication strategy to strengthen the capacity of ECOM and its members, a series of training webinars on communication and SMM issues was held, both for employees of ECOM's Secretariat and for ECOM member organizations.



### TRAINING FOR ECOM MEMBERS

*A series of webinars was held on the following topics:*

- Strategy for promoting the organization on Instagram and Facebook;
- How to develop content for the organization's social media: content plan, content matrix and rubrics, different content formats;
- Ways to promote the organization on social networks.



### TRAINING FOR ECOM SECRETARIAT

Three training webinars on the topic **«Developing a personal brand on social networks»** were held for ECOM's staff members and Steering Committee.



In September 2022, a **mentoring program for the development of personal brands** through social networks was launched. As part of the mentorship, representatives of ECOM's Secretariat and Steering Committee work together with an expert to develop their own expert brand on their chosen social network(s). The expert also develops an individual plan for each person for the development of their social network profiles.



As a result, personal consultations were held, 10 online lessons about visuals for social networks were recorded, and individual development plans were developed for each program participant.










## REPORT ON THE WORK OF ECOM'S STEERING COMMITTEE IN 2019-2022

### COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The composition of the Steering Committee, the report of which is presented in this document, was elected at ECOM's in-person General Meeting of ECOM Members in Tallinn on 20 November, 2019 for a term of three years: from 02.12.2019 to 01.12.2022.

#### **Seven people were elected to the SC in 2019:**

-  **BURTSEV Egor** (*Russian Federation, individual member*),
-  **VINOGRADOV Vitaly** (*Republic of Kazakhstan, individual member*),
-  **DOMANI Anastasia Eva** (*Ukraine, individual member*),
-  **GABRIELIAN Sergey** (*Republic of Armenia, representative of the Humanitarian NGO "New Generation"*),
-  **ORSEKOV Daniyar (Erlan)** (*Kyrgyz Republic, representative of the Public Organization "Kyrgyz Indigo"*),
-  **PISEMSKY Evgeny** (*Russian Federation, representative of the Socially-oriented Public Organization "Phoenix PLUS"*),
-  **SHEREMET Svyatoslav** (*Ukraine, individual member*).

During the three years of the work of the SC, there have been changes in the composition of the SC, which indicates that the SC is a dynamic body that responds to the state of affairs both within the Coalition and the geopolitical situation in the EECA region. In particular, Daniyar Orsekov resigned from his seat in the SC in August 2020. In connection with the departure of Daniyar, by-elections were held, and Adilet ALIMKULOV, representing the same organization "Kyrgyz Indigo", which Daniyar represented before him, was elected to the vacant seat. In March 2022, after the start of the large-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, Anastasia Eva Domani left the SC by her own decision. Due to the short period of time remaining until the end of the term of office of the current composition of the SC, it was decided not to hold by-elections for the vacant seat. Thus, by the end of the term, the SC included six people.

On 25 February, 2020, the Steering Committee elected Vitaly VINOGRADOV as its Chair from among its own members.

## CHALLENGES IN THE WORK OF THE SC IN 2019-2022

In comparison with the previous period of the Coalition's operations, this three-year term of ECOM's SC faced some of its biggest challenges.

### *These should include:*

- 1** The COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in national epidemics in all countries of the region. The pandemic «came» to the region at the beginning of 2020 and persisted in the countries of the region with varying degrees of intensity until the time of this report (September 2022). It is because of the pandemic that the number of face-to-face meetings of the Steering Committee was reduced; for members of the SC, the possibility of free movement between the countries of the region was limited.
- 2** Geopolitical conflicts and challenges. During this term of the SC, there was a «hot» phase in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, the beginning and development of a large-scale war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, as well as the most serious episodes of aggravations of domestic situations in a number of countries in the region: mass protests against Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus and mass unrest in Kazakhstan. Geopolitical challenges had a direct impact on SC members: for example, SC members who had Russian citizenship, Evgeny Pisemsky and Egor Burtsev, were forced to leave their country. Due to general political circumstances, Anastasia Eva Domani also withdrew from the SC.

