2020

Integrated biological-behavioral surveillance survey among female sex workers, people who inject drugs and men who have sex with men in the Republic of Moldova, 2020

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IBBS	Integrated Biological and Behavioral Surveillance
CI	Confidence Interval
CT	Chlamydia trachomatis
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
GAM	Global AIDS Monitoring
HBV	Hepatitis B virus
HCV	Hepatitis C virus
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
PWID	People who inject drugs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSP	Needle and syringe exchange programs
OST	Opiate Substitution Therapy
PLWHIV	People living with HIV
RDS	Respondent Driven Sampling
RDSA	Respondent Driven Sampling Analyst
SS-PSE	Successive sampling population size estimation
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

This report presents the results of the Integrated Biological and Behavioral Surveillance (IBBS) Surveys in the Republic of Moldova designed to assess the prevalence of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis C (HCV), hepatitis B (HBV) and syphilis, and respective behaviors and population size estimations (PSE) among people who inject drugs (PWID), men who have sex with men (MSM) and female sex workers (FSW). The results from these surveys represent an important contribution to the knowledge of the HIV, HCV, HBV and syphilis epidemics among key populations in the Republic of Moldova. These surveys used respondent driven sampling (RDS) to recruit PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita, and MSM and FSW in Chisinau and Balti. In total, 2,671 respondents (1377 PWID, 640 FSW and, 654 MSM) participated. After obtaining informed consent for the interview and testing, participants undergo a behavioral interview, were tested for HIV, HCV, HBV and syphilis and were given the opportunity to receive free counselling and test results. Participants were also referred to health facilities for care and treatment depending on their needs. In addition, population size estimation (PSE) techniques, including unique object and service multipliers and SS-PSE, were used to estimate the population sizes of PWID, MSM and FSW.

Findings

Female Sex Workers

The aggregated weighted HIV prevalence among FSW for the two cities was 2.7%, however all were unaware of their HIV status at the time of testing. Antibodies to HCV was 5.1% in Chisinau and 17.2% in Balti and antibodies to HBV was 2.9% in Chisinau and 4.7% in Balti. Syphilis infection was 13.7% in Balti and 16% in Chisinau. FSW in both cities reported having multiple partners and inconsistent condom use. Not all FSW knew where to get condoms when needed.

Up to one-fifth of FSW reported having signs and symptoms of a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the last 12 months; in Chisinau where every seventh, and in the Balti every twentieth, FSW reported being diagnosed with an STI in the last 12 months. Not all FSW knew where to access confidential HIV testing.

People Who Inject Drugs

HIV prevalence among PWID ranged between 8.1% and 23.5%; Weighted HIV prevalence in the four survey sites combined was 11.4%. Antibodies to HCV ranged from 42% to 63%, antibodies to HBV from 1.2% to 10.8% and Syphilis prevalence ranged from 3.5% to 5.2%. All PWID reported using non-injection drugs ever and within the last 12 months. The drug most often used by PWID within the past six months in three cities (Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita) was Cannabis and its derivatives, in Chisinau was new psychoactive substances (NPS) in powder, crystal or tablet form, however, it is most often injected. In Balti, the highest percentage of PWID injected NPS in the past one month and methamphetamines in the past one to six months. In Tiraspol, the drug most often injected in the previous six months was poppy (shirca), in Ribnita was methamphetamine. Low percentages of PWID reported sharing needles/syringes and/or being injected with needles/ syringes used by someone in the last month. However, from 21% in Chisinau to 57% in Ribnita exchanged injection equipment. Three-quarters or more PWID reported having a steady sex partner, one-third or more reported having non-cohabiting, non-marital sex partners (indicating that most

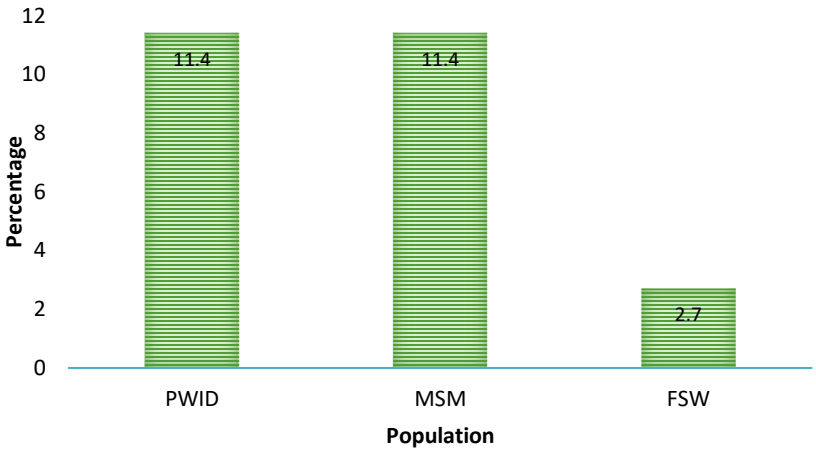

Figure 1. HIV prevalence among all populations, Republic of Moldova,

PWID have multiple partners) and between 3% in Bălți and 6% in PWID in Rîbnița reported having commercial sex partners in the last 6 months. PWID reported inconsistent condom use with regular and non-regular partners. Although most PWID reported accessibility to HIV testing services, between 25% and 62% had an HIV test and received their results in the past year or knew their HIV positive status.

Men Who Have Sex with Men

HIV prevalence among MSM was 8,4% in Balti and 11,6% in Chisinau. The weighted HIV prevalence among MSM in the two survey sites combined was 11.4%. HCV was 4.3% in Chisinau and 14,6% in Balti, HBV was 3,1% in Chisinau and 4,1% in Balti and syphilis was 15,3% in Balti and 16,6% in Chisinau. Among all respondents, 40,9% of MSM reported their sexual orientation as bisexual and 55,5% reported it as Homosexual or Gay. Roughly two thirds of MSM in all cities reported having sexual preferences for males and between 50% in Chisinau and 61% in Balti reported using a condom during their most recent sexual intercourse with a man or woman. Most MSM reported that they can get a condom when they need one at pharmacies or through NGO outreach. Between 33% in Balti and 48% in Chisinau reported having an HIV test and receiving their test results in the previous year or knowing their HIV positive status. Many MSM reported frequent consumption of alcohol, among which the majority in Chisinau reported consuming alcohol daily or almost daily. Many MSM reported ever using non-injection drugs, and 9% in Balti reported injecting drugs in the last 12 months, all of which reported using a sterile needle/syringe at last injection.

Recommendations

1. Information, education, and health communication interventions should focus on improving comprehensive knowledge about HIV transmission and prevention across all key populations.

2. Efforts should be made to maintain and/or increase access to outreach services providing harm reduction for all key populations.
3. Peer educator-based interventions should be considered to reach a larger proportion and potentially more hidden subpopulations, and behavioral interventions should be developed to promote correct and consistent condom use across all key populations.
4. Efforts should be made to increase coverage and frequency of HIV testing together with enrolment in care across all key populations.
5. Scale up non-clinical and clinical routine HIV and STI testing services for all key populations.
6. Integrate mental health services, to include substance abuse counseling and treatment, with HIV prevention programs targeting key populations.
7. Educate health care and other service providers on the specific needs of the key populations and provide sensitivity training to health care and other service providers to ensure a welcoming and supportive environment for all key populations.
8. Scale up HIV/AIDS education services, which engage both key populations and their partners.
9. Form advocacy groups to increase awareness and to create environments that support key populations and reduce stigma and discrimination.
10. Talk more with government and policy makers to ensure protection of the human rights of key populations.
11. Advocate for an enabling political environment, integration with public health policy, the presence of supportive laws, and opposition to violence to reinforce the effectiveness of HIV prevention, especially for key population who may currently find it difficult to access service, including regions on the left bank of Nistru.
12. Include key populations in the planning and implementation of all HIV prevention interventions.

13. Target clients and high-risk partners with prevention programs, especially those who refuse to use condoms and have greater potential to spread HIV and STI to the general population. Provide condom negotiation skills training to FSW and MSM.
14. Continue using future rounds of IBBS to monitor the progress achieved by targeted interventions for the prevention of HIV, HCV, HBV and syphilis, and provision of care and treatment for the key populations.
15. Conduct additional analysis to disaggregate data by adolescents (15 to 19 years) and young people (20 to 24 years) for all populations to better target these especially vulnerable subpopulations with appropriate interventions.

BACKGROUND

HIV Epidemic in Republic of Moldova

In 2019, approximately 9300 adults (≥15 years) were living with HIV in Republic of Moldova (1). While HIV prevalence is low (0.3%) in the general population, prevalence has been found to be higher among the key populations at higher risk of HIV, including people who inject drugs (PWID), female sex workers (FSW), men who have sex with men (MSM) and prisoners. In the HIV Integrated Biological and Behavioral Surveillance (IBBS) surveys conducted in 2016, HIV prevalence among PWID ranged from 13.9% to 29.1%, for FSW ranged from 3.9% to 22.3%, for MSM ranged from 4.1% to 9% and for prisoners was 3.8%. Key populations at higher risk of HIV are often difficult to sample due to the high levels of stigma and discrimination directed towards them because of their risk behaviors and/or criminalized activities. Another round of IBSS was conducted among PWID, FSW and MSM in 2019-2020. These surveys used respondent driven sampling (RDS) to recruit these populations as an effective method for recruiting hidden population. The report presents the findings from the 2019-2020 IBSS. The objectives of these surveys were to assess HIV prevalence, knowledge and testing, the prevalence of other infections, drug use and sexual risk behaviors, and program coverage. In addition, population size estimations (PSE) using a variety of methods are presented for FSW, MSM, PWID and the Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) indicators are presented for all populations in Appendix A.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the IBBS surveys were to measure HIV sero-prevalence and associated sexual and injecting risk behaviors among FSW, MSM, PWID in the Republic of Moldova. In addition, data from the IBBS surveys were used to estimate the sizes of FSW, MSM, and PWID as well as:

- Program coverage, some indicators of stigma, discrimination and violence, HIV; knowledge and testing, and STI signs and symptoms in all populations;
- Prevalence of Hepatitis C virus (HCV), Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and syphilis among FSW, MSM, and PWID;

METHODS

Eligibility, sample sizes and survey locations

Table 1 displays the populations, eligibility criteria, survey cities and sample sizes used for the 2020 IBBS. In additional to the eligibility criteria described below, all populations included being 16 years or older. The total sample size of PWID was 1377, for FSW was 640 and for MSM was 654. All populations were sampled using RDS. Further description of the sampling methods and sample size calculations are provided below.

Table 1. Eligibility criteria for populations, 2020

	Populations		
	PWID	FSW	MSM
Criteria	Male/female; injected drugs intravenously in the past 12 months; Reside, work, and/or socialize in the survey area for ≥ 12 months	Biological female; exchanged vaginal/anal sex for money/goods (travels, etc.) or drugs in the last 12 months prior to the study	Biological male; Anal sex with a male in the past 12 months; Reside, work, and/or socialize in the survey area for ≥ 6 months
Survey locations and sample sizes	Chisinau: 365	Chisinau: 323	Chisinau: 363
	Balti: 357	Balti: 317	Balti: 291
	Tiraspol: 333		
	Ribnita: 322		

Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS)

RDS, a variant of chain referral sampling and designed to reach "hidden" populations was used to sample PWID, FSW and MSM[1]. RDS recruitment starts with a set number of purposefully selected members of the study population referred to as "seeds" (5 seeds starts for each group/location, in some sites was added a seed during study implementation due one initial seed didn't work). Emphasis is placed on selecting seeds with large social networks and who know people from diverse backgrounds. After enrolling and completing the survey process, each seed is given a specified number (up to three) of uniquely coded coupons, with which to recruit their peers depending on which population they were (i.e., eligible PWID, FSW, and MSM). Recruited peers who consented to enroll and completed the survey steps make up the first wave of participants and are also given uniquely coded coupons with which to recruit their peers. The use of this recruitment strategy produces successive waves of recruitment, ideally long recruitment chains of respondents, and continues until the desired sample size is reached. Analysis of RDS data relies on each participant providing their social network size and active monitoring of who recruited whom using the information from the uniquely coded coupons. Use of the unique coupon codes eliminates the need to collect personal identifying information, such as names and addresses, maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of survey respondents. When conducted and analyzed properly, RDS can eliminate biases commonly associated with other chain referral sampling methods and can yield findings representative of the network from which the sample was taken[2].

