



EQUALITY FOR GAY AND LESBIAN

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2005—2008

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Skopje, August 2005

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### *Acknowledgements*

Members of EGAL would like to use this opportunity to express their deepest gratitude to the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation; without slightest hesitation they decided to conduct training for a completely new and, in Macedonian frameworks, still unaccepted and risky for cooperation group of people. We thank Liljana Alčeva and Aleksandar Bužarovski for the time they dedicated to us, and we are especially grateful to Neda Maleska-Sačmaroska, who facilitated the entire procedure for production of this document, and showed an exceptional patience in working with EGAL.

Hoping that the cooperation will go on in the future, we would also like to thank to COC Nederland, who provided financial support of the entire process, and we are especially glad for the personal participation of Arjos Vendrig and Björn van Roozendaal.

## Glossary

We are of the opinion that most of the terms used in this document, which are exactly used to describe EGAL's target groups and its activities, are still insufficiently familiar to the Macedonian public. In order to make this document understandable to any one wishing to read it, we offer this interpretation for the terminology used.

**Sexual orientation**<sup>1</sup>. Entails emotional, romantic, sexual and emotive attraction of one person to another. There are three types of sexual orientation: **heterosexual**, when a man is attracted only to women, and a woman only to men; **homosexual**, when a man is attracted only to men, and a woman only to women; and **bisexual**, when a man is attracted to both women and man, and a woman is attracted to both men and women. Determination of sexual orientation is in close connection to the biological category of sex. Sex represents a set of bodily (biological, physical) features which determine us as naturally born male or female people (what we also use for animals to call them male or female). Most relevant features to determine one's sex are the reproductive organs, but also chromosomes and hormones, and the secondary sexual features: breast size, hip form, voice tone colour, body hair. **Sexual determination**, **sexual preference** are other expressions used to designate the same phenomenon, but their use is unjustified, since both terms indicate to a possibility of choice. However, sexual orientation is not something a person can choose or not, on the contrary, people are born as such. The only thing people of non-heterosexual orientation can choose is whether they will be honest to themselves and towards the others about their feelings, and, in case they acknowledge their nature to themselves, whether they will live in accordance with such sexual orientation, or will suppress it at all times.

**Gender identity** entails personal and intimate feelings of an individual whether they recognise themselves as being man or woman. Gender identity is in close connection to the societal category of gender. Gender represents a set of all the socially determined roles which are imposed since the earliest age to male and female children so as to grow up respectively into men (wear trousers, not to make their bodies more beautiful, be aggressive, dominant, suppress their own feelings, do physical labour, financially secure the family, be politically engaged, etc) and women (wear skirts, make their bodies more beautiful, be tender, passive, sensitive, do light labour, or, even better, stay at home, raise children and cook, not to be interested in how the state is run and in other managerial affairs, etc).

**Gender expression** is external manifestation of a particular gender role – exactly by whether we wear trousers or skirts, whether we are sensitive or not, what tone colour we use/imitate, etc.

**LGBT** (eng. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) is a term civil associations use in an attempt to encompass all categories of non-heterosexuality. This includes two categories based on sexual orientation: male and female homosexual persons (gays and lesbians) and bisexual male and female persons, and also one gender category – transgender(ed) people.

**Transgender(ed) people** are the people whose gender identity or gender expression radically differs from the traditionally defined and accepted norms. Here belong **transvestites** (or **travestites**) who prefer from time to time or at all times to wear cloths of the opposite gender (and who should not be taken for granted as being homo/bi-sexually oriented!), and also **transsexuals**, people who use hormonal therapy and surgical operations to change their natural sex, in order to even socially fit into the desired gender.

**Lesbians** are women who feel emotional, romantic, sexual and emotive attraction only to other women.

**Gays** are men who feel emotional, romantic, sexual and emotive attraction only to other men, i.e. those people who are traditionally called homosexuals. In more recent times the LGBT community itself imposes the use of gay as a single designation for all the forms of non-heterosexual orientation, i.e. gay is used as an all-inclusive

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<sup>1</sup> Interpretation of the terms *sexual orientation* to *internalized homophobia* is based on the information available at <http://www.lori.hr/sveosvemu/terminologija.htm>

substitute for the acronym LGBT. In contemporary contexts LGBT is mainly used by civil associations, especially in the context of fighting for the rights of these people, whereas gay is used to describe social aspect of the life of these people: gay life, gay lifestyle, gay community, gay clubs, gay (sub)culture. Similarly, words homosexual and homosexuality are more frequently used to designate all forms of non-heterosexual orientation. Frequently, in order to underline that the word gay stands only for homosexual men, and not for all the LGBT people, the expression *gay man* is used.

**Bisexual (man and women)** are people who feel emotional, romantic, sexual and emotive attraction both to persons of their own and of the opposite sex.

**LGBTIQ** is an acronym which become increasingly used in more recent times so as to be able to also encompass two additional categories of people: intersexual (man and women) and queers.

**Intersexual people** are people who are naturally born with biological / physical features of both male and female sex (to be more exact, with undetermined genitalia). In such cases parents ask that one genital features be removed with surgical operation, and others are left; in such a way, in their own will and choice, they determine the biological sex of a person who is to grow old one day not necessarily fitting into the gender identity imposed by their parents. It is even more horrible when surgeons self-willingly, without the knowledge of the parents, perform surgical interventions on an intersexually born baby, in order to “complete the determination” of its sex. As a rule they choose to eliminate the male genital features and preserve the female ones, as a simpler and safer operation. Such an intervention which does not necessarily coincide with the identity the person will develop in its life can lead to emotional trauma, loss of sexual desire and inability for orgasm. It is usual to treat intersexuality as a gender category, not as a sexual orientation category. Intersexual people are not to be confused with **androgyny** people (traditionally called **hermaphrodites**), who in their external appearance or by their own identification, do not incline neither to the male nor female gender i.e. they gender-express themselves as both being man and woman, or gender-express themselves neutrally.

**Queer** (eng. originally it meant *weird*, then used in the sense of today's *gay*). Today it is used for those LGBT people who have a rather philosophical approach towards their own sexual orientation. They refuse to interpret their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the framework of biological features or societal norms, they refuse to identify themselves as being gay, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender, etc. They explain their distinctiveness from the majority simply by the of right every person to be an individual, the right of self-creation of own sexuality and gender, the right to a constant personal determination and transformation, even, as a bottom line, the right to non-identity.

**MSM** (eng. Men who have Sex with Men). This term is used to name all the men who temporarily, frequently or constantly have sexual intercourse with men, regardless of what their sexual orientation might be (homosexual or bisexual). This term was originally used for those people of homosexual or bisexual orientation who refuse to accept that according to their sexual behaviour are exactly homosexuals or bisexuals. They find excuses for such behaviour: out of curiosity, for money, have been forced to, raped, have been only in male company for a long time (in gaol, in the army, aboard a military ship)... Due to this they refuse to be qualified as members of LGBT community, and, in most of the cases, the indeed refuse to become part of the LGBT community (in the sense to make friends with other LGBT people, visit LGBT clubs, advocate LGBT rights, etc). In more recent times MSM is a term which is most used in medicine, in the attempt to prevent STIs, when facts alone are most relevant – that a particular man had sexual intercourse with another man (and potentially exposed himself to STIs) – contrary to what, it is of no importance how this man identifies himself and what have been the reasons to having sex with another man (which can be considered a step forward in non-condemnation of same-sex intercourse).

**Homophobia** is a set of social and cultural prejudices about sexual orientation and gender identity which differ from the socially accepted majority sexual orientation and gender identity. These prejudices are usually manifested as an irrational fear from non-heterosexual persons, the sensation of disgust when attempting to

imagine the homosexual intercourse, intolerant attitude towards them, even open verbal and physical attacks, and, as a bottom line, an organised action against such people, in order to retain the criminalization of different sexual orientation and gender identity, and to prevent the recognition of their rights. Such organised actions are usually called **anti-gay movements**. Homophobia can be individual when we talk about an individual person with homophobic feelings; institutionalised, when the state has been organised in such a way that the public institutions (administration, health system, education, businesses, religions...) function upon the principle of discrimination of different sexual orientations and gender identity; and cultural homophobia, when the society nurtures such values and norms according to which the world should only exist based on the bipolar principle of male-female or man-woman, and therefore heterosexuality is recognised as the only normal and moral sexual orientation.

**Homonegativity** is a narrower form of homophobia, i.e. a non-violent form of homophobia. Homonegativity entails promotion of negative, individual or social, attitudes towards homosexuality, resistance against social changes which lead towards the liberalisation of the LGBT, but not necessarily their criminalisation, discrimination, etc. On the contrary, homonegativity can be expressed as a compassion with LGBT for “they are not guilty” for being created as such by nature, and the desire to help them “heal” with medical or psychiatric methods.

**Heterosexism** is a stance, individual or social, according to which heterosexuality is the only legitimate human sexual orientation, under the usually exploited excuse that it is god-given or naturally justified, since it alone can lead towards procreation. Such glorification of heterosexual orientation completely ignores the very existence of persons with different sexual orientation, and negates their rights. Heterosexism, as a personal conviction of an individual, which can then be incorporated in wider social framework, is the underlying reason for the rise of homophobia and homonegativity.

**Homosexuality** is a term frequently used by the anti-gay movements, with the intention the suffix *-ism* to add a “medical” weight to the term, and so clearly indicate that homosexuality is a disease. LGBT people consider the use of this term as highly offensive.

**Biphobia and transphobia** refers to a phobia, on all the bases stated above and in all manners stated above, specifically against bisexuals or transgender peopled. However, it is usual for the term homophobia to also cover biphobia and transphobia.

**Internalised homophobia** (and biphobia and transphobia) is the situation when a person who him/herself is a of different sexual orientation or gender identity, due to having been reared in the spirit of utter heterosexism and having grown up in a homophobic society, internalises homophobic feelings in him/herself, i.e. incorporates them in his/her value system. He/she blames him/herself for being “created as such”, finds “wrong steps” or traumatic events in the past which have contributed to such a situation, and attempts to or only wishes to change these, or, simply, refuses to accept him/herself as being LGBT. This inevitably leads to a more or less powerful internal psychological conflicts in the person.

**HIV<sup>2</sup>** (eng. Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus). A virus which directly hits the white blood cells in the human body, which reduces or even minimises the ability of the human organism to defend against external micro organisms which cause diseases (bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi).

**HIV+** (HIV positive). A condition of a person for whom relevant tests have verified to be carrier of HIV.

**SIDA** (fr. SIDA = Syndrome d'Immuno-Deficience Acquis, also eng. AIDS = Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome). A syndrome of acquired immunodeficiency (reduced capacity for protection). Terminal clinical stage of the disease caused by infection from HIV. Besides the general symptoms of the infection which HIV can, but not necessarily, cause: temperature, diarrhoea, sickness, etc. symptoms of another disease also occur, which has

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<sup>2</sup> Interpretation of the terms *HIV* to *STI* is based on the information available at <http://www.hera.org.mk/> (Information / Basic terms HIV/AIDS; STI) and also [http://www.medicina.hr/clanci/hiv\\_i\\_aids.htm#aids](http://www.medicina.hr/clanci/hiv_i_aids.htm#aids)

developed exactly due to the suppressed capacity of the organism to defend itself. The person infected by HIV becomes ill from AIDS the moment when the number of white blood cells of the CD+ 4 T-Ly class fall under 200 per one millilitre, i.e. less than 14%. In such a condition the immune system of the human organism becomes non-resistant to external micro organisms. Even the most banal micro organisms, which usually do not represent any kind of threat to human health, can now become lethal.

