

Our meetings

❖ ECUO General Assembly took place in Kyiv



Representatives of ECUO member-states from 15 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia gathered together on the eve of the Valentine's Day. During 3 days we discussed our achievements, held a voting of the President of the Union, analyzed difficulties and planned further steps towards ECUO goals achievement.

This meeting allowed all participants to share the situation in the country re access to treatment, main successes and challenges. Besides, our members could share experience of their countries on taking commitments for securing ARV treatment at state budget cost.

One of the main results of this meeting is establishment of the Regional Advocacy Strategy (RAS) as a framework document that would regulate the main activity of our organizations in the countries re advocacy for scaling up access to ARV-treatment. The meeting allowed us to discuss and approve advocacy country plans for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Russia for 2013 (plans review on ECUO website is coming soon). We also finalized plan for support of advocacy events at regional level.

One entire day was dedicated to the information exchange and identification of the advocacy best regional practices/lessons learned among ECUO members from 7 EC grant targeted countries:



Selected Highlights

All-Ukraine Network of PLWH told about their experience with transition of treatment programmes from the Global Fund (GF) to public financing; at present, 69% of ARV



medicines in Ukraine are procured at state budget cost. They also shared on-hand experience of PLWH engagement and monitoring of the several stages of public procurement process. As a result of this monitoring they managed to prevent procurement of overpriced ARV medicines and revealed corruption schemes in MoH worth to approximately 1,5 million USD in 2012.

Representatives of PLWH organization from Georgia shared their experience in building coalition of organizations and networks working in HIV/AIDS field and harm reduction for more effective dialogue with state authorities. In 2012, they united efforts of 5 PLWH organizations to run joint public campaigns; they also signed a memorandum for joint events aimed at initiation of establishment of the transition plan for transferring patients receiving ART from Global Fund supported to State funded programs.

Representatives of Moldova PLWH League presented their experience of working in key HIV/AIDS committees at national level re securing ARV-treatment at state budget cost, as well as their participation in legal drafting of the new bill on state procurement in the context of TRIPS+ (recently signed by Moldova Government). Also, PLWH Moldova League initiated a study related to the analysis of national regulatory framework of procurement and registration of medicines, and access to generic ARV drugs.

Representatives of PLWH Armenia presented their advocacy experience re initiation of several legislative reforms that would simplify ARV drugs public procurement process after the Global Fund's withdrawal from the country.

Every country has its own specific needs. However, the financial & technical needs and the problems of co-operation with public authorities are common to all of them. Future advocacy plans were defined in line with these needs in lieu with the newly-adopted ECUO advocacy strategy - by 2020 in EE&CA countries to ensure 100% of funding for ARV treatment for all PLWH who need it and its efficient & effective application by the state budget - which for us – for people living with HIV, is an element of the right to life and health.

During the General Assembly Vladimir Zhovtyak was reelected as the President of ECUO.

Podcast of the meeting is available here: <http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2013/03/14/podkast-vich-aktivizm-kontinentalnogo-masshtaba/>



This project is supported by the EU

❖ **Summary: Regional meeting “Scaling up ARV-treatment in EECA region”**

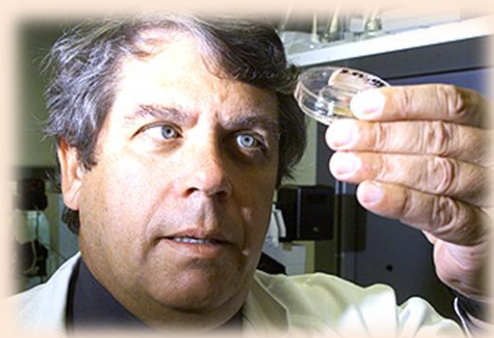
The Regional Meeting “Scaling up ARV treatment in EECA region” held in Kyiv on 5 March. This meeting was attended by regional public organizations working in HIV field in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, representatives of state authorities of these countries, European Union, representatives of WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP and the Global Fund.



Discussion of the regional advocacy strategy of the East Europe and Central Asia Union of PLWH (ECUO) as well as implementation of the work plan for 2013-2014 was high on the agenda. By ECUO initiative, the decision was made to establish the Regional Advisory Group to provide technical and expert assistance in implementation of this strategy.

For the minutes of the meeting go to <http://ecuo.org/en/ecuo/news/2013/03/22/minutes-regional-meeting-on-access-to-arv-treatment-in-eeca-region/>

Expert consultations



Medicine (CIRM).

❖ **Famous scientist told ECUO how we can cure HIV**

Alan Trounson: to cure HIV and discover vaccine

Stem cells can become a miracle tool enabling us to finally cure HIV, believes Professor Alan Trounson - renown expert in the field of stem technology and President of the California Institute for Regenerative

Prof. Trounson claims that his research group managed to get up close to the treatment of HIV; testing of the new methodology on humans will start soon. ECUO interviewed Prof. Trounson to find out about details of his research.

