

## NGOs unite at the pan-European level to improve HIV prevention and support for Men who have sex with Men (MSM)

### Co-authors

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### Caring for the sexual health and well-being of MSM

MSM in Europe remain highly vulnerable with regards to HIV as revealed by the high proportion of MSM among newly diagnosed cases of HIV in many countries, studies revealing a high proportion of MSM engaging in high-risk sexual behaviours as well as alarming trends regarding several other sexually transmitted infections in several countries.

- 1 - informing in targeted and tailored ways about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (promoting harm-reduction strategies including the use of condoms and water-based lubricants)
- 2 - working with behavioural researchers to document precisely the specific risks faced by MSM
- 3 - enabling the mobilisation at all levels of gay men living with HIV
- 4 - Experimenting always with innovative approaches such as internet-based projects that reach very large numbers of users of gay online forums.

However, the sustainability of such essential health services remains uncertain in many countries, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Many governments remain most reluctant to commit to improving the health of MSM and many NGO projects with MSM depend upon international funding that is decreasing in the region.

### Uniting NGO delegates from 21 countries in "Gay Paris"!

As part of the AIDS ACTION EUROPE partnership, the NGO AIDES organized in Paris, France in June 2007 a pan-European Gay Health Seminar with 45 NGO delegates, active in HIV prevention and support with MSM from 21 countries (mostly from Central and Eastern Europe).

Thanks to our proximity with various local MSM communities, local NGOs play an essential and multifaceted role in the frontline of the responses to the HIV epidemic among MSM. This includes:

### Developing and sustaining advocacy!

We need to use more effectively the potential of existing networks and institutions working for MSM health and thus overcome the political and financial obstacles. AIDS ACTION EUROPE along with other networks will actively integrate the health of MSM as an advocacy priority.

Our "Ljubljana Declaration" on the promotion of Gay Sexual Health, released on August 1, 2008, thus conveys at the highest levels the suggestions shared by European civil society organisations from across our wide European Region.



Gay Pride, Paris



### Thanks

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### The following organisations were represented at our seminar (thanks for their contributions!!)

- Belgium:** Sensoa
- Croatia:** Iskorak (Sexual and Gender minorities Centre)
- Czech Republic:** Czech AIDS Help Society
- Estonia:** Estonian Network of People Living with HIV, NGO
- France:** Act-Up Paris, AIDES, ELCS NGO, Ile-de-France Regional Council, The City of Paris, Warning
- Germany:** AIDS-Hilfe North-Rhine Westphalia
- Greece:** Synthesis
- Ireland:** Gay HIV Strategies
- Latvia:** AGIHAS (Support Group for

- People Living with HIV/AIDS)
- Lithuania:** Pozityvus Gyvenimas (Positive Life)
- Macedonia:** EGAL
- Netherlands:** Municipal Public Health Service Rotterdam-Rijnmond (MPHS), SCHORER
- Poland:** Kampania Przeciw Homofobii (Campaign Against Homophobia), SIEC PLUS, Social AIDS Committee (SKA)
- Portugal:** Abraço
- Romania:** Accept, PSI-Romania
- Russia:** The "Siberian Alternative" Centre, PSI-Russia - LaSky
- Serbia:** SPY - Safe Pulse of Youth

- Slovenia:** ŠKUC-MAGNUS
- Spain:** Grupo de Trabajo Sobre Tratamientos del VIH
- Sweden:** Positiva Gruppen
- Ukraine:** AIDS Foundation East-West, All Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV, SAAPF (Substance Abuse and AIDS Prevention Foundation)
- International:** AIDS ACTION EUROPE, Eastern European & Central Asian Union of PLWH organisations (ECUO), ILGA, The European Centre for the Epidemiological Monitoring of AIDS (EuroHIV), The European Parliament