[1] Heckathorn D. 1997. Respondent driven sampling: a new approach to the study of hidden populations. Social Problems. 44(2):174-99.
[2]Gile KJ, Handcock MS. Respondent-Driven Sampling: An Assessment of Current Methodology. *Sociological Methods*, 2010. 40, 1: 285-327.

TESTING PROCEDURES

HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis C and B testing

Capillary blood was collected from each participant to test for HIV, HCV, HBV, and Syphilis infections. They have used blood rapid diagnostic tests based on capillary blood samples, for the qualitative determination of antibodies to HIV, HBV, HCV, and Treponema pallidum (TP) infections. The testing procedure was performed in places designed for this purpose, according to the protocol of testing and counseling by trained medical and non-medical workers for the use of rapid blood diagnostic tests. Respondents received the test results along with posttest counseling, within 15 minutes of providing blood. The test used for HIV and Syphilis screening was a combined test - HIV and syphilis DUO test. Tests for HCV and HBV were conducted separately using HCV and HBsAg tests. All rapid diagnostic tests were based on the immunochromatographic principle, and capillary blood samples were used for this.

The HIV&Syphilis testing used Immunochromato-graphic assay was used for detection of antibodies to all isotypes (IgG, IgM, IgA) specific to HIV-1/2 and/or TP simultaneously in human serum, plasma, or whole blood. Additionally, blood capillary blood samples were tested for HCV used Immunochromato-graphic assay for HCV antibodies detection of antibodies to HCV, in human serum or plasma whole blood, for HBV infection was used the with Immunoassay for HBsAg test which detect the ion of HBV Surface Antigen in whole blood and for Syphilis detection was used Immunochromato-graphic assay for detection of antibodies for isotypes (IgG, IgM, IgA) specific to HIV-1/2 and/or TP simultaneously in whole blood HIV&Syphilis DUO test mentioned above.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

Data were collected directly into an electronic questionnaire by interviewers and then merged, cleaned and coded. Site specific population estimates and univariate analyses for PWID, MSM and FSW were conducted using the successive sampling estimator in RDS Analyst

(www.hpmrg.org), a specialized software for network data. All aggregated analysis of PWID, MSM and FSW are weighted by network size and the respective key population size of the respective survey city.

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

Data for all populations are displayed in either tables or figures (bar and pie charts) for each city and in aggregate. When possible, the category size (n), the adjusted estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CI) are provided. Statistically significant differences between or within the samples can be assessed by noting whether the confidence intervals overlap. Although the estimates presented here for PWID, MSM and FSW may be considered representative of the network of the population from which respondents were recruited, the small number of values for certain variables may limit the ability to derive accurate estimates.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As per the protocol, all respondents were informed that survey participation was confidential and voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time during the survey process. Following careful explanation of the survey, staff obtained consent from each eligible respondent. During consent, respondents were provided the name and telephone number of the local survey coordinator should they have any questions about the survey or if they believed they had been injured or mistreated as the result of their involvement in the survey. Interviews, pre and post-test counselling, provision of test results and biological testing were conducted in private and confidential settings to maintain privacy and confidentiality. All survey data, including biological and behavioral information, were kept in a confidential manner. No names, addresses or other personal identifiers were collected from participants. The protocol and questionnaire were submitted for ethical review to and approved by an Ethical National Committee of the Republic of Moldova.

STUDY FINDINGS

Section I. Female sex workers (FSW)

The maximum number of waves reached in the recruitment chains of Chisinau was 12 (Figure 1.1) and in Balti was 9 (Figure 1.2). The maximum number of waves reached in the recruitment chains in Chisinau was 11, in Balti was 12. Both samples used five seeds to initiate recruitment. In Chisinau a seed did not work and another seed were added during data collection. In Chisinau 323 FSW were sampled and in Balti 317 were sampled.

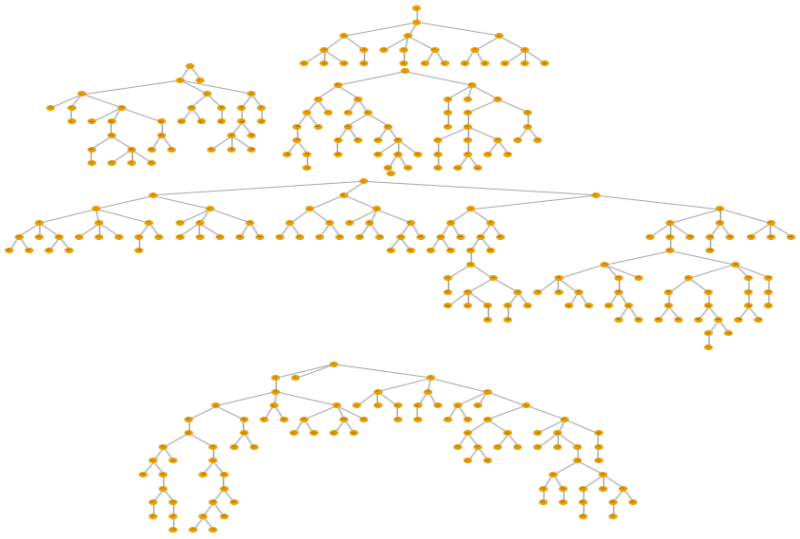

Figure 1.1. Recruitment graph of the FSW sample (n=323), with five recruitment chains, Chisinau, 2020.

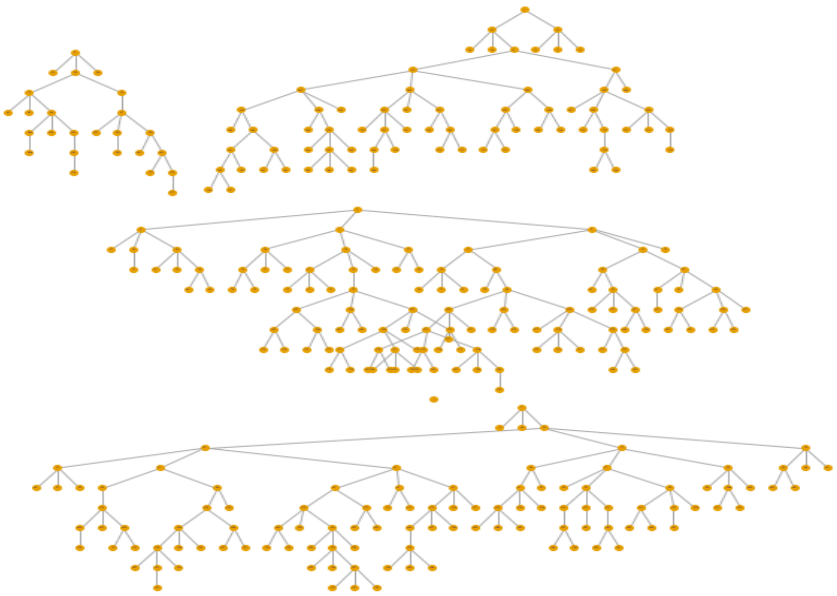

Figure 1.2. Recruitment graph of the FSW sample (n=317), with five recruitment chains, Balti, 2020.

Sociodemographic characteristics among FSW

The majority of FSW are above the age of 25 years with mean ages ranging from 26.8 in Chisinau to 32.6 in Balti; few are 45 years or older (Figure 1.3; Table 1.1).

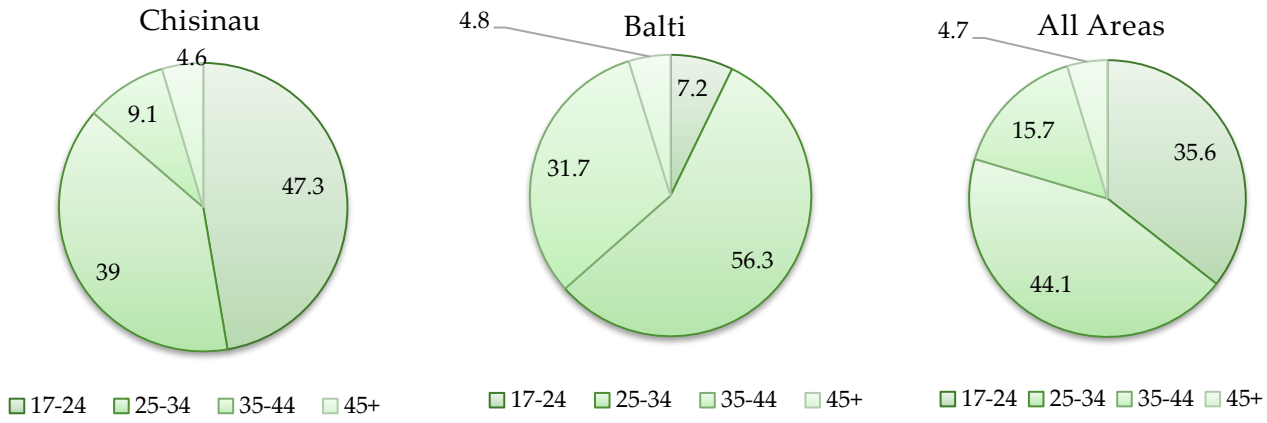

Figure 1.3. Age groups of FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

Most FSW are divorced, widowed, and living with partner and in Chisinau have secondary/specialized education and in Balti have incomplete secondary education. Just over one quarter of FSW in Balti and 42% of FSW in Chisinau earn an income aside from selling sex, 51% in Balti have a permanent job. Sixty-one percent of FSW from Balti report a monthly income of about 3001-6000 MDL, and 72% from Chisinau report an income of > 6001 MDL for sex work.

Table 1.1 Sociodemographic characteristics among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
AGE						
17-24	**150**	**47.3 (40.2-54.4)**	20	7.2 (3.5-10.8)	170	35.6
25-34	134	39 (32.9-45.2)	**178**	**56.3 (50-62.7)**	**312**	**44.1**
35-44	27	9.1 (5.7-12.5)	102	31.7 (26-37.4)	129	15.7
45+	12	4.6 (1.1-8.2)	17	4.8 (2-7.6)	29	4.7
AGE						
<24	150	47.3 (40.2-54.4)	20	7.1 (3.4-10.9)	170	35.6
25+	**173**	**52.7 (45.6-59.8)**	**297**	**92.9 (89.1-96.6)**	**470**	**64.4**
AGE; MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
	26,8/ 25/±7,0		32,6/31/±6,7		28,5/27/±7,4	
RELATIONSHIP STATUS						
MARRIED LIVE WITH PARTNER	7	1.9 (0.4-3.3)	9	1.9 (0.4-3.3)	16	1.9
CONCUBINAGE LIVE WITH PARTNER	41	12.3 (8.6-16)	28	10.5 (6.8-14.2)	69	11.8
SINGLE, LIVE WITH PARTNER	11	3.7 (1.5-6)	6	2.1 (0.1-4)	17	3.2
DIVORCED, WIDOWED, LIVE WITH PARTNER	**257**	**80.9 (76.5-85.2)**	**268**	**84.6 (80.2-89)**	**525**	**82**
MARRIED, CONCUBINAGE, SINGLE, DIVORCED, WIDOWED LIVE W/OUT PARTNER	5	1.2 (0.2-2.3)	4	1 (0.1-1.9)	9	1.2
EDUCATION						
PRIMARY EDUCATION (≤4 CLASSES)	1	0.6 (0.4-0.8)	2	1.6 (0-3.9)	3	0.9
5-9 CLASSES	150	45 (38.3-51.8)	**162**	**49 (42.8-55.2)**	**312**	**46.2**
SECONDARY/SPECIALIZED	**145**	**45.1 (38.6-51.6)**	144	46.2 (40.1-52.3)	289	45.5
UNFINISHED HIGHER	25	8.6 (4.6-12.5)	4	1.2 (0-2.4)	29	6.4
HIGHER EDUCATION	2	0.7 (0-1.6)	5	2 (0.2-3.8)	7	1
EARN INCOME ASIDE FROM SELLING SEX						
	136	42 (36.1-47.9)	83	27.4 (21.9-32.9)	219	37.8
OTHER MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME						
PERMANENT WORK	16	12.3 (7.3-17.2)	40	50.9 (37.2-64.8)	56	20.4
SEASONAL WORK/LOCAL, ABROAD, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS	36	23.9 (16.2-31.5)	21	23.1 (12.5-33.6)	57	23.7

PENSIONER/DISABLED/HOUSEWIFE/ PARENTAL LEAVE	11	7.3 (3.5-11.1)	13	18.5 (9.5-27.6)	24	9.7
STUDENT	25	21.8 (12.5-31.2)	0	--	25	17.2
UNEMPLOYED	5	3.3 (0.5-6.1)	4	2.6 (0.6-5.6)	9	3.1
OTHER	44	31.5 (22.2-40.6)	4	4.9 (-0.1-10)	48	25.9
AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME IN PAST MONTH (IN MDL)						
≤ 660	0	--	0	--	0	--
661-1000	1	0.4 (-0.4-1.2)	3	1.2 (0.3-2.7)	4	0.6
1001-3000	8	2.9 (0.9-4.9)	35	10.8 (6.9-14.8)	43	5.2
3001-6000	69	24.5 (18.9-30.1)	**186**	**61.4 (54.9-67.9)**	255	35.1
≥6001	**245**	**72.2 (66.6-77.8)**	85	26.6 (20.1-33.1)	**330**	**59.1**
NO INCOME	0	--	0	--	0	--

Around half of FSW in both cities (47% in Balti, 57% in Chisinau) find clients on the Internet and just over one third in Chisinau find clients on the street (Figure 1.4).

