

Executive Summary

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1. Preface

Why Us?

The Foundation AMOC/DHV started to carry out health promotion activities and HIV/STI prevention among male sex workers (MSW) in Amsterdam more than 15 years ago. It was felt, that MSW (selling sex on Central Station, in hustler bars and in various brothels or private sex clubs) needed specific attention, as they were not targeted and reached by any other local agency.

In 1997 the AMOC/DHV Foundation launched the European Network Male Prostitution (ENMP), supported by the European Commission and the Dutch Aids Fund. The network now consists of agencies in 24 different countries, all engaged in the field of male sex work.

What do we want?

The ENMP stimulates, develops and improves proper health and social services, which contribute to the needs and well-being of MSW's. Furthermore, the network intends to bridge the gap between the needs of MSW and the services, provided by agencies, active in the field of HIV/STI prevention and health promotion. Therefore both, agencies as well as MSW are actively involved in the network.

What do we do?

- Exchange between the Member States and the applicant countries of the European Union
- Develop and implement specific intervention strategies and models of good practise
- Practical support and advice towards service providers (e.g. by setting up services for MSW) and other relevant parties
- Organise different activities, such as conferences, network meetings or training workshops
- Organise and support exchange visits within Europe
- Gather information and data, including policy reviews
- Refer and link to hundreds of different service providers, sex workers projects, sponsors and other relevant programmes

What are the results?

- Website with information about the recent developments of the ENMP
- Different ENMP publications through our website
- Publication and dissemination of different information material (ENMP Manual; Newsletter; Statement of Intent; Information folders, Meeting Reports, ...)
- Discussion forum online through the ENMP mailinglist and the guestbook
- Contacts to different ENMP members for information, advice and practical collaboration

2. Objectives

Networking

The ENMP network exists of 22 different countries. With financial support of UNAIDS we could involve additional partners from Bulgaria, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan and the Ukraine. Their participation responds to the fact that male sex work is not a national, but a European and border-crossing phenomenon. Therefore, we need to develop methods and strategies, which can be implemented in different settings and realities. In addition, the partners need to be flexible and open-minded with the willingness to learn from each other.

Organisation of regional and national activities

To make use of the various forms of expertise within the network, we agreed that each regional group should prepare and organise a specific conference or training, which guarantees a broader forum for exchange and training. This approach sensitises and trains agencies and supports the implementation of proper health promotion strategies.

In the past 2 years, the Regional groups have focused on different issues:

Central- Eastern European group

The Central- and Eastern European region can be divided as followed:

1. Western countries, like Germany and Switzerland:
 - Specific services for MSW
 - Migrants from Central and Eastern Europe with different backgrounds and specific needs
2. Eastern countries, like Poland and Romania:
 - No structural and specific services at the moment
 - Need in support and training

Besides these major differences, the group identified common key issues, which are discussed by using and learning of each other's knowledge and experience:

- Exclusion of male sex workers (e.g. Lack of access to medical services)
- New ways of prostitution (Internet) - development of new intervention strategies

Southern European group

Male sex work is identified as an issue, but France and Spain (with one MSW Project) are the only countries, offering specific services to male sex workers. However, some countries might be able to develop services in the near future. As there is a lack of experience and knowledge in this area, training and networking on a national and local level needs to be supported and developed.

Northern European group

All countries do have services for sex workers and quite well developed health services, which can be accessed by male sex workers as well. The socio-economic infrastructure within these countries is satisfactory, but does not always meet the specific needs of male sex workers. This applies especially to the Scandinavian countries, in which the term prostitution is indissolubly connected with the emancipation of or violence against women.

Each Regional group agreed to organise a meeting or conference, based on the activities in the past years. The following events were planned¹:

- Southern Europe: Follow-up training for agencies considering, planning or implementing services for male sex workers
- Northern Europe: Stockholm Hearing: 'Hidden Stories' – Male Prostitution in Sweden & Northern Europe
- Central- and Eastern Europe: Internet conference : Hiv and STI prevention through the Internet

HIV and STI Prevention

In 2002 the ENMP produced a Manual, in which various models of good practice in different countries have been described². The organisation of different conferences and trainings in 2003 contributed to the idea of exchange and transfer of knowledge, regarding the development of specific HIV and STI prevention strategies:

- The training for service providers gives the opportunity to transfer knowledge and learn from each other in a clear defined setting. Participants have the opportunity to exercise specific strategies under the professional supervision of the trainers.

¹ Detailed information can be found at the foot in chapter 4: Network Activities

² Manual with tips tricks and models of good practice for service providers considering, planning or implementing services for male sex workers, ENMP, 2002

- The Stockholm Hearing compares different policy models and its effects on health and well-being of (male) sex workers.
- The Internet conference highlights specific and new HIV and STI prevention methods through the Internet. Different experts are brought together to present their work and participants have the opportunity to learn from each other in smaller workshops.

Besides, these very specific events, the ENMP discusses new developments on HIV and STI prevention during the various meeting (e.g. General Meeting).

Datacollection / Pilotsurvey

Based on the pilot survey, carried out in 2002, the ENMP analyses and evaluates the outcomes in cooperation with the City University in London. The outcomes will be published in a Survey Report and we hope to conduct a follow-up survey in a number of different countries, including applicant countries of the EU.

Platform of support and advice

In the past years, the ENMP has developed more and more into a platform, offering support and advice towards policy makers, service providers and health professionals. The network has expanded and we started to cooperate strongly with sex workers and activists on an international level. Within this framework, our efforts can be summarised as followed:

- Exchange and transfer of knowledge by organising meetings, trainings and conferences
- Offering opportunities for bilateral exchange
- Mutual advice and support on the scene
- Development and dissemination of information materials
- Referral and mediation centre (bringing agencies and people together, in order to stimulate future collaboration)
- Presentation of the ENMP and its activities during international conferences

3. Conclusion

The year 2003 has been full of activities and the ENMP planned and organised lots of different meetings. We realise that the organisation of training events and conferences made the ENMP more accessible for other service providers, activists and MSW and helped to increase the impact of the network. We also received lots of media attention during the Stockholm Hearing and the training in Gijon, which supported the local projects within their practical work.

Pending the decision of the European Commission, regarding future funding, we intended to focus on the following issues:

- Broad exchange with service providers, MSW, policy makers, ...
- Training for service providers and MSW
- Gathering data (based on the outcomes of the pilot survey)
- Gathering existing and developing new prevention material
- Development and implementation of health promotion projects for MSW
- Policy, health and sex work
- Health promotion through the Internet

However, due to the rejection of our project proposal we are now forced to concentrate all efforts on finding alternative ways of funding. During the last ENMP meeting in Lisbon it became obvious that the network members were not ready to reconcile themselves to the fact of the project suspension. Therefore, we will do our best to find alternative ways of continuation.

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