



## February 2010

Welcome to the sixth edition of the a&m newsletter!

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### a&m Capacity Building

[a&m](#) aims to engage with people with a general interest in the topic of HIV/AIDS. Young people facing the obstacles of language and cultural barriers appear to be 'hard to reach' for traditional HIV-prevention programmes in Europe. a&m invites those with an excellent working knowledge of at least two languages (bilingual or multilingual skills), good access to their communities and a desire to improve the health of young migrants to join the project.

a&m builds knowledge and facilitates the exchange of experience among migrants and national and ethnic minorities about a range of issues connected to HIV/AIDS, including:

- Migration and HIV/AIDS
- Basic Knowledge on HIV/AIDS
- Basic Knowledge on Hepatitis
- Services and Care

- Living with HIV/AIDS
- Birth Control and Sexual Health
- Why don't we talk about sexuality?
- Basic Knowledge of Harm Reduction

a&m partners use structured training to share their knowledge on how to access services and about the protection of human rights. The project offers practical skills in preparing, conducting and evaluating educational community group sessions in more than 20 languages.

Three training courses for transcultural AIDS-mediators have been completed after 18 months of a&m activities in Denmark, Estonia and Germany. Partners saw more than 100 candidates interviewed and the best selected to receive 50 hours of transcultural HIV-training. The methods and curriculum developed by the EMZ were adapted to reflect local circumstances. [Cross-Over](#) – the migration project of AIDS-Fondet – has met with an 'unknown' group of people in Copenhagen. 'We did not know that these people were willing to work with us: fluently bilingual, socially integrated and motivated immigrants and young people with a background in migration', explains Mille Urban, who coordinated the training. 'The mix of twelve nationalities made for the most rewarding learning process I have ever experienced.'

In Tallinn, the recruitment of mediators by [AIDSi-Tukikeskus](#) focussed on Russian speaking immigrants and on Russians living in Estonia. Sirle Blumberg and Jury Kalikov introduced interactive teaching methods into the curriculum and received very positive feedback from participants. Some of the Russian teachers trained will also work in classrooms at Russian schools



in Estonia. The training at the [EMZ](#) in Hanover was adapted to focus on young migrants in the a&m project. 'For the first time we reached a much younger age group of candidates', says Ahmet Kimil, who developed the curriculum. 'We took a major step forward in transgenerational AIDS education.'

The partners of a&m met in December 2009 to exchange experiences. The 60 mediators who had completed their training by December have now begun to organize educational sessions in their respective communities. Partners in Istanbul, London and Rome start training in February 2010. Transcultural mediators will participate in coaching and supervision provided by the a&m partners after certification. You can also contact the a&m partner organizations to arrange for a community group session in your own community. Just go to the [a&m website](#) to contact us.  
(Matthias Wienold)

## a&m Networking Activities

The [European Aids Treatment Group](#), as leader of a&m networking activities coordinates efforts with partners to consolidate the previous and current networks and to facilitate smooth, efficient and enduring relationships between partner organizations and EU institutions.

Heading into the second year of the project, different challenges and opportunities have emerged. New partners are engaged in the project – IOM, the [International Organization of Migration](#) is now leading the policy activities – and [Naz Project London](#) is the new organization responsible for mediator training in the UK. a&m continuously looks to engage new partners

and new organizations, and to create synergies with other European projects.

[TAMPEP](#) (the European network for HIV/STI Prevention and Health Promotion Among Migrant Sex Workers) is now one of our collaborating partners, contributing to the development of training materials. We are now also a partner of [Correlation Network II](#), a project aiming to tackle health inequalities in Europe, and further partnerships are to be added in the coming months.

Our website [www.aidsmobility.org](http://www.aidsmobility.org) has been restructured and unites all the information about the project. In addition, we have been uploading our project profile to different databases as a way to increase the project's visibility and build new partnerships.

In particular, we have contributed to a mapping exercise by IOM that aims to provide an overview of health and migration projects funded by the European Commission in recent years ('Assisting Migrants and Communities') and we have been sharing information on different platforms, namely through the [Aids Action Europe clearinghouse](#).

New and existing partners came together for the 4th Steering Committee meeting last December in Hanover. At the same time we celebrated International Migrants Day together. The [EMZ](#) organized a conference in Hanover to mark the occasion and the methodology developed by a&m was presented in the workshop 'Better Health for All'.

