



GENDERDOC-M

**FIVE-YEAR
ACTIVITY
REPORT**

Years 2010 – 2014

Chişinău – 2015

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**Alexei
MARCICOV,**
Chairman
of GENDERDOC-M
Information Centre

ALL people have such stages in life which they transcribe into their own history. In my life, one of those stages was the period between 2010 and 2014. These five years of mine completely intertwined with the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's reporting period. And the starting point was the closing period of PRECIS, a unique project not only for GENDERDOC-M, in terms of significance, but also personally for me. It has turned GENDERDOC-M into a truly professional human rights organization and also resource centre for non-governmental organisations in the post-Soviet space and made me a professional human rights defender.

This period was followed by another historically important moment: Lesbians, gays and bisexuals were partially recognised as a social group that requires state protection from discrimination. Unfortunately, gender identity is not explicitly mentioned in it. I had dreamed

we about ourselves and our friends about us

Five years of true victories

of a law that would ensure a bit more equality for LGBT people since the establishment of the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre. And my dream partly came true. The Law on Ensuring Equality was adopted by the Parliament in 2012.

And yet, after the dramatic 2008 events, it seemed that the LGBT community's desire to come out to mass public activities was lost once and for all. But, thank God, I was wrong. Sensing the taste of freedom once one wouldn't be able to live the same way any more. That's why the year after the Law on Ensuring Equality had been adopted we walked the short, in terms of distance, but long, in terms of spiritual significance, March for Equality. Its organisers and participants were protected by the police from the aggressive counter-demonstrators. Thus, the Moldovan Government stated that LGBT people are entitled to equality in exercising their right to freedom of assembly.

Thus, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has stated that LGBT people are entitled to have equal rights and be protected; however, the Government and Parliament are yet to walk the talk and ensure that LGBT people's rights are granted and respected.

To stop and take a look back

ONCE, when I was crossing the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's threshold, I thought that working in this organisation would be a dream job for me. That was an impossible dream. However, some five years later I became the executive director of one of the strongest, most experienced and professional LGBT organisations in Eastern Europe.

It occurred that this reporting period coincided with the time of my directorship, and only during the report preparation period was I able to really understand and appreciate the huge amount of

work, which had been completed by the GENDERDOC-M team, and the successes, which we had been able to achieve with the help from our partners, volunteers and community members.

Often, in the routine of writing project proposals and reports and carrying out strategic litigation and training sessions, we have no time to stop and take a look back saying to ourselves, "We've done a lot. We're great!" Now, having finished this report, I want to do exactly this – to express my gratitude, first of all, to all staff and volunteers and, of course, to all professionals, as well as to all partners thanks to whom you are holding this publication in your hands.

Anastasia Danilova,
Executive Director of the
GENDERDOC-M Information
Centre

GENDERDOC-M Information Centre in 2009–2014

FIRST arrived in Chişinău in April 2009, in the immediate wake of the dramatic events surrounding the elections of that month, Parliament had just been burnt and tens of people remained in custody. Ultimately, circa 700 persons would allege that they had been beaten by police during the events, in which several people were killed.

I arrived on a Saturday, checked into my hotel and headed straight to the final event of the 2009 Rainbow over Dniester Pride Festival, a party in a club on Bernardazzi Street. A friend of mine had put me in contact with Boris Balaneţkii – at that time the GENDERDOC-M director – and Boris had invited me to come along. It was a great party. I remember vividly the drag queen beauty pageant and karaoke contest. And I met people that night who remain friends to this day. But it was, of course, a subdued and difficult evening – 2009 Rainbow over Dniester Festival was entirely a private, secret event, both because of the political turmoil, but also because a peaceful rally in 2008 had been stopped by a violent mob, assisted by secu-

rity services. A video of the events of 2008 – still on YouTube – is a frightening, depressing and ugly record of massive public bullying.

How far GENDERDOC-M has come since then! In 2010 and 2011, the Chişinău municipality banned another peaceful rally, but allowed counter-demonstrations. Anti-LGBT movements became more prominent in Moldova, and key members of Moldova's leadership made statements intolerable anywhere, and certainly not befitting the government of a country intent on upholding its international human rights obligations. As these issues climbed the list of international concern surrounding Moldova, we watched with our own kind of pride as GENDERDOC-M evolved into a skilled, thoughtful and highly competent human

Claude Cahn,
Human Rights Adviser
Office of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Human Rights
(OHCHR)



rights organisation – arguably Moldova’s best human rights organisation in any area.

And we are also proud that the United Nations has joined fully, openly and unequivocally in its support for GENDERDOC-M’s

efforts to assist Moldova in becoming a democratic country, celebrating Moldova’s beautiful diversity with “tolerance, pluralism and broadmindedness”, in the powerful words of the European Court of Human Rights. We have celebrated with sincere joy the successes led by GENDERDOC-M in finally holding Rainbow over Dniester Festival in 2012, and in holding the March for Equality without even minimal challenge in 2013. A photograph of Anastasia Danilova holding aloft the rainbow flag from the podium and howling with joy is one of the most enduring images of the beauty of human liberation that I have seen.

Of course, challenges lie ahead: new movements on the Internet openly entrap gay men. In September, the office of GENDERDOC-M was actually attacked, for the first time since 2009. As the human rights challenges facing LGBT communities in Moldova, we will work with GENDERDOC-M to find appropriate methods for addressing them. And we are confident that – not too long in the future – this work will ultimately be successful: full dignity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in the Republic of Moldova, celebrated by everyone as full and equal members of the human family.

20 November 2014,
Chişinău



Without GENDERDOC-M there would have not been LGBT emancipation

GENDERDOC-M is one of the few civil society organisations who represent concrete interests of a concrete circle of people in our society. Few organisations can cite this as an example. GENDERDOC-M Information Centre does not allow for compromise and does not betray principles of equality and human rights. This is exactly what other associations should learn from the Centre.

GENDERDOC-M is the civil society organisation and not a professional consultative association whose number is great in Moldova. This is what lies in its naturalness and harmonious understanding of its bold civic stance. Perhaps, there is no other similar organisation in Moldova who would overcome so many stereotypes on its way and not only in society. If there had been no GENDERDOC-M, there would have not been the movement towards LGBT emancipation.

Serghei Ostaf,
Director of the Human Rights
Resource Center “CRDO”





GENDERDOC-M and CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS: 10 years of fruitful cooperation

SINCE 2004 Civil Rights Defenders has partnered with GENDERDOC-M Information Centre to increase awareness of and access to information concerning the LGBT community. Joint efforts have also aimed at combating prejudice and improving the position of the community in the Republic of Moldova. This cooperation includes publications and resources that inform and empower LGBT persons living in the country. To improve the media reporting on LGBT issues, GENDERDOC-M has trained journalists and conducted extensive media monitoring. The most recent analysis has shown that over the last several years the media reports on LGBT issues have become more neutral and less prejudiced or biased. This is an important achievement in not only protecting citizens' right to freedom from discrimination, but also in improving the public's perception, and overcoming stereotypes and prejudice.

GENDERDOC-M – Our reliable partner in Moldova

GENDERDOC-M Information Centre certainly stands out as a strategic organisation with great impact. In recent years, we at ILGA-Europe have been impressed by the well-developed strategy and thought-through advocacy on the adoption of the Moldovan anti-discrimination law, which resulted not only into the adoption of an LGBT-inclusive anti-discrimination law, but also effective mechanisms to protect the rights of the LGBT community in the country. There is also so much to learn from the GENDERDOC-M team on effective

cooperation with police on the organisation of safe Pride events, on successful strategic litigation, as well as on working with older gay people, among many other activities. Another notable strength of the organisation has been its capacity to continuously improve its democratic structures to ensure transparency and accountability. In short, GENDERDOC-M has grown even stronger as a credible, effective and respected partner in Moldova and at a European level over the past five years. For this, I sincerely congratulate the many dedicated, intelligent and compassionate people of the GENDERDOC-M team.



Evelyne Paradis,
Executive director
of ILGA-Europe

GENDERDOC-M Centre is renowned for actively representing interests of LGBT community

ALTHOUGH I'd been familiar with the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's activity since 2001, our partnership began in 2010, when the organisation set a goal to apply the available domestic legislative provisions in protecting LGBT people and to develop new LGBT-friendly legal tools.

The organisation's image has evolved throughout all these years thanks to the perseverance it manifested in demanding equal treatment of LGBT people and punishment for the humiliating attitude and offence. GENDERDOC-M is well known in the legal circuits and in the society in general as the organisation that actively represents interests of LGBT people, has sanctioned hate speech and fought discrimination in court. The organisation has managed to establish a clear practice of legal gender recognition for transgender individuals in the absence of any clear document change procedure implemented by the State Registry Offices.

Nevertheless, exercising the right to the freedoms of assembly and ex-

pression, violation of LGBT people's rights, and hate crimes still represent urgent issues that can and must be resolved in the nearest future. I can firmly state that the endeavours made by the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre during the past years have brought a number of positive changes to the legislation and LGBT people's social life in the Republic of Moldova. No wonder the old saying goes: "Knock, and the door will be opened for you. Ask, and it shall be given to you".