ARV (Anti-Retrovirus Therapy). This term includes all the drugs synthesised so far, which through different approaches and in different manners suppress the development of HIV. As a rule, these medicaments are very complex, followed by a series of complications and side-effect, and every self-willing, uncontrolled, undisciplined and unmonitored administration of these drugs can in itself be fatal for the organisms.

STI(s) (Sexually Transmitted Infections, also STD(s), Sexually Transmitted Diseases). What we traditionally call venereal diseases. Contagious diseases which are transmitted by unprotected (without condoms) sexual intercourse with already infected partner, but also through a direct contact with the infected wound, from an infected mother to a child (in pregnancy or during breast-feeding), and also through repeated use of needles/syringes in intravenous drug use, tattooing or piercing. The more popular in the STI group are: gonorrhoea, syphilis, chlamydiasis, genital herpes, condiloma, hepatitis, trichomoniasis, pubic lice, candidiasis, but also HIV/AIDS (this group also includes vaginitis – vaginal inflammation – because it is usually treated in a similar medical way).

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The need to produce the Strategic Document of EGAL results from several basic problematic areas:

- the existence of homophobia in the Republic of Macedonia (RM)
- lack of awareness for possible epidemic of HIV/AIDS and STI
- absence of LGBT culture
- lack of visibility of the LGBT community
- an increased intolerance towards differences in the LGBT community itself.

Following is the starting position considered in production of this document:

- clear definition of the basic problematic issue
- analysis of the current situation in the most important sectors of the LGBT population (in EGAL's point of view)
- needs assessment for the target group
- analysis of the area of operation of other organizations dealing with the issues of the LGBT population
- donor mapping
- EGAL's capacity to deal with the existing challenges.

EGAL's strategy gives directions for the future operation of the organisation in three basic areas: fighting homophobia, LGBT culture promotion, and sexual and psycho-social health. These directions will have to be made operational in specific programmes for particular issues and to also offer a way for their implementation.

The content of this strategic document moves within the realistic conditions of the LGBT population in RM, the objective capacities of the organization to implement particular activities, and the cooperation with particular state institutions.

The implementation of this strategy has been foreseen for a period of three years.

This strategy is not to be taken as a static unchangeable document, but depending on the sometimes unpredictable social changes, it can well detour from the set path.

This document provides sequentially the basic information about EGAL and its operation so far, the vision shared among the members of the organisation, the framework for EGAL's action (context scan), future strategic directions for EGAL's operation (objectives based on the needs of the target group, activities, expected results and indicators), and the major outcomes of the strategic planning exercises have been annexed to this document.



## 2 EGAL BASIC INFO

EGAL<sup>3</sup> is a civil association whose main goal is to improve the position of LGBT population in RM.

Although young according to its existence, EGAL is relatively experienced organization regarding the capacity of the human resources in it.

In November 2003 a group of activists from the Health Education and Research Association (HERA)<sup>4</sup>, who until then worked on projects treating the LGBT population, identified the need to establish an association which will deal with health, but also other issues, exclusively of interest for the LGBT people in RM, thus enhancing the focus on this target group.

On 13 February 2004 the existence of this new organization – EGAL – headquartered in Skopje, was formally and legally regulated and registered at court.

The same year, at the regular annual assembly, HERA decided to grant to EGAL all the credit and benefits of its projects until then which were dealing with LGBT population, as a token of recognition that exactly EGAL's founding members were the ones who within HERA implemented the LGBT projects. In such a way, from its very beginning, EGAL was launched as an organisation with several years of experience of its founding members, and 2 completed projects:

1. *Gay Info Line for HIV/AIDS*, Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC)<sup>5</sup> from Skopje, April 2003 – March 2004, with a self-funded extension until September 2004
2. *Peer Research among MSM*, a regional project of Population Services International (PSI) Romania<sup>6</sup>, May 2003 – October 2003.

From its foundation until today EGAL has independently implemented the following projects:

3. *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*, Cultuur en Ontspannings-Centrum (COC) Nederland<sup>7</sup>, in cooperation with Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation (MASSO)<sup>8</sup> from Skopje, ongoing
4. *Prevention against HIV/AIDS among MSM in Macedonia, programme task No. 4 of the Global Fund*<sup>9</sup>, 2005.

In May 2005 EGAL was joined by the Dzunica team, the organisers of the first, and so far the only LGBT film festival:

5. *Dzunica Film Festival*, under the auspices of the Centre for Civil and Human Rights (CCHR, also CGČP)<sup>10</sup> from Skopje, 8-10 October 2004.

Thanks to the initial experiences members of EGAL acquired through the projects given above, the organization at the moment has a sufficient scope of knowledge and skills available, necessary to make an enhanced continuation of its work in the future. Members of EGAL are familiar with how to operate an SOS line, how to lobby and cooperate with health services, how to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS and STI in most adequate way, how to conduct a systematic research, how to gain trust from the target group, how to organise cultural manifestations,

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<sup>3</sup> From the English *Equality for Gays and Lesbians*, with a clear allusion to the French *égal*, equal

<sup>4</sup> [www.hera.org.mk/](http://www.hera.org.mk/)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.isc.org.mk/>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.psi.org/where\\_we\\_work/romania.html](http://www.psi.org/where_we_work/romania.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.coc.nl/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.massso.org.mk/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/>

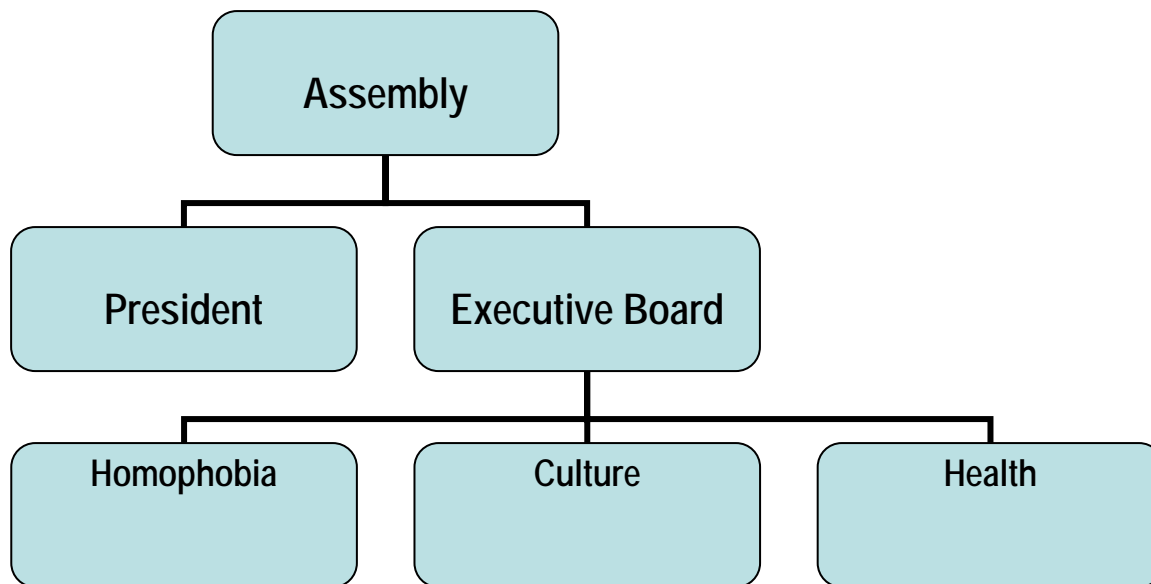
<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cgcp.org.mk/>

how to acquire the copyright for particular films, how to identify the needs for their personal capacity building, how to establish cooperation with partner organisations and donor agencies, etc.

The successful work of the organization so far received a special recognition when EGAL was admitted membership of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA)<sup>11</sup> in November 2004 in Budapest.

Today EGAL has the material, technical and human resources necessary for the implementation of its programme: its premises, team of professionals, work division in 3 sectors, volunteers, etc. The organisation practices team work with divided responsibility among its members and mutual cooperation.

## 2.1 Organisational set-up



The ultimate superior body in the organisation is the **Assembly**.

EGAL applies rather strict admission criteria. EGAL's policy is that there can be no "invisible" members. On the contrary, each and every member of the organisation has to be active, somehow involved in the fields of operation of EGAL. In order to become member of EGAL, the candidate must be able to implement certain activities on his/her own. In order to be able to perform well, the candidate has to have strong will and affirmed skills, certain educational and professional/occupational background.

As high-set as the criteria may seem, EGAL allows its members complete freedom, within the strategic orientation of the organisation, to choose the field of operation and particular activities to work on. If a particular member identifies a possibility to launch new activities – such that would be more appealing to her/him, or more effective in her/his opinion – this member is welcome to do all that is in his power to initiate this activity. Once proposed and approved, the member is encouraged to write project proposals, raise funds, identify partners, etc. so as to implement the activity properly. All members of EGAL tend to contribute in project designs for particular activities, and to also get involved in their implementation. However, if none or insufficient number of EGAL members are

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ilga.org/>

available / have the capacity / are interested enough for a particular activity at the moment, the member proposing the particular activity is free to hire outside staff, as long as the project budget has been provided to pay the services of the hired people.

In general, the Assembly approves the admission of new members, and also it defines the general policy of EGAL (its strategic orientation, field of operation, etc.).

The **Executive Board**, selected by the Assembly, from amongst its members, has the role to recommend the design of particular projects deemed necessary to accomplish EGAL's strategic goals. It is also there to approve particular projects initiated by individual members, entailing the assessment of their compliance with EGAL's strategy, viability, sustainability, etc. As a rule, members of the Executive Board are the more experienced members of EGAL, who are better familiar with the way things are on the field, so they have the discretion right to instruct, advice or even direct and impose particular actions within projects.

The **President** is also selected by the Assembly. In addition to the standard presidential functions, such as representations of the organisation, in a small-size organisation like EGAL, when it is impossible, alongside the Executive Board to also have the other organisational bodies practiced by Macedonian NGOs, such as the Supervisory Board, the President is also the one who manages and supervises the overall operation of EGAL and the work of particular members.

Obligations and responsibilities of all members/bodies in the organisation are governed by its **Statute**.

All members of EGAL, according to their own preference, fall into three larger sectors corresponding to the three main strategic field of operation: **Homophobia, Culture and Health**. Though such work division proves to be practical, the Executive Board, which is the one defining particular work of each sector, also strongly encourages a number of cross-sector activities contributing to organisational strengthening and institutional development.

## 2.2 Mission

EGAL is a civil association which works for improvement of the quality of life of the LGBT population and overcoming homophobia in the Macedonian society, through improvement of the sexual and psycho-social health of LGBT people and their close ones, promotion of LGBT culture, and education of LGBT people and the wider public in the Republic of Macedonia.

## 2.3 Focus groups

Within its strategy, the future work of EGAL shall focus on several target groups:

- LGBT population, regardless of their ethnicity (and with a special focus on young people, drug users, HIV positive, and other marginalized groups)
- MSM
- parents and close ones to LGBT
- general population.

## 2.4 Geographic scope of action

The entire territory of RM; in general the capital and other larger cities, with an open possibility to focus also on suburban and rural areas.

## 2.5 Field of operation

Homophobia – irrational fear from homosexuality<sup>12</sup>, resistance to accept difference in sexual orientation, open discrimination against LGBT people – is present in many modern societies.

All the studies so far, all reports and experiences indicate that the Macedonian society is highly homophobic. Negative attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices about different sexual orientation and non-heterosexual individuals are widespread, both among the general population and among some specific groups of people.