## WORK REGIME OF THE COMMITTEE

During the reporting period, ECOM's Steering Committee worked in two main modes, which we call reactive and proactive. Firstly, in its reactive mode, the SC carried out obligatory tasks and functions prescribed by the Regulations on ECOM's SC. Secondly, the SC also worked in a proactive mode, whereby we took the initiative, and employed creative and political leadership. This often went beyond the scope of routine statutory activities.

### *Such creative developments of the Steering Committee during the reporting period include:*

- developing a «backbone» and filling the new strategic plan of the organization for 2022-2026 with meaning,
- developing and approving fundamental changes in the decision-making system and the organogram of the Coalition,
- putting forward and developing the content of political statements of the organization on acute socio-political issues of the countries of the region.

## WHAT DID WE DO DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD AS PART OF OUR FUNCTIONS?



### 1. POLITICAL STATEMENTS BY ECOM

As part of its functions, the SC regularly developed position papers, in particular political statements, and other documents on behalf of ECOM as a whole. These include:

- Statement on the occasion of International Women's Day (March 2020),
- Statement by ECOM regarding the proposal to assign the status of "foreign agent" to the organization Phoenix PLUS, Russia (December 2020),
- Statement on the violence committed at "Tbilisi Pride" in Georgia (June 2021),
- Position paper on the Russian Federation's military invasion of Ukraine (March 2022).



### 2. NEW MEMBERS OF ECOM

The SC meaningfully and critically worked on the admission of new members to ECOM, including both organizations and individuals.

During the reporting period, the SC responded positively to all applications for coalition membership without exception, although in a number of cases the admission decisions were "delayed", which was due to the technical need to obtain any missing documents from applicants as required by the admissions procedure.

Individual members of the SC actively recommended new members for the Coalition.

When reviewing applications for membership in the Coalition, we carefully reviewed the packages of documents for membership. In a number of cases, decisions were not unanimous and were taken by majority vote, which indicated a healthy pluralism within the SC itself.

***During the term of the SC, ECOM accepted:***

INDIVIDUAL  
MEMBERS

11

12

MEMBER  
ORGANIZATIONS

By representing ECOM in their own countries, SC member in many cases acted as promoters of the Coalition, and encouraged local organizations and experts to submit their candidacies for ECOM membership.



### 3. ORGANIZATION OF EVENTS AND REPRESENTING ECOM

- The SC delegated functions to SC member themselves for key events for the Coalition, such as the XXIV International AIDS Conference in 2022 in Montreal (Canada), which was attended by SC member Adilet Alimkulov.

The SC developed a procedure for closed ranked voting for delegating tasks: if there are several competing candidates, SC members cast a vote for their preferred candidate in a secret ballot, and the Secretariat counts the votes.

- 3.2. In 2021, ECOM initiated, organized, and held the IV Regional Consultation on HIV among MSM and Trans People in Eastern Europe and Central Asia «Unity, Support, and Healing During the Transformation Period» (14–15 December 2021). SC member took an active part in the preparation and holding of the events of the IV Consultation, in particular, they helped coordinate the work of country hubs, where participants of the Consultation gathered.



### 4. SC MEETINGS

During 2019–2022, the SC held regular meetings, in accordance with the Regulations on the SC. The SC met four times a year, and also when issues within ECOM arose that were within the competence of the SC. Some of these meetings were held face-to-face, however, most were unfortunately online.

Two face-to-face SC meetings were held in February 2020 and summer 2021, respectively. Face-to-face meetings, due to the high engagement and concentration of SC members, made it possible to develop and adopt complex decisions on fundamental issues of the functioning and development of ECOM, namely:

- to develop a new coalition management structure in accordance with the challenges of the time, with amendments to ECOM's organogram and charter (which was subsequently approved by the General Meeting of ECOM Members on the basis of the SC proposals),
- to develop a new strategic plan for the Coalition for 2022–2026 together with hired consultants (which was also subsequently approved by the General Meeting of ECOM Members)..