Doian Ioana Străisteanu,
Lawyer and
human rights expert

Through mass media, GENDERDOC-M managed to show general public true face of the LGBT community

LOOKING back at the last five years of the organisation's activity, I can certainly affirm that GENDERDOC-M has gone from adolescence to maturity from the viewpoint of many aspects and not only raising awareness about LGBT people's rights and problems, but also in raising awareness among the general public. I've seen GENDERDOC-M's activists manifest solidarity with diverse discriminated groups and not only with those from Moldova.

In 2010 and 2011, GENDERDOC-M was occasionally present in the local informational space but only in the context of the anti-discrimination bill. Now I've noticed a significant qualitative and quantitative leap. GENDERDOC-M is more and more visible and, it should be underlined, in a positive context. Of course, the leap is determined by several indirect factors such as Moldova's direction towards the European Union and, consequently, Moldo-

van society's thawing (including mass media outlets) with regard to diversity acceptance.

The principal factor still remains GENDERDOC-M's own organisational maturation. Its activists are becoming more active in raising public awareness and organising a lot of public events that often draw the media's attention. An immense piece of GENDERDOC-M's work for LGBT people is carried out by providing them services and counselling, which is becoming more and more visible. I see a greater openness of gays and lesbians: More of them choose not to conceal their sexual orientation anymore and disclose it to society, in front of TV cameras and have no more fear to participate in the March for Equality held by GENDERDOC-M annually.

I also note maturation in regards to on-line presence (an element that shouldn't be neglected in the Information Age). GENDERDOC-M has managed

to launch an exceptional platform egalim.md, inspired by the U.S.-based It Gets Better Project, bringing LGBT people closer to the general public which is a very important thing to do. I am convinced that, in great measure, those who discriminate or manifest a negative attitude towards LGBT people, in fact, do not know these people and have never talked to a gay or a lesbian to see that they are just like anybody else.

GENDERDOC-M has managed to show a different 'face', to 'reform' its website which looks magnificent. It is more attractive than the previous version and is easy to navigate, where one (including a journalist) can find necessary data.

Adding one more personal

observation, I'd like to say that GENDERDOC-M has managed to formulate its main message more clearly and convey it more and more often throughout the last two years. It is the message that LGBT people do not demand special rights but rather that they fight for the equal rights enjoyed by the rest of Moldovan citizens, thus having managed to decrease (maybe insufficiently) and to neutralise negative and discriminatory reactions and, especially, stereotypes about this community.

Alla Ceapai,
Radio Free Europe/
Radio Liberty



organisational development

Organisation's reputation grows in the country and abroad

GENERAL ASSEMBLIES AND BOARD MEETINGS

The members and Board of organisation became exactly the people who helped the staff in their uneasy work in the field of promoting LGBT equality in 2010 – 2014. The work in the field of promoting anti-discrimination legislation, obtaining the true right to the freedom of assembly for

Between 2010 and 2014, six Board meetings, three report-and-election assemblies and two general assemblies of organisation's members took place. At the Board meetings, general and report-and-election assemblies, the executive director's and staffers' reports about the completed work were heard; reports of the Censorship Committee about the account of financial means and assets were presented, and GEN-

DERDOC-M's staff list was approved. Almost at every assembly, the organisation's membership and membership fee were discussed. The Board, as well as the general assembly, spent time on discussing the issues related to the carrying out of public activities, peaceful demonstration, and the Rainbow over Dniester Festival. One

of the assemblies considered the question of introducing amendments to the organisation's statutes with regards to the change of legal address, change of organisation's name, and delegating GENDERDOC-M the right to

the LGBT community, and defending rights and freedoms of the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre beneficiaries was consolidated as never before, particularly in the interconnection of all organisational structures and among the general assembly, Board, Censorship Committee and organisation's staff.



represent interests of LGBT community in court and other state bodies. At the report-and-election assemblies the Board and Chairperson were elected.

Also, during the reporting period, the number of organisation's members increased. At the beginning of 2010, GENDERDOC-M had 21 members. At the report-and-election assembly held in December 2014, there were already 37 members; among them six were honorary members. It should be underlined that only in January 2014 there were elected 11 new members, and five former members were granted the title of honorary members of GENDERDOC-M. It is also important that at the report-and-election assembly held in 2012, for the first time in history, parents of gays and lesbians were elected as members, and the organisation's Board was more than 50 per cent renewed, what is more, with young gays and lesbians.

STRATEGIC PLAN

At the end of 2010, the preparatory work for the elaboration of the organisation's 2011 – 2013 Strategic Plan had been completed. It was successfully implemented within three organisational programmes: Organisational Development and Volunteers' Movement Programme, LGBT Health and Well-being Programme, and the LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme. Upon the three years' completion, based on the assessment of the implemented 2011 – 2013 Strategic Plan, a new strategic plan for 2014 – 2016 was elaborated. During the preparatory work for the current strategic plan, a number of consultations in the form of focus groups with partner organisations, journalists, psychologists, beneficiaries, parents and relatives of LGBT

people, outreach workers and organisation's Board were carried out. In the 2014 – 2016 Strategic Plan were included following programmes: the Capacity Building Programme, LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme, LGBT Community Development Programme, and LGBT Health Programme. Thereby, the work with the LGBT community was included in a separate programme, whose aim is to develop a consolidated, socially active and motivated LGBT community. For the first time, the work on developing a feminist movement was included in the strategic plan.

REBRANDING

To increase GENDERDOC-M's visibility, in 2013 it was decided to conduct organisation's rebranding within which a new organisational style and logo were elaborated. The logo design combined the international symbol of the fight for LGBT equality, the pink triangle, and a national motif, the grape leaf. Thus, the current logo simultaneously reflects the organisation's significance on the territory of Moldova, as well as in the international LGBT movement. The design company that conducted the rebranding process elaborated the organisation's brand book, which includes guidelines on the correct use of organisational style



and examples of designs. A well-structured, user-friendly, accessible, and modern website was elaborated in 2013 and launched at the beginning of 2014. The elaboration of a new website was one of the principal recommendations included in GENDERDOC-M Communication Strategy elaborated in 2012. The new website, www.gdm.md, contains following pages: the organisation's official documents based on which GENDERDOC-M functions, audit reports, news, information about staff, an event calendar, strategic litigation section, volunteer application form, online library, search engine, training request form, online questionnaire on human rights violations, discrimination and hate-motivated incidents against LGBT people, as well as the option of sharing website materi-

LIBRARY

The organisation's book and media library definitely represents its assets. During the past five years we have managed to significantly extend it with artistic literature and books in the fields of psychology, law, sociology etc. Our beneficiaries and students from various Moldovan universities actively visited the centre's reading room, as well as checked out books for reading and course paper and thesis writing. Also, the office hosted screenings of feature and documentary films from the organisation's media library.

INTERNATIONAL WORK

GENDERDOC-M continued working as a resource centre for other LGBT organizations in the post-Soviet space. Thus, owing to the Civil Rights Defenders' support, two years in a row, the organisation's chairman and executive director provided consultation help to the young Belarusian association 'GayBelarus'. As a result of this collaboration, GayBelarus elaborated a three-year strategic plan, as well as other such important documents as the Code of Ethics and volunteer work policy. GayBelarus members and staff revised their statutes and changed their organizational structure, as well as defined responsibilities of all staffers in accordance with programme aims



and objectives as mentioned in the strategic plan.

Within the regional cooperation activity, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre:

- ▶ provided consultation on lobbying and advocating for anti-discrimination policies to the association 'PINK Armenia' (Armenia),
- ▶ helped Mykolayiv Association for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals 'LiGA' to prepare and carry out the Rainbow Spring Festival in Mykolayiv, Ukraine,
- ▶ provided consultancy on organisational development and work with mass media to the association 'Gender and Development' (Azerbaijan),
- ▶ held trainings on domestic violence and methods of victim counseling, methods of psychological counseling for LGBT people and work with parents of LGBT people for Mykolayiv Association for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals 'LiGA' (Ukraine),
- ▶ provided consultation on the work with parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people for Mykolayiv Association for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals 'LiGA' (Ukraine),
- ▶ held a training session on gender equality for human rights organizations from the post-Soviet region in Chernihiv (Ukraine),
- ▶ provided consultation on strategic planning for the association 'Nasha organizatsiya' from Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine.

CONFERENCES

Annually, the organisation's leadership and staff participated in ILGA-Europe conference, which is the greatest and most significant LGBTI movement event in all of Europe. GENDERDOC-M Information Centre representatives partook in workshops and discussions that were carried out within following conferences:

- ▶ Expressing our differences, challenging our prejudices, developing our alliances, 2010, The Hague (Netherlands),
- ▶ Human Rights and "Traditional Values": clash or dialogue?, 2011, Turin (Italy),
- ▶ Advancing LGBTI equality in challenging economic times, 2012, Dublin (Ireland),
- ▶ Family matters! Reaching out to hearts and minds, 2013, Zagreb (Croatia),
- ▶ MOVEMENT: Leading Sustainable Change, 2014, Riga (Latvia).