According to the only such study in Macedonia<sup>13</sup> on general population's opinions on homosexuality, about two-thirds of the population (64%) think of homosexuality as something sick and abnormal, and they consider homosexuals as immoral and pervert people. A similar rate of people would not accept their child if it is of different sexual orientation.

Problems, discrimination and exclusion of LGBT population by the mainstream social affairs are evident in many sectors of social living. However, within the available capacities and priorities of EGAL, the strategic direction of EGAL will move along the following societal sectors:

- fighting homophobia
- LGBT culture promotion
- sexual and psycho-social health improvement.

Out of these three fields of operation, over the period of next three years, EGAL has also identified the need for cross-sector activities, aiming at **organisational strengthening and institutional development**, above all:

- publishing (professional literature)
- research
- networking in RM and the region.

## 2.6 Cooperation with non-governmental organisations and foundations

In the accomplishment of its objectives EGAL established cooperation with a number of organisations on the national and regional level: HERA, MASSO, MCIC<sup>14</sup>, PSI, COC Nederland, and ILGA. EGAL intends to deepen the cooperation with these organisations, but at the same time remains open for cooperation with new partners in the civil sector.

In the accomplishment of its objectives EGAL will also strive to establish communication and cooperation with relevant state bodies and institutions in RM: the Government, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, local self-government, local educational, health and social centres.

Key donor agencies which have supported the work of EGAL so far include PSI, Global Fund, COC Nederland, and ILGA. In the period of next three years EGAL will make efforts to cover part of its activities by state donations, either at the central level (the Government) or at the local level (self-government).

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<sup>12</sup> By "homosexuality", here and further on in the text, we understand all forms of non-heterosexual orientation (homosexual and bisexual) and different gender identity (transgender people: transvestites, transsexuals).

<sup>13</sup> For more information see below 4.1 *Context scan*.

<sup>14</sup> Also MCMS; Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation ([www.mcms.org.mk](http://www.mcms.org.mk))

### 3 EGAL's VISION

Creation of a shared vision among EGAL activists is the basic guideline of the organisation in the accomplishment of the desired better future for the LGBT population in RM. Dedication to making their vision come true, as well as the values they share, are the foundation for the implementation of the strategy.

Though the vision is not a reality, rather a desired state of conditions, the entire human resources of EGAL clearly and undoubtedly back up the accomplishment of the following objectives, remaining completely available for the accomplishment of a better future for the LGBT population in Macedonia.

#### 3.1 Objectives

- overcoming stereotypes and prejudices related to sexual orientation and LGBT people in Macedonia
- LGBT culture and arts promotion
- sexual health improvement of LGBT people and their close ones
- psycho-social health improvement of LGBT people and their close ones
- improvement of communication and interaction among LGBT groups, and creation of a visible and sustainable LGBT community
- social integration of LGBT people in the society
- cooperation with relevant state institutions

#### 3.2 Activities

The entire operation of EGAL is primarily aiming at the LGBT people as the basic target group, but some of the activities will also encompass the close ones to LGBT people (relatives and friends), and the general population.

##### 3.2.1 *Fighting homophobia*

- educational workshops on sexual orientation, for LGBT people and for organised non-LGB groups (similar NGOs, youth and student organisations, high schools, political parties, etc)
- education of relevant state institutions (the police, the army, prisons, health services) on correct treatment of LGBT people
- media campaigning and fighting homophobia

##### 3.2.2 *LGBT culture promotion*

- cultural week
- film festival
- literary gatherings / readings with LGBT topics
- organisation of entertainment events, also with educational character
- production of a monthly LGBT culture guide / newsletter

- organisation of photography, film, painting, etc workshops (sections)
- organisation of cultural and sporting events in continuation
- publication of a monthly LGBT magazine

### 3.2.3 *Sexual and psycho-social health improvement*

- health service establishment for the LGBT people and their close ones, including counselling services for HIV/AIDS and STI
- self-help groups for HIV/AIDS and STI
- SOS line for HIV/AIDS and STI
- campaigning for prevention against HIV/AIDS and STI
- peer education for HIV prevention
- field work (education about HIV and STI, HIV testing) of people outside Skopje
- provision of a free of charge ARV therapy for HIV positive LGBT people
- condom and lubricant distribution
- education about HIV ad STI in prisons
- production of information brochures on sexual health and harm reduction among LGBT drug users
- psycho-social health improvement of LGBT people and their close ones (counselling service, SOS line, self-help groups, peer education)

### 3.2.4 *Organisational strengthening and institutional development (cross-sector activities)*

- publishing (scientific literature on health, sexual orientation, etc)
- research
- web page creation
- production of promotion, information and education material (flyers, brochures...)
- networking in RM and the region.

## 4 STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Context scan

The adoption of the civil model and the new political and legal concept in the Republic of Macedonia since 1991 onwards influenced the affirmation of individual human rights and freedoms and their specific protection. When Macedonia became a full member of the Council of Europe in 1995, and by signing the European Convention on Human Rights, the state took over the responsibility, among other things, to change its Criminal Law. The new, modified and “adapted to international requirements” Criminal Law was adopted in 1996, and came into force on 1 November 1996.

With the adoption of this law Macedonia de facto decriminalised homosexuality. This way Macedonian sexual minorities gained the right to freely express their sexual orientation and gender identity without fear of punishment. But this is only the first of the many steps that have to be undertaken so as to enable the LGBT people a dignified life enjoying the rights equal to those of heterosexuals.

Besides the series of formal and legal activities necessary to accomplish such equality (such as the introduction of sexual orientation as a basis for prohibition of discrimination, etc), it is also necessary to gain the public support by the Macedonian citizens.

Unfortunately, the research carried out so far into the perception of homosexuality and LGBT persons show that the Macedonian public expresses a high level of non-acceptance and negative perception of this phenomenon and these people.

According to the only study in Macedonia in the general public’s opinion on homosexuality<sup>15</sup>, around two-thirds of the Macedonian population (64%) consider homosexuality to be something sick and abnormal, and that homosexuals are immoral and pervert people. The same portion of the population would not accept their child if it were of different sexual orientation.

Significant number of the population think that homosexuals should not be given basic human rights, such as the right to work, free association, and expression (see *Table 1*).

Large portion of the respondents in this study showed a desire for social distance from LGBT people, accompanied by uncomfortable feelings and non-acceptance of such people (see *Table 2*).

It is worth mentioning that the polls (an integral part of this study) were to a large extent conducted by activists of CCHR, in those times the only LGBT organisation in Macedonia. This resulted in great number of interviewers, and also respondents, who were themselves part of the LGBT population. In such a way a certain dosage of positive biasness has been introduced in this research. It is realistic to expect that the actual situation in Macedonia is much more devastating than the outcomes of this research.

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<sup>15</sup> *Borders of Freedom and Choice: Homosexuality in the Republic of Macedonia*. (2002). Research report. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia and Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution. (<http://shc-campsite.mdif.org/look/download/homosexualityinmacedonia.pdf>)

Table 1. Negative standpoints on civil rights for LGBT people<sup>16</sup>

| Statements   | ... I agree<br>(...completely)<br>...yes | ...I am not sure<br>...I do not know | ...I do not agree<br>(...at all)<br>...no |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Homosexuals should not have the right to establish permanent relationships and get married | 57%                                      | 17%                                  | 25%                                       |
| Homosexuals should not manifest their orientation in public                                | 56%                                      | 14%                                  | 29%                                       |
| Homosexuals should hang out and meet at particular places                                  | 56%                                      | /                                    | /   |
| Homosexuals should not work in education and with children                                 | 53%                                      | /                                    | /   |
| Homosexuals should not be medical doctors  | 46%                                      | /                                    | /   |
| Homosexuality should be punished by law  | 34%                                      | 14%                                  | 52%                                       |

Table 2. The level of social distance from LGBT people<sup>17</sup>

| Statements /<br>Questions  | ... I agree<br>(...completely)<br>...yes | ...I am not sure<br>...I do not know | ...I do not agree<br>(...at all)<br>...no |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| I do not feel comfortable in the company of a homosexual   | 53%                                      | 19%                                  | 27.5%                                     |
| If I was to understand that a friend of mine is a homosexual, I would immediately terminate the friendship | 42%                                      | /                                    | /   |
| Would you accept the homosexuality of a family member?   | 20%                                      | 25%                                  | 55%                                       |
| Would you accept a homosexual friend?  | 29%                                      | 20%                                  | 51%                                       |
| Would you work with a homosexual fellow-colleague?   | /  | /                                    | 38%                                       |

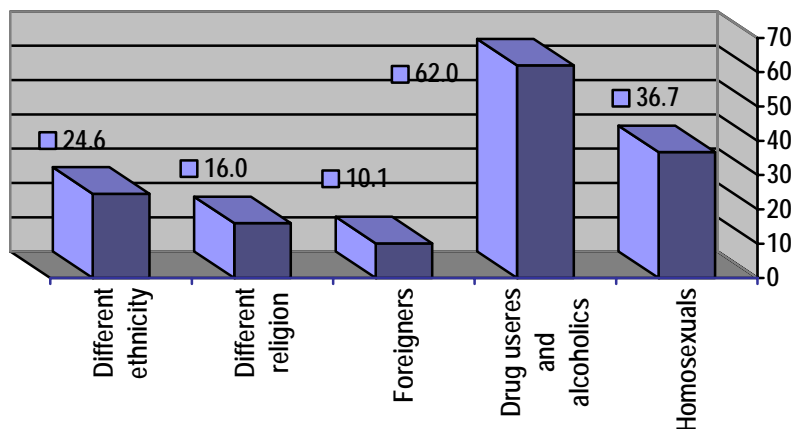
<sup>16</sup> Adapted from *Borders of Freedom and Choice: Homosexuality in the Republic of Macedonia*. (2002). Research report. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia and Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution. (<http://shc-campsite.mdif.org/look/download/homosexualityinmacedonia.pdf>)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



Another indicator for the extent of non-acceptance of LGBT people by the Macedonian citizens is the information that the only less desirable neighbour than a homosexual (36.7%) is a drug user or alcoholic (62.0%) (see *Chart 1*).

*Chart 1. Percentage distribution of people who would not like to have for neighbours people belonging to specific social categories.<sup>18</sup>*



Although the number of people who have been physically or mentally tormented because of their sexuality in our country is relatively small (13% by individuals<sup>19</sup>), there is a consensual opinion that this is mainly due to the invisibility of this group of people and the careful disclosure of the sexual orientation only before friendly people. It can be supposed, especially from the experiences of certain neighbouring countries,<sup>20</sup> that if adequate measures are not taken to fight homophobia, as the visibility of LGBT people increases so will significantly increase the frequency of violence committed against them. This could be one of the risks within the strategy.

Despite the fact for long now the global scientific circles have not treated homosexuality as a mental disorder or pathology, such points of view are still widespread among Macedonian psychologists and psychiatrists. From the information available to the non-governmental organisations dealing with LGBT issues at least 15 LGBT persons had negative experiences with psychiatrists or psychologists they turned to or were forced to see. Although the Medical Chamber of Macedonia in May 2005 officially reported that they respect the decision by the World Health Organisation<sup>21</sup> of 1993<sup>22</sup> to erase homosexuality from the lists of psychological disorder, a number of individual psychiatrists still advocate this opinion. One of them, as a reaction to the statement by the Medical Chamber, said: "All right, homosexuality is not a disease, yet it is a psychological disorder". Besides this, a study into the attitudes

<sup>18</sup> Adapted from *Civil Society Index of RM*. (2005). Research report. Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation.