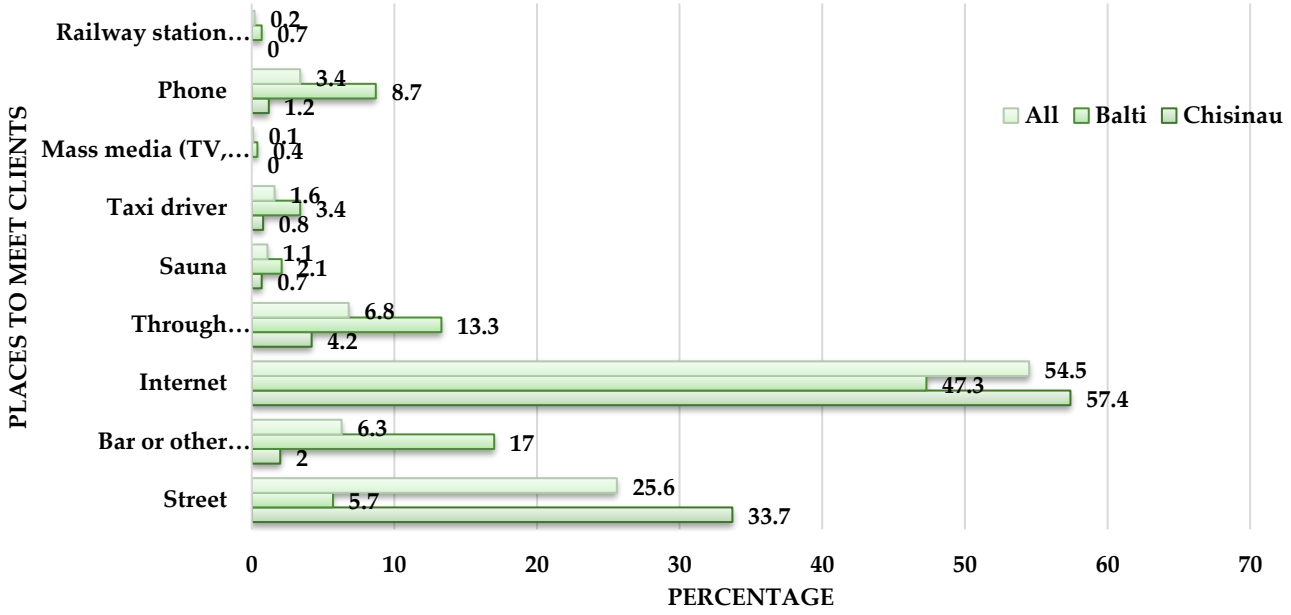

Figure 1.4. The most common places to meet clients among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

Nineteen percent of FSW in Balti and 23% in Chisinau report traveling outside the Republic of Moldova to earn income in the past 12 months (Figure 1.5).

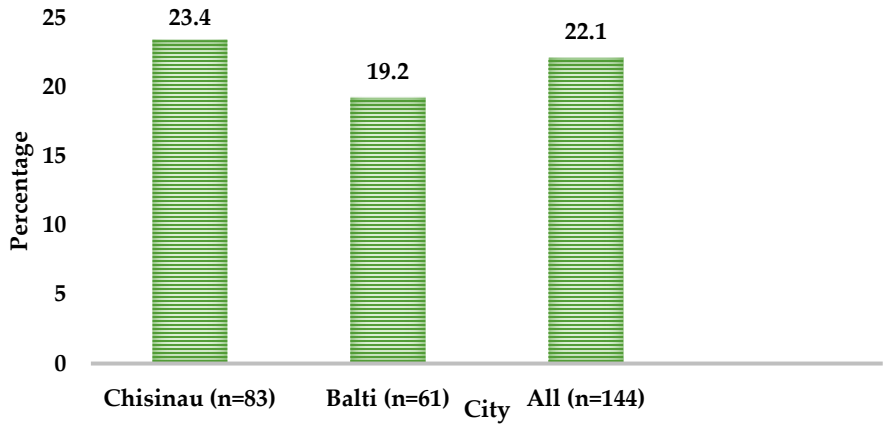

Figure 1.5. Migration characteristics among sex workers, Republic of Moldova, 2020

Non-injection drug use among FSW

A higher percentage of FSW in Balti, compared to Chisinau, ever used non-injection drugs (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Drug use among FSW in Chisinau, and Balti, Republic of Moldova

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
NON-INJECTION DRUG USE						
	83	24.5 (19-30)	125	39.4 (33.3-45.5)	208	28.8
DURATION USE; MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
	1.4/1/±1.4		3.5/2/±4.2		2.2/1/±3.1	

Injection drug use among FSW

No FSW from Chisinau injected drugs in the past 12 months. In Balti, 16.5% reported injecting drugs in the past 12 months, of which almost 52% used syringes previously used by someone else (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. Injection drug use among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
INJECTION DRUG USE						
	0	--	57	16.5 (11.4-21.6)	57	4.9
NEVER INJECTED WITH A NEEDLE PREVIOUSLY USED BY SOMEONE ELSE IN LAST 12 MONTHS						

		31	52.3 (35.5-69.1)	31	52.3
RECEIVED FREE STERILE SYRINGES IN PAST 12 MONTHS					
Yes		43	77.5 (67-87.9)	43	77.5
No		14	22.5 (12.1-33.1)	14	22.5

Sexual behaviors among FSW

All FSW had their first sexual intercourse with a man when they were 18 years or younger (Table 1.5); the majority first had sexual intercourse in exchange for money when they were between 19 and 24 years. Of all FSW who had sexual intercourse with a non-marital, non-cohabitating partner in the past 12 months (>99%), 92% in Balti and 96% in Chisinau reported using a condom during their last sexual intercourse.

Table 1.5. Sexual Behaviors among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
AGE OF FIRST VAGINAL/ANAL SEX WITH MAN						
<18	**292**	**90.5 (87.1-93.9)**	**310**	**97.4 (94.7-100)**	**602**	**92.5**
19-24	30	8.9 (5.6-12.1)	7	2.6 (0-5.3)	37	7
25-34	1	0.6 (-0.7-1.9)	0	--	1	0.5
AGE OF FIRST SEXUAL INTERCOURSE FOR MONEY						
15-18	82	25.5 (19.9-31.2)	50	14.6 (10.2-18.9)	132	22.2
19-24	**200**	**60.8 (54.6-67)**	**186**	**59.4 (53.2-65.5)**	**386**	**60.1**
25-34	35	11.7 (7.5-15.9)	76	25 (19.4-30.6)	111	15.6
35-44	5	1.9 (0.1-3.8)	5	1.1 (-0.1-2.2)	10	1.7
45+	0	--	0	--	0	--
AGE AT FIRST SEXUAL INTERCOURSE FOR MONEY						
<24	**282**	**86.3 (81.7-91.1)**	**236**	**73.9 (68.3-79.6)**	**518**	**82.7**
25+	40	13.7 (9-18.3)	81	26.1 (20.4-31.8)	121	173
AGE-MEAN, MEDIAN OF FIRST SEXUAL INTERCOURSE FOR MONEY						
		21/20/±3.8		22.1/21/±3.8		21.3/20/±3.9
SEX WITH NON-MARITAL, NON-COHABITING PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS						
	321	99.5 (98.9-100)	317	100	638	99.6
USED CONDOM AT LAST SEX WITH NON-MARITAL, NON-COHABITING PARTNER						
	275	96.3 (94-98.6)	241	92.2 (88.4-96)	516	95.2

Casual and steady partners

Only 12% of FSW in Chisinau and 18% in Balti had a casual sex partner in the past 6 months, of which they reported a median of 2 partners (Table 1.6). Three quarters of FSW in Chisinau and

88% in Balti used a condom with their last casual sex partner. One quarter in Balti and 35% in Chisinau had a steady sex partner in the past 6 months; all reported having a median of 1 partner and 23% in Chisinau and 51% in Balti used a condom at last sex with a steady sex partner. Condom use with casual partners was inconsistent for 30% of FSW in Balti and 36% in Chisinau. Few FSW reported consistent condom use with their steady partner in the past 6 months.

Table 1.6. Casual and steady male partners in the previous six months, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
CASUAL SEX PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS						
	35	12.2 (7.7-16.9)	49	17.7 (13.2-22.3)	84	13.8
CASUAL SEX PARTNER (LAST 6 MONTHS) ; MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
		15.1/2/±25.2		3/2/±9.1		10.6/2/±21.5
USED CONDOM AT LAST SEX VAGINAL/ANAL WITH CASUAL SEX PARTNER						
	24	74.8 (66.5-83.8)	41	87.9 (77.6-98)	65	79.7
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH CASUAL PARTNERS IN LAST MONTH						
Always (100%)	12	63.6 (51.8-76.1)	7	69.6 (42.4-97.9)	19	64.4
Most times (75%-99)	6	11.4 (0.8-21.6)	2	10.2 (0-19.4)	8	11.2
Every second time (25-74%)	5	9.4 (5.6-12.9)	1	13.3 (0-39.6)	6	9.8
Rarely (1-24%)	3	10.1 (4-16.2)	0	--	3	9
Never	2	5.5 (2.1-8.8)	1	6.9 (0-18)	3	5.6
STEADY MALE SEX PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS						
	115	35.2 (29.4-41)	79	24.6 (19.3-30.1)	194	32.1
STEADY MALE PARTNER (PAST MONTH); MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
		1.1/1/±0.5		1.2/1/±0.5		1.1/1/±0.5
USED CONDOM AT LAST SEX VAGINAL/ANAL WITH STEADY MALE SEX PARTNER						
	22	23.3 (12.4-34.6)	46	51 (39.6-61.8)	68	29.5
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH STEADY PARTNERS IN THE LAST MONTH						
Always (100%)	5	6.2 (0.5-12)	6	9.1 (0-20.8)	11	6.9
Most times (75%-99)	10	18.7 (2.1-35.7)	30	52.7 (30.6-74.7)	40	26.8
Every second time (25-74%)	9	12.2 (2.8-21.6)	8	14 (1.5-26.4)	17	12.5
Rarely (1-24%)	43	52 (30.9-72.7)	10	18.1 (6.8-29.3)	53	44
Never	7	10.9 (2.3-19.6)	3	6.2 (4.8-7.8)	10	9.8

Paying sex partners

FSW in both Chisinau and Balti had a median of 20 paying sex partners in the last month; almost all in both cities used a condom at last sex with a paying partner (Table 1.7). Most FSW reported that their last sexual partner was a paying partner and that they had just one or two partners on the last day worked. Frequency of always using a condom use with a paying partner in the last 6 months was 13% in Balti and 83% in Chisinau. The most of respondents in both cities report that the decision to use or not the condom belongs to them. Seventy-two percent FSW in Chisinau and 80% from Balti reported being able to convince the partner that using a condom is a concern for his health.