In 2014, at the ILGA-Europe annual conference held in Riga, the Chairman of GENDERDOC-M Information Centre was awarded with a certificate of acknowledgement



by ILGA-Europe member organisations and staff for the "tireless support of and contribution to the Eastern European LGBTI movement". At the same conference, ILGA-Europe conference delegates elected executive director of GENDERDOC-M to represent European region in the Board of ILGA World. In 2012, LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme Coordinator participated at the ILGA World Conference under the theme "Global Rights, Global Respect" held in Stockholm, Sweden. Two years later, in 2014, the organisation's executive director took part in the ILGA World Conference titled "Decolonizing our bodies" held in Mexico City, Mexico.

Also, in 2011 – 2013, GENDERDOC-M staff participated at the General Assemblies of IGLYO (International LGBTQ Youth and Student Organisation), which were held in Amsterdam (Netherlands), Mykolayiv (Ukraine), and Copenhagen (Denmark) respectively. In 2011 – 2012, the LGBT Community Development Programme Coordinator (then LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme Assistant) was member of the Executive Board of the National Youth Council of Moldova. In 2012 – 2013, he was member of IGLYO Board. Within the mandate, in 2013, he served as the course director of the Study Session "Equality in Action: Mobilising LGBTQ youth around the Council of Europe Recommendation on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity" carried out for young LGBTQ activists at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg (France). During 2010 – 2014, he participated in the following international events:

- ▶ Conference "Gender



Queer University: Questioning Norms in Higher Education", 2010, Strasbourg (France),

- ▶ Information Tour "LGBT in Germany" for activists from Eastern Europe and central Asia at the invitation of the Federal Foreign Office, 2011, Berlin (Germany),
- ▶ Conference "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights in Europe", 2013, Paris (France),
- ▶ OSCE Civil Society Meeting on Monitoring and Reporting on Hate Crimes, Racism and Intolerance and Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Combat-



ing Racism, Intolerance and Discrimination in Society through Sport, 2012, Vienna (Austria),

- ▶ Regional Workshop "Stop the violence: LGBT rights are human rights", 2012, Tirana (Albania),
- ▶ OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Freedom of Assembly and Association, 2012, Vienna (Austria),
- ▶ Conference "Defenders' Days", 2013, Stockholm (Sweden),
- ▶ Conference "Defenders' Days", 2014, Stockholm (Sweden),
- ▶ 5th European Transgender Council, 2014, Budapest (Hungary).
The LGBT Health Programme Coordinator participated in following conferences:
- ▶ XVIII International AIDS Conference, 2010, Vienna (Austria),
- ▶ Conference "HIV in European Region, Unity and Diversity", 2011, Tallinn (Estonia),
- ▶ The Future of HIV Prevention among MSM in Europe Conference "Men, sex and HIV", 2011, Stockholm (Sweden),
- ▶ National HIV/AIDS Conference "Zero tendency: Zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths", 2013, Chişinău (Moldova),
- ▶ Conference "HIV and Viral Hepatitis: Challenges of Timely Testing and Care", 2014, Barcelona (Spain).



INTERNATIONAL PRIDE FESTIVALS

At the invitation of the Dutch Embassy in Germany, the LGBT Community Development Programme Coordinator participated at the 35th Christopher Street Day Parade held in Berlin, Germany, in 2013. In June 2014, executive director and LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme Coordinator represented GENDERDOC-M Information Centre at the biggest European Pride festival, EuroPride, which took place in Oslo, Norway. In August 2014, executive director and LGBT Community Development Programme Coordinator represented the organisation and Moldova at the biggest Pride Festival in Scandinavia – Stockholm Pride.

lobby and advocacy

GENDERDOC-M is the regional leader in the anti-discrimination field

NON-DISCRIMINATION COALITION AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW

Since 2005, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre is a member of the Non-discrimination Coalition consisting of non-governmental human rights organisations from Moldova. The Coalition elaborated a draft law on preventing and combating discrimination and maintained its promotion among governmental agencies. The initial title of the draft law was "Law on Preventing and Combating Discrimination". In 2011, it stirred opposition from different Christian associations because it contained sexual orientation in the list of protected grounds, which had been included in the law. As a result of consultations with Moldova's European partners, the draft law's title was changed into the "Equal Opportunities Law", and the sexual orientation criterion was mentioned

only in the Article 7, which prohibits discrimination in the field of employment and occupation. In May 2012, it bore the title "Law on Ensuring Equality" and was adopted by Parliament. The law entered into force on 1 January 2013. GENDERDOC-M Information Centre was the first organisation who submitted a court complaint based on the law provisions on behalf of a woman, who had been subjected to discrimination by her ex-husband. The case was subsequently won. In the judgment, the fact of discrimination, namely harassment and victimisation, in other than employment area was officially recognised. The present law foresaw establishment of an institutional mechanism to prevent and combat discrimination, as well as to ensure equality, the Council. GENDERDOC-M, along other non-governmental organisations, put forward candidates to the elected position of the Council member and monitored the election process based on eval-



uation of candidate's resume and an interview with the election commission consisted of members of Moldovan Parliament. The Council commenced its activity in September 2013. As of today, it consists of five LGBT-friendly members – human rights defenders, lawyers and professionals. In 2012, organisations, members of the Non-discrimination Coalition, following the recommendation by an external assessment expert, made a decision to officially register this coalition as a non-governmental organisation at the Ministry of Justice. GENDERDOC-M became one of the founding members of this newly established association.

STRATEGIC LITIGATION

In 2010, strategic litigation became one of the GENDERDOC-M's pivotal directions of work. This was possible thanks to the quality cooperation with the experienced lawyer and human rights expert Doina Ioana Străisteanu. Together with her, GENDERDOC-M elaborated Strategic Litigation Policy which has been in use during the last five years.

In 2011, within the LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme, the project "Making Protection from Discrimination Real" was successfully implemented. This project was possible thanks to the financial support by the United Nations Development Programme. It marked the beginning of continuous and systematic work in the field of strategic litigation. During the last five years, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre initiated 30 lawsuits based on the following criteria:

- ▶ Hate crimes – 8 cases,
- ▶ Hate speech, incitement to hatred and discrimination – 13 cases,
- ▶ Discrimination – 4 cases,

- ▶ Legal gender recognition – 3 cases,
- ▶ Freedom of expression – 1 case,
- ▶ Child custody – 1 case.

In total, 16 final judgments were issued in favour of the organisation and/or plaintiffs whom GENDERDOC-M had provided free legal aid. The remaining cases are being examined including at the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Justice.

One of the most important achievements for organisation, as well as for the entire LGBT community, was the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights, who had satisfied GENDERDOC-M's claim in the case "GENDERDOC-M vs. Moldova" recognising the refusal by Chişinău city authorities to allow a peaceful rally, which was to take place on 27 May 2005 during the Rainbow over Dniester Festival, illegitimate. The Strasbourg Court ruled that the Chişinău City authorities had violated Article 11 (freedom of assembly), Article 13 (right to an effective remedy), and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimi-



nation) of the European Convention on Human Rights. Namely, for the first in the history of our country, Moldova was charged for violating Article 14, which prohibits discrimination of people on any ground. According to the judgment, Moldovan authorities paid GENDERDOC-M Information Centre €8110 in moral damages and €2900 in court expenses. A similar case regarding violation of the right to freedom of assembly for LGBT people in Moldova is being currently examined by the European Court of Human Rights. It regards discrimination against GENDERDOC-M activists and their allies by Chişinău city authorities that happened in 2010 when the activists intended to hold a public rally in support of adoption of the anti-discrimination law in the city centre of Moldovan capital. Back then, the Mayor of Chişinău, Dorin Chirtoacă, went to court with a claim against the organisation demanding relocation of the public LGBT rally from the city centre to the city outskirts. Chişinău Court of Appeal satisfied Mayor's claim whereas the Supreme Court of Justice refused to recognise the judgment by the lower court instance as discriminatory. According to the ILGA-Europe statistics presented at the annual conference in 2012, Moldova ranked first in Europe in terms of the number of court cases concerning sexual orientation and gender identity at the national level.

In December 2012, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre was granted the Human Rights Award by the UN Office in Moldova for "its work on combating discrimination through litigation, advocacy and awareness-raising activi-



ties". In the explanatory award Memorandum it said that GENDERDOC-M is "the only organisation in the country defending LGBT rights at the national and international levels". Experts called the Centre "the national human rights voice, as well as a regional leader, in the field of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, as well as combating discrimination broadly".

COUNSELLING AND SEMINARS FOR LGBT COMMUNITY

One of the pivotal forms of legal support provided to the LGBT community is offering of the free legal counselling on issues concerning violation of one's rights on grounds of sexual orientation and/or gender identity. From 2010 to 2014, in total 146 legal consultations were carried out. Besides this, seminars with lawyers were carried out for LGBT community members. The seminars were held on the following themes:

- ▶ Police detention procedure. How to act if one is detained. What rights the detainee has and on what grounds one can be detained.
- ▶ The age of consent for consensual sexual activity.
- ▶ Discrimination and how one should react to an act of discrimination.
- ▶ Domestic violence.