<sup>19</sup> *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*. (2005). An ongoing research. Equality for Gays And Lesbians and Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

<sup>20</sup> A more recent example of possible unwanted outcomes from a premature and not well prepared visibility increase of the LGBT population comes from Serbia and Montenegro. Although the number of attacks against LGBT people has been small in the past, the first attempt for a massive disclosure of this population by organizing the *Belgrade Gay Parade* in 2002 ended with physical attacks against LGBT people, not as much by the accidental passers-by opposing homosexuality as by the organized anti-gay groups (above all hooligans from amongst sports fans, and also from the *Obraz (Dignity)* association with Church and religious provenience). The police (in the name of the state) took the side of defending the LGBT protestors, with rather modest and untimely reactions.

<sup>21</sup> [www.who.int/en/](http://www.who.int/en/)

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/bluebook.pdf> (Page 11, Paragraph 2)

towards homosexuality among students in psychology showed that the homophobia of these future mental-health workers is equally expressed as with the general population.<sup>23</sup>

Discrimination and homophobia in the Macedonian society is reflected in the reactions of the public and state officials. By now LGBT non-governmental organisations became familiar with 20 cases of verbal or physical abuse of LGBT people by the police, one of which includes rape. Several cases are known when the workmen were forced out of work when their employers found out about their sexual orientation. Unfortunately, due to the fear of public condemnation and the stigmatisation which will follow the public disclosure of the personal sexuality, none of these cases has been reported to the authorities.

Finally, LGBT people are victims of violence because of their sexual orientation even in their own homes. Most of these people would not expose their sexuality before family members (according to the research by EGAL,<sup>24</sup> only 7% of the respondents did this), but those who have done this, or whose parents “found out” not at their own will, in most cases experienced a series of negative reactions. The ways families deal with this situation includes beating up and turning the homosexual children out onto the streets, taking them to psychiatrists forcefully and “treating” the “disease” with diazepam, emotional blackmails for homicide, or physical or mental illness by the parent, etc. In the rural and Moslem communities the favourite way to “cure” homosexuality is forceful marriage, or forceful “sending away” to work abroad.<sup>25</sup>

This homonegativity would frequently leave serious consequences on the mental and psycho-social development of the LGBT people.

Resulting from these or similar conditions related to discrimination, stereotypes and the non-acceptance, the homophobia has a devastating impact on the LGBT people. These people have more frequent problems with their self-confidence, self-assertion and the general psychological welfare. As a consequence LGBT people suffer depression more frequently, have a shorter life span, they are more frequent smokers and users of alcohol and prohibited drugs than heterosexuals, and the rate of homicide attempts with LGBT people is far bigger than with the general population<sup>26</sup>.

Such conditions do not source out only from the direct manifestation of homophobia against them, but indirectly as well, by the presence of a high level of homophobia with LGBT people themselves (what is called internalised homophobia). Having grown up in homophobic societies, a large number of LGBT people accept these widespread negative perceptions and prejudices, which additionally prevents them from creating a positive image of themselves. The lack of correct and adequate information about these phenomenon, and also the lack of social support, acceptance, and positive examples makes it difficult for these people to overcome the internalised homophobia.

The studies made in Macedonia so far indicate that between 10-13% of the people who define themselves as being LGBT show certain extent of internalised homophobia. 10% of the LGBT people consider homosexuality to be an abnormal and unnatural phenomenon, or a transitory phase which has to be overcome.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, 11.2% of the people who continuously practice same-sex intercourse feel guilty for their sexual orientation or are being

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<sup>23</sup> Vrangalova, S. (2003). *The Image of Homosexuality among Second-Year Students at the Institute of Psychology*. Seminar paper. Institute for Psychology. Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje.

<sup>24</sup> *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*. (2005). An ongoing research. Equality for Gays And Lesbians and Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

<sup>25</sup> Trajković, R. (2004). *Macedonia and the Rights of Sexual Minorities – A Step Closer to Europe*. Examination essay. Postgraduate studies in European Integration and Communication. Institute for Sociology, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje.

<sup>26</sup> *SIECUS Report, Volume 29, Number 4*. (2001). SIECUS Fact Sheet: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth Issues. (<http://www.siecus.org/pubs/fact/fact0013.html>)

<sup>27</sup> *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*. (2005). An ongoing research. Equality for Gays And Lesbians and Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

afraid from what they feel.<sup>28</sup> Besides this, 21% of the people who identify themselves with LGBT would like to change their sexual orientation, were they given such opportunity, thinking that this would make their lives easier.<sup>29</sup>

At the moment there are no services that can be offered to LGBT people who need professional psycho-social assistance. The service they receive from their psychologists or psychiatrists depends solely on the personal perceptions and convictions of the particular mental-health worker. It is worth mentioning that the curriculum of education of these professionals treats the issues of homosexuality highly superficially, in most of the cases in the context of psycho-pathological processes.

Intertwined with this general social position the absence of LGBT culture of living in Macedonia is also evident. LGBT community is faintly visible (and in the smaller towns completely invisible), LGBT people are afraid to become part of this culture, and the number of places where LGBT people can socialise and feel safe and part of the group is very small.

Currently in Macedonia there is only one gay night club and two gay-friendly bars (all located in Skopje), which are frequented by more or less outed lesbians, gays and bisexuals. Gay men also have two sites for anonymous sex (terminuses)<sup>30</sup>, which lacks its correlate for the lesbians and bisexual women. Since 1999 the *gaymacedonia* channel has been hosted by one of the most frequently used chat programmes on the Internet, mIRC; although created for all gay people, this channel is mainly used by gay men.

Most of the LGBT people (66%) think that there is no gay culture in Macedonia, half of which do not feel (or just partially feel) as part of this culture. Their replies, however, clearly indicate to the need for such events: 80% of the ones who have attended an LGBT cultural event would like to do that again in the future (if offered one such opportunity).

Although two-thirds of the LGBT people are aware of the existence of the gay community in Macedonia, half of them do not feel (or just partially feel) as part of it. Reasons to this are varied, but it is clear that a large number of LGBT people are not satisfied with the momentary organisation of the gay life in Macedonia. These are the more frequent criticisms: too much of gossiping; envy, meanness, selfishness; lack of mutual trust, support, help; division into “clans”; promiscuity and strong sexual competition; monotony; and loss of aesthetical criteria. In fact, 60% of the LGBT people think they cannot trust other LGBT people nor can they expect from them assistance or support.<sup>31</sup>

This division within the existing gay community in Macedonia contributes to a high level of intolerance towards differences within the group itself (see *Table 3*).

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<sup>28</sup> *Identification of the LGBT Population in the Republic of Macedonia 2004-2005*. (2005). Opinion-polls report. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia and the Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

<sup>29</sup> *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*. (2005). An ongoing research. Equality for Gays And Lesbians and Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

<sup>30</sup> Open public places in the city (such as bus or railway stations, parks, bridges...), as a rule with dimmed lights, where in the evening hours gay men would meet anonymously in order to arrange for a sexual intercourse in another place and at another time, or, quite frequently, in order to have sex immediately on the very spot.

<sup>31</sup> *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*. (2005). An ongoing research. Equality for Gays And Lesbians and Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

*Table 3. Which of the following persons you would not like to have in your circle of LGBT friends?<sup>32</sup>*

| Category of people   | %  |
|--|----|
| People who offer sexual services for money and/or compensation | 62 |
| Effeminate (girlish) men                                       | 47 |
| Uneducated, uncivil  | 35 |
| People who frequently change their sexual partners             | 27 |
| People who frequent cruising <sup>33</sup> areas               | 25 |
| Virile (tomboyish) women                                       | 22 |
| Bisexuals  | 14 |
| People of different ethnicity                                  | 6  |
| Transsexuals and transvestites                                 | 4  |

And the last problem EGAL intends to deal with in the next three years is the situation with HIV/SIDA and STI, and their prevention.

One of the priorities set in the Millennium Goals by the United Nations Organisation<sup>34</sup> in 2000<sup>35</sup> is fighting HIV/AIDS. The official records show that Macedonia is still among the countries with the lowest level of clinically diagnosed cases of HIV/AIDS in the region and in Europe. So far 64 cases of HIV/AIDS have been registered (46 cases of AIDS and 18 cases of HIV positive people). Majority of the cases have been registered in the later stages of the HIV infection, when the patient has already developed AIDS. However, there is a well-founded doubt that this data do not reflect the actual situation, because the monitoring system for its distribution and the number of HIV/AIDS cases is not well developed, and the highly risky groups are not taken separately. So far there has been no anonymous random serum testing, as one of the ways to detect the actual expansibility of HIV infection in the country.<sup>36</sup>

Unfortunately, the insufficient information in global scale and regionally, lack of monitoring of the trends and indicators for the occurrence of HIV/AIDS, makes the LGBT people in Macedonia share the unfounded belief that HIV/AIDS is either absent or is present in insignificant proportions.

The information in the National Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia on HIV and AIDS shows that HIV is increasingly more present with heterosexual people, and is being reduced with homosexual population (see 5.3. *Strategic objective 3* of this document). As the result of such encouraging facts, but also due to a series of other factors (financial conditions, lack of education, lack of information, inadequate use of protection, etc) large portion of the LGBT population manifests a highly risky behaviour without the use of protection.

The improvement of sexual health of the LGBT people, not only by preventing HIV/AIDS, but also by preventing all other STIs, will remain an important segment of EGAL's operation.

<sup>32</sup> *Development and Improvement of LGBT Culture in Macedonia*. (2005). An ongoing research. Equality for Gays And Lesbians and Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation.

<sup>33</sup> Eng. cruising area, the same as the *terminuses* described above (see footnote 30).

<sup>34</sup> [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

<sup>36</sup> *Millennium Development Goals Report for the Republic of Macedonia*. (2005). The Government of RM. (<http://www.mfa.gov.mk/upload/dokumenti/undp-mk.pdf>)

## 4.2 Relevant actors and other interventions in RM

The last three years have seen significant changes in the civil sector in RM as to the establishment of civil associations advocating the rights and interests of LGBT people. Apart from EGAL, there are two other registered LGBT organisations:

- Centre for Civil and Human Rights (CCHR)
- Macedonian Association for Free Sexual Orientation (MASSO).

Following are the milestones in the LGBT activism in RM, which attracted the media attention to a great extent, undoubtedly confirming the existence of the LGBT people in Macedonia, and bringing to the daylight their needs and requests, thus kindling fiery public discussions:

- campaigning for promotion of visibility of sexual minorities *Face the Difference* (CCHR, August/September 2003)
- first international conference on the rights of the LGBT people entitled *Homosexuality in the Republic in Macedonia – Between the Prejudices and the Europeanization: Social Status of Homosexuals and Legislation on Homosexuality* (CCHR, 28 and 29 November 2003)
- gay info line for HIV/AIDS (HERA, 2003)
- the first LGBT film festival *Dzunica* (the Dzunica team, 8-10 October 2004)
- the appearance of the President of MASSO in the *Čumu* phone-in show on A1 television (MASSO, 19 April 2005)
- the establishment of the Specialised Outpatient Department for HIV/AIDS diagnostics and treatment as part of the Clinic for Infectious Diseases and Fibril Conditions in Skopje (HERA and EGAL, June 2005)
- first LGBT sports games (MASSO, 15-17 July 2005)

Of course, some of the reactions were positive, some were neutral, and others were homophobic, but the different sexual orientation is no longer taboo in Macedonia.

