



## **Database European projects working in the field of male sex work (MSW)**

### **Introduction: aims and method**

Correlation set up a database collecting information on agencies and projects providing services for male sex workers. The European-wide database is developed for the Internet and is accessible through the Correlation website. The aim is to offer information on different projects and working methods within Europe, to stimulate networking and exchange in order to professionalize the services.

In order to make the database efficient and to get the active input of all those projects in Europe providing services for male sex workers, a questionnaire was developed with a number of relevant questions. Besides up-to-date contact information, the questionnaire aimed at gathering in-dept information on the target group, the main goals, the methods used, the philosophy and background of every project:

1. Describe your target group
2. Reaching male sex workers (MSW) is the major focus point within the organisation?
3. Description of the main goals of your project
4. Description of the background / philosophy of your organisation
5. Methods used to reach MSW: Outreach, Drop-in, Medical service, Internet, Other
6. Number of MSW reached during 2007 and 2006
7. Top 3 countries of origin of the MSW
8. Since when is the organisation focusing on MSW?
9. Do sex workers actively participate in your organisation? What is the level of involvement of sex workers within the project?
10. Number of staff members working with MSW
11. Your organisation is NGO, GO?
12. Main funders of the project
13. Action level of the project? Description of the main partners (local, regional, national and international)
14. Participation in a European or international network or project?
15. Political activities of the project? For which purpose?
16. Specific projects or special services towards MSW that could serve as a model of good practice for other organisations in Europe?
17. Additional information regarding the project?
18. Contact details of other projects working with MSW in your country

From December 2007 until March 2008, agencies and projects were contacted. A general e-mail and two reminders were sent. Projects were contacted personally by e-mail and phone to gather the information required.

## Summary analysis of the responses

90 projects were contacted in 32 different countries<sup>1</sup>. 10 projects responded that they do not work with MSW. From the 80 projects left, 42% (34 projects) responded from 19 different countries<sup>2</sup>. The respondents do not come from one specific region, but are spread over the whole European area.

10 of 34 projects, or 29%, have MSW as a major focus group within the organisation. The other 24 (70%) work with MSW amongst other target groups such as female sex workers, gay men, drug users, people living on the streets, people infected with HIV, migrants, etc.

All respondents mention health care and STI/HIV prevention as a main goal within the organisation, next to support, advice and empowerment of the sex workers. Only 3 of the 34 projects (9%) do not offer outreach services. 21 projects or 62% of the respondents offer easy access services such as drop-in. 26 projects or 76% offer a medical service to the MSW. 21 respondents (62%) use the Internet to offer their services, through an interactive website or online outreach.

Other methods used are peer education (2 projects) and night shelter (2 projects).

The number of sex workers reached is very different and varies between 6 and 740. As a consequence of this big variety between projects, an average number doesn't give any useful indication.

The origin of the sex workers varies from country to country, but 50% of the projects works with Eastern European sex workers (mostly Romanian). 9 of these 17 projects are situated outside of the Eastern European area. 7 projects (20%) work with South American sex workers (mostly Brazilian).

Most of the projects are prove to be quite young. Only 3 projects started up in the '80s, 12 in the '90s and 14 (41%) in 2000 or later.

Participation of the sex workers is an important issue for most of the projects. In 26 of them, or 76%, sex workers are participating in the organisation. Participation degree varies from carrying out outreach activities to active involvement in policy-making and action planning.

Only 17% of the projects are governmental organisations (6 projects). The others are independent foundations or NGOs.

Networking seems to be very important. Most of the projects participate in different local and national networks. 22 projects (65%) are part of an international network such as Tampep, Swan or Correlation.

17 projects (50%) are politically active. Advocacy and lobby work for sex work regulations are the main activities. Legalisation of sex work and better conditions for sex workers are main focus points.

## Ongoing project

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Ukraine

<sup>2</sup> Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Macedonia, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom

The database provides fast access to specific information on a large number of partners working in the field of MSW. In order to remain effective the available information needs to be up-to-date. The database should be an ongoing and growing project. New projects can be added, additional information and changes of data of the existing projects can easily be processed. This way the database will continue to be a useful and trustworthy tool for networking and information sharing.