- ▶ Defend your rights today and be free tomorrow. On the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Law on Preventing and Combating Discrimination.
- ▶ Police and I. Rights and obligations.
- ▶ Questions for a lawyer.
- ▶ Property relations in same-sex couples.
- ▶ Rights and freedoms of LGBT people.
- ▶ Preventing hate crimes.

One seminar on preventing hate crimes for outreach workers was carried out with the purpose of raising their awareness about the issues and further dissemination of received information among beneficiaries who visit gay cruising areas. Besides this, a training course



on document- ing cases of rights violations was held for five volunteers who were skilled to counsel people on human rights, interview victims of discrimination, and fill in respective questionnaires.

CAMP FOR LGB PEOPLE ON THE THEME "STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICES, STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION"

In September 2013, a camp on the theme "Stereotypes, Prejudices, Stigma and Discrimination" was carried out for 20 LGB community members. The aim of the camp was to identify and discuss the prejudices and stereotypes participants had and overcome them. However, it was also important to discuss the internalisation of homophobia, its characteristics and the harm it causes LGBT people. In the second half of the activity, participants received information on homophobia and discrimination. All camp activities were carried out in an interactive way with assistance of video aid and practical exercises.

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION OF LGBT RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Since GENDERDOC-M Information Centre is a human rights organisation, one of its main tasks is to monitor and document cases of discrimination and violations of rights on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. Annually, the organisation produces a report on the situation with observance of LGBT rights in Moldova with concrete examples of violations documented within the LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme. Also, during the last five years the following thematic reports were issued:

- ▶ Report on violation of economic, social and cultural rights of LGBT people in Moldova presented to the respective UN Committee,

- ▶ Annual reports on hate crimes against LGBT people in Moldova for the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights,
- ▶ Report on ill-treatment and discrimination based on hatred towards LGBT people in Moldova for the Equal Rights Trust;
- ▶ Alternative report on the violations of LGBT people's rights in 2008 – 2010 for the Universal periodic Review (UPR) based on which Moldovan Government received a number of recommendations to ensure respect of LGBT people's rights;
- ▶ Report on homophobic speech by members of Moldovan Parliament (written together with ILGA-Europe);
- ▶ Reports on strategic litigation.

The situation with observance of LGBT people's rights in Moldova was always voiced and discussed at all meetings and round tables with high-profile officials, representatives of European institutions (European Commission for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, European Commission on Human Rights, European Union Delegation, Council of Europe, OSCE, UNDP), international representations, commissions, delegations and foreign embassies.

In 2011, a survey on discrimination and human rights violations among 220



lesbians and gays was conducted. Based on the collected data, an analytical report on the instances of human rights violations in the lesbian and gay community was drawn. It revealed that 65% of respondents from the lesbian and gay community had faced various problems due to their sexual orientation. From the remaining 35% (94 respondents had never faced similar problems) 39% (37 respondents) said they had not disclosed their sexual orientation to anybody, 23% (22 respondents) had come out to their friends only, and only 31% (25 respondents) had come out to their families and friends. The percentage of people who had faced problems due to their sexual orientation was 65% among the gay men and 49% among the lesbian women. Also, based on the analysis of the problems faced by transgender people, and with direct involvement of the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre, a



working group on the elaboration of the legal gender recognition mechanism for transsexual people was established.

INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

Within the project “It Gets Better – egal.md” the egal.md website aimed at making the voices of those who condemn homophobia and transphobia and express support for LGBT youth heard was launched. This GENDERDOC-M project aspires to show the LGBT youth, who have realised their sexual orientation or gender identity, that they are not alone and that there are other people in Moldova who accept them, wish them happiness and consider them equal. Besides the video messages of support, the website shares different LGBT stories from Moldova and video messages by out gays and lesbians.

The project idea was inspired by the U.S.-based It Gets Better Project. The significance of the Moldovan project “It Gets Better – egal.md” was recognised internationally. In July 2013, it became official international affiliate of the It Gets Better Project in Moldova. Thus, egal.md is the first initiative of such kind aimed at LGBT youth in Eastern Europe, and namely on the post-Soviet space.

The website was launched in February 2013. Currently, it has a collection of more than 70 video messages and 60 personal stories. Since its launch, it was visited by more than 34 thousand unique visitors.

“A Word Can Lead to a Crime” project aimed at preventing homophobic speech by politicians during the national parliamentary elections in November 2014. Within the project, an animated video called “Do not be manipulated!”, was produced and distributed on social media and

several TV channels. The GENDERDOC-M campaign called on the general public, who become a target of dirty political games and propaganda during election period, to become aware of the fact that politicians ignore real social problems in favour of invented ideas. By the means of the animated video, the public was urged to demand politicians to resolve true issues and not to be manipulated.

TRAININGS

During the reporting period, in total 23 training courses on sexual orientation and gender identity were conducted for the following groups: journalists, volunteers, Amnesty International Moldova, Family Planning Society of Moldova (SPFM), members of the Non-discrimination Coalition, staff and volunteers of the National Roma Center, Youth in Action training participants, police, staff of the Human Rights Center of Moldova (ombudsman institution), students of the Advanced Journalism School, Border Police, cross-ministry working group on legal gender recognition, and staff of Peace Corps Moldova. Besides this, 14 training sessions were conducted in Moldovan urban and rural schools within the Non-discrimination Caravan project, as well as 13 anti-bullying lessons for 401 high school students and 30 teachers.

PERFORMANCES

The GENDERDOC-M Information Centre staff and volunteers were interviewed and consulted for two theatre performances staged by the independent theatre company, teatr-spălătorie. The script of the first documentary play, ROGVAIV (abbreviation of the first letters of each rainbow colour) was based on materials and news pieces that came out during the public debate around adoption of the anti-discrimination draft law in spring 2011. It reflected most infamous instances of homophobic hate speech by the Moldovan political elite in 2011 and statements of support towards LGBT community by some influential public personae.

The second performance, “Dear Moldova, can we kiss just a little bit?”, was staged together with a group of non-professional actors who are beneficiaries of the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre and who told their stories of what it meant to be gay for his or her relative (parent or child) in Moldova. This performance enjoyed huge success. It was shown three times in Germany, where it won the first prize at the Burgerbuhnenfestival. Both performances were shown at the Rainbow over Dniester Festival in 2012 and 2014.

In 2012, the then LGBT Rights Lobby and Advocacy Programme Assistant, Artiom Zavadovschi, staged a mono performance “Coming Out” hosted by teatr-spălătorie on the occasion of the International Coming Out Day. The documentary performance, based on Artiom’s personal experience of growing up gay in his hometown of Bălți, which also addressed the anti-homosexual ordinance adopted by the Bălți City Council in February 2012, was shown three times.

PUBLIC ACTIONS

During the five years, between 2010 and 2014, in total 19 protest rallies, marches, flash-mobs and other public demonstrations on LGBT rights were held. They were dedicated to the LGBT people’s right to the freedom of assembly, International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, took form of a kiss-in, raised the issues of “love vs. hate”, right to family, discrimination, anti-LGBT legislative initiative in Russia, Ukraine and other countries, street harassment, homophobic pseudo-scientist Paul Cameron’s visit to Moldova and others. The GENDERDOC-M staff, volunteers and beneficiaries participated in 11 rallies, marches, flash-mobs and other public actions held by partner organisations, which were dedicated to the issues of countering domestic violence, violence against women, hate speech, discrimination against refugees, discrimination against Roma people, supporting anti-discrimination legislation, supporting declassification of KGB archives, supporting the right to vote of people with disabilities, supporting freedom of religion, and Europe Day celebrations.

WORKING WITH MASS MEDIA

In recent years, LGBT issues have become ones of the highest-rated and most controversial discussion topics in the Moldovan mass media, as well as in the society in general. Being aware of the fact that mass media forms public attitudes towards LGBT people in society, GENDERDOC-M staff and volunteers paid particular attention to the work with journalists and students, future mass media professionals. During the last five years, there were three training courses and three lectures on sexual orientation, gender identity and



correct LGBT terminology conducted for journalists and students of the Advanced Journalism School. It should be noted that the organisation's staff gave more than 80 interviews on the issues of LGBT rights in Moldova, anti-discrimination legislation, litigation, and other LGBT-related topics for the TV channels, radio stations, newspapers and on-line media (Jurnal TV, Moldova-1, ProTV, Euro TV, Jurnal FM, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Prime, TV2, Publika TV, Canal Regional, Jurnal de Chişinău, TVC21, Adevărul, NIT, TV7, Radio Chişinău, Unimedia, kommersant.md, Komsomolskaya Pravda, Voice of Russia, discriminare.md, BBC, MIR TV channel). Also, GENDERDOC-M staff participated in more than 30 TV talk shows and debates aired on AltTV, Jurnal TV, Canal Regional, Publika TV, SorTV, and Prime TV channel.

