

Press launch of UNAIDS Global AIDS Update – The Urgency of Now: AIDS at a Crossroads.

SPECIAL FOCUS: Eastern Europe and Central Asia



Eamonn Murphy

Regional Director for Asia Pacific and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions,

leads UNAIDS in advancing an integrated response to HIV across these regions. With extensive experience in global health and development, he provides strategic direction, advocacy, coordination, and technical support to catalyze leadership from governments, communities, and partners for delivering life-saving HIV services. Previously, Mr. Murphy played key roles, including Deputy Executive Director at UNAIDS and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, where he facilitated the implementation of global HIV strategies and supported countries in achieving ambitious AIDS targets.



Anahit Avanesyan

Minister of Health of the Republic of Armenia,

brings over 15 years of legal and regulatory experience in both public and private sectors, focusing on governance and management. Appointed Minister of Healthcare in 2021 after serving as First Deputy Minister of Health, she specializes in pharmaceutical policy and holds a Master's Degree in Civil Law from Yerevan State University. Ms. Avanesyan is a dedicated advocate for women's rights and youth empowerment, representing Armenia on the GAVI International Alliance Council since 2021.



Vera Brezhneva

UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador for Eastern Europe and Central Asia,

is a renowned singer, actress, and TV host appointed as a UNAIDS Regional Goodwill Ambassador in 2014. With a profound commitment to humanitarian causes, Ms. Brezhneva leverages her widespread influence to raise awareness on HIV issues, particularly impacting women and children. She engages in outreach campaigns and social media initiatives to champion HIV prevention and care across the region.



Ganna Dovbakh

Executive Director at the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRA),

is a renowned regional activist and community mobilization expert from Ukraine. She advocates for sustainable funding of quality harm reduction services in the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (CEECA) region. Ganna holds a Master of Arts (MA) in Social Psychology and a MA in Culture Studies, and she has authored numerous publications on community system support.



Elena Rastokina

President of Association Answer-Kazakhstan,

has been living with HIV for 16 years. After her diagnosis, she founded the «Answer» NGO in Kazakhstan, which has since expanded to 10 regions of the country. In 2024, the «Answer-Kazakhstan» association continues its mission to develop the women's community and advocate for the decriminalization and humanization of Kazakhstan's HIV legislation.



Moderator: Armen Aghajanov

Activist at VirusOff EECA,

is an openly gay person living with HIV, with a migrant background from Georgia-Armenia, currently based in Cyprus. Armen leads the regional information platform VirusOff and operates across the EECA region and Ukraine, advocating for HIV awareness and support.
