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INTERIM REPORT

DECEMBER 2001

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Foreword

In the majority of the countries, male sex work is a non-issue, ignored by policy makers, funders and service providers. However, influencing factors as migration (mostly from Eastern Europe) and mobility, make it more and more necessary to exchange information across the borders and to develop specific strategies and services, which meet the specific needs of male sex workers.

Therefore, in 1997 the Foundation AMOC/DHV launched the European Network Male Prostitution (ENMP), with partners from 18 different countries. The European Commission and the Dutch Aids Foundation approved a renewed request (for two further years), so the ENMP started it's second phase in November 2000, as the ENMP 2000, after a break in activities of some 12 months.

AMOC/DHV in Amsterdam is the European co-ordination centre of the project, responsible for the organisation of the programme and the maintenance of the Network. Each participating country has a national co-ordinator, who is responsible for the development of a National Network on male prostitution issues. The national co-ordinator will provide information towards both, the European Network as well the National Network.

The division into Regional groups is one of the most important changes within the ENMP 2000. Changing the structure of the network, it is hope to increase the involvement and the commitment of each individual partner. The similarities between the countries will create useful and effective ways to co-operate and aid mutual support within the region. Each group will develop specific working plans, based on the specific needs within their region.

The Regional groups are divided as followed:

SOUTHERN EUROPE:

Regional co-ordination: Greece Participants: Spain, Portugal, France, Italy

CENTRAL- AND EASTERN EUROPE:

Regional co-ordination: Switzerland Participants: Austria, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Romania, Poland

NORTHERN EUROPE:

Regional co-ordination: United Kingdom Participants: Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden

1. Background of the project

AMOC/DHV is working for more than 15 years within the field of male sex work. In the beginning of the 90-s, AMOC became confronted with a new group of young men working as male sex workers, mainly coming from Central and Eastern European countries, like Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic. AMOC tried to approach this new group with the common method of outreach and counselling. However, the group seemed to be hard to reach and new methods had to be developed.

A first assessment among this group showed:

- A poor knowledge regarding HIV/Aids and STI's and safe sex practises
- The cultural background increases the taboo on prostitution and homosexuality, which makes it even harder to discuss safe sex practises and MSM issues
- The communistic past of their country led to mistrust, fear of control and a sceptical attitude towards service providers and Public Health organisations
- A communication problem, because most of the young men did not speak English, German or Dutch
- The illegal status of this group increased the mistrust towards service providers and other supporting organisations
- Experimental druguse, which led in many cases to problematic druguse of cocaine and heroine
- Living and working within the subculture of male prostitution as well as the above mentioned circumstances lead to isolation, which made it hard to reach this group

In 1994, AMOC started the Eastern Europe project, mainly focusing on male sex workers from Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic. A Romanian colleague approached the different groups by doing outreachwork and carried out prevention activities on different levels (face-to-face contacts, in groups, formal, informal).

Working with migrant male sex workers made it necessary to co-operate with organisations all over Europe. The contacts to Western European countries, like Germany, Belgium, Austria, United Kingdom, Ireland and others had been established for quite a while. The contacts to countries, like Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary followed after the development of the Eastern Europe project and AMOC developed an informal network of contacts and mutual support within Europe.

However, it became obvious that a formal exchange between the projects would be useful and necessary for the future co-operation. The services from other countries expressed their need in such a network, especially when they had no possibility in exchanging information on a national level.

In 1997, AMOC started the ENMP, financed by the European Commission and the Dutch Aids Foundation. The 2 years project focused on a first inventory and assessment regarding male sex work issues in all the different countries¹. Besides, we pinpointed the problems and needs and discussed and developed future activities for the network².

A 2nd project phase started in November 2000. Due to the increasing number of network members and the differences in regional needs, the network divided into 3 Regional groups. Each group developed specific working plans and will carry out activities based on the needs of the region.

2. Biases

The ENMP exists since 1997 and discussed male sex work on different levels. The general and the regional working plans are based on the outcomes of this investigation:

Male sex workers are confronted with specific problems and various forms of discrimination. The taboo on homosexuality and prostitution leads to further marginalisation.

Experience shows that specific service provision for male sex workers is the exception, rather than the rule. Many services have contact with male sex workers, but do not recognise their specific needs or even acknowledge their identity as sex workers. The perceived small number of boys and young men, selling sex to men, and the taboos on male sex work, combined with the difficulties to receive funding, discourage agencies from developing specific services in this field. Therefore, agencies need to be informed in order to become more aware of the needs of male sex workers, who might use their services as well. Each country and region has specific issues and problems unique to it's location. Prostitution itself, as well as service provision is influenced by the socio-economic context of each country, which makes it necessary to develop specific methods, focusing on the national and local needs. Networking needs to be developed in order to stimulate mutual support and improve service provision for male sex workers.