### 5. ENSURING THE INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY OF ECOM

- The SC took an active part in the search for new optimal formats for organizational interaction within the Coalition, and the reform of its internal management in 2021. The result of joint work with the Secretariat was developments to the updated management system of the organization, which, we hope made it more flexible and mobile, while not going beyond the legislative framework established by the country of registration, the Republic of Estonia. The corresponding developments of the SC formed the basis for formal changes to ECOM's Charter, approved by the General Meeting of ECOM Members and registered by the Estonian judicial authorities. In essence, since 2021, the Coalition has been operating in the organizational format developed by the Steering Committee.

- ECOM is an organization with strict procedures that ensure a competitive principle for filling leadership and executive positions in the organization. In particular, the 5-year term of office of Vitaly Djuma, who was appointed to the position in 2017 expired during this term of the SC. In accordance with the Charter of the Coalition, the SC took over the functions of organizing a new open competition for the position of Executive Director. As part of the competition, the SC reviewed the submitted documents, conducted necessary interviews, and ultimately approved the reappointment of Vitaly Djuma to the position of Executive Director, whose candidacy was found to meet the requirements for the position. Based on the results of the competition, the Chair of ECOM's SC, Vitaly Vinogradov, signed a new contract on behalf of ECOM with the Executive Director for a new 5-year term (2022-2027).
- As part of its work to ensure the institutional sustainability of ECOM, the SC routinely interacts with the Coalition's Secretariat. In particular, the SC regularly reviews and approves the Secretariat's quarterly progress reports. At its discretion, the SC asked the Secretariat to include certain information in these reports, and made proposals for organizing the work of the Secretariat in accordance with the Coalition's strategic plan for the subsequent quarter. Thus, the SC took part in the development of 11 quarterly reports of the Secretariat.
- The Steering Committee, in accordance with the Regulations on the SC, took part in the preparation, review, and approval of the Coalition's annual reports, which were subsequently published and presented to the General Meeting of ECOM Members.
- As a result of the work of the Steering Committee, the statutory and internal procedures of the Coalition were greatly improved: amendments were made to the Charter, the Steering Committee regulations (in particular the procedure for election to the SC), and the provisions on membership in ECOM, and provisions on the General Meeting of ECOM Members were developed and amended.



## 6. MEDIATION OF ETHICAL CHALLENGES

Simultaneously with the current composition of ECOM's Steering Committee, the Ethics Committee was elected for the first time. Over the past three years, within the framework of ECOM's work, one internal conflict situation arose and was brought to the SC, which required an investigation in accordance with ECOM's Code of Ethics. As part of mediation to resolve the conflict, the SC cooperated with the Ethics Committee.



## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN 2022

DONOR	PROJECT	FUNDS UTILIZED, EUR*
Aidsfonds – Soa Aids Nederland	Emergency response for people living with and vulnerable to HIV in Ukraine and neighbouring countries	43 266
Elton John AIDS Foundation	Humanitarian Support to LGBT Community Members from Ukraine	210 287
Elton John AIDS Foundation	Trans Map in EECA	230 009
The Global Fund **	Sustainability of services for key populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia region	226 545
The Global Fund	Service provider for technical assistance	23 041
Open Society Foundations	Work with the rights groups in the Eurasia region to promote right to health and equality	24 581
Other projects	Other projects	146 673
OutRight Action International	Rapid Support for LGBT Ukrainians	15 903
Robert Carr Fund***	Mitigating impact of COVID-19 on HIV programs for inadequately served populations	174 683
Robert Carr Fund****	Mitigating impact of COVID-19 on HIV programs for inadequately served populations	141 092
Robert Carr Fund***	Moving Together Towards Quality and Equality: Improved Sustainable Services for ISPs in EECA	134 782
Robert Carr Fund****	Sustainable Health Advocacy with Gay Men	66 183
ViiV Healthcare	PrePare EECA	33 393
ViiV Healthcare	To provide emergency humanitarian assistance to Ukrainian refugees LGBTQI	102 624
UN Agencies	Various projects	98 468
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1 671 530</b>

\* — EUR equivalent is calculated based on the annual average exchange rate used in FMS. The final EUR expenses will be presented after Annual audit of the ECOM Financial Statement prepared on Accounting basis according to Estonian law.