17 press conferences were organised on the following themes:

- ▶ Supporting the Law on Freedom of Assembly
- ▶ On the ban of the LGBT rally with participation of the Member of European Parliament, Marije Cornelissen, and ILGA-Europe Programmes Director, Maxim Anmeghichean
- ▶ Saying No! to teaching religion in schools
- ▶ Supporting the Law on Preventing and Combating Discrimination
- ▶ Appealing to Parliament, Church and society to prevent hate speech against LGBT people
- ▶ On the launch of the Rainbow over Dniester Pride Festival – annually
- ▶ Presenting results of the survey “Facing Existing Discrimination” conducted together with ILGA-Europe
- ▶ On the hate crime perpetrator's sentence
- ▶ Year results of strategic litigation
- ▶ Court judgment in the case “Oleg Brega vs. privesc.eu”

- ▶ Activity of extremist gangs in Moldova
- ▶ Litigation results
- ▶ Exposing the pseudo-scientist Paul Cameron

Three press statements on the following issues were sent to the mass media:

- ▶ Statement by the member of Parliament, Piotr Vlah about the ban for gay people to be members of the Liberal Democratic Party
- ▶ Change of identity documents for transgender people
- ▶ Judgment of the case “GENDERDOC-M vs. mdn.md website”

The GENDERDOC-M representatives participated at three round-table discussions carried out together with journalists. The discussions covered such themes as hate crimes, ethic coverage of issues related to marginalised minorities, and tolerance towards socially vulnerable groups.

PUBLICATIONS

During the past five years following publications were released:

The guide for journalists “How to Write About LGBT People Correctly”. The booklet was elaborated as an aide to mass media professionals to improve their language in terms of avoiding use of humiliating or incorrect vocabulary and better professional approach when covering LGBT issues.

The booklet “Know Your Rights” was elaborated for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It mainly aims at raising their awareness about the most frequently violations of LGBT rights in Moldova, as well as at providing them recommendations how to defend their own rights. The booklet text contains references to the current Moldovan legislation and excerpts from its concrete articles.



MONITORING OF MASS MEDIA

In 2011 and 2012, a total of 10 scholarships were given to journalists and bloggers, as well as to concrete publications, e.g. the SP newspaper from Bălţi, Expert Novostey and Ziarul de Gardă newspapers from Chişinău.

Year	Tonality of coverage	Language of material		Total
		Russian	Romanian	
2010	positive	18	134	152
	negative	7	156	163
	neutral	8	76	84
Total number of materials in 2010				399
2011	positive	61	237	298
	negative	35	214	249
	neutral	28	77	105
Total number of materials in 2011				652
2012	positive	49	96	145
	negative	32	127	159
	neutral	73	101	174
Total number of materials in 2012				478
2013	positive	22	97	119
	negative	84	71	155
	neutral	164	256	420
Total number of materials in 2013				694
2014	positive	54	91	145
	negative	68	93	161
	neutral	125	161	286
Total number of materials in 2014				592

FEMINISM

Since 2014, one of the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's areas of work with the LGBT community has been designated the development of a feminist group that subsequently, in theory, will join the mainstream feminist movement of Moldova. The starting point of the work in this direction became the training course “The Right to Be a Woman”, where an active feminist collective was established and its further actions and involvement in the women's rights movement of Moldova were discussed. The training course agenda included discussion of such topics as the social gender norms, history and directions of feminism, influence of patriarchy on women in Moldova, and elaboration of the feminist group's action plan.

SEMINARS FOR STUDENTS

Throughout the five reporting years, there were 36 seminars held on the topic “Fundamental aspects of human sexuality”. The seminars were mostly attended by the psychology and social work department students from various Chişinău-based universities (Ion Creangă Pedagogical University, Free International University of Moldova (ULIM), Moldova State University, University of Criminal Law and Criminology, and Technical University). A large number of seminars were held based on the university teachers' initiative in the framework of the student training practice. From 2010 to 2014, 654 students par-

ticipated in the aforementioned seminars, 538 of whom were women and 116 were men.

The seminar participants received theoretical knowledge and various information materials on sexual orientation and gender identity and the specifics of service provision to LGBT people by means of various interactive methods of information delivery. Seminar participants also had an opportunity to ask questions and receive answers from an LGBT person, who would come out in front of them. This method undoubtedly increased seminar effectiveness.

According to remarks made by the organisation's staff for the last several years, the growing tendency of LGBT acceptance among youth has become particularly visible. Youngsters tend to accept and understand new phenomena and previously incomprehensible information about various natural and societal phenomena much quicker.

SEMINARS FOR PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

In 2010 – 2014, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre paid particular attention to the awareness raising work

with various professional groups: psychologists, medical workers, police, journalists, representatives of different service providing NGOs. Mostly, that work was carried out in the form of a training course. A great number of those trainings were delivered upon a request received from the representatives of professional groups themselves, which can be explained by their need of information on specific aspects of work with LGBT people, an issue that arises during the performance of their professional duties.

During the five reporting years, there were nine training courses held on the topic "Fundamental aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity", which were attended by 159 professionals from various fields of activity. The training participants received theoretical knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity and specifics of work with LGBT people by means of various interactive methodologies.

Training participants highly appreciated the information that they received and voiced an opinion that the information provided was very useful and that it had changed their world outlook.

community development

We motivate LGBT people to become socially active

For the past five years, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre has continued its work in the field of organising and carrying out informational, educational, cultural and entertainment activities for the LGBT people, their families and friends, as well as for the community allies and all citizens of Moldova interested in receiving reliable information on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. Thus, between 2010 and 2013, at varying intervals, there were discussion clubs, film screenings, art clubs and informational seminars held on different topics: personal development, overcoming internalised homophobia, coming out and interaction with parents, rainbow families, violence and hate crimes, etc. Many other activities, such as public debates, flashmobs, workshops, and parties were held in various public LGBT-friendly places (clubs, cafes, conference halls, parks), including within the annual Rainbow over Dniester Festival, International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, Coming Out Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, and Human Rights Day.

Due to the fact that, beginning from 2010, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's par-

ticular attention was paid to solving legal issues bound up with discrimination and hate crimes against LGBT people, the organisation's team felt they were losing the formerly established communication with the community. That is why beginning from 2014 GENDERDOC-M's work with its beneficiaries becomes one of the priority directions. Within the new 2014 – 2016 strategic plan, the LGBT Community Development Programme was established. It is coordinated by Artiom Zavadovschi who previously held the post of the Lobby and Advocacy Programme Assistant.

The Programme aims at systematizing and reviving the work done in previous years and which was directed at developing a consolidated socially active and motivated LGBT community in the Republic of Moldova.

Within the strategy on expanding GENDERDOC-M's geographic activity in



LGBT Community Chooses Safety

LGBT COMMUNITY CHOOSES SAFER SEX

From 2010 to 2014, the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre continued working in the field of LGBT healthcare within the LGBT Health Programme. It should be recognised that it has been a long-standing and successful area of work for the non-governmental organisation. During the past five years:

- ▶ The target group has been extended geographically and quantitatively (including the cities of Bălți, where the youth-friendly health centre ATIS works directly with the target group, and Tiraspol, where outreach work is done by two employed outreach workers).
- ▶ The issue of beneficiaries' access to means of protection (condoms and lubricants) has been solved.
- ▶ The field work has been established (12 professionally trained outreach workers visit cruising areas of Chişinău five times per week).
- ▶ The beneficiary card-based account system (card registration) has been adopted.
- ▶ Men who have sex with men (MSM) have been recognised as a vulnerable group and included in the National HIV/AIDS and STI Prevention and Control Programme.
- ▶ The LGBT Health Programme actively participates at the meetings of

the National Coordinating Council on HIV/AIDS, STI and Tuberculosis Prevention and Control, as well as at meetings of the Council's working groups, enjoying the right to vote.

- ▶ The work on voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) has been initiated. This service has been provided by GENDERDOC-M since 26 November 2013.
- ▶ The Dermatology and Communicable Diseases Hospital, in collaboration with other key stakeholders, including GENDERDOC-M, has elaborated the standard on voluntary counselling and saliva-based testing for vulnerable groups. The VCT standard was approved by the order №1162 issued by Ministry of Health on 18 October 2013.
- ▶ Currently, GENDERDOC-M manages a referral system of VCT medical professionals, who have been trained in the field of VCT and certified to work in this area.
- ▶ The counselling staff of VCT offices across the country (62 offices), including the Transnistrian region, have acquired knowledge in the field of sexual orientation, sexual behaviour, stigma, discrimination,

other regions, beginning from March 2014, regular thematic seminars for the local gay community are held in Bălți. In Tiraspol, outreach workers organise activities aimed at promoting safer sexual behaviour, within which new ways of consolidating local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are sought. At the same time, in Chişinău, within the programme's framework, the work on improving forms and methods of organising and carrying out various activities for the LGBT community and their allies is done – to enhance the visibility of organisation and its services, including by means of production and distribution of visual products.

One of the greatest GENDERDOC-M's achievements is the It Gets Better

– egali.md Project, which was launched on 5 February 2013. It is one of the official international affiliates of the U.S. It Gets Better Project. We reiterate, egali.md website was designed so the voice of those who condemns homophobia and transphobia, and express support towards LGBT youth was heard. This project aims to show LGBT youth, who have realised their sexual orientation or gender identity, that they are not alone and that there are many people, even in Moldova, who accept them, wish them happiness and consider them equal in all rights. Thus, the It Gets Better – egali.md Project is the first LGBT initiative of such kind in Eastern Europe in general and in the post-Soviet space in particular.





