

Keep UNAIDS — the HIV response in EECA is not finished
Statement from the regional networks of Eastern Europe & Central Asia

1 October 2025

We, the undersigned regional networks of civil society organizations working on HIV in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA), national organizations and community groups, express our grave concern regarding discussions about closing or dismantling UNAIDS. At a time when the HIV epidemic in our region continues to grow, removing the only global agency with a specific mandate to lead, coordinate and monitor the response would be a profound mistake with devastating consequences.

HIV infections in Eastern Europe and Central Asia continue to rise, with an estimated 140,000 new cases in 2023, representing a twenty percent increase since 2010, - which stands in stark contrast to other regions that have seen declines in new infections and AIDS-related deaths. The epidemic in our region is concentrated among key populations, particularly people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men, people in prisons and other marginalized groups who already face stigma, criminalization, and barriers to accessing health services. These dynamics demand stronger, not weaker, global leadership.

UNAIDS plays a unique role in ensuring that governments, international organizations, and civil society are united behind a coherent and evidence-based response. . In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where shrinking civic space and punitive policies continue to endanger lives, the independent voice and normative authority of UNAIDS is essential.

We need a reformed, fit-for-purpose and resilient UNAIDS, not a dismantled one. To close it now, at the very moment when the HIV epidemic in our region is worsening, would risk undoing decades of progress. It would weaken international solidarity, fragment data collection and monitoring, and silence an institution that has consistently stood with the most affected communities. The cost of such a decision would not only be measured in institutional terms, but in human lives.

We therefore urge Member States, the United Nations, and international donors to reject any proposal to close or dismantle UNAIDS, and instead to commit to sustaining its mandate and resources.

Only with a strong and fit-for-purpose UNAIDS can the world — and Eastern Europe and Central Asia in particular — stay on the path toward ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Signed by 24 regional and national civil society organizations:

ARAS - Romanian Association Against AIDS

Association for harm reduction Stigma, Slovenia

BerLUN e.V / Gemeinschaft der grogenkonsumierenden Menschen aus Osteuropa, Berlin, Germany

Center for Humane Policy, Bulgaria

Center for Information and Counseling on Reproductive Health – Tanadgoma, Georgia

Charitable organization "Charitable Foundation "SPODIVANNYA", Ukraine

Club Eney, Ukraine

ECOM - Eurasian Coalition on Health, Rights, Gender and Sexual Diversity

Eurasian Harm Reduction Association (EHRA), CEECA region

Eurasian Movement for the Right to Health in Prisons, CEECA region

Eurasian Women's Network on AIDS (EWNA), CEECA region

Fund social support Revansh, Kazakhstan

Health Advocacy Coalition (HAC), CEECA region

HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje, Republik of North Macedonia

HPLGBT, Ukraine

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ITPC EECA)

New Generation Humanitarian NGO (NGNGO), Armenia

NGO Fund Woman, living HIV, Kazakhstan

Public Association "Protection of the Rights of Service Users in the Field of Mental Health – “Overcoming”, Kazakhstan

Public Association “PULS Community”, Republic of Moldova

Regional Expert Group on Migration and Health for Eurasia, CEECA region

The Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network (SWAN)

WESTERN UKRAINIAN RESOURCE CENTER «UKRAINIAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS “YOUR HOME”, Ukraine

Women and Modern World Social Charitable Center-CWMW, Azerbaijan