Table 1.7. Paying sex partners, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
NUMBER IN PAST MONTH; MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
	21.6/20/±.12.5		25.8/20/±.21.6		22.9/20/15±.8	
CONDOM USE AT LAST SEX						
	316	96.8 (94.6-99.1)	288	92.9 (90.1-95.6)	604	95.6
TYPE OF PARTNER AT LAST SEX						
Steady	39	13 (8,7-17,3)	49	16.5 (11.9-21.2)	88	14
Paying	**274**	**82.8 (76.9-88.5)**	**262**	**82 (77.3-86.7)**	**536**	**82.4**
Casual	10	4.3 (0.6-8)	4	1.5 (0.1-2.8)	14	3.5
NUMBER ON LAST WORKING DAY						
1	**137**	**44.8 (38.4-51.1)**	**119**	**42.1 (35.5-48.7)**	**256**	**44**
2	111	32.2 (26.9-37.8)	121	38.6 (33.3-43.9)	232	34.1
3	44	12.8 (8.8-16.7)	35	9.8 (6.2-13.4)	79	11.9
4	18	5.5 (3-8)	23	5.6 (2.9-8.2)	41	5.5
5+	12	4.7 (1.5-7.8)	15	3.9 (1.8-6.1)	27	4.4
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE IN PAST 6 MONTHS						
Always (100%)	**271**	**83.1 (78.2-87.9)**	42	12,6 (8,1-17,2)	**313**	**62.4**
Most times (75%-99)	51	16.9 (12.1-21.8)	**215**	**72.1 (65.8-78.4)**	266	33.1
Every second time (25-74%)	0	--	42	12 (8.1-15.9)	42	3.5
Rarely (1-24%)	0	--	7	1.4 (0.4-2.4)	7	0.4
Never (0%)	0	--	7	1.9 (0.5-3.3)	7	0.6
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE IN LAST MONTH DURING VAGINAL CONTACTS						
Always (100%)	295	91.5 (87.8-95.3)	78	26 (20.2-31.9)	373	72.3
Most times (75%-99)	25	8.5 (4.8-12.2)	178	58.4 (51.7-65.1)	203	23.1

Every second time (25-74%)	0	--	42	12.2 (8.5-15.9)	42	3.6
Rarely (1-24%)	0	--	7	1.4 (0.4-2.5)	7	0.4
Never (0%)	0	--	5	1.5 (0.1-2.8)	5	0.4
No vaginal contacts in last month	0	--	2	0.4 (0-0.9)	2	0.1
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE IN LAST MONTH DURING ANAL CONTACTS						
Always (100%)	85	22.2 (17,5-27)	56	19.2 (14.3-23.9)	141	21.3
Most times (75%-99)	6	1.5 (0.3-2.7)	133	44 (37.6-50.5)	139	13.9
Every second time (25-74%)	4	1.3 (0.1-2.5)	23	6.9 (4-9.9)	27	2.9
Rarely (1-24%)	1	0.3 (0-0.9)	8	2.1 (1-3.2)	9	0.8
Never (0%)	0	--	12	3.7 (1.3-6.1)	12	1.1
No anal contacts in the last month	225	74.6 (69.8-79.3)	79	24.1 (18.8-29.5)	304	59.9
THE DECISION TO USE A CONDOM						
I DECIDE TO USE OR NOT TO USE A CONDOM FOR SEXUAL INTERCOURSE						
I agree	316	98.2 (96.7-99.6)	292	94.3 (91.5-97.1)	608	97
I do not agree & I do not deny	6	1.8 (0.4-3.3)	19	5 (2.3-7.7)	25	2.8
I do not agree			3	0.7 (0-1.4)	3	0.2
MY PARTNER DECIDES TO USE OR NOT TO USE A CONDOM DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE						
I agree	9	3.9 (1.1-6.7)	14	3.4 (1.9-5)	23	3.7
I do not agree & I do not deny	44	14.4 (10-18.6)	75	23.8 (18.3-29.3)	119	17.1
I do not agree	269	81.8 (76.3-87.4)	225	72.8 (67-78.6)	494	79.2
I CAN ALWAYS AGREE WITH MY PARTNER SO THAT WE USE A CONDOM						
I agree	269	82.1 (76.8-87.5)	250	81.4 (76.7-86.1)	519	81.9
I do not agree & I do not deny	41	13.7 (9.4-18)	55	17.3 (12.8-21.9)	96	14.8
I do not agree	12	4.2 (1.5-6.8)	5	1.3 (0-2.6)	17	3.3
I CAN ALWAYS CONVINCE MY PARTNER THAT USING A CONDOM IS A CONCERN FOR HIS HEALTH						
I agree	235	72.1 (66-78.3)	248	79.9 (75.2-84.7)	483	74.4
I do not agree & I do not deny	73	23.3 (17.8-28.8)	55	17.7 (13.4-22.1)	128	21.7
I do not agree	14	4.6 (1.9-7.3)	9	2.4 (0.7-4.1)	23	3.9
I CAN REFUSE SEX WITH A PARTNER WHO REFUSES TO USE A CONDOM						
I agree	313	97.3 (95.5-99.2)	265	86 (82.2-89.9)	578	94
I do not agree & I do not deny	0	--	35	10.6 (7.2-14.1)	43	5
I do not agree	8	2.7 (0.8-4.6)	12	3.3 (1.3-5.4)	12	1
I CAN USE A CONDOM WITH MY PARTNER EVEN IF I DRANK ALCOHOL.						
I agree	280	86.4 (82.5-90.3)	256	84.9 (80.8-89)	536	86
I do not agree & I do not deny	34	11 (7.1-14.9)	32	8.8 (5.9-11.6)	66	10.3
I do not agree	7	2.6 (0.7-4.5)	23	6.4 (3.6-9.2)	30	3.7

Sexual health

Under 15% of FSW in Balti and 20% in Chisinau had signs or symptoms of an STI in the last 12 months (Table 1.8), of which about 28% in Balti and 73% in Chisinau were diagnosed with an STI by a doctor. Fifty-six percent in Balti and 87% in Chisinau among those who had symptoms

of an STI received any treatment for an STI in the last 12 months (Table 1.8). Twelve percent of FSW in Balti and 41% in Chisinau have been tested for STI in the last three months.

Table 1.8. Sexual health among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
EXPERIENCED DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:						
GENITAL/ANAL WOUNDS/SORE/DISCHARGE						
	69	20.2 (15.2-25.3)	50	14.7 (10.7-18.6)	119	18.5
DIAGNOSED WITH A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION (BY A DOCTOR)						
	50	72.5 (60.9-84.2)	16	28.1 (16.5-39.7)	66	62.3
RECEIVED ANY TREATMENT FOR GENITAL/ANAL WOUNDS/SORE/DISCHARGE FROM DOCTOR						
	59	87.4 (79.7-95.2)	30	55.6 (42.2-69.3)	89	80.1
TESTED FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS THE LAST 3 MONTHS						
	140	41.4 (35.2-47.6)	47	11.5 (8.1-15)	187	32.36

HIV knowledge, perceptions and stigma

Almost all FSW have ever heard of HIV/AIDS (Table 1.8). Sixty-two percent of FSW in Chisinau and 84% in Balti know that a healthy-looking person can be living with HIV. FSW in Chisinau are more aware that a person cannot get HIV from a mosquito bite and cannot get HIV by using the same toilet with a person living with HIV compared to FSW in Balti. However, FSW in Balti, compared to Chisinau, are more aware that someone cannot get HIV from sharing a meal with someone living with HIV. FSW in Balti have lower percentages of stigma related to people living with HIV compared to FSW in Chisinau.

Table 1.8. HIV Knowledge, perception and stigma towards people living with HIV among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
EVER HEARD OF HIV/AIDS						
	323	100	310	98.1 (96.7-99.6)	633	99.4
HIV PERCEPTION						
A HEALTHY-LOOKING PERSON CAN BE LIVING HIV						
	199	62.4 (56.7-68)	265	84.4 (80-88.7)	464	68.8

A PERSON CAN GET HIV FROM A MOSQUITO BITE						
	33	12.2 (7.5-6.8)	69	21.9 (16.8-26.9)	102	15
CAN GET HIV FROM SHARING A MEAL WITH SOMEONE WHO IS LIVING WITH HIV						
	43	14.4 (9.5-19.4)	35	10.5 (6.7-14.2)	78	13.3
CAN GET HIV BY USING THE SAME TOILET WITH A PERSON LIVING WITH HIV						
	41	14.6 (9.1-20)	65	20.3 (15.8-24.8)	106	16.3
READY TO USE SAME UTENSILS WITH A PERSON LIVING WITH HIV (OF THOSE WHO HEARD OF HIV)						
	28	7.3 (4.7-9.8)	115	37.9 (31.8-44.1)	143	16.1
STIGMA RELATED TO PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV (PLHIV)						
WOULD NOT KEEP IT A SECRET IF AN ACQUAINTANCE/FRIEND WERE LIVING WITH HIV						
	148	46.1 (39.3-53.1)	29	8.4 (5.1-11.6)	177	35.3
A STUDENT WHO IS LIVING WITH HIV AND HAS NO SYMPTOMS SHOULD CONTINUE TO STUDY						
	198	60.2 (54.8-65.5)	273	89 (85.6-92.5)	471	68.5
A TEACHER WHO IS LIVING WITH HIV AND HAS NO SYMPTOMS SHOULD CONTINUE TEACHING						
	173	51.5 (45.3-57.5)	272	89.1 (85.5-92.9)	445	62.2
WOULD CONTINUE TO BUY FOOD FROM GROCER/CATERING ESTABLISHMENT IF OWNER WERE LIVING WITH HIV						
	83	23.2 (17.8-28.5)	260	84.4 (80.2-88.8)	343	40.8

Almost all (95%) FSW in all cities know that the proper use of condoms during each sexual intercourse can reduce the risk of HIV infection (Figure 1.4) and 88% in Chisinau and 95% in Balti know that having sex with one faithful, uninfected partner also cab reduce the risk of HIV infection.

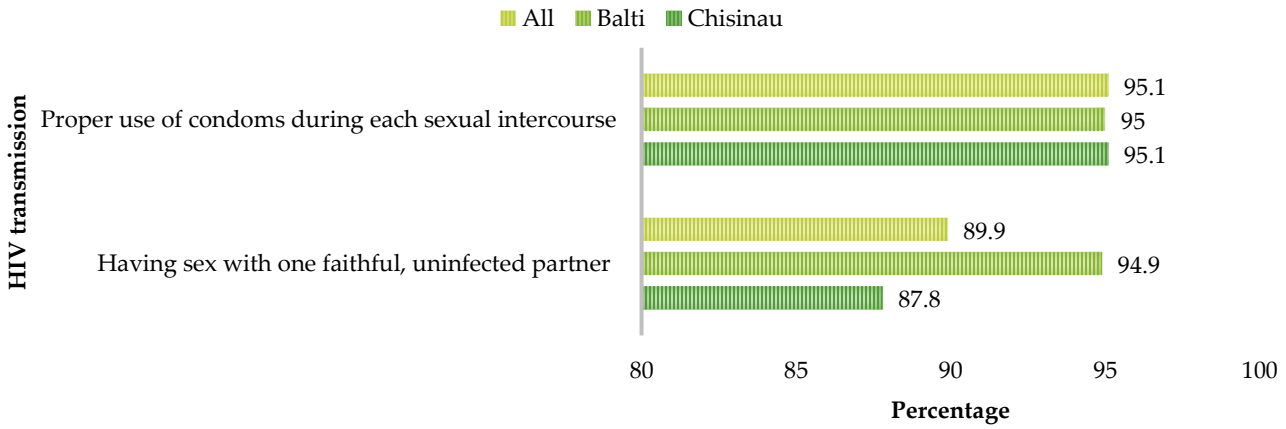

Figure 1.4. Methods known by FSW about how to reduce the risk of HIV transmission, Republic of Moldova, 2020

HIV testing

Over 80% of FSW in all cities know where to get a confidential HIV test (Table 1.9). Almost 24% of FSW in Chisinau and 56% of FSW in Balti were ever tested for HCV and HBV and over 80% of FSW in both cities were ever tested for HIV. Of those who received results, 1.6% in Chisinau and 3.7% in Balti received positive test results.