During the five reporting years, the LGBT Health Programme implemented the following projects:

- ▶ 2010 – LGBT Community Chooses Safer Sexual Behaviour, funded by Soros Foundation-Moldova (\$8962).
- ▶ 2011 – LGBT Community Chooses Safety, funded by Soros Foundation-Moldova (\$9380).
- ▶ 2012 – LGBT Community and MSM Choose Safer Sexual Behaviour, funded by Soros Foundation-Moldova (\$31823).

- ▶ 2012 – Organizational and Educational Work with Third-age MSM: Our Response to HIV/AIDS, funded by amfAR (The Foundation for AIDS Research) (\$19975)
- ▶ 2013 – LGBT Community and MSM Choose Safer Sexual Behaviour, funded by Soros Foundation-Moldova (\$18324. + €16588).
- ▶ 2014 – LGBT Community and MSM Choose Safer Sexual Behaviour, funded by Soros Foundation-Moldova (€30700)

It is worth mentioning that on 30 November 2011 the LGBT Health Programme Coordinator Veaceslav Mulear was awarded the Red Ribbon Award and the Diploma for Achievements in the Field of Considerable Involvement and Commitment to the National HIV/AIDS Response granted by the Ministry of Health and UNAIDS Moldova.

CONSIDERING BENEFICIARIES' NEEDS

During the last five years, the need for psychological counselling among LGBT community members has tripled.

stereotypes, work with MSM, and raised their awareness on how to work with MSM.

- ▶ The Guidelines on HIV Prevention among Key Populations has been approved by the order № 1553 of Ministry of Health on 26 December 2013. It was elaborated by the HIV Prevention Department of the National Public Health Centre in collaboration with key stakeholders, including GENDERDOC-M.
- ▶ Collaboration with the youth-friendly health centres (Neovita in Chişinău and ATIS in Bălţi) and LGBT-friendly medical professionals has been established.
- ▶ In 2014, the standard called "Package of services in the field of HIV prevention among men who have sex with men (MSM)" was elaborated and attached to the National HIV/AIDS and STI Prevention and Control Programme. Currently, it is awaiting approval by the Ministry of Health.
- ▶ The support groups for elderly MSM and HIV+ gay men are successfully maintained. Their meetings are held on the regular basis (at least once a month).

In particular, people frequently seek psychological counselling with regards to various negative emotional states such as depression, anxiety or fear, insomnia and even panic. This is slightly more characteristic of female beneficiaries (around 52%).

It should be noted that such states are caused by the fear of possible outing. LGBT people are frightened by the fact that somebody could disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to their family members or relatives, colleagues, classmates or neighbours. They are frightened by the fact that people on streets might learn about their homosexuality or gender identity and beat or insult them, or would threaten them with violence. Another reason for fears is the internalised homophobia and transphobia.

Men tend to turn to the psychologist with the coming out related issues (63%). Year in year out, the number of such cases grows. However, the trust in the assistance provided by organisation's psychologist increases, too.

Due to family conflicts, an equal number of men and women seek psychological support. Generally, conflicts with parents are caused by their children's sexual orientation or gender identity. Often, quarrels end with physical and psychological violence. Many beneficiaries, who have ended up in such situations, face economic problems: They are left homeless and destitute.

To show the extent of this issue, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre has conducted a study on the beneficiaries' emotional state and causes of their psychological disorders.

Another set of problems making people seek psychological support is related to the relationships within the LGBT community. As a rule, conflicts arise at the

level of interactions within the same-sex couples or with other community members. Breakdowns happen due to self-doubt, fear of being rejected or not supported in some way, which is crucial in the client's opinion. Women tend to address with such cases more often (60%).

Along with individual counselling, sessions with parents of LGBT children were held. As a result, a majority of parents accepted their children's sexual orientation or gender identity; respectively, the quality of children's as well as parent's life improved.

Seminars and training for LGBT individuals were carried out, too. Their topics varied. The most popular seminars and trainings proved to be those on effective communication and confidence, psychological reactions to the sexually transmitted infections and other sexual health related issues, as well as the effects of stress on human health, and psychological adaptation of the elderly.

Psychologist's work wasn't limited to psychological counselling, trainings and seminars for LGBT individuals, their friends and relatives. Simultaneously, the fundamental information on sexual orientation and gender identity was delivered to the representatives of civil society. These topics were raised at trainings and seminars carried out for students, police, teachers, doctors, military psychologists, border police personnel and others.

The GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's psychologist and other staff constantly shared accumulated experience in the field of individual and group counselling for LGBT people, HIV-positive gay men, parents of LGBT children, and elderly gay men with their colleagues from Ukraine and Russia.

briefly about important things

PRECIS conference: How was it?

Another step in the GENDERDOC-M development was the PRECIS Project, which helped the organisation not only obtain numerous partners and friends but also provided an opportunity to share experiences and ascend to a new level – the level of a regional resource centre for newly-founded LGBT organisations from the post-Soviet space.

At the end of the five-year-long project, in 2011, Moldovan activists held the closing project conference which united over 100 delegates from Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine, as well as several dozens of representatives of international organisations and foundations. Within the conference framework took place four plenary sessions, 14 workshops, an NGO fair, a common meeting of LGBT organisations' leadership and management, a closing dinner and a friendship night where Moldovan entertainment artists performed.

Opening the project's closing conference, the Chairman of GENDERDOC-M Information Centre Alexei Marcicov reminded everyone of how socially significant the project had been, because it had become the first – and, in a particular sense, the only – project designated to LGBT communities not only from one but seven countries in the post-Soviet space. He called PRECIS the school of civic courage for the results that had been achieved in the field of human rights

defense and the school of healthy lifestyle for the activities implemented in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, as well as the school of capacity building for the experience gained in this field.

The conference delegates heard speeches of the COC Netherlands director Koen van Dijk, Moldovan Ombudsman Tudor Lazăr, advocacy director of the LGBT Rights Program at Human Rights Watch Boris Dittrich, and the Dutch Human Rights Ambassador Lionel Veer.

As it is known, the PRECIS Project was aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention and LGBT community consolidation in the CIS region. That's why the project programme itself was divided into several pillars, each of which received a fair share of attention at the closing conference. At the conference workshops, project participants and stakeholders shared their achievements and plans for future.

The issue of HIV/AIDS, perhaps, received the most attention at the closing conference. The workshop on HIV prevention saw speeches by the Head of Public Health Policy Department at the Ministry of Health Aliona Serbulenco, LGBT Health and Well-being Programme assistant at GENDERDOC-M Veaceslav Mulear, leaders of other PRECIS project participating organisations, and the executive director of GENEDOC-M Anastasia Danilova.

The most acute problem of the post-Soviet countries is discrimination against LGBT people. In some of the



countries, authorities do not even comprehend the fact that part of society still remains an outcast, while in others they started to think that it may be something wrong indeed, whereas in the rest of the states authorities began to elaborate and even promised to adopt shortly the anti-discrimination law under the pressure from the European structures.

In any case, the high merit of human rights defenders and LGBT rights activists should be noted and in what regards the commencement of the campaign on discrimination prevention among general public in general. And the Programmes and Policy Officer at ILGA-Europe Beth Fernandez told participants what the next steps in this direction would be.

The Moldovan lawyer Doina Ioana Străisteanu noted that in other countries, just like in ours, there certainly existed laws guaranteeing particular rights to all citizens. However, they were unable to protect LGBT people from discrimination. That's why, she said, the Moldovan Ministry of Justice had been preparing its own bill on preventing and combating discrimination. However, the lawyer and her colleagues had a lot of questions

concerning the draft law, and they had submitted a number of observations to its authors.

The representative of Kazakhstan's LGBT organisation Valentina

Ragoza said that in their country the discrimination phenomenon is generally denied or ignored. In Armenia, the situation with anti-discrimination legislation is aggravated by the religious aspect. Besides that, according to the Chairperson of 'We for Civil Equality' organisation Karen Badalyan, the Armenian society is not yet prepared not only to accept LGBT people and their rights but also does not accept human rights as such in general. What regards Ukraine, activists tried to establish a basis for discrimination prevention there as back as in 2004. However, there had been no due lobbying to promote the bill, and that's why it got suspended without reaching the Parliament. The anti-discrimination in Georgia was also non-existent. Besides that, authorities manifested extreme forms of homophobia, and no persuasion or authority by the European structures could change the situation, although, of course, Georgian





authorities still cared what the Council of Europe would say.

The ILGA-Europe expert, Niger Warner, suggested that all human rights defenders take advantage of their governments' worries about what European structures would say and do and lobby adoption of anti-discrimination legislation through the European officials. Every other year the Council of Europe received reports on the results of on-going reforms in the country which means that in some way – maybe not the most significant – this political structure could influence local governments.

Human rights defenders, professionals in different fields, and various level officials further discussed a great number of other topics from the agenda. There were separate sessions on the transgender issues and relations between parents and their LGBT children. Representatives of different countries shared their experiences in the area of shattering stereotypes, consolidating LGBT communities, and ensuring the safety of public activities.