None of the organisations works on health education or education about sexual orientation, neither with LGBT people nor with the general public.

None of the organisations works on the improvement of psycho-social health of LGBT people, or of their close ones (relatives and friends).

None of the organisations works on the improvement of sexual health of the LGBT people (HERA, who works on the prevention against HIV/AIDS, is not an LGBT organisation, but its activities also cover the LGBT population).

Observing the obvious gaps in the current LGBT activism in Macedonia, EGAL was in the position to set its strategic directions.

## 5 EGAL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic directions of EGAL give the future plans of the organisation. What follows below are the strategic objectives, the results expected, activities and indicators for those issues the organisations intends to deal with in the period 2005 – 2008.

These correspond to the perceived needs of the target groups.

### 5.1 Strategic objective 1

#### *Fighting homophobia*

##### *Specific objectives*

Objective 1: Homophobia reduction in the Macedonian society

Objective 2: Internalised homophobia reduction among the LGBT people in RM and improvement of their psycho-social health

##### *Actual situation*

Having in mind the information given above about the situation in RM regarding homosexuality, it becomes evident that Macedonian society is to a great extent homophobic. All the research carried out so far, and the reports and experiences indicate that the negative perceptions of these phenomena are widespread, both among the general population and among specific groups of people, such as mental-health workers, the police and other state officials.

Having in mind the situation in the Macedonian society regarding the perceptions and the knowledge of sexual orientation, in the next three years EGAL will actively work on awareness raising about this phenomenon and about the LGBT people.

One set of activities aimed at accomplishment of this objective will be directed towards increasing the level of information of the general public regarding sexual orientation through various educational workshops and lectures, round tables and panel discussions, publication of information materials and scientific literature. Such efforts will be especially directed towards particular organised groups of people, such as non-governmental organisations dealing with human rights of marginalised groups, youth and student organisations, political parties, etc.

Parallel to this, it will be necessary to also make efforts to reduce the prejudices, misperceptions and the discrimination against LGBT by the staff in public and state services, such as the police, the army, prisons, education and health systems.

Considering the research information about the impact (positive or negative) families have with their reactions on the psycho-physical welfare of the LGBT people, it is necessary to offer adequate education and psycho-social assistance to the families and close ones to LGBT people. With the SOS line, counselling and information material dissemination for the families and the close ones to the LGBT people, EGAL intends to reduce the lack of knowledge and the irrational fear of these people from homosexuality as a phenomenon, and thus enable positive acceptance of LGBT people by their families.

Apart from the dearth of adequate and current information regarding sexual orientation and the homophobia of the heterosexual population, homophobic feelings are also evident with a significant portion of LGBT people. Because of this, in the next three years EGAL will intensively work on reduction of internalised homophobia among the



LGBT people in RM, as part of the efforts against homophobia in Macedonian society in general, and with the aim to improve their psycho-social health and welfare. Psycho-socials services (SOS line and counselling), educational workshops about sexual orientation, self-help groups (if needed), production of information brochures and professional literature for these people are some of the foreseen activities to achieve this objective.

Following on the current situation, these would be the expected results, activates planned and indicators of the changes.

### Result 1

The awareness of the general population in RM about sexual orientation and LGBT people has risen

#### Activities

- 1.1 To raise the visibility of LGBT topics and people through media campaigning, coverage in written and electronic media, organisation of cultural events and publication of literature with LGBT topics
- 1.2 To educate the general public about sexual orientation through educational workshops and lectures with various organised non-LGBT groups, round tables and panel discussions, publication of information material
- 1.3 To educate the staff of the public and state services (the police, the army, prisons, education and health centres) in order to reduce the prejudices about different sexual orientation and discrimination against LGBT people
- 1.4 To provide psycho-social assistance to the families and the close ones of the LGBT people

#### Indicators

- 30% of the population (the general public) in the RM by 2008 do not consider the different sexual orientation (homosexuality) a disease, or abnormal and immoral
- the portion of the population which thinks that the basic human and civil rights should be provided to the LGBT people has increased from 20-30% in 2005 to 40-50% in 2008
- low rate of attacks and abuse by the heterosexual population (although the visibility of the LGBT people has risen)
- low level of discrimination by the state and public services (although the visibility of the LGBT people has risen)
- by the middle of 2007 an SOS line and a counselling service have been opened

### Result 2

The internalised homophobia among the LGBT people in RM has been reduced

#### Activities

- 2.1 To educate the LGBT people about the various aspects of sexual orientation
- 2.2 To provide psycho-social assistance to the LGBT people (SOS, counselling, self-help groups)

## Indicators

- reduced number of LGBT people manifesting internalised homophobia (who consider their orientation a sickness, would like to change it, etc)
- increased number of LGBT people who openly share their sexual orientation with non-LGBT friends
- by the middle of 2007 an SOS line and a counselling service have been opened

## 5.2 Strategic objective 2

### LGBT culture promotion

#### *Specific objective*

Objective 1: Improvement of culture of living of the LGBT population in RM

#### *Actual situation*

The absence of LGBT culture (culture of living) is the result of low visibility of the LGBT community, the lack of preparedness by the LGBT people to become a part of a functional community, and total absence of LGBT places for socialisation, cultural elevation or work; places where LGBT people will feel as a group, and where they would feel safe – both from the outside environment and from the LGBT community itself – to be what they are.

Within the frameworks of the national institutions, especially the Ministry of Culture, nothing has been done with relation to LGBT culture promotion in RM. The only positive example were the recently organised LGBT sports games, when the Agency for Youth and Sports let one of its facilities be used for the purpose of this event.

One of the most significant LGBT cultural events in the past in RM was the *Dzunica* film festival organised in October 2004. 8 films were shown at this festival, and the event was accompanied by 1 artistic exhibition and 3 theme parties.

The event took place in the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Skopje and lasted for four days. The selection of films consisted of one documentary (*When Boys Fly*), three commercial films (*Treading Water*, *Big Eden*, *Wolves of Kromer*), three amateur films (*Pink Ferret*, *Boyfriends*, *Wave Babes*), and a serial of three parts (*Tipping the Velvet*). The films were of English, Czech, and American production.

The exhibition showed photographs with transvestite topics by the artist Istok Bratić from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The three parties, organised as thematic events, aimed at raising the spirits of the audience, and thus strengthening the feeling of belonging to the community. At the same occasion information brochures were disseminated on HIV/AIDS and STIs (in production of HERA and EGAL), and condoms were distributed.

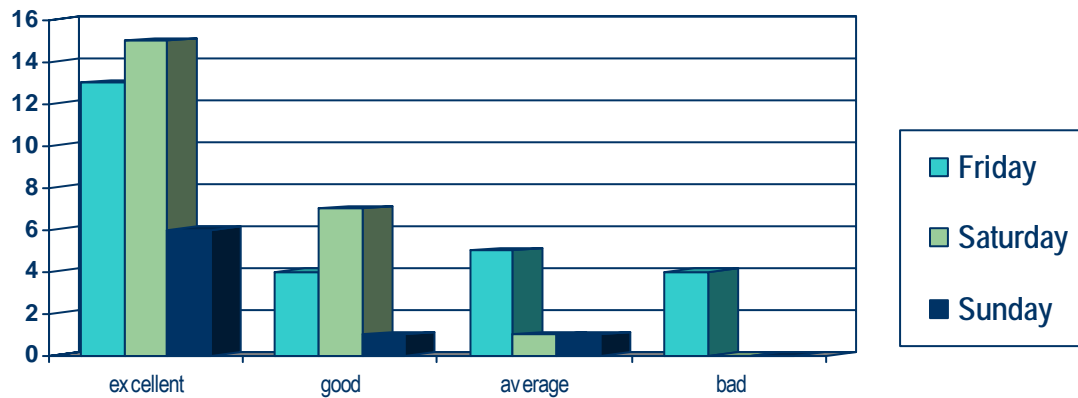
Since May 2005 the *Dzunica* team continued its works as part of EGAL.

The *Dzunica* film festival was organised with the idea and the dream of its continuation in the forthcoming years, to make it a tradition. The great turnout convinced us that we should keep on with the organisation of cultural manifestations. This is equally necessary for both the LGBT and non-LGBT people in Macedonia, and in this way the latter will more easily accept the different sexual orientation.

The audience gave positive evaluation of the first LGBT film festival, which can lead us to the conclusion that the target group will expect organisation of similar events also in the future.



Chart 2. General evaluation of the quality of the programme offered (the films shown) per days<sup>37</sup>



However, it soon became evident that these accidental and temporary events are far from satisfying the needs of the LGBT community. Hence the idea for the film festival to grow into a more-inclusive festival, which, apart from the film projections, will also stage exhibitions, book promotions, workshops, parties, etc. This will give rise to a week of intensive socialisation of the LGBT community, giving opportunities to share life experiences, exchange advice, raise the culture of living, strengthen the feeling of belonging.

Exactly through the organisation of cultural events in the next three years EGAL will have the task to improve the social life, communication and trusts among the LGBT people.

## Result 1

### Cultural manifestations are organised

#### Activities

- 1.1 To stage a festival
- 1.2 To publish books (fiction and cultural guide / newsletter)
- 1.3 To hold thematic events
- 1.4 To organise creative workshops (photography, sculpture, painting, etc)

#### Indicators

- 3 staged film festivals by the end of 2008
- the turnout increases by 5% each next festival
- a number of fiction books published by the end of 2008

<sup>37</sup> Sekulovska, I. (2004). *Report with Evaluation from the Dzunia Film Festival 2004*. Dzunia.

- 3 cultural guides / newsletters published
- 15 thematic events held by the end of 2008
- 50% of the audience participated in at least 25% of the events
- 9 workshops organised by the end of 2008
- 25% of the topics to work upon suggested by the participants themselves

### 5.3 Strategic objective 3

#### Sexual health improvement

##### *Specific objective*

Objective 1: Sexual health improvement of the LGBT people in RM

##### *Actual situation*

Most of the research carried out in RM, specially the ones by the civil associations, indicate to a highly risky behaviour of the young people in this country. The level of information and the knowledge about HIV/AIDS among the population is very low, especially among the intravenous drug users, people who provide sexual services for commercial purposes, gay men, prisoners, victims of trafficking, refugees and internal migrants. On top of this, there is still strong stigmatisation and medicalisation of HIV and STI in RM.<sup>38</sup>

Statistical data of 2003 show that the dominant way of HIV transmission is the heterosexual contact (see *Table 4*). However, some of the infected heterosexuals, especially men, were infected in a homosexual / bisexual contact.

*Table 4: Transmission of HIV, data from 2003*<sup>39</sup>

| Way of transmission    | HIV | AIDS | Total | %    |
|------------------------|-----|------|-------|------|
| Homosexual             | 2   | 6    | 8     | 13,8 |
| Heterosexual           | 13  | 26   | 39    | 67,2 |
| Intravenous drug users | 2   | 6    | 8     | 13,8 |
| Vertical <sup>40</sup> | 1   | 2    | 3     | 5,2  |
| Blood transfusion      | /   | /    | /     | /    |
| Haemophilia            | /   | /    | /     | /    |
| Other (unknown)        | /   | /    | /     | /    |
| TOTAL                  | 18  | 40   | 58    | 100  |

<sup>38</sup> Millennium Development Goals Report for the Republic of Macedonia. (2005). The Government of RM. (<http://www.mfa.gov.mk/upload/dokumenti/undp-mk.pdf>)

<sup>39</sup> Adapted from the *National Strategy of Macedonia for HIV/AIDS 2003-2006*. (2003). The Government of RM.