Male sex workers are a heterogeneous group with different needs. Agencies need to develop different services in order to reach different groups. Co-operation on local and national level is required and other services should be sensitised, involved and trained as well (e.g. gay organisations, services for people living with HIV and AIDS, services for young people, drug users, homeless people, etc.).

3. Objectives

HIV- AND STI PREVENTION

HIV and STI prevention, focusing on male sex workers, are carried out in all the countries, where contacts to male sex workers have been established. Different approaches and methods will be developed and implemented. This experience will be exchanged and shared within the network, so all members will benefit from each other's knowledge. Moreover, joint prevention activities can be developed, carried out and will be evaluated afterwards. Several meetings on European and Regional level and Bilateral visits will strengthen the co-operation between the different member countries.

Most of the Western European countries have services and experience in working with male sex workers. These projects (e.g. Germany, UK, The Netherlands) developed specific prevention activities and projects, which might be useful for other project partners and services. Therefore, different projects have been asked to contribute to the Manual, which will gather models of good practise, so other services are able to implement them as well.

NETWORKING

The network has been extended and exists of 18 different countries all over Europe. The increasing number of members as well as the differences between the regions³, led to the division of the network. 3 different Regional groups focus on the development of a specific working plan, based on the needs of the region. However, two General Meetings will be held as well, in order to ensure the exchange of information within the whole network.

Besides the activities within the network, we established many contacts within the different countries. Contacts are established by the European, the Regional and last but not least by the national co-ordinators of the network. Our *indirect* network receives all kind of information and material and will get support and advise on different levels, if required. This applies for male sex workers, service providers, politicians, policy makers and other relevant persons or organisations.

DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION

The distribution of information belongs to an important part of our network activities. The European, the Regional and national co-ordinators are responsible for this part. Information is distributed in different ways:

- Information folder
- Newsletter (4 editions)
- Website
- Electronic mailinglist (subscribing necessary)
- Presentations during (inter)national conferences and symposia

PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Besides the development of materials and activities, it has always been an essential part of the network to support each other. Some projects co-operate in a very practical way, by supporting each other with the daily client work, others focus on the development of services, for which support or training is required. Therefore, the bilateral visits are used not only for getting information and new inspiration, but to support other projects by sensitising or training the stuff and other services.

POLITICAL INTERESTS

The network is focusing more and on the political issues, regarding male sex work. This applies not only for the development of statements, but also for the involvement of male sex workers in the service development and implementation.

4. Methods

GENERAL AND REGIONAL MEETINGS

2 General Meetings will be held, one at the beginning of the project and one at the end. The meetings offer the opportunity to meet the whole network, exchange information in different formations and work on broader issues.

The 1st General Meeting was held in February 2001 in Amsterdam and focused on the development of the General Working Plan, the development of 3 regional need assessments and 3 regional working plans, based on the needs within the regional groups. The 2nd General Meeting will focus on the development of statements and the evaluation of the project.

The Regional groups will meet each other 3 times in different locations within the region. Two Regional meetings have already taken place (Hamburg, Dublin, Lisbon, Copenhagen, Bucharest, Athens)⁴.

BILATERAL VISITS

The bilateral visits will be used as a possibility to learn from each other. The members of the network agreed that the opportunity to see different realities of male sex work has meant a lot to their practical work. The travels were seen as inspiring and very effective, as new methods had been experienced, which can be implemented in the own country.

CO-ORDINATION MEETING

2 co-ordination meetings will be held (3 Regional co-ordinators + European co-ordinator), in order to discuss the developments of the different regions and to fine-tune planned activities.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN PROJECTS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The co-operation with other European networks has been important in the past and is even intensified during this project period. Regular exchange takes and practical co-operation places with TAMPEP, EUROPAP, Aids & Mobility, the European Youth Foundation (EYF) and UNAIDS.

We were invited to several meeting and conferences of EUROPAP, TAMPEP and Aids & Mobility; a European Prostitution Conference will be organised together with EUROPAP in January 2002, a research regarding male sex work will be carried out in Eastern Europe on behalf of UNAIDS and we hope to get some further support from the EYF for organising a 2nd male sex workers meeting.

5. Division into Regional groups

The division of the network into 3 Regional Groups has to be seen as a major change within the network structure, which influences the network on different levels:

Way of working

Each Region is having 3 Regional meetings, in which the different working plans are discussed, developed and evaluated. The group consists of approximately 6 various countries, which makes the exchange easier and guarantees the active participation of each partner.