Table 1.9. HIV Testing among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
KNOWS WHERE TO GET A CONFIDENTIAL HIV TEST						
	279	85.6 (80.9-90.8)	262	82.3 (77.8-86.8)	541	84.6
EVER TESTED FOR:						
HBV	3	0.9 (0-1.9)	8	2.3 (0.7-4)	11	1.3
HCV	4	1.2 (0-2.5)	0	--	4	0.9
HCV & HBV	79	23.7 (18.4-29.1)	180	55.6 (48.8-62.4)	259	33.1
HIV	268	80.4 (74.1-86.8)	275	86.8 (82.5-91.2)	542	82.2
TIME OF LAST HIV TEST						
6 MONTHS	196	74.2 (65.1-83.4)	50	15.6 (10-21.2)	246	56.1
6-12 MONTHS	38	13.1 (8.8-17.3)	93	34.2 (27.7-40.8)	131	19.6
>12 MONTHS	33	12.7 (5.2-20.3)	131	50 (42.7-57.4)	164	24.3
KNOW RESULTS AT LAST TEST						
	268	100	275	100	542	100
RESULTS FROM LAST TEST						
POSITIVE	5	1.6 (0-3.3)	15	3.7 (1.2-6.3)	20	2.3
NEGATIVE	263	98.4 (96.7-100)	260	96.3 (93.7-98.8)	523	97.7
INDETERMINATE	0	--	0	--	0	--

Condoms and prevention coverage

Seventy-two percent of FSW in Balti and 94% in Chisinau know where/from whom to get condoms when needed and 51% in Balti and 69% in Chisinau received free condoms in the last three months. Forty-five percent in Balti and 62% in Chisinau o received information on condom use and safe sex in the last three months. The highest percentage of FSW in both cities reported purchasing a condom from a pharmacy and over 50% received free condoms from NGOs (Table 1.10).

Table 1.10. Condoms and Prevention coverage among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
KNOWS THE PLACE / PERSON FROM WHOM YOU CAN GET (BUY OR GET) CONDOMS						
	305	94.3 (91.6-97)	231	72.4 (66.1-78.8)	536	87.9
RECEIVED FREE CONDOMS IN PAST 3 MONTHS						
	224	68.6 (51.5-85.7)	160	51.3 (44.9-57.7)	384	63.1
CONSULTED ON CONDOM USE AND SAFE SEX IN PAST 3 MONTHS						
	205	62.3 (50.2-74.2)	141	44.7 (38.3-51.1)	346	56.7
FREQUENCY OF RECEIVING FREE CONDOMS DURING MONTH						
2 - 3 times a week or more	8	3.8 (0.5-7.2)	5	1.9 (0.3-3.5)	13	3.4
Once a week	43	21.3 (13.9-28.4)	**83**	**54 (44.3-63.6)**	126	28.7
2-3 times a month	35	15.9 (9-22.6)	43	25.6 (17.7-33.6)	78	18.1
Once a month	26	13.7 (9-18.4)	18	11.4 (4.9-17.8)	44	13.2
Less than once a month	**111**	**45.3 (32.6-58.3)**	7	7.2 (1.4-12.9)	**118**	**36.6**
WHERE RESPONDENT CAN GET CONDOM WHEN NEED ONE						
Shop						
	230	69 (64.9-73.2)	153	50 (44.3-55.7)	383	63.4
Purchase at a pharmacy						
	249	**74.9 (71-78.8)**	**227**	**72.7 (67.1-78.3)**	**476**	**74.2**
Market						
	98	26.9 (22.4-31.3)	34	12 (7.8-16.2)	132	22.5
Ngo						
	183	54.9 (50.6-59.2)	165	51.6 (45-58.1)	348	53.9
Polyclinic (not family planning)						
	4	1.1 (0.4-1.7)	2	0.2 (0-0.4)	6	0.8
Hospital						
	1	0.2 (0.1-0.2)	0	--	1	0.1
Family planning center						
	23	5.4 (0-16.3)	1	0.3 (0-0.7)	24	3.9
Bar / hotel						
	33	8.8 (0.5-17)	1	0.4 (0-1.1)	34	6.3
Outreach worker						
	164	52.6 (48.6-56.5)	162	50.9 (44.3-57.4)	326	52
Friend						
	135	40.5 (36-45)	72	23.7 (18.2-29)	207	35.5
Pharmacy/ free						
	126	35 (30-40)	3	0.5 (0.1-1)	129	24.9
MAIN SOURCE FOR CONDOMS:						
Shop						
	42	11.6 (7-16.3)	24	7.7 (4.7-10.8)	66	10.4
Purchase at a pharmacy						
	106	**32.3 (23.9-40.6)**	90	31.1 (25-37.3)	196	31.6
Market						
	12	3.4 (1.5-5.4)	1	0.2 (0-0.4)	13	2.5
Ngo						
	46	15.4 (10.4-20.4)	12	2.6 (1.2-3.9)	58	11.6

Bar / hotel						
	1	0.3 (0-1)	6	2.9 (0.5-5.3)	7	1.1
Outreach worker						
	88	29.8 (19.8-39.8)	**147**	**47.2 (40.48-54)**	**235**	**34.5**
Friend						
	8	2.5 (0.9-4)	12	4 (1.6-6.4)	20	2.9
Pharmacy/ free						
	3	0.9 (0-1.9)	0	--	3	0.6
Other						
	15	3.8 (2-5.6)	13	3.8 (1.5-6.2)	28	3.8
DOES NOT USE AND DOES NOT NEED CONDOMS						
	0	--	10	2.7 (1.1-4.2)	10	0.8

Sixty-six percent of FSW in Chisinau and 43% in Balti received prevention services, among which the largest percentage received free condoms (Table 1.11).

Table 1.11. Services received from prevention programs in past 12 months among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%
BENEFICIARIES OF PREVENTION SERVICES3						
	217	66 (53,2-78,7)	137	42,6 (36,7-48,5)	354	59,1
SERVICES RECEIVED FROM OUTREACH SERVICE, DROP-IN CENTRE OR SEXUAL HEALTH CLINIC IN PAST 12 MONTHS						
Anonymous counseling and voluntary HIV testing						
	212	61.6 (57.6-65.7)	91	30.3 (24.1-36.5)	303	52.4
New needle and syringe						
	2	0.3 (0.2-0.5)	44	13.2 (9.1-17.3)	46	4.1
HIV prevention services (education about HIV prevention)						
	203	59 (54.5-63.5)	93	27.5 (22.3-32.7)	296	49.7
Free condoms						
	221	**67.6 (63.9-71.4)**	**170**	**52.7 (46.5-58.8)**	**391**	**63.2**
Free disinfectants						
	209	61.7 (57.6-66)	99	27.8 (22.7-33)	308	51.8
Self-help groups						
	0	--	28	7.9 (4.6-11.2)	28	2.3
Methadone / buprenorphine substitution therapy						
	0	--	1	0.4 (0-1.2)	1	0.1
Drug addiction treatment						

[3] According to the definition of indicator 3.7 GAM

	4	1.3 (0.5-2.1)	4	1.3 (0-2.5)	8	1.3
Medical consultation for STI						
	108	32.3 (27.7-37)	78	22.7 (18-27.4)	186	29.5
Treatment of STI						
	42	11.4 (4.4-18.4)	23	6.3 (3.6-9)	65	9.9
Psychological counseling						
	30	7.9 (0-17.2)	47	12.6 (8.5-16.7)	77	9.2
Free hygiene bags / pads used						
	218	66 (92.2-69.8)	160	50.4 (43.8-56.9)	378	61.4
Overdose prevention services						
	0	--	13	4.2 (1.8-6.7)	13	1.2
Legal advice						
	5	1.4 (0.5-2.3)	43	13.2 (8.9-17.5)	48	4.9
Other						
	15	6 (0-18.5)	0	--	15	4.2
No one						
	65	20.8 (16.1-25.6)	137	44.5 (37.8-51.1)	202	27.7

Biologic test results

HIV seroprevalence was 2.1% (n=8, CI: 0.5, 3.7) in Chisinau and 4.4% (n=18, CI: 1.9, 6.9) in Balti (Figure 1.5). HCV was 5.1 (2.8-7.4) in Chisinau, 17.2% (13.2-21.2) in Balti, HBV was 2,9% (1,2-4,6) in Chisinau, 4,7% (1.9-7.4) in Balti and syphilis infection was 16% (11-20.8) in Chisinau, 13.7% (9.7-17.8) in Balti.

Figure 1.5. Biologic test results among FSW, Republic of Moldova, 2020

Discussion and recommendations of FSW findings

Sex with non-commercial and commercial partners and inconsistent condom use

Under half FSW had sex with non-commercial partners, under 70% used a condom with occasional partners and under 10% used condoms with steady partners in the last month. Frequency of condom use among FSW during sex with commercial partners is inconsistent with 83.1% in Chisinau and only 12.6% in Balti reporting always using a condom in the last six months. Given the high percentage of FSW who were diagnosed with an STI in the past year and the high risk of engaging in sex for money, more prevention interventions and harm reduction services that engage both FSW and their sex partners (including non-commercial and commercial) are warranted. Enhanced counseling and training of FSW to negotiate condom use with partners (permanent, occasional, and commercial) is needed. Given the fact that more than half of respondents most often meet their clients on-line, creative prevention services and training should capture FSW who use the internet. Other prevention options, such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP), can be considered for FSW. Additionally, health care and other service providers should encourage routine HIV testing and STI screening for FSW and their partners[4].

Availability of condoms and low condom negotiation skills

Not all FSW, especially in Balti, are able to access condoms every time they need one and many have partners who refuse to use a condom when asked. Despite many FSW reported that they easily can convince partners to use condoms, there is an inconsistent use of condoms with various partners. Education about the risk of HIV and STI transmission should be targeted to clients as well as FSW. FSW should receive education on condom negotiation skills and programs to reduce stigma towards women carrying condoms are needed.

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[4]World Health Organization. Implementing Comprehensive HIV/STI Programs with Sex Workers. Geneva, Switzerland; 2013. Available from: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/90000/1/9789241506182_eng.pdf

Screening for STI is low among FSW

One fifth of FSW from Chisinau and every seventh from Balti had symptoms of an STI in the last 12 months, indicating low condom usage during sexual intercourse and the potential for further spread to and from clients and onward to clients' and FSW other partners. The presence of an STI increases the risk for HIV infection[5]. Early diagnosis and treatment of STI are important for improving health and reducing the risk of HIV transmission. Routine HIV and other STI testing should be offered in both clinical and non-clinical settings to ensure all FSW are being reached. Also it is recommended to implement the prescription of the symptomatic treatment of STI. This is especially needed in Chisinau.

HIV testing among FSW is high.

Most FSW know where to get an HIV test and 80.4% in Chisinau and 86.8% in Balti ever had an HIV test. Ensuring access to FSW-friendly testing services is important. Sensitivity training should be required for all health care and service providers.

HIV prevalence under 5%.

HIV prevalence is less than 5% among FSW. Syphilis prevalence is higher in Chisinau. In Balti HCV is higher than in Chisinau, which may confirm more frequent use of drugs. Despite the low prevalence of HIV and higher prevalence of syphilis, efforts to expand HIV/AIDS and other STI awareness, education, and screening programs must scale up. HIV prevalence results compared to reporting a positive result at the last HIV test performed rate as not everyone was aware of their HIV status.

Summary of Key Recommendations

- Scale up non-clinical and clinical routine HIV and STI testing services.
- Harm reduction services should be made available and easily accessible to FSW.

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[5] World Health Organization. Implementing Comprehensive HIV/STI Programs with Sex Workers. Geneva, Switzerland; 2013. Available from: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/90000/1/9789241506182_eng.pdf

- Distribute condoms and deliver HIV/AIDS prevention messages to target mobile FSW.
- Integrate mental health services, to include substance abuse counseling and treatment, with HIV prevention programs targeting FSW.
- Scale-up coverage of combination prevention services.
- Educate health care and other service providers on the specific needs of the FSW population.
- Scale up HIV/AIDS education services, which engage both FSW and their partners, including clients.
- Provide sensitive training to health care and other service providers to ensure a welcoming and supportive environment for FSW.
- Form advocacy groups to increase awareness and to create environments that support FSW.
- Include on-line counseling as HIV prevention interventions targeting FSW.