<sup>40</sup> "Vertical" transmission means from mother to a child.

But if we look into the gender structure of the infected and diseased in 2005 (see *Table 5*) we can conclude that the number of man is double the one of women. It is an established fact that MSM are one of the groups with high risk of HIV transmission. It would be justified to suppose that due to the stigmatisation of homosexuality in Macedonia, the number of HIV infected gay men is probably higher.

*Table 5: Sexual structure of the infected and diseased, data from 2003.*<sup>41</sup>

| HIV/AIDS | Men | Women | Total |
|----------|-----|-------|-------|
| HIV      | 11  | 7     | 18    |
| AIDS     | 33  | 13    | 46    |
| Total    | 44  | 20    | 64    |

Members of EGAL (at that time members of HERA) as part of the regional *Peer Research among MSM in South-Eastern Europe*, a project of PSI Romania, in 2003 conducted the very first qualitative research among MSM population in Macedonia. The results showed that this vulnerable group in Macedonia manifests highly risky sexual behaviour: They are highly promiscuous, and use protection against HIV/AIDS and STI in a very small number of cases.

This is also evident in other information available in EGAL: that 30% of the respondents had 5-12 partners during one year, and 21% percent even had 3-7 partners in a single night. A high level of risk is present in group sex (27% said they practiced group sex). Although 73% are aware that due to their behaviour they run the risk of getting HIV/AIDS and STIs, 58% of them never use condoms.

Apart from all the risks the LGBT people are exposed to with regard to sexual health, another problem that occurs is the administration of the ARV therapy intended for HIV infected people: the availability of the medicaments is very complex and difficult, and the number of drugs on the positive list<sup>42</sup> is insufficient.

On the other hand, the invisibility of this population and the social stigmatisation makes it difficult to prevent the sexual diseases among LGBT people.

Medical centres available in Macedonia which offer sexual health services do not gain the necessary trust by the LGBT people due to the fact that the medical staff is not enough discreet and reliable. This imposes the need to open health centres where the services will be provided by a trained staff to work with LGBT people, and who will have their trust.

Resulting from this situation in the next three years EGAL will implement the following activities.

### Result 1

#### Risky behaviour among the LGBT people with regard to HIV and STI has been reduced

<sup>41</sup> Adapted from the *National Strategy of Macedonia for HIV/AIDS 2003-2006*. (2003). The Government of RM.

<sup>42</sup> In the health insurance system in RM a “positive list” of drugs/medicaments includes those drugs/medicaments which are covered by the health insurance, for which purchase the ill person pays only a symbolic contribution.

### Activities

- 1.1 To improve the level of information among the LGBT population about HIV/AIDS and STI through publication of educational material and their distribution on places frequented by the LGBT people, educational classes, etc.
- 1.2 To improve the accessibility of the HIV/AIDS and STI prevention means and free of charge distribution of condoms and lubricants.

### Indicators

- a 10% increase by the end of 2008 among the LGBT population in Macedonia who use protection against HIV and STI
- lowered HIV/AIDS and STI infections among the LGBT people
- larger number of distributed condoms, lubricants and educational material on sexual health among the LGBT people
- increased number of places for distribution of prevention materials against HIV and STI
- 5 new fieldworkers trained for work with LGBT people

## Result 2

### Sexual health infrastructure and services available to LGBT people have improved

### Activities

- 2.1 To open centres for LGBT people where they can receive in a maximum discretion information and advice about HIV/AIDS and STI
- 2.2 To enhance the coordination and communication between the LGBT people and the medical staff of sexual health services
- 2.3 To open health centres for the needs of the LGBT people

### Indicators

- at least two counselling centres opened outside Skopje for HIV prevention
- organised 15 trainings of the medical staff on the needs of LGBT people in Macedonia, with a special focus on trust and discretion
- an increased number of HIV/AIDS testing among LGBT people
- an increased number of people who asked for STI-related services in the medical centres
- at least one centre opened with medical staff trained to work with LGBT people and to respond to their specific needs, as well as to gain their trusts

### Result 3

#### The quality of life of the HIV positive LGBT people in RM has been improved

##### Activities

- 3.1 To develop cooperation with health services (institutions) for HIV/AIDS and STIs
- 3.2 To educate about non-discrimination of HIV positive people among the social circles of the LGBT people
- 3.3 To lobby for availability of adequate ARV therapy

##### Indicators

- meetings with medical staff of the HIV and STI health services (institutions) at least once a month in the case an HIV positive LGBT person has been admitted
- reduced perception among the LGBT people that LGBT community rejects the HIV positive among them
- extended positive list with at least 2 ARV therapy drugs a year

#### 5.4 Strategic objective 4

##### Organisational strengthening and institutional development

###### *Specific objectives*

Objective 1: Capacity building of human resources in the organisation through internal exchange of knowledge and experiences

Objective 2: Capacity building in the organisation through implementation of cross-sector activities

Objective 3: Institutional development through networking with relevant national and international organisations.

###### *Actual situation*

Although the experiences of the EGAL members individually go back long ago, EGAL as an organisation is relatively young, especially if we take in consideration that the number of activists in May 2005 nearly doubled. On the other hand, the expansion of the field of operation of EGAL is evident, moving from predominantly health activities towards cultural, educational, and research activities. In order to achieve a better coherence of the group, in the future EGAL will have to dedicate itself to such activities which will necessitate simultaneous engagement of several activists from several sectors. On the other hand, having in mind the constantly increasing number of LGBT activists and organisations in the country and the region, EGAL will have to pay attention to its own positioning in the national, regional and international LGBT scene.

## Result 1

### Improved capacities of the human resources through specialisation and sub-specialisation

#### Activities

- 1.1 To hold internal workshops on sexual orientation
- 1.2 To hold internal artistic and creative workshops
- 1.3 To hold internal workshops on HIV/AIDS and STI, and also on how to operate an SOS line

#### Indicators

- 6 workshops on each of the topics implemented by the end of 2008

## Result 2

### Established information resource centre of the organisation

#### Activities

- 2.1 To publish books (scientific literature)
- 2.2 To produce promotion, information and education material (if possible, also a newsletter / magazine)
- 2.3 To set up a book and DVD library with works dealing with LGBT topics
- 2.4 To create a web site
- 2.5 To conduct research

#### Indicators

- by the end of 2008 3 scientific books have been translated and printed
- all the activities have been joined by adequate promo, info and edu material
- by the end of 2008 EGAL has its own collection of 100 titles of books and as many films
- the web page is operational since the middle of 2006, more than 10.000 hits by the end of 2008
- 6 research studies have been carried out by the end of 2008, 3 in cooperation and 3 independent

## Result 3

### Strengthened networking

#### Activities

- 3.1 To communicate and/or cooperate with the Governmental bodies (Ministries, Institutes, Agencies) and with the local self-government

- 3.2 To communicate and/or cooperate with MASSO, CCHR, and possibly new LGBT organisations in Macedonia, and with other civil associations which advocate the interests of marginalised groups, or deal with the strengthening of the civil society
- 3.3 To communicate and/or cooperate with ILGA, COC Nederland, SEE Q Network, PSI, Global Fund... and other organisations assessed suitable for cooperation at a given time

#### Indicators

- several copies of the entire promotion and information material submitted to all relevant national institutions and organisations
- national institutions and organisations become donors / patrons / participants in 4 activities by EGAL by the end of 2008
- participation in national and international seminars, conferences, etc. (of interest in a given time)
- implemented 6 small-scale cooperation projects, 3 of which are with international partners and/or donors

## 6 CONCLUSION

EGAL sets a large number of questions, dilemmas and areas of operation before itself. The answer to these is not an easy one. This mid-term strategy is a framework for the concretisation of the long-term tasks of EGAL in specific operations and programs in the next three years.

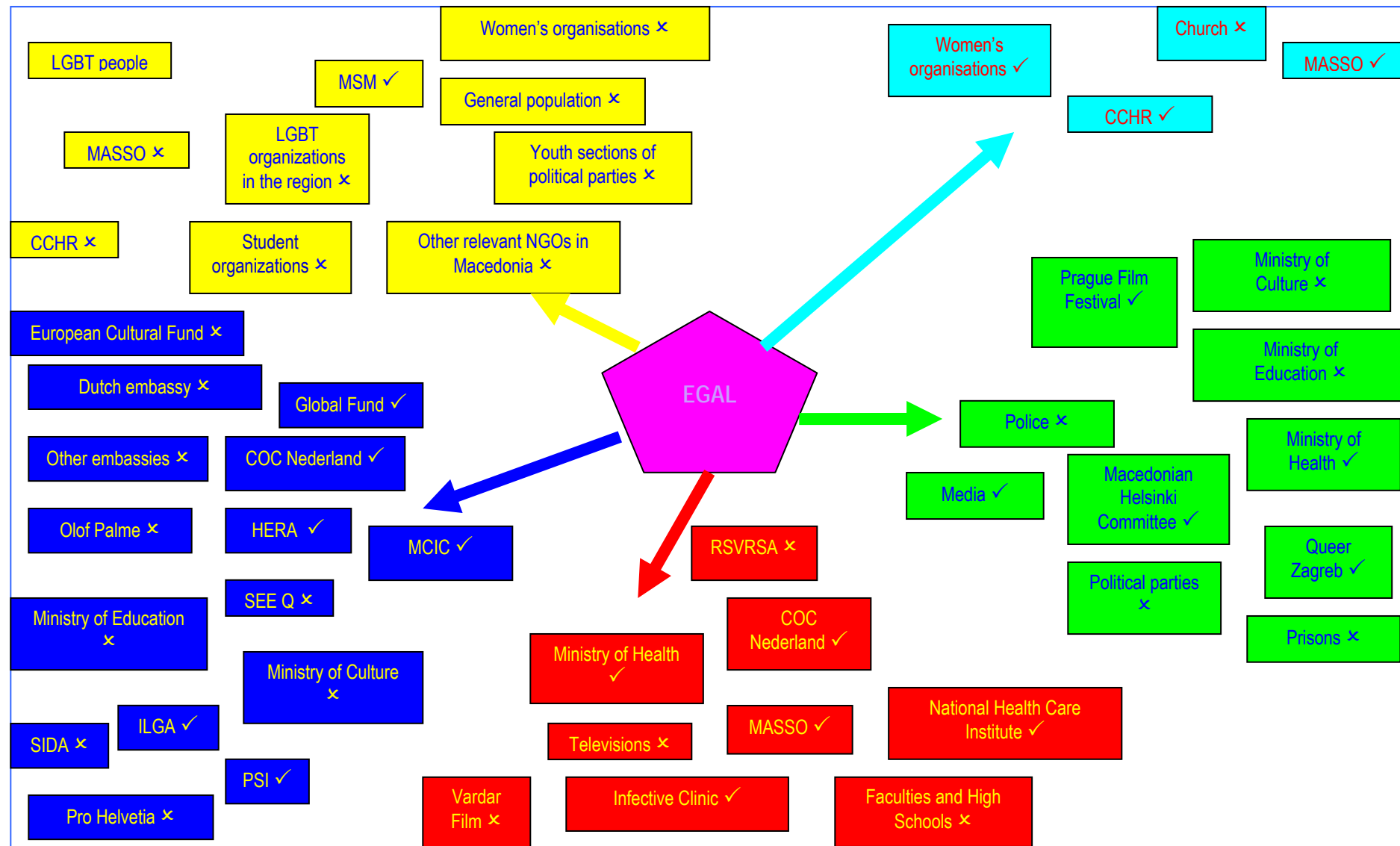
The first next step of EGAL would be to adopt this Strategic Document at the forthcoming Assembly of the organisation. Basically this is expected to be an act of formality since most of the members of EGAL have anyhow taken active part in the design of the strategy.