Working Plan

Besides the General Working Plan, which has been developed, in accordance with the outcomes of the last project period, each Regional group has developed specific working plans. The Regional Working plans are based on the specific problems and needs of the region, which were pinpointed in the first General Meeting.

Role of the individual partners

Due to the limited number of participants and the regional focus, we did increase the responsibility of the individual partners, which contributes positively to the network.

Activities and Outcomes

Each Regional group has planned specific activities, which are planned, developed and carried out by all

participants within the region. This way of working increases the effectiveness, the impact and the practical relevance of each activity. The number of different activities within the regions shows that the regional groups work inspiring and motivating.

KEY ISSUES OF THE 3 DIFFERENT REGIONAL GROUPS

Central-Eastern European group

- Taboo on male sex work
- Migration & Mobility
- New ways of prostitution (Internet) and development of future intervention strategies
- Lack of access to medical services
- Fundraising

South European group

- Migration & Mobility
- Fundraising
- Lack of knowledge and experience
- Development of specific services and intervention strategies
- Development of national networking
- Political lobby

North European group

- Sharing knowledge
- Networking
- Youth prostitution
- Regional profile and agreement of terminology
- Sensitising other agencies

6. Networkactivities

Different activities are planned and will be carried out in the 2nd part of the project phase. The activities can be summarised as followed:

PILOT SURVEY⁵

The initial European Network Male Prostitution (ENMP 1997 - 1999) identified migration was a little understood and under researched phenomenon amongst young men selling sex across Europe. The Network suggested three strands of migrant male sex workers;

Those men who migrant from one European country, and end up selling sex in another European country (e.g. East to West). Those men who arrive from outside of the EC (extra continental) and find themselves involved in selling sex within the Europe. These men originating within Europe, and migrating within the continent in order to find or vary their sex work, working environment. It was felt that a strategic approach was required to learn more about each of these groups of sex workers, 'chart' their progression and try to establish factors and co-factors contributing to this phenomenon. Greater understanding would facilitate services to work with the specific problems and potential cultural challenges of these young men. This need was highlighted as an outcome of the original Network. During the first general meeting of the ENMP 2000 (Feb 2001) the concept of a survey approach was agreed and partners discussed the types of information and data which needed to be collected, and the methodology to be used to acquire this data. It was agreed that a survey style questionnaire would be developed.

The questionnaire has since been developed and discussed within the regional working groups, and the Regional Co-ordinators have agreed that it would be of academic value to involve a research institute at this early stage, to validate the questionnaire as a survey tool, advise on the process of data collection and analysis, and assist with it's administration. City University in London has been approached, and Dr Anthony Pryce, Reader in the Sociology of Sexual Health, has agreed to act as independent academic and research adviser to the Network.

Based within the Department of Applied Behavioural & Biological Sciences at City (one of the UK's oldest and most respected academic institutions), Dr Pryce has already advised the Network that the questionnaire should initially be piloted on a smaller scale trial, using 3 countries within each region (Germany, France and UK).

The results will be analysed and evaluated within a new project phase, by employing a part time researcher, so the survey might be conducted across the whole Network.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: INTERNET SURVEY⁶

Different organisations, offering services to male sex workers have noticed an increasing number of young men selling sex to men through Internet. Service providers do not have any experience with this new phenomenon and don't know how to approach this group of male sex workers.

This issue has been discussed several times within the European Network Male Prostitution (ENMP). The Central and Eastern European group of the ENMP agreed to carry out a survey, in order to gain an insight into this new development.

Aims

An Internet survey, carried out in 6 different countries within Europe (Romania, Poland, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands), in order to get an overview about:

- the organisation of the commercial male sex market on the Internet (newsgroups, chatboxes, websites, portals,...)
- the number of men selling sex to men through Internet
- the number of commercial sex contacts made through the Internet
- possible ways of future interventions for service providers

Methods

The survey will start at the beginning of October. The first month will be used for an *orientation and observation* on the web. Chatrooms, portals, newsgroups and websites will be visited, in order to map out the commercial male sex market on the Internet. November and December will be used for an *active approach* of the male sex workers. *Short interviews* will be held in order to receive detailed information. An *evaluation report* will be produced and will be sent till 10 January to the Regional and the European coordinator. The time investment is approximately 25 hours a month.