Section II. People who inject drugs

PWID were sampled in four cities in the Republic of Moldova. The maximum number of waves reached in the recruitment chains in Chisinau was 14, in Balti was 13, Tiraspol 11 and Ribnita was 10 (Figures 2.1-4). All samples used five seeds to initiate recruitment. In Chisinau two more seeds were added during data collection. The final sample sizes were 365 in Chisinau, 357 in Balti, 333 in Tiraspol and 322 in Ribnita. Additional tables and the tables for all cities aggregated are available in **Appendix C.**

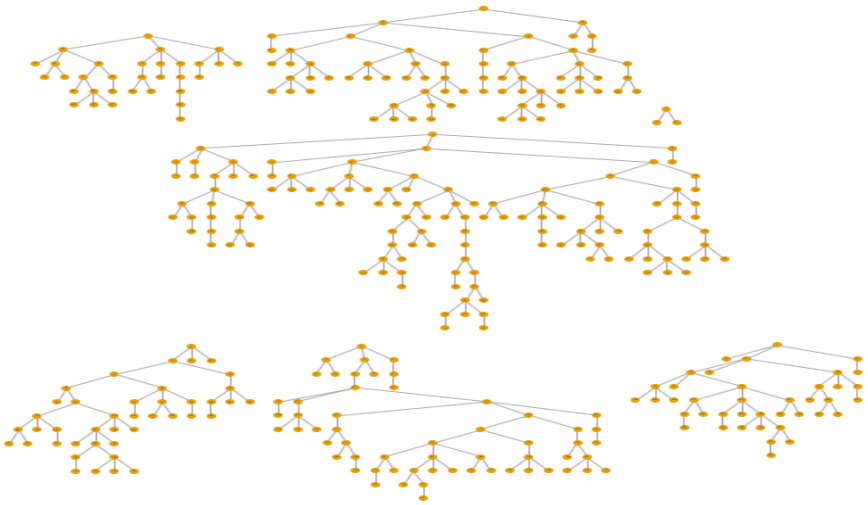

Figure 2.1. Recruitment graph of PWID, Chisinau, 2020

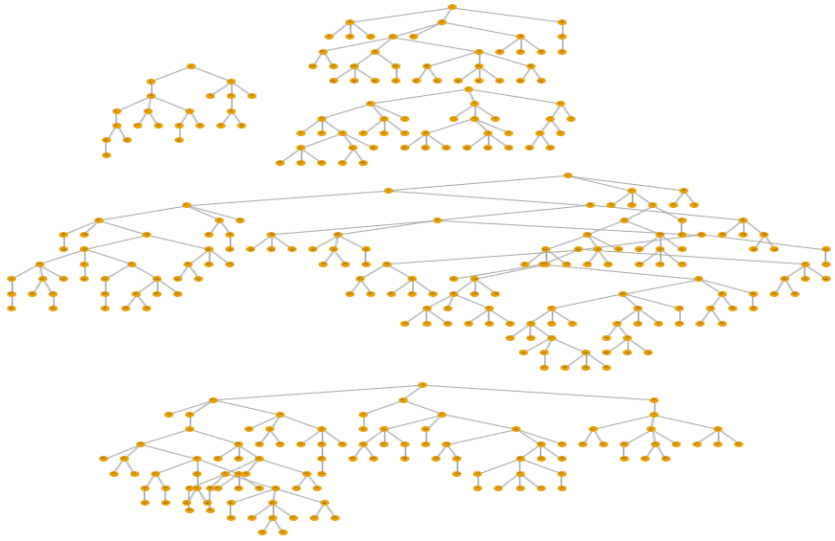

Figure 2.2. Recruitment graph of PWID, Balti, 2020.

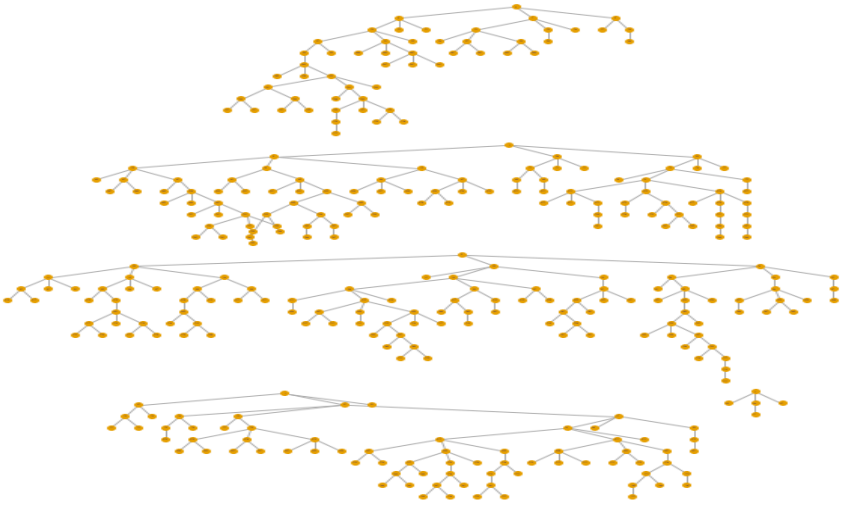

Figure 2.3. Recruitment graph of PWID, Tiraspol, 2020.

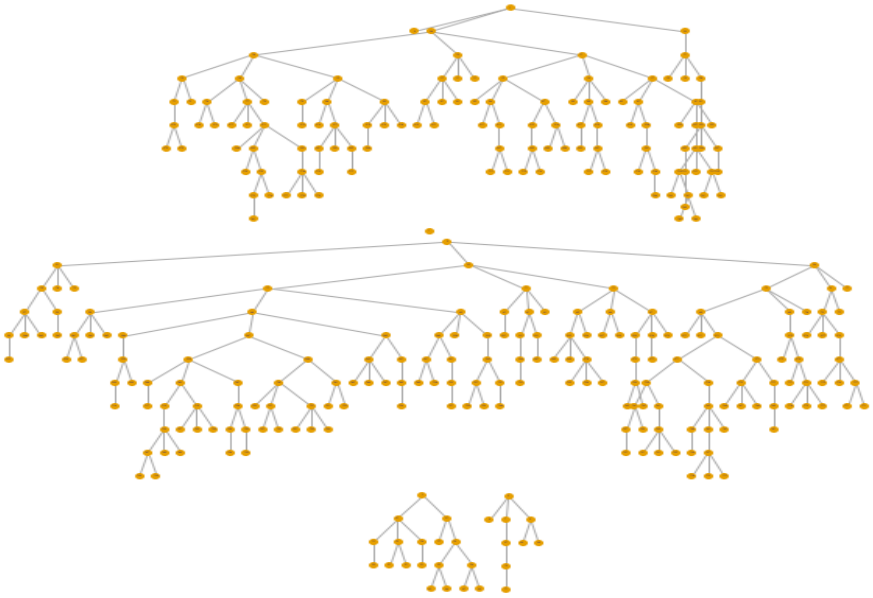

Figure 2.4. Recruitment graph of the PWID sample, Ribnita, 2020.

Sociodemographic characteristics

The largest percentages of PWID are between the ages of 35 and 45 years, male, living without a partner, and have a secondary/specialized education (Table 2.1). Between 39% in Tiraspol and 60% in Balti have no income, between 14% in Balti and 41% in Tiraspol have seasonal employment, and between 14% in Tiraspol and 23% in Chisinau are permanently employed.

Table 2.1. Sociodemographic characteristics among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
AGE								
15-18	5	1.6 (0-3.8)	1	0.9 (0-2.6)	3	1.6 (0.1-3.1)	0	--
19-24	22	5.4 (2.4-8.4)	24	7.2 (2.6-11.9)	25	9.2 (4.8-13.6)	7	1.4 (0.5-2.4)
25-35	109	30.6 (23.7-37.6)	98	26.7 (21.0-32.5)	97	27.6 (22-33.2)	120	33.3 (27.2-39.4)
35-45	**173**	**48.6 (40.8-56.3)**	**149**	**38.4 (32.3-44.4)**	**133**	**39.0 (32.7-45.2)**	**133**	**39.2 (33.1-45.5)**
46+	56	13.8 (8.4-19.3)	85	26.7 (19.9-33.5)	75	22.6 (16.4-28.7)	62	26.1 (19.5-32.5)
AGE								
<25	27	7.0 (3.1-10.8)	25	8.2 (2.7-13.6)	28	10.9 (5.8-16.0)	7	1.4 (0.5-2.3)
25+	338	93.0 (89.2-96.9)	332	91.8 (86.4-97.3)	305	89.1 (84-94.2)	315	98.6 (97.7-99.5)
SEX								
Male	296	78.6 (73.4-83.8)	316	89 (84.9-93.2)	252	74 (67.9-80.1)	230	65.9 (58.9-73)

Female	69	24.1 (16.1-26.6)	41	11 (6.8-15.1)	81	26 (19.9-32.1)	92	34.1 (27-41.2)
MARITAL STATUS								
Married live with partner	29	7 (3,8-10.2)	35	9 (5-12,8)	43	12.8 (8.8-16.9)	72	19 (14.2-23.8)
Concubines live with partner	66	20.8 (14.7-26.8)	34	8.7 (5.4-11.9)	69	23.7 (17.7-29.7)	104	29.1 (23-35.1)
Single, live with partner	44	9.7 (6.5-12.9)	44	12.9 (8.3-17.5)	41	10.5 (7.4-13.6)	12	3.8 (1.6-5.9)
Divorced, widowed, live with partner	22	5.8 (2.5-9.1)	30	9.8 (5.8-13.7)	18	4.5 (2-7)	10	5.6 (1.5-9.8)
Married, concubines, single, divorced, widowed live w/out partner	**200**	**56.8 (49.8-63.9)**	**209**	**59.7 (53.4-66.1)**	**155**	**48.5 (41.7-55.4)**	**123**	**42.6 (35.9-49.2)**
EDUCATION								
Primary education (4 classes and less)	2	0.7 (0-1.8)	3	0.6 (0-1.3)	11	3.4 (0.7-6.1)	1	0.1 (0.1-0.2)
5-9 classes	113	26 (19.9-32.1)	87	22.9 (17.7-28.1)	132	39.7 (33.4-46)	68	19.4 (14.2-24.5)
Secondary/specialized	**201**	**60.8 (54.1-67.6)**	**247**	**71.6 (66-77.4)**	**177**	**52.5 (45.9-59.2)**	**222**	**71.9 (66.3-77.4)**
Unfinished higher	19	3.4 (1.7-5)	7	1.1 (0.3-2)	7	1.9 (0.3-3.5)	21	5.9 (3.1-8.7)
Higher education	30	9.1 (4.9-13.3)	13	3.8 (1.1-6.4)	5	2.4 (0-4.9)	10	2.7 (1.1-4.3)
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT								
Permanent work	90	23.1 (17.4-28.8)	56	19.2 (13.8-24.6)	43	13.5 (9.4-17.6)	47	15.2 (10-20.4)
Seasonal work/Local, abroad, multiple locations	84	25.8 (19.8-31.7)	51	14.0 (9.6-18.4)	**133**	**41.4 (35.6-47.3)**	165	39.3 (32.1-47.1)
Pensioner/Disabled/ housewife/Parental leave	8	2.5 (0.1-4.8)	11	2.8 (1-4.5)	19	4.8 (2.1-7.5)	18	5.7 (2.7-8.7)
Student	0	--	1	0.9 (0-2.3)	3	1.1 (0-2.2)	0	--
Unemployed	**183**	**48.7 (42.2-55.2)**	**226**	**59.9 (53.4-66.4)**	131	38.8 (32.8-44.8)	**90**	**39.6 (32.3-47.1)**
Other	0	--	12	3.2 (1.1-5.4)	3	0.4 (0-0.9)	1	0.2 (0-0.4)
AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME IN LAST MONTH (IN MDL)								
< 600	17	4.9 (2.0-7.9)	6	1.1 (0.1-2.1)	47	14.0 (9.8-18.1)	44	24.7 (16-33)
661-1000	25	6.2 (3-9.4)	29	7.5 (4.4-10.5)	63	19.3 (14.6-24.1)	61	18.4 (13.7-23.1)
1001-3000	68	18.5 (13.1-23.9)	53	16.7 (11.6-21.7)	**123**	**37.8 (32.1-43.5)**	**120**	**31.9 (25.6-38.4)**
3001-6000	85	25.2 (19.3-31.1)	55	17.1 (12-22.3)	44	13.1 (8.9-17.2)	51	11.3 (8.3-14.5)
>6001	26	6.3 (3.1-9.5)	4	0.5 (0.04-0.9)	2	0.7 (0.1-1.4)	2	0.3 (0-0.5)
No income	**132**	**38.4 (31.8-45)**	**209**	**56.3 (49.7-62.8)**	53	15.1 (10.4-19.8)	44	13.5 (9-17.9)
DK	2	0.2 (0-0.4)	1	0.9 (0-2.2)	0	--	0	--
NR	3	0.3 (0.1-0.5)	0	--	0	--	0	--

Non-injection and injection drug use and needle/syringe behaviors

Non-injection drug use

In all cities, most PWID first used non-injection drugs prior to the age of 18 (Table 2.2) and all reported using non-injection drugs ever and within the last 12 months. The drugs most often used in the last one month and past one to six months in all cities were Cannabis/marijuana/hashish/cannabis resin. PWID in Chisinau, used NPS/mixture of smoking herbs and NPS/powder within the past one to six months. Every seventh PWID from cities on the right bank and around 6% in Tiraspol and 7% in Ribnita used drug mixes in the last 6 months (Table B.2a).

