



## February 2009

### Welcome to 2009 and the second edition of the AIDS & Mobility (A&M) Newsletter!

Thank you for the the warm reception you gave the first issue of the newsletter. Please keep your feedback coming!

In this quarter's issue we take a closer look at the issue of criminal prosecutions for HIV transmission in Europe, as well as our usual round-up of HIV and migration news, a look at recent research and a feature on a new Danish project.

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### Criminalising HIV transmission in Europe

Criminalisation of HIV transmission has gained an increasingly prominent place on the agenda of global agencies in the past few years. It's becoming clear that the law is a very blunt instrument against HIV and that, far from reducing onward transmission, legal moves to

imprison people for transmitting HIV are more likely to increase stigma and damage public health strategies.

Terrence Higgins Trust has been at the forefront of drawing attention to the genuine impact of prosecutions since 1997, when proposals were made to change the law in England. Our interest has been both practical – helping people with HIV caught up in prosecutions; and policy – working to change systems and practices that harm health rather than helping.

#### Migrants disproportionately affected

In the UK and in a number of other European countries, migrants have been disproportionately targeted in prosecutions and in media coverage of the issue. THT contributed to the Aids & Mobility Report, "HIV/AIDS and migration in European printed media: an analysis of daily newspapers" in 2006, which illustrated this phenomenon. Thus, this is not just a general HIV policy issue in Europe but one which particularly affects migrant communities, increasing stigma and mixing up prejudice against migrants and prejudice about HIV into a powerful weapon which must be challenged.

In order to shed light on what was happening across Europe and Central Asia, THT has also worked with the Global Network of People with HIV (based in Amsterdam) to document the relevant laws and their use across the region. The first survey was funded by UNAIDS and published in 2005.



## Global scan

Now, a revised, improved and updated version of the survey, funded by Positive Action and incorporated into a global effort, has been produced. The Global Criminalisation Scan, through its regional partners (including THT in Europe), documents laws, judicial practices and case studies about the criminalisation of HIV transmission. The Scan is the only collection presenting this data on a worldwide scale and the European data is some of the most complete. The GNP-hosted website contains country by country information, regional analysis, and where possible global analysis. It also includes an in-depth section on the key issues in criminalisation of HIV transmission.

Data to inform and complete the country pages has been collected in a variety of ways. These have included desk research of legal databases and government sites.

Questionnaires were also sent to networks of people living with HIV, HIV service organisations, government departments, UN country representatives, government officials, and others working on the issues.

## Contribute to the database

The database is a living document, relying on community participation. Please tell us if the information we have on a country is wrong or incomplete. GNP especially welcomes offers of translation of pages into other languages, news reports, details of organisations working on the issues, or news of any advocacy initiatives happening. To do any of this, you can email the regional contact – which in the case of Europe and Central Asia is us at [THT](mailto:info@tht.org).

## Links

[Global Criminalisation Scan](#)

[UNAIDS Criminalisation Policy Brief](#)

**Lisa Power, Terrence Higgins Trust**

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## News round-up

In this issue: good news on HIV-related travel restrictions; a new IOM report on global migration and a call to action for the EC.

## HIV-related travel restrictions

In our last issue, we reported on the work of the UNAIDS International Task Team on HIV-related Travel Restrictions.

In December 2008, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board met to consider the Task Team's recommendations. These included asking countries to regularly report on any HIV-related travel restrictions in their UNGASS submissions and recommending that UNAIDS work with the WHO to expand guidance on public health and the health economics of travel restrictions.

The UNAIDS Board voted to approve all of the Task Team recommendations and will now begin work to implement them. This adds to the voices calling for an end to HIV-related travel restrictions worldwide.

The Task Team have produced an advocacy guide: "Denying entry, stay and residence due to HIV status: Ten things you need to know". You can download the guide in a range of languages and get the latest information on HIV-related travel restrictions at [www.hivtravel.org](http://www.hivtravel.org)



## US Entry Ban

With the new administration settling in, change may be around the corner. No timetable has yet been set, but campaigners in the US and overseas are hopeful that President Obama's team will move forward with changing the entry regulations soon.

## World Migration Report 2008

In December 2008, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) launched the World Migration Report. This year's report focuses on economic migration and includes independent studies by specialist researchers as well as taking a more detailed look at policy development. The report presents regional overviews, case studies of the experiences of individual migrants and includes a look at migrant health.

You can access the full report [here](#).

## European Parliament makes HIV resolution

On the 20th November 2008, MEPs passed a resolution on "[HIV/AIDS: early diagnosis and early care](#)".

MEPs asked member states to work on tackling HIV-related discrimination, including restrictions on freedom of movement and also called for a renewed focus on prevention, testing and treatment. The European Council and Commission were asked to work together on promoting earlier diagnosis and the benefits of early HIV care.

The resolution was adopted with 480 votes in favour, four against and 10 abstentions.

## Research round-up

A brief overview of recently published research on issues around HIV and migration in Europe. Links to abstracts or full text are provided where possible.

Please contact us if you have research items you'd like to see included here.

## Bibliography of resources on HIV-related travel restrictions

[The impact of HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence: an annotated bibliography](#) is the UNAIDS conference room paper that accompanies the work of the International Task Team.

## Increased attendances of people of eastern European origin at sexual health services in London

[Sexually Transmitted Infections - 2009 Feb; 85\(1\):75-8.](#)

This article describes recent increases in the use of London sexual health services by migrants from Eastern Europe, and discusses the need for services to adapt quickly to meet the need of this population.

## Health systems' responses to 25 years of HIV in Europe: inequities persist and challenges remain

[Health Policy 86 \(2-3\) May 2008: 181-194](#)

This article analyses different policy and health system responses to HIV in Europe over the last 25 years.



## **United Kingdom acquisition of HIV infection in African residents in London: more than previously thought.**

[AIDS. 2009 Jan 14; 23\(2\):262-6](#)

HIV prevention interventions for Africans must focus on reducing transmission within the UK as well as addressing infections acquired abroad.

## **Spotlight on Denmark**

Since 2003, Cross-Over has been working to increase openness about HIV amongst ethnic minority communities in Denmark. With HIV treatment available to everyone, it has always been important to reduce stigma and encourage people to test and get treated if necessary.

There are around 4,500 people living with HIV in Denmark, but there are also probably a further 1,000 people who do not know they have the virus. To support the drive to reduce numbers of people with undiagnosed HIV, and address low usage of mainstream clinics by minority groups, Cross-Over plan to open a special quick-test site in Copenhagen at the end of February for people from ethnic minority communities.

The service will be tailored to meet the needs of minority communities in Denmark; initially counselling will be offered in English and Turkish as well as Danish, and other languages may follow. Cross-Over also plan to put referral pathways in place, to make sure anyone using the services who tests positive for HIV, is seen by specialists at a hospital the

following day. We hope to report on the initiative's success in a future edition!

[www.cross-over.dk](http://www.cross-over.dk)

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## **If you have a project working with young migrants that you'd like to tell us about, get in touch with the AIDS & Mobility Project.**

Let us know about your work on HIV and migration, or any news stories or events you think our network of partners would be interested in.

You can contact us on:  
[info@aidsmobility.org](mailto:info@aidsmobility.org)  
00 49 511 1693184

Our website is currently being updated, but new information on the project will soon be available at [www.aidsmobility.org](http://www.aidsmobility.org)

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**Executive  
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