Executing organisations

- ARAS (Romania)
- TADA (Poland)
- NZW Mozaïk ADZON (Belgium)
- Verein Wiener Sozialprojekte (Austria)
- Aids Hilfe Bern (Switzerland)
- PPP/GG&GD (The Netherlands)

SOUTHERN EUROPE: NEEDS ASSESSMENT⁷

Specific services for male sex workers are the exception rather than the rule, especially in Southern Europe. France has developed several services, focusing on sex workers in general and one project in Asturias (Spain) is targeting male sex workers. Greece, Portugal and Italy do not have any experience in working with this group.

Therefore the Southern European Region will focus in their future meetings initially on the on the development of activities in the field of male sex work. The following issues need to be discussed:

- Ways of funding
- Development of campaigns, to inform policy makers, funders, media and the general public
- Informing other agencies, to become aware of the needs of male sex workers
- Development of a national network of services, dealing with male sex workers
- Need assessment
- Methodologies
- Evaluation
- Mutual support within the region

A questionnaire for service providers has been developed and will be sent to the different agencies, in order to see, wich agencies already have contact with male sex workers and what specific services are offered to them.

Future co-operation and mutual support could be developed by establishing a national network of services, willing to work with male sex workers. Already existing structures may be utilised to assist networking.

The members of the Southern European group will carry out a need assessment, by describing both the needs of the target group as well as the needs of the service poviders. The first outcomes of the need assessment will be discussed in the next Regional meeting, which will probably lead to specific campaigns within the different countries.

SOUTHERN EUROPE: TRAINING⁸

The European Network Male Prostitution (ENMP) identified the needs of male sex workers and service providers in the different countries and regions. A lack of experience and specific service provision has been observed in the Southern part of Europe, where only a small number of organisations offers services to male sex workers.

Male sex workers are not identified as target group with specific needs, although some of them access different services (for gays, youngsters, homeless people, drug users...). However, an increasing number of services is planning to develop programmes and services for this target group. They expressed their need in information, advice and practical support.

Aims

A training for service providers will be organised in order to support Southern European projects in their (future) practical work in the field of male sex work. The training will be organised and carried out by the Southern European region of the ENMP.

The training will focus on the following key issues:

- Development of a male sex work project
- Methods and strategies in approaching male sex workers
- Networking and co-operation
- Development of effective HIV and STD prevention strategies
- Involvement of and co-operation with male sex workers

Practical details

Each of the ENMP co-ordinators from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and France will invite 3 different participants. The participants are in contact with male sex workers, plan to develop services or do already work in the field of male sex work. Participants need to have a workable knowledge of English, because interpretation won't be available.

The maximum number of participants will be 22. The trainers team consists of 2 trainers in co-operation with Aids & Mobility and the Schorer Stichting in Amsterdam. The training will take place in Athens from 8-10 March 2002. The deadline of registration is 15 January.

NORTHERN EUROPE: DATABASE 9

The first meeting of the Northern Region of the ENMP 2000 was held recently in Dublin (March 2001), involving the partners from Ireland, Norway, Finland and Denmark, and co-ordinated by the UK partner, with support from Katrin Schiffer, as Network Co-ordinator. This meeting also coincided with the 2nd National Forum on Male Prostitution in Ireland, which allowed each of the partners to present the work within their own country, and gave an opportunity to highlight the work of the Network and the Regional group.

One of the main themes to emerge from this regional meeting was the need for the development of a research database. This was discussed, and two key aims for such a database were identified:

- To catalogue and make available any (and all known) published research relating to male sex work, and related issues within each country.
- To catalogue and make known any current or recently undertaken (as yet unpublished) research relating to male sex work, and it's related issues within each country.

Denmark and the UK will lead on development of the database, which can be maintained on a Regional basis during the initial implementation and establishment phase. It is then envisaged that the concept be 'rolled' out across the Network, and the database be hosted on the ENMP 2000 website, currently being assembled. The database would then act as a resource for the Network, and anyone undertaking future research, developing or commissioning services for work with sex workers across Europe.

EUROPEAN PROSTITUTION CONFERENCE

EUROPAP and ENMP are holding an international conference in January 2002 on *Sex work and health in a changing Europe*. The conference will provide an opportunity to report on recent developments, to share experiences, and create a forum to discuss health and opportunities for women, men and transgenders working in the sex industry in Europe.

Contributions are invited from across Europe to address the following four themes

- Activism and advocacy
- Sex work in the new Europe; impact of global and regional changes
- Promoting health, quality services and access to care
- Public policies on prostitution and their impact on the lives of sex workers

Workshops will include:

- Health and health care
- Developments in central and eastern Europe
- Male sex workers
- Sex workers organising
- Policy changes in Europe
- Training session on evaluation

There will be participants from all European Union countries, and we hope to attract interest from the Newly Independent States, and Central and Eastern European countries. We hope to include a small number of experts from outside of Europe to share their experiences. The conference will be useful for policy makers, researchers, and workers in the sex industry and in health and social services.