Table 2.2. Non-injection drug use among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
AGE AT FIRST DRUG USE								
12-18	**182**	**42 (35.3-48.8)**	**180**	**44.6 (37.9-51.2)**	**137**	**41.8 (35.3-48.1)**	**180**	**56.4 (49.7-63.1)**
19-24	103	32.7 (25.8-39.5)	77	21.7 (16.4-26.8)	88	24.5 (19.6-29.5)	92	25.1 (19.5-30.7)
25-34	63	21 (14.2-27.8)	70	20.8 (15.1-26.4)	76	24.1 (18.3-29.9)	45	16.3 (11-21.6)
35-44	16	4.1 (1.8-6.4)	20	8.8 (4.3-13.3)	25	7.8 (4.5-11.2)	2	1.1 (0-2.5)
45+	1	0.2 (0-0.7)	9	4.2 (1.3-7.2)	7	1.8 (0.4-3.3)	2	1,1 (0-2,4)
AGE								
<24	285	74.7 (68.1-81.3)	257	66.2 (59.5-72.9)	225	66.2 (60.6-72)	273	81.6 (76.3-86.9)
25+	80	25.3 (18.7-31.9)	99	33.8 (27.1-40.5)	108	33.8 (28-39.5)	49	18.4 (13.1-23.7)
NON-INJECTION DRUG USE IN PAST MONTH								
Cannabis/marijuana /hash/cannabis resin	**203**	**63 (56-69.9)**	**182**	**61.3 (54-68.5)**	**97**	**52.4 (42.5-61.9)**	**147**	**61,5**
Heroin	14	2.8 (1.3-4.2)	21	6.5 (3.5-9.5)	9	4.4 (1.4-7.3)	2	1.4 (0-3.9)
Cocaine	8	2.4 (0.6-4.2)	10	3.1 (1-5.2)	7	4.4 (0.9-8)	2	1.1 (0-2.3)
Amphetamine	30	7.5 (4.1-10.9)	18	4.6 (2.4-6.8)	29	17.1 (10-24.3)	7	3.2 (0.3-6.1)
Ecstasy (mdma, mda)	19	5.1 (2-8.3)	21	5.9 (2.4-9.3)	7	4.3 (0.2-8.4)	2	0.7 (0-1.6)
Hallucinogenic mushrooms, mescaline	9	1.8 (0.5-3.1)	6	1.3 (0.2-2.4)	0	--	0	--
Ketamine	1	0.4 (0-1.1)	0	--	3	1.5 (0-3.2)	0	--
LSD	12	3.2 (1.1-5.3)	17	6.2 (2.3-10.2)	4	1.6 (0-3.1)	3	1.2 (0-2.4)

Methadone, buprenorphine, fentanyl, subutex	18	5.1 (2.5-7.6)	23	7.1 (3.9-10.2)	3	1.9 (0-4.2)	5	2.5 (0.1-5)
Tranquilizers6	13	3.3 (1.1-5.5)	54	16.7 (11.6-21.8)	17	10.9 (5.5-16.5)	22	12.7 (6.3-19.3)
Diazepam, alprazolam, rivotril, clonazepam/krestin	30	8 (4-12.1)	44	13.2 (9-17.4)	15	8.5 (3.8-13.2)	15	7.4 (3.7-11.2)
Ghb/gbl	3	1.1 (0-2.4)	13	5.3 (1.5-9.2)	2	0.8 (0-1.9)	0	--
NPS/mixture of smoking herbs	156	46.6 (39.7-53.5)	129	39.2 (32-46.2)	12	4.7 (1.8-7.4)	14	6.2 (2.8-9.4)
NPS/powder, crystal, tablet form7	177	55.4 (47.7-63)	108	33.5 (27.2-39.6)	29	16.4 (8.9-23.9)	20	8.2 (4.7-11.7)
NPS/ form of liquids	9	2 (0.3-3.6)	5	2.4 (0-5.1)	8	3.5 (0.7-6.2)	0	--
Drug combination for erectile dysfunction with drugs8	3	0.7 (0-1.4)	4	1.7 (0-3.3)	0	--	0	--
Other	3	0.9 (0-1.9)	1	0.6 (0-1.8)	5	2.2 (0-4.7)	1	0.4 (0-1.2)

Injection drug use

General injection drug use

Most PWID in Chisinau, Balti and Tiraspol reported first injecting drugs between the ages of 25 and 34 years, whereas most in Ribnita reported first injecting between the ages of 19 and 24 years. The median age of first injecting drugs ranges from 21-24 years (Table 2.3). The drugs most often injected in the past month by PWID in Chisinau and Balti where NPS in powder, crystal or tablet form[9] and Methamphetamine and in Tiraspol the drug most often injected was poppy (shirka) and in Ribnita was methamphetamine. The drug most often injected in the last one to six months in Balti and Ribnita was methamphetamine, in Chisinau was NPS in powder,

[6] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,
[7] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"
[8] Chemsex, Chemsex + Viagra, poppers ...
[9] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

crystal or tablet form[10] and in Tiraspol was poppy (shirka). Most PWID (roughly 80% in Chisinau and Balti and around half in Tiraspol and Ribnita) reported injecting drugs in the last month. Among PWID who injected drugs in the last month, most did so multiple times a week.

Table 2.3. Injection drug use among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
AGE AT FIRST INJECTION DRUG USE								
12-18	91	20 (14.4-25.7)	104	24.7 (19.5-29.9)	86	28.3 (22-34.5)	78	26.9 (20.7-33.1)
19-24	118	34.2 (27.8-40.6)	100	27.1 (21.7-32.4)	99	27.6 (22.1-33.2)	**161**	**42.3 (35.5-49.4)**
25-34	**117**	**36.0 (29.4-42.6)**	**111**	**32.3 (26.2-38.4)**	**101**	**30.4 (24.2-36.7)**	77	28.2 (22.1-34.3)
35-44	35	8.6 (5-12.3)	28	10.1 (5.2-14.9)	36	11.3 (7.3-15.3)	3	1.4 (-0.1-3)
45+	3	1.2 (0-2.6)	13	6 (2.5-9.4)	9	2.4 (0.9-3.9)	2	1.1 (0-2.5)
AGE								
<24	**209**	**54.2 (47.3-61.2)**	**204**	**51.7 (45.3-58.1)**	**185**	**55.9 (49.1-62.6)**	**239**	**69.3 (63.1-75.5)**
25+	155	45.8 (38.8-52.7)	152	48.3 (41.9-54.7)	146	44.1 (37.4-50.9)	82	30.7 (24.5-36.9)
Mean/median/DS	364	24.7/23/ ±7.1	356	25.7/24/±9.1	331	24.9/23/±8.1	321	22.4/21/±5.9
MOST OFTEN USED INJECTION DRUG IN PAST MONTH								
Heroin	60	21.2 (14.4-28)	42	15.2 (9.6-20.9)	2	0.4 (0-0.7)	1	1.2 (0-3.6)
Amphetamine	4	2.4 (0-5.2)	2	0.8 (0.1-1.5)	22	13.4 (7.2-19.6)	21	9 (5.1-12.9)
Methamphetamine	35	13.7 (7.9-19.5)	103	32.9 (24.8-41)	20	10.7 (2-19.4)	**127**	**57.9 (49.4-65.8)**
Poppy (shirka)	11	3.9 (0.3-7.5)	36	13.6 (8.5-18.8)	**94**	**55.2 (41.3-69.1)**	25	13.7 (7-20.6)
Desomorphine/ crocodile/tropicamide	0	--	0	--	2	0.8 (0-1.8)	0	--
Methadone, buprenorphine, fentanyl, subutex	25	7.3 (3.7-10.9)	6	1.4 (0-2.8)	2	0.5 (0-1)	35	16 (10.1-22)
Tranquilizers[11]	2	0.7 (0-1.5)	3	0.9 (0-1.9)	0	--	1	2.3 (1.7-3.2)
Diazepam, alprazolam, rivotril, clonazepam/kreston	0	--	1	0.4 (0-0.9)	0	--	0	--

[10] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

[11] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,

NPS/powder, crystal, tablet form[12]	**161**	**50.8 (42.1-59.5)**	**105**	**34.6 (24.3-44.8)**	24	16.1 (7.8-24.6)	0	--
NPS/liquid form	0	--	1	0.2 (0-0.5)	0	--	0	--
Other	0	--	0	--	0	--	0	--
MOST OFTEN USED INJECTION DRUG IN LAST 1 - 6 MONTHS								
Heroin	5	11 (--)	9	23.9 (0-81.7)	1	1.2 (0-3.8)	2	2.5 (0-6)
Amphetamine	0	--	1	1.1 (0-22.9)	14	16.4 (2.1-31.1)	5	3.3 (1-5.4)
Methamphetamine	11	22.2 (8.9-35.4)	**20**	**44 (0-100)**	19	14.1 (5.2-22.8)	**44**	**49 (35.1-63.3)**
Poppy (shirka)	4	8.9 (0.4-17.5)	10	17.5 (0-45.3)	**60**	**52.5 (34.9-69.9)**	27	28 (11.3-44.3)
Desomorphine/ crocodile/tropicamide	0	--	0	--	1	0.8 (0-1.9)	0	--
Methadone, buprenorphine, fentanyl, subutexb	6	8.2 (8.1-8.1)	0	--	1	1.2 (1.2-1.2)	10	11.1 (3.2-18.8)
Tranquilizers[13]	0	--	2	3.6 (2.6-4.6)	1	0.5 (0.5-0.5)	3	3.5 (0-7.1)
Diazepam, alprazolam, rivotril, clonazepam/krestin	0	--	0	--	0	--	2	2.8 (0-8.2)
NPS/powder, crystal or tablet form[14]	**22**	**49.7(35.3-64.2)**	6	9.8 (0-76.6)	15	13.2 (3.2-23.1)	0	--
LAST TIME RESPONDENT INJECTED DRUGS								
Last month	**313**	**78.5 (71.5-85.1)**	**301**	**80.7 (74.7-86.7)**	**176**	**45.1 (37.5-52.7)**	**214**	**56.1 (48.9-63.6)**
1-6 months	47	19.2 (12.6-26.1)	47	16.9 (11.2-22.6)	117	38.6 (31.2-46.1)	94	35.3 (28.4-42.1)
6-12 months	5	2.3 (0.5-4.2)	9	2.4 (0.2-4.6)	40	16.3 (10.8-21.8)	14	8.6 (3.3-13.7)
FREQUENCY OF INJECTION DRUG USE IN LAST MONTH								
Once	18	9.9 (5-14.9)	6	1.6 (0.3-2.8)	7	4.9 (0.4-9.6)	3	6.7 (0.1-13.9)
2-3 times	34	11.3 (6.5-16.2)	31	10.9 (6.6-15.3)	39	22 (14.9-29.2)	35	18.3 (9.2-27.6)
Once/week	21	7.5 (3-12)	14	4.6 (1.5-7.6)	14	9.8 (4-15.8)	16	6.6 (3-10)
Multiple times/week	**202**	**65 (57.4-72.6)**	**235**	**80.1 (74.6-85.5)**	**108**	**60.9 (51.6-70.1)**	**160**	**68.4 (55-81)**
Once a day	31	6,3 (3,4-9,2)	15	2.9 (1.2-4.6)	7	2.4 (0.3-4.3)	0	--