The workshop on how to communicate with funders and raise funds proved to be very popular among conference participants. As the Programmes Director at ILGA-Europe Maxim Anmeghichean noted, almost all funders looked at several components of organisation: presence of leaders and teams, democratic structure, concrete vision of

needs and requirements. It is also important for the NGO to somehow get in the "spotlight" and be visible in society.

One of the captivating conference events was the non-governmental organisation fair. All project participating countries presented publications reflecting on the results of their work. Publications of various studies or leaflets with recommendation enjoyed particular in-depth analysis and quality.

At the closing of the conference, GENDERDOC-M, as the event organiser, prepared several surprises for participants. Firstly, there was a short video reflecting the five years of project implementation, including meetings with European experts, joint visits with Prides in other countries, training courses, and fun moments.

The second surprise could be also called a gift. Each representative of the project participating organisation received a piece of the big plaque with the project title – PRECIS. It reminds recipients of how important, timely and useful the PRECIS Project was. Most importantly, looking at that piece of the bigger image, one cannot forget that the project made the representatives of seven countries friends. It united hundreds of human rights defenders around one goal: to make the world a better place for us all.



Rainbow over Dniester Festival 2010 – 2014

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Festival 'Rainbow over Dniester' is the biggest annual event holding particular significance not only for the Moldovan LGBT movement but also for the entire post-Soviet space. The festival programme contains information, social, cultural and political activities aimed at increasing LGBT people's visibility in Moldova, drawing public attention towards the urgent problems they face, as well as informing the general public about the issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, equality and non-discrimination.

Since 2013, the festival has opened with a rainbow flag-raising ceremony at the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre premises. As a rule, the ceremony is attended by invited guests: representatives of partner organisations from Moldova and elsewhere, diplomats and mass media.

The traditional Pride Festival activities comprise of the flower-laying ceremony at the Monument to Martyrs of Political Repressions. Thus, Pride Festival organisers and guests pay tribute to those LGBT people who were subjected to political repression and vi-



olence throughout different times.

Another good Pride Festival tradition is awarding professionals from various fields for their contribution to the social integration of LGBT community. The award ceremony takes place during the Pride Celebration Night in the presence of numerous guests. The ceremony is followed by a concert of famous Moldovan performers in honour of award recipients.

Another significant 'Rainbow over Dniester' Festival event is the safer sex promotion party. For the past two years it kicked off with a dedication to the commemoration of AIDS victims. That's why, at the end of a short rally, participants release white balloons with small flashing lights inside them into the air. "Let it be our message to those who died from AIDS so that they know that we remember them and will do everything possible to stop HIV", said the Chairman of GENDERDOC-M Information Centre Alexei Marcicov at the event in 2014.





INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

One of the principal information Pride Festival events is the conference where pressing issues of LGBT people in Moldova and the region are discussed. That's why Pride Festival conferences gather various groups in one room: human rights defenders from Moldova, LGBT activists from neighbouring countries, representatives of international structures and partner organisations. During the five reporting years, conferences were an indispensable part of the festival programme. Here are their topics and a brief description:

2010. The Role of Non-governmental Organisations in Solving Transgender People's Problems.

LGBT activists from Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Georgia and Russia discussed the main problems faced by transgender individuals in the region and namely the lack or complete absence of medical professionals in the field of transition-related healthcare, lack of legal gender recognition mechanisms, and low activism and visibility of transgender people themselves. Also, the floor was taken by the representative of ILGA-Europe Maxim Anmeghichean (currently working at Open Society Foundations), who made a presentation about transgender cases at the European Court of Human Rights, and the Member of European Parliament Marije Cornelissen, who spoke about the

situation of transgender people in Europe.

2011. Rights of LGBT People in Present-day Moldova and Possibilities for Effective Combating of Discrimination.

This conference united human rights defenders from Moldova, as well as representatives of the OSCE Mission to Moldova and EU Delegation to Moldova for the discussion of issues that the anti-discrimination law should have included in Moldova, what the prerequisites for its adoption were, and what helped and hindered the speedy adoption of the law.

2012. Round Table Discussion on the Adoption of the Law on Ensuring Equality.

The initiative to hold the round table belonged to the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova.

2013. Partnership Is the Key to Success.

This conference was dedicated to the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's 15th anniversary. It was attended by representatives of almost all partner organisations with whom we had collaborated throughout the years.

2014. Is Moldova Regional Leader in Ensuring LGBT people's Rights?

PUBLIC RALLIES AND MARCHES

2010. Protest rally 'Law Is One for All' in front of Chişinău City Hall.

2011. Rainbow Flashmob on the spot of the 2008 bus attack.

2012. The March for Equality was replaced with a round table discussion.

2013. First March for Equality – first 350 meters walked under the police protection.

2014. Second March for Equality. Participants walked the pre-established route from its beginning to the end. A small rally concluded the March. Counterdemonstrators manifested aggression as they had done before. However, thanks to the coordinated work of the police there were no casualties or serious incidents.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR LGBT COMMUNITY AND ITS FRIENDS

One more goal pursued by the Pride Festival is the consolidation of LGBT community. An optimal format for an event that corresponded to this task was organisation of the Pride House activity, which was carried out within the Pride Festival for three consecutive years – in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The Pride House represents several activities such as workshops, discussions, art clubs and others that are taking place simultaneously. Each participant could choose an event to attend based on personal preferences.



During the three Pride House activities there were two discussions on 'Parents and children: Coming out in the family', seminars 'Preparing and carrying out trainings', 'The rhetoric of hate and hate of rhetoric', 'Queer Theory', and workshops 'Art Therapy', 'Make a greeting card for the Member of Parliament' and 'Decoupage'.

DOCUMENTARY MARATHON 2012

Beginning in 2013 the duration of the Pride Festival has doubled. If between 2010 and 2012, festival lasted for only three days, programme of the following two Pride Festivals (2013 and 2014) were extended to six days. This allowed us to complement the festival with public debates, Human Library, open-air events, performances and exhibitions.

For example, in 2012, the last Rainbow over Dniester Festival day was dedicated to the arts of cinema and theatre. All activities were united under the same concept, Documentary Marathon. The programme included screening of two documentary films and a documentary theatre performance, which were followed by the Q&A sessions with their production teams.

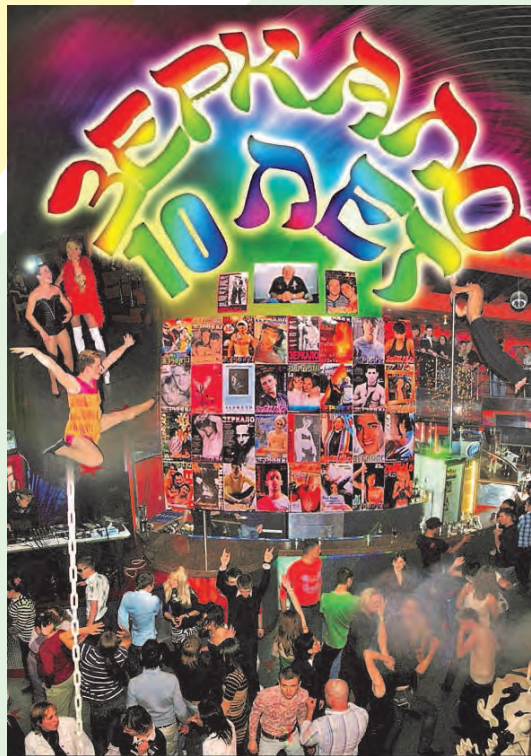


'Mirror' reflection of LGBT community's life

General information. Overall, between 2010 and 2014, there were 14 issues released of the Zerkalo (Russian: Mirror) magazine: in 2010 – two issues, in the following years – three issues per year. The circulation of each number varied between 500 and 550 copies. Most of the issues had 24 pages in total (numbers 1 and 2 for each reporting year), while number 3, released in 2011 – 2014, had 32 pages each.

About magazine's content. The first number of each reporting year is dedicated to the developments in the LGBT community that took place at the end of the previous year and at the beginning of this year, including the general assembly of organisation's members. The second number of each reporting year is dedicated to the annual Pride Festival, Rainbow over Dniester; the third one is dedicated to the events that took place in the second half of the year.

It should be noted that the authors of the publications tried to cover all LGBT events which took place in Moldova, as well as abroad. What regards the news from abroad was that it was mostly represented by the events crucial for the LGBT movement. For example, there were published reports on participation of the GENDERDOC-M Information Centre representatives at the annual ILGA Europe conference, LGBT-related statements by the European and global public and governmental agencies, as well as the accounts from Pride Parades, trainings and seminars, in which GENDERDOC-M representatives participated. In the magazine issues released in the reporting period, one can see a number of articles about



what kind of assistance GENDERDOC-M employees provided to the friendly and partner organisations.

