



Center for Information  
and Counseling on Reproductive  
Health - Tanadgoma



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## **EMERGING HIV EPIDEMIC AMONG MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN GEORGIA – COMPARISON WITH A EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE**



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# Background

- Estimated HIV prevalence in Georgia is 0.4% among the adult population
- There is annual increase of new infections and HIV cases attributed to homosexual transmission are rapidly increasing in Georgia
- The study aimed to compare recent Georgian trends with data from the European countries



# Methods

- A cross sectional, anonymous surveys using respondent driven sampling was conducted in the capital city of Georgia Tbilisi in 2010 and 2015.
- MSM aged  $\geq 18$  years and having homosexual contact during last year were recruited. Face-to-face interviewing and voluntary blood testing on HIV were done. Blood samples were collected from 271 (2010) and 300 (2015) MSM.
- The study protocols were approved by the Ethical Committee of HIV/AIDS Patients Support Foundation.
- Data were analysed with the RDSAT 7.1 software.
- European CDC data were consulted to draw comparison of Georgia data with European countries.



# Results (1)

- Several key indicators such as coverage with preventive interventions, knowledge about HIV infection, HIV testing uptake and awareness about HIV testing possibilities improved for the period 2010-2015.
- However, condom use at last anal intercourse did not change for the same period and about 40% of MSM practice unprotected sex.



# Results (2)

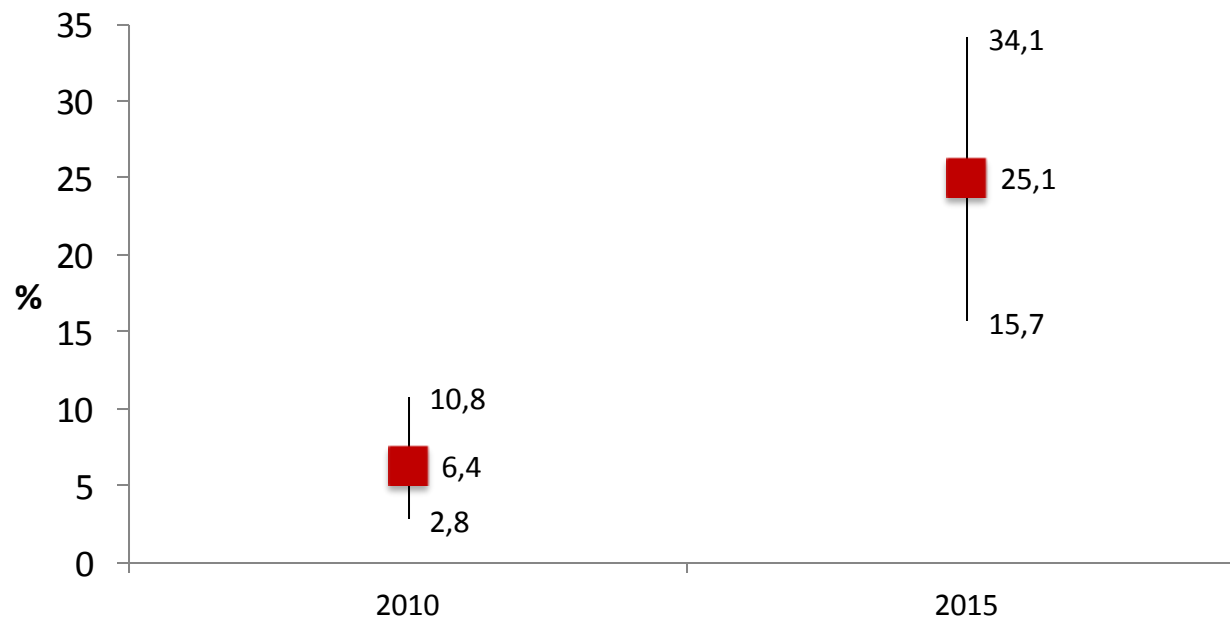
## MSM key indicators during 2010-2015

Indicator	2010	2015	significance
Coverage by preventive intervention	20.9%	43.5%	$p < 0.001$
Knowledge about HIV infection	19.9%	30.4%	$p < 0.001$
HIV testing during last year	15.8%	38.4%	$p < 0.01$
Knowledge about HIV testing possibilities	46.1%	79.6%	$p < 0.01$
Condom use at last anal intercourse	61.7%	63.2%	$p > 0.05$

# Results (3)

- The 2015 study found 25.1% HIV prevalence rate among MSM population in the capital city.
- A three-fold increase is observed from 2010 with a higher concentration among older (<25) age group.

**HIV prevalence rates among MSM in 2010, 2015, Tbilisi, Georgia  
(sample sizes 271 and 300 respectively)**



# Conclusion

- HIV diagnosis in MSM is increasing annually in Western and Eastern Europe. Reported cases among MSM has increased by 33% for the period 2004-2013. Sex between men account for majority of cases diagnosed in 2014 (42%) and is increasing (European CDC, 2014). This is the only key population with no decline in new infections.
- Despite improving certain programmatic parameters, HIV epidemic continues to unfold among MSM population.
- Georgia follows the European pattern, suggesting that current prevention efforts are not having necessary impact and there is a need for reframing programmatic efforts tailored to new realities.

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