We have also participated in a series of other events to discuss integration and



migrant health in Europe. We will continue collaborating on a shared agenda and we will raise our voices for efficient and sustainable policies for migrants in order to ensure the achievement of our goals and the sustainability of the project.

It is now also time to discuss the future of the network for 2011 and beyond. Much more remains to be done for young migrants across Europe and we would like to see the a&m approach implemented in more sites and extend the mediator model to new health and social support sectors. This topic will certainly be on the agenda for upcoming meetings.  
(Ana Lúcia Cardoso)

## US removes HIV travel ban

In a long awaited move, the US Federal administration ended more than 20 years of discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS, reports [The Global Data Base](#). The counter-productive nature of travel restrictions had been acknowledged by President George W. Bush in 2008. Finally, people entering the US no longer have to declare their HIV-status.

[US President Barack Obama](#) said: 'Twenty-two years ago, in a decision rooted in fear rather than fact, the United States instituted a travel ban on entry into the country for people living with HIV/AIDS. Now, we talk about reducing the stigma of this disease -- yet we've treated a visitor living with it as a threat. (...)

If we want to be the global leader in combating HIV/AIDS, we need to act like it. And that's why, on Monday my administration will publish a final rule that eliminates the travel ban effective just after the New Year. Congress and President Bush began this process last year, and they ought to be commended for it. We are finishing the job. It's a step that will encourage people to get tested and get treatment, it's a step that will keep families together, and it's a step that will save lives'.

## Policies and Funding in the Baltic Sea Region

'Good public health and social well-being are indispensable for our societies to thrive!'

The global financial crisis has exacerbated the already extreme disparities in the Baltic Sea Region. The [Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being](#) (NDPHS) has identified these as challenges to public health and social well-being, and aims to increase cooperation and coordination at the international level. Thirteen governments, the European Commission and eight international organizations cooperate to contribute to greater political and administrative coherence in the Baltic Sea Region.

The [NDPHS Database](#) is a unique single access point. The Database offers an information tool for policy- and decision makers, researchers, project designers, financing agencies, trainers, campaigners and networkers.



The 'NDPHS Project pipeline' features a user-friendly mechanism that bundles multiple funding opportunities. Each financing agency specifies its requirements. Based on the thematic and geographical characteristics of the proposed project, the 'pipeline' automatically categorizes the proposed project and identifies possible sources of funding. Proposals will only need to be submitted once, but can reach several financing agencies simultaneously. 'Project pipeline' has been designed as a tool to help you proceed from a project idea through the project proposal to financing your project.

The NDPHS places particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The main role of the NDPHS HIV/AIDS Expert Group is to act as the focal point for national inputs from the Partner Countries and Organizations. The 'HIV/AIDS in the Baltic Sea Region and Northwest Russia' report includes a description of recent epidemiological developments in HIV and AIDS in some Northern Dimension countries, focusing on the Baltic Sea Region and Northwest Russia. The report makes recommendations for surveillance, policy development, legislation, prevention, treatment, care and support. Additionally, concrete project themes are recommended. The report includes two annexes: (1) Mother-to-child transmission of HIV and (2) Migration and HIV/AIDS.

A short fact sheet 'Facing the Challenges of HIV/AIDS in Our Region' provides comprehensive information. Both

documents can be downloaded in the "Papers" section of the NDPHS Database.

## Patient Information is the key to better health in Europe

a&m, the EMZ, the [Polish Patient Safety Foundation](#) and the [European Public Health Association](#) EUPHA joined forces to emphasize the importance of patient information for migrants living in Europe. Germany, Poland and Turkey are closely linked by migration (as are other EU countries).

In a common [press release](#) the three organizations support the new [Policy Statement on Patient Information](#) of the [International Association of Patient Organizations](#), IAPO. They confirm that patient information is essential to Europeans receiving high quality care. 'Without information we cannot learn what is right and begin to question the things that go wrong. Common standards for patient information in Europe make sense.' Information was provided in English, German, Polish and Turkish.

A report on the harmonization of patient information in Europe is to be published at the next [EUPHA conference in 2011 in Amsterdam](#). A pre-conference event will be held for patient organizations.



Executive  
Agency for  
Health and  
Consumers

Co-funded by the European Union under the Programme of Community Action in the Field of Public Health 2003-2008/ Executive Agency for Health and Consumers.