Despite the importance of the international coverage during the entire reporting period, priority was still granted to the reflection of developments in the Moldovan LGBT community. As it has already been mentioned, one can find in the magazine a detailed description of general and report-and-election assemblies of organisation's members, annual Rainbow over Dniester Festivals, almost all public activities, as well as trainings and semi-



nars. A particular attention was paid to GENDERDOC-M's work in the field of lobbying and advocating for the rights of LGBT people, strategic litigation cases, and promotion of the safer sexual behaviour,

as well as to other subjects. There wasn't a single meeting of the support group for MSM of the third age or that of the parents of GENDERDOC-M's beneficiaries which wouldn't be covered in the magazine. In other words, Zerkalo truly became a reflection of LGBT community's life in Moldova.

Prospects. Unfortunately, it should be also stated that gradually LGBT community's interest towards this printed publication has faded. Zerkalo has a smaller readership. Today, it is read only in the GENDERDOC-M library. Besides that several copies of each issue are distributed among the members of the support group for MSM of the third age, as well as among those who do not have a computer at home or who cannot imagine his life without a printed medium (they are few –

dozens of people). Those who visit GENDERDOC-M Information Centre also read the publication. A small number of copies are distributed at the safer sexual behaviour promotion parties and other cultural and entrainment activities. In other words, more and more people read articles and pieces of news about Moldovan LGBT community's life online – on the

GENDERDOC-M website, and not in the printed magazine. In connection with this fact, it was decided to release Zerkalo only electronically. In 2015, there will be two electronic issues published.

Support groups

IN THE SUPPORT GROUP, THEY BECAME FIVE YEARS OLDER

Gays in the third age became the ancestors of all GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's support groups when, in the beginning of April 2002, they gathered together at the first meeting.

Today it's hard to count the total number of such meetings – there have been many. However, it should be particularly noted that soon they started to be held regularly. For a long period of time, the elderly men would meet four times a year. Meetings were held either outside of Chişinău in the case of the retreat, in the form of a one-day field trip to historical sites of Moldova, or at the office around discussions on various topics.

Beginning from 2013, a new opportunity of holding meetings on a monthly basis arose. Now meetings are carried out on a variety of topics. There are trainings and seminars on the promotion of safe sexual behaviour and field trips to historical sites of Moldova. Also, there are regular meetings at the GENDERDOC-M office with informal discussions about everyday concerns, including healthy lifestyle and group members' birthday celebrations. By the way, birthday people are not only congratulated, but also receive presents.

Such meetings also have games and quizzes. Winners of various competitions receive prizes, including the ones from the woodcarving master Mikhail, a support

group member. In the office, participants can receive new publications released by GENDERDOC-M, means of protection from HIV and STIs, as well as information on a variety of issues. Almost at every meeting there arises the issue of providing assistance to those who have become ill or got into trouble. The decision to help those who seek assistance is made together with GENDERDOC-M.

All support group members like partaking in retreats. For them, there are elaborated special programmes. For instance, in July 2014, a particular interest drew the retreat seminar on psychological aspects in the same-sex couples' relationship where one of the partners is HIV-positive. Along with the theoretical discussion, that seminar saw a lot of personal accounts from participants' lives. In the evening, a screening of the television film, *The Normal Heart*, whose topic coincided with the seminar's film, took place.

One cannot avoid saying that one of the support group meetings is traditionally dedicated to the New Year's celebration. At the office (and occasionally outside the office), there's a celebration table



and attendees are greeted by the GENDERDOC-M executive director, as well as Santa Clause. This is followed by contests and quizzes with prizes for the winners and, of course, dancing. By the way, the neediest elderly gays are given a small amount of money so they can purchase goods necessary for a decent New Year's celebration.

In other words, such meetings are crucial for single people such as the gays of the third age. Majority of them lack any other circle of communication. As one of the group members put it, "maybe we're still alive because it's become interesting to live for us". At the moment, the list numbers around 50 people; however, meetings are regularly attended by 15 – 20 men.

The support group is open. If any gay or MSM over 50 would like to join it, he can reach the support group coordinator Alexei Marcicov by the telephone number 022 288860 or 069142822.

PARENTS BEGAN TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE

During the reporting period, the support group for parents and relatives of LGBT people increased in numbers. To date, the list of LGBT people who had come out to their parents and whose parents participated in organisation's activities comprises 76 names.

In total, there were 17 meetings held, four of which were joint meetings of parents and their children. During this period 20 new parents joined the group.

The Moldovan parent group began to actively establish contacts with parents of LGBT people from other countries. There were four joint meetings held with parents from different countries both in Odessa and Chişinău. Participants at those meetings had a chance to interact with each other, learn more about the common issues they faced and share experiences of their groups' activity.

It should be noted that during this period several parents also engaged in some public activism. They began to manifest initiative and provide support to new parents who had just joined the group. They also supported LGBT people whose parents were not aware of their children's sexual orientations and/or gender identities.

Some parents began to take active part in various public activities, including those held within the 'Rainbow over Dniester' Pride Festival, there were even TV cameras present. Together with other festival guests they laid flowers at the Monument to Martyrs of Political Repression, participated at the Human Library activity, came out to public marches and played in theatre performances. They gave interviews to the press.

In other words, the group has a core comprised of several activists through whom other parents voice their wishes to receive new information about how they can defend their children's rights, how they could contribute to the development of the LGBT movement in Moldova and how GENDERDOC-M Information Centre could benefit from their involvement. Four support group members became organisation members and several others also expressed their wish to join membership in 2015. They believe that their membership in the association will allow them to be more active in demanding rights and freedoms for their children.



Supporting transgender people

THE first time transgender people passed GENDERDOC-M Information Centre's threshold was in 2007. They turned for assistance in resolving the issues of discrimination on the ground of gender identity and gender expression, as well as for psychological and social assistance. In course of time, based on a transsexual woman's initiative, a peer support group for transgender people was established. Its meetings were carried out on the regular basis in the office and outside. In 2010 – 2014, such topics as psychological comfort, gender identity and gender expression, change of name and gender marker in legal documents, discrimination, employment relationships with other people, hormonal therapy and others were discussed at the group meetings.

Currently, the support group gathers based on the necessity, and some of its members contin-

ue helping each other informally in the transition-related matters. GENDERDOC-M Information Centre continues ensuring free and confidential assistance in the field of legal gender recognition for transgender people by providing services of an experienced lawyer and liaising with the Gender Dysphoria Commission under the Ministry of Health who issues certificates with the 'transsexualism' diagnosis, without which, unfortunately, transgender people cannot change their name and gender marker in their identity documents. During the reporting period, with GENDERDOC-M's legal support, five transsexual people were able to get their gender legally recognized in court and change name and gender marker in their legal documents. Organisation has a staff psychologist who provides quality assistance for transgender people for free and confidentially.



Budget implementation in 2010 – 2014

Funder	Objective of financing	Financial revenue 2010-2014 (in Euro)					Expenditure 2010-2014 (in Euro)					TOTAL expenditure	
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTAL revenue	2010	2011	2012	2013		2014
Sigrid Rausing Trust	Support of the overall organisation's activity	38 838	44 959	48 143	45 280	46 944	224 144	33 043	49 870	49 245	33 319	38 706	204 183
COC Netherlands	Documenting cases of discrimination and other human rights violations against LGBT people	206 161	84 323		9 201		290 484	212 548	84 323				296 871
ILGA-Europe	Promoting safer sexual behaviour among gays and MSM Supporting equal.md website information campaign against hate speech	4 500					13 701	2 855	1 972		15 639		20 466
Soros Foundation-Moldova	Promoting LGBT rights through information dissemination and advocacy	7 000	6 914	37 715	36 050	38 600	126 279	7 000	6 914	37 091	36 674	38 600	126 279
Civil Rights Defenders	Promoting LGBT rights through strategic litigation and information dissemination		44 930	62 063	41 912	53 755	202 640		45 000	62 053	39 956	53 754	200 763
UNDP	Promoting LGBT rights through strategic litigation and information dissemination		7 252	3 572			10 824		4 825	3 572			8 397
MATRA	Information and education work with LGBT people and their families			21 445			21 445			21 498			21 498
amfAR	Preventing HIV/AIDS among MSM			11 653	3 670		15 323			4 699	10 624		15 323
Ministry of Finance of the RM	Compensation by ECtHR judgment			11 010			11 010						
Transgender Europe	Documenting cases of hate crime and other violations against transgender people					12 468	12 468					4 820	4 820
American Bar Association - Rule of Law Initiative	Promoting LGBT rights through strategic litigation and information dissemination				23 807	37 665	61 472				16 360	41 155	57 515
Open Society Foundations	Promoting and defending LGBT rights			14 700	31 111		45 811				15 432	18 432	33 864
UNICEF Moldova	Study on the perception of adolescence by LGB youth			2 265	1 407		3 672				2 265	1 107	3 372
UK Embassy in the Republic of Moldova	Maintenance of equal.md website and organisation of Pride Festival activities			520	820		1 340				520	816	1 336
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights	Organisation of education activities within Pride Festival			1 479			1 479					1 104	1 104
United Nations in Moldova	UN Human Rights Award			768			768						
Anonymous donor	Strategic litigation			4 000			4 000			3 948			3 948
Human Rights Center of the RM	Conducting training course on LGBT issues				381		381				381		381
TOTAL		255 469	188 358	200 369	177 786	224 229	1 047 241	255 446	192 904	182 106	171 170	198 494	1 000 120