What represents a true challenge for EGAL in the next three years, and which should be accomplished as a side-effect of the implementation of all the activities, can be summarized in three points:

1. the organisation should become completely operational
  - the office should become functional
  - the sector division of work should become functional
2. the organisation should become financially self-sustainable
  - at least one project from each area of operation should be developed
  - donors should be identified to become strategic partners
  - an expected consolidated work programme should be elaborated together with the budget for the entire organisation
3. the organisation should become socially accepted and recognisable
  - several strategic partners should be identified (home and/or from abroad) for long-term joint / cooperation work
  - projects should be developed which will concretely reach the target group, with the maximum possible benefit for them
  - all the projects should be completed successfully and timely
  - a permanent system of monitoring and evaluation of its own work should be developed
  - its own promotion / marketing / corporation identity should be developed



Annex 1: Institutiogram



## LEGEND:

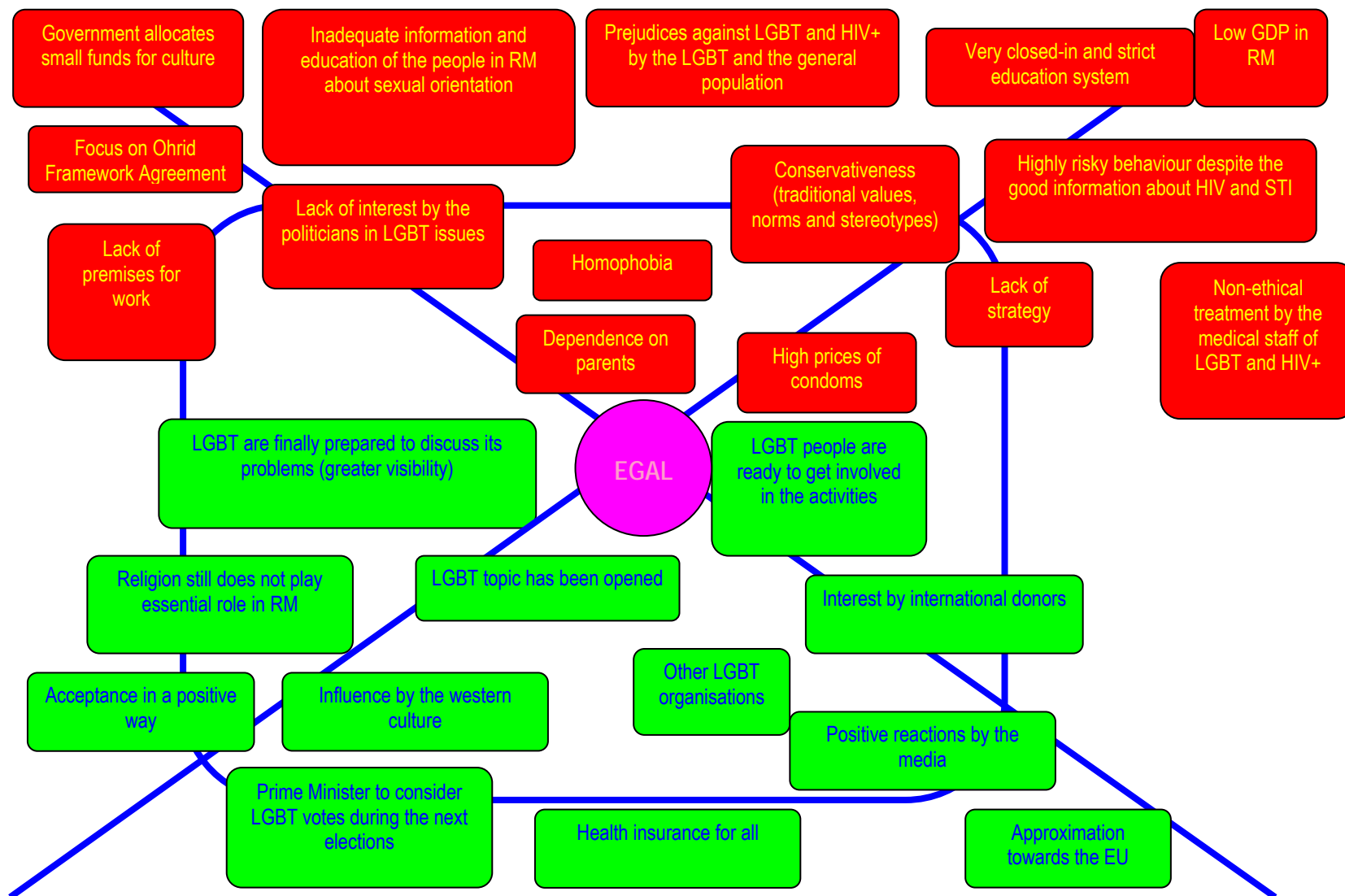
threats      beneficiaries      donors      cooperation      communication

The symbol ✓ stands for already established contacts, whereas × stands for intention to establish contacts in the future.

## Conclusions from the institutiogram

1. To expand the group of donors, and to strengthen the existing one
2. The operation so far has been too narrowed on a specific target group (LGBT/MSM), and only in Macedonia; to include more of the general population, non-LGBT organisations, international partners
3. The already exerted threats are not dangerous; on the other hand, the only inexperienced threat (the Church) is potentially most dangerous
4. To improve the communication and cooperation with LGBT organisations, both national and regional ones; to elaborate cooperation projects, to prompt experience exchange and positive example promotions
5. All potential partners in the field of culture are absent, cultural work so far has been too independent; in the future to work on cultural networking
6. To establish communication and to start cooperation with national institutions in the area of health, education and culture

Annex 2: Context scan



Annex 3: SWOT analysis

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☺ Good working atmosphere in the organisation</li> <li>☺ Decisions are made by the board</li> <li>☺ Trained staff in the topics EGAL deals with (health, education, culture)</li> <li>☺ Activities are relevant for the target group</li> <li>☺ Highly motivated activists</li> <li>☺ Organisational experience and learning</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☹ Strategy not elaborated and not approved</li> <li>☹ Insufficient staff in the organisation</li> <li>☹ Insufficient infrastructure (technical equipment)</li> <li>☹ Actual mission does not correspond to the current situation</li> <li>☹ Insufficient outputs (products for the LGBT and the general population)</li> <li>☹ Difficult access to information (internet, email, computer)</li> <li>☹ Administration procedures not set up</li> <li>☹ Not defined structure</li> <li>☹ Insufficiently defined financial procedures</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☺ Interest by international donors</li> <li>☺ Gay topic opened in the public / the media</li> <li>☺ Approximation towards the EU</li> <li>☺ LGBT community ready for transparency and activism</li> <li>☺ Decentralisation process (chances for cooperation with local authorities)</li> <li>☺ Adoption of western-like ways of political campaigning (focus on target groups as electorate)</li> <li>☺ Improvement of health infrastructure / services for sexual health (HIV, STI, etc.)</li> <li>☺ Health insurance for all</li> <li>☺ Influence by western culture</li> <li>☺ Positive reactions by the media</li> <li>☺ Relatively low level of religiosity</li> </ul> | <p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☹ Inadequate information and education about sexual orientation (homophobia and conservativeness)</li> <li>☹ Lack of cooperation with public institutions in the area of culture, education and health</li> <li>☹ Prejudices against LGBT and HIV positive by the LGBT and the general population, and by the medical staff</li> <li>☹ Lack of cooperation and trust among the LGBT people and absence of LGBT culture</li> <li>☹ Highly risky behaviour despite the good information</li> <li>☹ Communication with donors is not good enough</li> <li>☹ Strict and closed-in education system</li> <li>☹ Central government does not pay enough attention to culture</li> <li>☹ Lack of communication between the LGBT and public officials in the culture</li> <li>☹ Non-ethical treatment of the LGBT and HIV+ by the medical staff</li> <li>☹ Conservativeness</li> <li>☹ Lack of sincere interest by the politicians for LGBT issues</li> <li>☹ Communication and cooperation with other LGBT organisations is not good enough</li> <li>☹ Low economic power of the population (dependence on parents)</li> </ul> |

Annex 4: Strategic orientation matrix

| EGAL   | Interest by international donors | Gay topic opened in the public / the media | Approximation towards the EU | LGBT community ready for transparency and activism | Improvement of health infrastructure / services for sexual health (HIV, STI, etc.) | Decentralisation process (chances for cooperation with local authorities) | Homophobia Conservativeness | Inadequate information and education about sexual orientation | Lack of cooperation with public institutions in the area of culture, education and health | Prejudices against LGBT and HIV+ by the LGBT and the general population, and by the medical staff | Lack of cooperation and trust among the LGBT people and absence of LGBT culture | Highly risky behaviour despite the good information | Communication with donors is not good enough |
|--|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Organisational experience and learning                                   | ***                              |  |                              | *  | **   | *   | ***                         | **  | ***   | **  | ***   | ***   | ** 21  |
| Good working atmosphere in the organisation                              | *                                |  |                              | **   | *  |   |                             |   |   | **  |   |   | ** 8   |
| Decisions are made by the board  | ***                              |  |                              |  |  |   |                             |   |   | *   |   |   | * 5  |
| Trained staff in the topics EGAL deals with (health, education, culture) | ***                              |  |                              | *  | ***  | **  | ***                         | **  | **  | *   | ***   | ***   | ** 23  |
| Activities are relevant for the target group                             | ***                              | **   | *                            | **   | **   |   | ***                         | **  | ***   | ***   | ***   | ***   | * 26   |
| Highly motivated activists   | ***                              |  |                              | *  | *  | 38  | 59 **                       | *   | *   | **  | *   | *   | ** 14  |
| Difficult access to information (internet, email, computer)              | **                               |  |                              |  |  | 45 *  | 56                          | **  | **  | **  | *   | *   | *** 13                                       |
| Administration procedures not set up                                     | **                               |  | *                            | *  |  |   |                             | *   |   |   |   |   | *** 9  |
| Insufficient outputs (products for the LGBT and the general population)  | ***                              | **   | *                            | ***  | ***  | **  | ***                         | **  | ***   | **  | ***   | ***   | *** 30                                       |
| Insufficient infrastructure (technical equipment)                        | ***                              | *  |                              | **   | **   | *   |                             | **  |   | **  | *   | *   | ** 18  |
| Insufficient staff in the organisation                                   | ***                              | **   |                              | ***  | **   |   | ***                         | *   | **  | ***   | **  | **  | ** 23  |
| Insufficiently defined financial procedures                              | ***                              |  | *                            |  |  |   |                             | *   |   |   |   |   | ** 8   |
|  | 32                               | 7  | 4                            | 16   | 16   | 8   | 18                          | 16  | 16  | 20  | 17  |   | 28   |

Annex 5: Intervention logics

EGAL is a civil association which works for improvement of the quality of life of the LGBT population and overcoming homophobia in the Macedonian society, through improvement of the sexual and psycho-social health of LGBT people and their close ones, promotion of LGBT culture, and education of LGBT people and the wider public in the Republic of Macedonia.