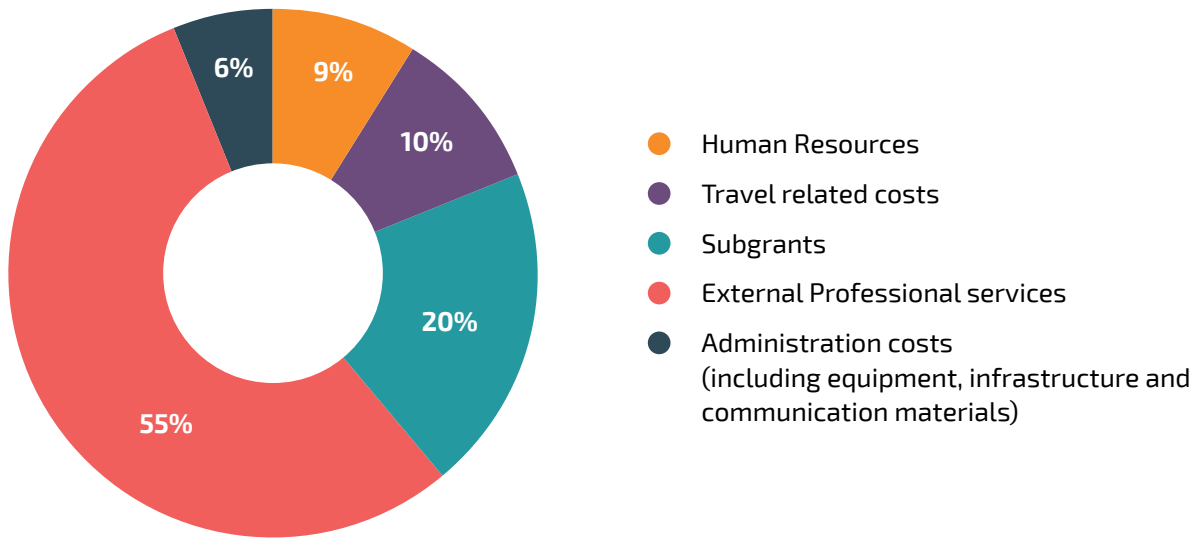
\*\* — funded through 'All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS' (CO 100% Life)

\*\*\* — funded through Eurasian Harm Reduction Association

\*\*\*\* — funded through The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MPact)



## BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURES BY COST CATEGORIES IN 2022





## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
<b>ARV therapy</b>	Antiretroviral therapy
<b>CCM</b>	Country Coordinating Mechanism
<b>CLM</b>	Community-led monitoring
<b>COVID-19</b>	Acute respiratory infection caused by SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus
<b>CRG</b>	The Community, Rights and Gender Strategic Initiative of the Global Fund
<b>ECOM</b>	Eurasian Coalition on Health, Rights, Gender and Sexual Diversity
<b>EECA</b>	Eastern Europe and Central Asia
<b>THE GLOBAL FUND</b>	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
<b>HIV</b>	Human immunodeficiency virus
<b>LGBT</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (intersexual) people
<b>MSM</b>	Men who have sex with men
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>PO</b>	Public organization
<b>PrEP</b>	Pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV
<b>REAct</b>	«Rights-Evidence-Action», a platform that allows you to record violations of the rights of representatives of key populations vulnerable to HIV and tuberculosis
<b>RGT</b>	Working Group of Trans People on HIV and Sexual Health in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
<b>ROBERT CARR FUND</b>	Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund
<b>SOGI</b>	Sexual orientation and gender identity
<b>STI</b>	Sexually transmitted infection
<b>TRANSIT</b>	«Implementing Comprehensive HIV and STI Programmes with Transgender People: Practical Guidance for Collaborative Interventions»
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