MANUAL

- A Manual will be produced at the end of the project, including
- General guidelines for service providers
- Models of good practise
- Development of a project
- Involvement of sex workers
- Specific interventions (e.g. cultural mediation, internet, outreach, drop-in)
- Networking
- Evaluation
- Recommendations
- Statements

NEWSLETTER

Two editions of the newsletter have already been edited, two more will follow. The newsletter is disseminated among other service providers, politicians and policy makers and is available on the website as well.

WEBSITE

The website is offering information, regarding the developments of the network and male sex work in general. The country reports and the contact addresses of the Resource Book (1999) are updated and an electronic mailing list can be joined, in order to follow and contribute to the discussion.

7. Limitations

The importance and meaning of the European network has been strongly increased in the past year. The development of the regional groups improved the effectiveness of the activities and interventions and guaranteed an active participation and contribution of each partner. However, due to different reasons, limitations have to be stated:

FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS WITHIN THE NETWORK AND WITHIN THE PROJECTS

The network developed several activities within the different regional groups (training, database, internet survey, need assessment, pilot survey), which are not covered by the budget of the ENMP. Additional funding has to be raised and network partners have to invest more time and energy.

This additional investment proves the increasing commitment of the project partners towards the ENMP, but the lack of financial support has to be summarised as a limitation. The ENMP needs to have a certain budget for the development of European and regional activities.

Financial limitations are seen as well within the projects. Some project partners take certain activities and services for granted, others are not able to develop and carry out basic services. Therefore, it is difficult to develop appropriate services for male sex workers in all the participating countries.

LACK OF TIME

Besides, the financial limitations, we have to consider a lack of time by most of the project partners. The activities within the European network are seen as very important and inspiring, but first priority for the members is the practical work within their organisation.

LACK OF SERVICES

Specific service provision for male sex workers is still the exception rather the rule. This applies especially for Southern and Eastern Europe. However, we can recognise an increasing interest for this issue and service providers as well as funders seem to be sensitised. All countries within the Southern European region are expecting to develop services in the near future.

COMMUNICATION

Communication problems are evident to a network. The smaller the network is, the better the communication. Due to the development of the regional groups we improved the communication between the partners.

8. Conclusion

The development of the Regional groups has been approved by all the participating countries. The network developed a number of different activities on European as well as on regional level. These activities make great demands on the project partners and we have to be aware that the effectiveness and the quality of the network strongly depends on these personal investments.

Network activities should focus in the future on the involvement of the indirect network. The Southern European region will develop and organise a training for service providers, which is required especially in this region. These kind of meetings and trainings should be organised in a broader way, in order to transfer the knowledge of the network to colleagues and to sensitise them for the needs of male sex workers. Therefore, it will be necessary to gain a specific budget for the development of these kinds of regional activities.

The pilot survey, which will be carried out in Germany, France and the UK, needs to be analysed and evaluated with scientific support of the City University in London. The follow-up of the ENMP needs to involve this part of the data analysis and evaluation.

The results of the different activities will be described in the Final Report (December 2002). Specific Reports will be available as well.

Acknowledgements

Many organisations, projects and individuals have contributed to the developments of the ENMP in the past year.

First of all, thanks to the enthusiastic members of the ENMP, who collaborated and provided knowledge, useful remarks and comments. They gather information, produce reports and articles, contact other service providers and contribute to the different network activities. A complete list of members can be found in the appendix of this report.

Invaluable work and support is given by the Regional co-ordinators: Panagiotis Damaskos (South), Rene Akeret (Central Europe) and Justin Gaffney (North). Their input and motivation is an essential part of the network and they fulfil their new role to our entire satisfaction.

The local network in Amsterdam, the National Network in the Netherlands as well as the German Network (AKSD) provided practical support and gave important and useful suggestions for the further development of the project.

My special thanks go again to Justin Gaffney, with whom I share a lot of the co-ordination work. He helps editing the newsletter and will be the responsible person for the pilot survey, which will be carried out next year.

Therefore, I would like to thank as well Anthony Price from the City University in London, who will provide scientific support to this survey. I hope that our fruitful co-operation will be continued in the future.

Finally, gratitutes go to the European Commission, the Dutch Aids Foundation in Amsterdam and the big spender Foundation in Hamburg for providing financial support.

Amsterdam, december 2001

Katrin Schiffer European co-ordinator

Appendix

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