FIGHTING HOMOPHOBIA

Homophobia reduction in the Macedonian society

Internalised homophobia reduction among the LGBT people in RM and improvement of their psycho-social health

1. The awareness of the general population in RM about sexual orientation and LGBT people has risen

| Activity  | Indicator   | Sources of verification  | Assumptions  |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1.1 To raise the visibility of LGBT topics and people through media campaigning, coverage in written and electronic media, organisation of cultural events and publication of literature with LGBT topics                           | * 30% of the population (the general public) in the RM by 2008 do not consider the different sexual orientation (homosexuality) a disease, or abnormal and immoral  | * all studies available in 2005 compared to those in 2008<br>* reports on educational workshops<br>* photographs and video records of the organised events         | * Macedonia is still heading the course to EU; this makes the state and public institutions be open for cooperation when it comes to LGBT issues                                   |
| 1.2 To educate the general public about sexual orientation through educational workshops and lectures with various organised non-LGBT groups, round tables and panel discussions, publication of information material               | * the portion of the population which thinks that the basic human and civil rights should be provided to the LGBT people has increased from 20-30% in 2005 to 40-50% in 2008<br>* low rate of attacks and abuse by the heterosexual population (although the visibility of the LGBT people has risen) | * distribution plan of the info, promo and edu material<br>* possible articles in the internal media of the state and public institutions (newsletters, web-pages) | * in the past few months homosexuality has turned from a complete taboo to a current issue openly discussed, which contributes to prejudice reduction among the general population |
| 1.3 To educate the staff of the public and state services (the police, the army, prisons, education and health centres) in order to reduce prejudices about the different sexual orientation and discrimination against LGBT people | * low level of discrimination by the state and public services (although the visibility of the LGBT people has risen)   |  |  |
| 1.4 To provide psycho-social assistance to the families and the close ones of the LGBT people   | * by the middle of 2007 an SOS line and a counselling service have been opened  | * reports on the work of the SOS line and the counselling services   | * EGAL activists adequately trained to deliver these services  |

| 2. The internalised homophobia among the LGBT people in RM has been reduced                     |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Activity  | Indicator  | Sources of verification  | Assumptions  |
| 2.1 To educate the LGBT people about the various aspects of sexual orientation                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* reduced number of LGBT people manifesting internalised homophobia (who consider their orientation a sickness, would like to change it, etc)</li> <li>* increased number of LGBT people who openly share their sexual orientation with non-LGBT friends</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* all studies available in 2005 compared to those in 2008</li> <li>* personal testimonials by LGBT people</li> <li>* reports on educational workshops</li> <li>* photographs and video records of the organised events</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* all social and political developments lead towards LGBT rights promotion; this contributes to an increasingly large number of LGBT people accept their own sexual orientation or express it openly</li> </ul> |
| 2.2 To provide psycho-social assistance to the LGBT people (SOS, counselling, self-help groups) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* by the middle of 2007 an SOS line and a counselling service have been opened</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* reports on the work of the SOS line and the counselling services</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* EGAL activists adequately trained to deliver these services</li> </ul>  |

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**LGBT CULTURE PROMOTION**

**Improvement of culture of living of the LGBT population in RM**

**1. Cultural manifestations are organised**

| Activity   | Indicator  | Sources of verification   | Assumptions   |
|--|--|---|---|
| 1.1 To stage a festival  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 3 staged film festivals by the end of 2008</li> <li>* the turnout increases by 5% each next festival</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* evaluation reports</li> <li>* annual reports</li> <li>* research into the culture impact on the LGBT population</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* positive changes in the society encourage the LGBT people to a great extent to become out and freely attend LGBT events</li> </ul>                           |
| 1.2 To publish books (fiction and cultural guide / newsletter)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* a number of fiction books published by the end of 2008</li> <li>* 3 cultural guides / newsletters published</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* distribution plan for the books and the cultural guide</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* copyrights for the films are given as courtesy</li> </ul>  |
| 1.3 To hold thematic events  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 15 thematic events held by the end of 2008</li> <li>* 50% of the audience participated in at least 25% of the events</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* video records from the thematic events</li> <li>* evaluation reports on promotion during the events</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* EGAL has its own premises or is in the position to provide venues to hold the events and workshops in</li> </ul>   |
| 1.4 To organise creative workshops (photography, sculpture, painting, etc) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 9 workshops organised by the end of 2008.</li> <li>* 25% of the topics to work upon suggested by the participants themselves</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* catalogue of artistic works (photographs, sculptures and paintings) created during the workshops</li> </ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* EGAL team is trained to facilitate the workshops</li> <li>* trust has been built in the community, LGBT people decide to get involved more easily</li> </ul> |



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**SEXUAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT**

**Sexual health improvement of the LGBT people in RM**

**1. Risky behaviour among the LGBT people with regard to HIV and STI has been reduced**

| Activity   | Indicator   | Sources of verification  | Assumptions  |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1.1 To improve the level of information among the LGBT population about HIV/AIDS and STI through publication of educational material and their distribution on places frequented by the LGBT people, educational classes, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* a 10% increase by the end of 2008 among the LGBT population in Macedonia who use protection against HIV and STI</li> <li>* lowered HIV/AIDS and STI infections among the LGBT people</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* comparison of behavioural research results among the LGBT of 2005 to the ones in 2008</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* the continuous work in the field of sexual health and overcoming the prejudices about HIV makes the LGBT people become more open for cooperation</li> </ul>   |
| 1.2 To improve the accessibility of the HIV/AIDS and STI prevention means and free of charge distribution of condoms and lubricants  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* larger number of distributed condoms, lubricants and educational material on sexual health among the LGBT people</li> <li>* increased number of places for distribution of prevention materials against HIV and STI</li> <li>* 5 new fieldworkers trained for work with LGBT people</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* distribution plan for condoms and lubricants among the LGBT people in 2008 compared to the one of 2005</li> <li>* newly identified sites frequented by the LGBT people</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* there is still interest by certain individuals to deal with LGBT sexual health</li> <li>* surpassing the obstacles by the tax and customs policies for lubricant import into the country</li> </ul> |

**2. Sexual health infrastructure and services available to LGBT people have improved**

| Activity   | Indicator   | Sources of verification   | Assumptions  |
|--|---|---|--|
| 2.1 To open centres for LGBT people where they can receive in a maximum discretion information and advice about HIV/AIDS and STI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* at least two counselling centres opened outside Skopje for HIV prevention</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* report on the work of the SOS line, counselling service and the fieldwork, information dissemination plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* unobstacled advertising of the SOS line and the counseling service</li> </ul> |

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>2.2 To enhance the coordination and communication between the LGBT people and the medical staff for sexual health services</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* organised 15 trainings of the medical staff on the needs of LGBT people in Macedonia, with a special focus on trust and discretion</li> <li>* an increased number of HIV/AIDS testing among LGBT people</li> <li>* an increased number of people who asked for STI-related services in the medical centres</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* reports on the work of the medical centres</li> <li>* internal media of the medical centres (newsletters, web-pages...)</li> <li>* behavioural research among the LGBT people in 2008</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* readiness and interest by the medical staff to work with the LGBT people</li> </ul>                                  |
| <p>2.3 To open health centres for the needs of the LGBT people</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* at least one centre opened with medical staff trained to work with LGBT people and to respond to their specific needs, as well as to gain their trusts</li> </ul>   |   |   |
| <p><b>3. The quality of life of the HIV positive LGBT people in RM has been improved</b></p>                                      |  |   |   |
| <p><b>Activity</b></p>  | <p><b>Indicator</b></p>  | <p><b>Sources of verification</b></p>   | <p><b>Assumptions</b></p>   |
| <p>3.1 To develop cooperation with health services (institutions) for HIV/AIDS and STI</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* meetings with medical staff of the HIV and STI health services (institutions) at least once a month in the case an HIV positive LGBT person has been admitted</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* reports on the meetings with the EGAL representatives</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* readiness and interest by the medical staff to work with the LGBT people</li> </ul>                                  |
| <p>3.2 To educate about non-discrimination of HIV positive people among the social circles of the LGBT people</p>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* reduced perception among the LGBT people that LGBT community rejects the HIV positive among them</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* compared research results between 2005 and 2008</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* a research has been carried out in 2008 into the discrimination of HIV positive people by the LGBT people</li> </ul> |
| <p>3.3 To lobby for availability of adequate ARV therapy</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* extended positive list with at least 2 ARV therapy drugs a year</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* the positive list</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Health Insurance Fund open for cooperation with NGOs</li> </ul>  |

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**ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Capacity building of human resources in the organisation through internal exchange of knowledge and experiences

Capacity building in the organisation through implementation of cross-sector activities

Institutional development through networking with relevant national and international organisations

**1. Improved capacities of the human resources through specialisation and sub-specialisation**

| Activity   | Indicator  | Sources of verification                   | Assumptions                                   |
|--|--|---|---|
| 1.1 To hold internal workshops on sexual orientation                                       | * 6 workshops on each of the topics implemented by the end of 2008 | * workshop organisation plan              | * current activists are still members of EGAL |
| 1.2 To hold internal artistic and creative workshops                                       |  | * reports on the workshops                |   |
| 1.3 To hold internal workshops on HIV/AIDS and STI, and also on how to operate an SOS line |  | * self-assessment at the end of each year |   |

**2. Established information resource centre of the organisation**

| Activity   | Indicator  | Sources of verification                              | Assumptions  |
|--|--|--|--|
| 2.1 To publish books (scientific literature)   | * by the end of 2008 3 scientific books have been translated and printed       | * book distribution plan                             | * copyright given as a courtesy (for translation)  |
| 2.2 To produce promotion, information and education material (if possible, also a newsletter / magazine) | * all the activities have been joined by adequate promo, info and edu material | * distribution plan for info, promo and edu material | * there is sufficient number of events / occasions when the materials can be distributed |

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| 2.3 To set up a book and DVD library with works dealing with LGBT topics   | * by the end of 2008 EGAL has its own collection of 100 titles of books and as many films  | * book catalogue  | * EGAL has the premises where to place the library fund   |
| 2.4 To create a web site   | * the web page is operational since the middle of 2006, more than 10.000 hits by the end of 2008   |   |   |
| 2.5 To conduct research  | * 6 research studies have been carried out by the end of 2008, 3 in operation and 3 independent  | * research concept / elaborate<br>* reports / analysis from the research  | * there are current issues to research into<br>* partners, too, show interest for cooperation   |
| <b>3. Strengthened networking</b>  |  |   |   |
| <b>Activity</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Sources of verification</b>  | <b>Assumptions</b>  |
| 3.1 To communicate and/or cooperate with the Governmental bodies (Ministries, Institutes, Agencies) and with the local self-government   | * several copies of the entire promotion and information material submitted to all relevant national institutions and organisations<br>* national institutions and organisations become donors / patrons / participants in 4 activities by EGAL by the end of 2008 | * possible articles in the media of the governmental institutions and the local self-government (web pages, newsletters...) | * RM keeps its course to EU, the result of which the governmental bodies must be open for LGBT issues and responsible before the public |
| 3.2 To communicate and/or cooperate with MASSO, CCHR, and possibly new LGBT organisations in Macedonia, and with other civil associations which advocate the interests of marginalised groups, or deal with the strengthening of the civil society | * participation in national and international seminars, conferences, etc. (of interest at a given time)  | * reports, photographs and video records from all the events<br>* EGAL's input in such events (public address)              | * partners, too, show interest for cooperation  |
| 3.3 To communication and/or cooperate with ILGA, COC Nederland, SEE Q Network, PSI, Global Fund... and other organisations assessed suitable for cooperation at a given time   | * implemented 6 small-scale cooperation projects, 3 of which are with international partners and/or donors   | * project document<br>* reports on the projects completed   |   |

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