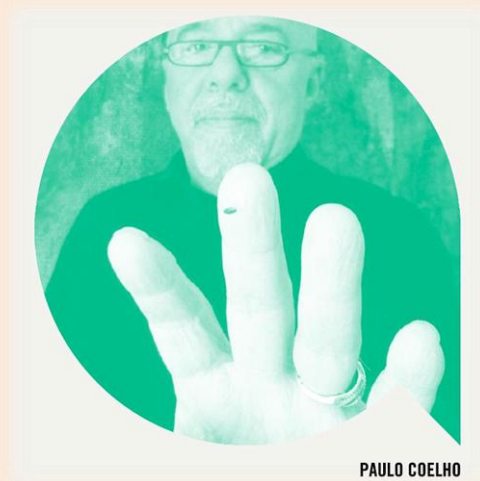
<http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2013/02/01/alan-trounson-vylechit-vich-i-izobresti-vakcinu/>



SIR ELTON JOHN

❖ ECUO joined the Elton John campaign

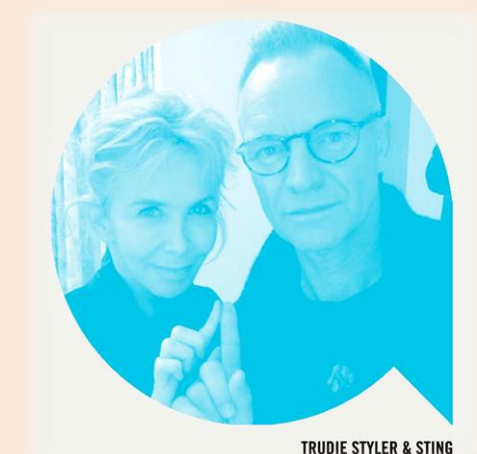
On February 14 to mark the Valentine's Day and its 20th anniversary, the Elton John AIDS Foundation started the campaign against stigma and discrimination of HIV-positive people entitled "Love in my blood". Sir Elton John together with famous athletes, writers and singers pricked his finger to show that he has LOVE in his blood.



PAULO COELHO

ECUO joined the campaign "Love in my blood"

<http://ecuo.org/ru/all/gallery/love-is-in-my-blood/>



TRUDIE STYLER & STING

Don't be afraid of HIV or AIDS. Instead, show that you care because with love it can be defeated!

❖ Latvia



November, 21 – HIV-positive activists in Latvia held the campaign “Want to live – pay for yourself” under the Ministry of Health to attract attention of society to policy changes of Latvian authorities.

For more details and video go to

<http://bit.ly/10jQUSo>

❖ Ukraine

November, 29 – the All-Ukrainian Youth Forum “Don’t give AIDS a chance” held in Kyiv. The Forum, which was dedicated to the World AIDS Day gathered hundreds of adolescents in the Ukrainian House exhibition centre for the chance to meet with activists, actors, state authorities and NGOs representatives and discuss HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ukraine.

For more information go to <http://bit.ly/101tGck>

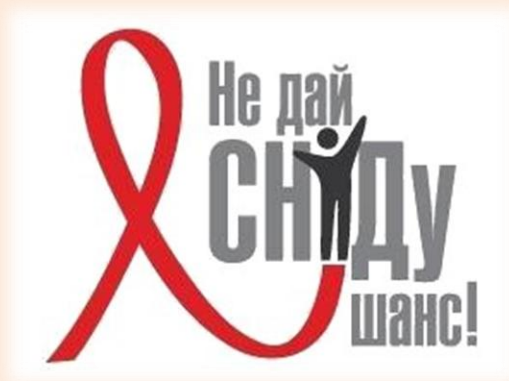
❖ Estonia

In Estonia HIV-positive people directed a documentary about their experiences of living with HIV. For more information go to

<http://bit.ly/SxqTHw>

❖ Russia

New social center for HIV-positive people was opened in Moscow. <http://bit.ly/11ByQ2Q>





❖ Moldova

On February 27, the official opening ceremony of the Social centre for PLWH and their immediate circle was held in Chisinau. Representatives of the Ministry of Health of Moldova, Ministries of Social protection, as well as Chisinau townhall representatives, PAS Centre and the Soros Foundation in Moldova attended the opening ceremony.

<http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2013/03/12/v-kishineve-otkrylsya-socialnyj-centr-dlya-lzhv/>

Also in Chisinau, Moldova the training “Assessment and advocacy in the field of state procurement of ARV therapy in Moldova” was conducted on March 14–15. 15 people from four regions of Moldova, including Trans-Dniester took part in the training. <http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2013/03/20/v-moldove-proshel-trening-ocenka-i-advokaciya-v-sfere-gosudarstvennyh-zakupok-arv-terapii/>

❖ Azerbaijan

On December, 16 a jiu-jitsu tournament was held in Shagan Sports Centre in Baku among adolescents and youth. Around 150 athletes in different weight categories participated in the tournament that was organized under the motto of tolerant attitude towards HIV-positive people and for promotion of healthy lifestyle.



<http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2012/12/25/v-baku-proshel-vich-tolerantnyj-turnir-po-dzhiu-dzhitsu/>

❖ Armenia

Termination of funding of ARV medicines procurement by the Global Fund won't affect access to treatment for all who need it in Armenia, stated Sergey Khachtrian, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Health during the round table "Sustainability of antiretroviral treatment in Armenia: possibilities and risks" held December, 17.

This event was organized by NGO "Real World, Real People" with support of ECUO within framework of EU project "Strong community through partnership".

http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2012/12/20/zamministra-armenii-uhod-gf-ne-povliyaet-na-dostup-k-arv-lecheniyu-v-armenii_full_version/



Meeting on strategic planning was conducted in Stepanavan, Armenia by the public organisation "Real World, Real People". Draft of the strategic plan for 2013-2015 was developed during the meeting.

17 staff members and members of organisation took part in the work meeting, including representatives from regional affiliates in Armenia.

<http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/news/2013/02/05/v-armenii-proshla-rabochaya-vstrecha-po-strategicheskomu-planirovaniyu-oo-realnyj-mir-realnye-lyudi/>