[12] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

[13] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,

[14] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

Needle/syringe behaviors

Almost all PWID in all cities used a sterile needle and syringe in the past month the last time they injected, under 10% shared a needle with someone after the participant had used it and injected with a syringe/needle used by someone else in last month (Table 2.4). Almost all PWID used a sterile needle/syringe the last time they injected, between 2% in Chisinau and 6% in Balti shared a needle with someone after the participant had used it in the last month and between 7% in Tiraspol and 19% in Balti injected with a syringe/needle used by someone in the past one to six months (Fig. 2.5). Indirect sharing of injecting equipment is steel high being between one fifth respondents in Chisinau and more than half in Ribnita during last month (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Needle/syringe behaviors among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
STERILE NEEDLE AND SYRINGE USED IN PAST MONTH, LAST INJECTION								
	285	93.88 (91.3-96.5)	290	96.2 (93.1-99.3)	164	92.9 (87-98.7)	207	97 (94.8-99.3)
SHARED NEEDLE WITH SOMEONE AFTER USE IN LAST MONTH								
	12	3.2 (1.3-5)	23	6.3 (3-9.7)	4	1.4 (0.5-2.2)	8	2.5 (0.8-3.9)
WAS INJECTED WITH A SYRINGE NEEDLE USED BY SOMEONE IN LAST MONTH								
	11	2.2 (0.8-3.7)	24	6.3 (3.3-9.2)	8	5.2 (1.3-9.1)	9	3.9 (1.3-6.5)
INDIRECT SHARING								
INJECTING DRUGS INTO A PRE-FILLED SYRINGE								
	31	12.1 (6.4-17.8)	85	25.6 (19.4-31.7)	31	21.8 (13.8-30.2)	80	30.8 (23-38)
DIVIDING DOSES BY THE FRONT OR BACK OF THE SYRINGE								
	44	15.6 (10.3-20.9)	101	31.6 (25.1-38)	26	16.9 (10.2-23.9)	21	9 (5.3-12.7)
ASPIRATING A DRUG SOLUTION FROM A COMMON VESSEL								
	57	17.2 (11.3-23.1)	130	41.6 (34.1-49)	49	31.3 (20-43)	86	36.8 (29.4-43.8)
INTEGRATED INDICATOR OF INDIRECT EXCHANGE OF INJECTION EQUIPMENT IN THE LAST MONTH								
	73	21.4 (15.4-27.4)	143	44.5 (37-51.8)	56	34.8 (25.2-44.8)	139	57.1 (47.8-65.7)
STERILE NEEDLE AND SYRINGE USED IN LAST 1-6 MONTHS, LAST INJECTION DRUG USE								
	41	92.2 (85.1-99.7)	46	98.4 (97.1-99.9)	110	96.2 (94.3-98.3)	89	90.4 (81.3-99)
SHARED NEEDLE WITH SOMEONE AFTER USE IN PAST 1-6 MONTHS								
	2	1.5 (1.4-1.4)	6	17.3 (0-41)	2	1 (0-2.3)	6	4.9 (1.7-7.8)
WAS INJECTED WITH A SYRINGE/NEEDLE USED BY SOMEONE IN PAST 1-6 MONTHS								
	4	8.9 (8.9-8.9)	7	19.4 (4.8-34.2)	10	6.9 (2.2-11.5)	9	10.4 (3.6-17.3)
INDIRECT SHARING IN LAST 6 MONTHS								
INJECTING DRUGS INTO A PRE-FILLED SYRINGE								

	14	21.1 (8.7-33.1)	17	40.5 (12.5-68.6)	35	28.7 (18.8-38.5)	45	37.8 (21.8-53)
DIVIDING DOSES BY THE FRONT OR BACK OF THE SYRINGE								
	13	20.5 (7.2-33.7)	23	46.8 (30.3-63.2)	21	16.8 (9.1-24.4)	9	10.5 (4.1-17.2)
ASPIRATING A DRUG SOLUTION FROM A COMMON VESSEL								
	13	16.7 (5.4-27.7)	26	54.5 (39.2-69.9)	44	35.7 (23.5-47.8)	36	35.4 (24-46.5)
INTEGRATED INDICATOR OF INDIRECT EXCHANGE OF INJECTION EQUIPMENT IN THE PAST 1-6 MONTHS								
Yes	18	27.9 (14.6-41)	26	54.9 (40.1-69.6)	52	43.3 (31.1-55.6)	58	52.3 (36.6-67.2)

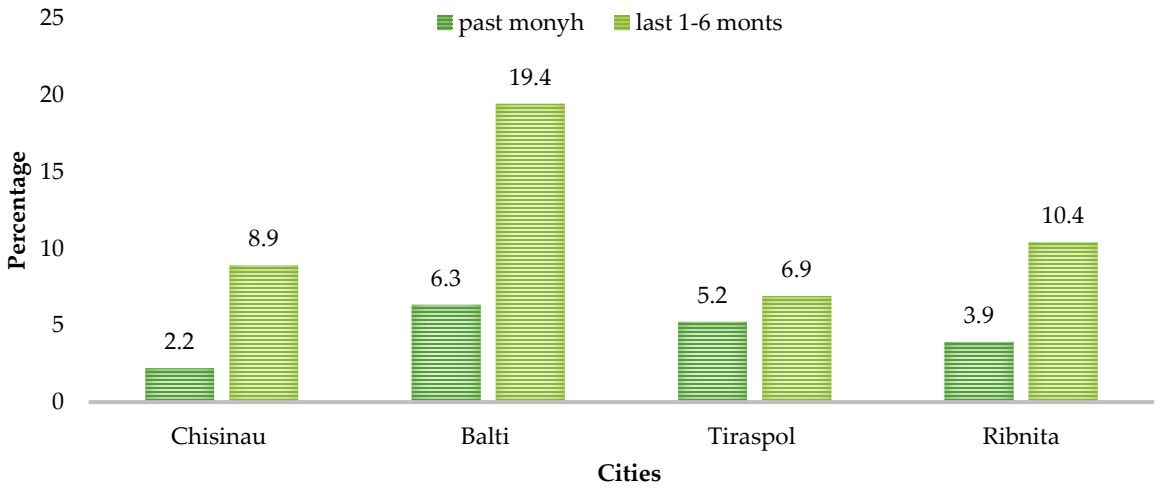

Figure 2.5. Direct sharing of syringes among PWID in Republic of Moldova, 2020

Harm reduction

More than half of PWID in Chisinau and Ribnita, one third in Balti and 40% in Tiraspol received free sterile syringes in the past 12 months. Most PWID reported receiving new syringes once a month in the past year, except for PWID in Chisinau, who reported receiving syringes 2-3 times a month (Table 2.5). The main source of sterile needles/syringes for Chisinau, Balti and Tiraspol were pharmacies (purchased) and for Ribnita were syringe exchange points. Almost all PWID knew of any organizations in the city that provides free new needles, syringes or injection equipment. The types of services received from an outreach service, drop-in centre or sexual health clinic in past 12 months varied widely by city.

Table 2.5. Harm reduction among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU	BALTI	TIRASPOL	RIBNITA

	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
CAN GET (PURCHASE OR RECEIVE) NEW UNUSED SYRINGES WHEN HE NEEDS								
	309	83.9 (78.4-89.4)	353	98.6 (97.2-100)	312	93.8 (90.7-96.9)	299	93.5 (91.1-96)
KNOWS THE PLACE / PERSON FROM WHOM YOU CAN GET (BUY OR GET) SYRINGES								
	341	91.1 (86.7-95.5)	354	98.8 (97.5-100)	315	95.5 (93.4-97.5)	317	98.7 (97.7-99.7)
RECEIVED FREE STERILE SYRINGES IN PAST 12 MONTHS								
	201	53.3 (43.7-63.1)	112	29.9 (23.7-36.2)	143	40.4 (33.5-47.4)	177	51.6 (44.9-58.3)
RECEIVED FREE STERILE SYRINGES IN PAST 3 MONTHS								
	171	47.2 (35.7-58.6)	101	26 (20.5-31.6)	59	16.1 (10.6-21.7)	161	41.9 (35.2-48.7)
FREQUENCY OF RECEIVING NEW (STERILE) NEEDLE/SYRINGE TO INJECT DRUGS DURING MONTH								
2-3 times/week or more	32	11.4 (4.6-18)	6	7.3 (1.1-13.5)	1	1.5 (0-3.5)	0	--
Once a week	16	14 (0.6-27.2)	33	28.6 (14.7-42.3)	1	0.5 (0-1.3)	7	3.3 (0.7-5.9)
2-3 times a month	**87**	**51.4 (35.1-68)**	22	23 (11.7-34.4)	10	11 (2.3-18.9)	14	7.9 (3.4-12.3)
Once a month	21	15.5 (7.5-23.6)	**35**	**34.4 (22.6-46.3)**	**39**	**67.9 (49.9-86.3)**	**98**	**69.7 (62.8-77.8)**
< once a month	7	7.2 (1.4-13)	5	6.7 (0-14.9)	8	19.1 (2.1-36.8)	37	18.9 (12.3-24.8)
I do not use it now	1	0,5 (0-1,2)	0	--	0	--	0	--
PLACE RESPONDENT RECEIVED NEW (STERILE) SYRINGES AND NEEDLES, PAST 12 MONTHS:								
Pharmacy/free	163	43.8 (33.6-54.1)	4	1.1 (-0.03-2.2)	24	7.2 (3.6-10.6)	110	30.8 (24.5-37.1)
Needle-exchange program	166	45 (35.6-54.4)	114	29.2 (23.3-35.1)	79	22.8 (16.5-29.2)	168	44.1 (37.5-50.7)
Family	9	4.5 (0.6-8.4)	6	2 (0.3-3.7)	22	6.7 (3.7-9.7)	29	7 (3.9-10.1)
Sex partner	0	--	5	1.7 (0-3.5)	4	1.3 (0-2.5)	46	11.6 (7.8-15.4)
Friends	99	25.7 (19.7-31.36)	57	16.9 (12.2-21.8)	112	28.9 (23.5-34.3)	107	27.3 (21.8-32.9)
Hospital workers	3	0.3 (0-0.7)	0	--	1	0.1 (0-0.2)	4	0.9 (0.1-1.7)
Hospital/clinic/other medical facility	5	1 (0-2)	5	0.5 (0-1)	4	1.4 (0.1-2.7)	2	1.6 (0-3.6)
Other drug users	21	6.6 (2.6-10.5)	87	24.9 (19.3-30.6)	16	3.5 (1.9-5.1)	113	28.5 (22.7-34.3)
Drug dealer	4	1.4 (0-3.3)	14	4.6 (2-7.3)	0	--	7	1.7 (0.6-2.8)
Purchase at pharmacy	**209**	**58.4 (48.9-67.9)**	**258**	**73.2 (67.5-78.8)**	**284**	**86.6 (82.2-90.9)**	**120**	**46.7 (38.9-54.3)**
Stealing	1	0.2 (0-0.7)	0	--	0	--	0	--
On the street	6	1.8 (0.2-3.4)	5	1.2 (0.1-2.3)	1	0.06 (0-0.1)	1	0,2 (0-0.6)
Get only used syringes	0	--	1	0.2 (0-0.5)	1	0.2 (0-0.4)	0	--
MAIN SOURCE FOR RECEIVED NEW (STERILE) SYRINGES AND NEEDLES, PAST 12 MONTHS:								
Pharmacy/free	44	10.3 (5.8-14.8)	1	0.5 (0-1.1)	6	1.5 (0.2-2.8)	1	0.3 (0-0.6)
Needle-exchange program	119	32.6 (23.4-41.9)	106	27.1 (21.2-33)	67	19.8 (14-25.7)	**166**	**43.4 (36.3-50.5)**
Family	5	1.7 (0-4)	2	0.7 (0-1.6)	4	1.1 (0.1-2.1)	15	3.9 (1.8-6.1)
Sex partner	0	--	2	1.2 (0-2.4)	1	0.5 (0-1)	31	8 (4.9-11.1)
Friends	10	2.7 (0-5.5)	14	4.4 (1.4-7.4)	21	5.6 (2.5-8.6)	30	9.4 (5.2-13.6)
Hospital workers	1	0.6 (0-1.4)	0	--	0	--	1	0.2 (0-0.6)
Hospital/clinic/other medical facility	1	0.2 (0-0.5)	1	0.1 (0-0.2)	0	--	0	--

Other drug users	1	0.20.21 (0.1-0.3)	15	4.3 (1.7-7)	0	--	10	2.7 (1-4.4)
Drug dealer	0	--	3	1 (0-2.4)	1	0.1 (0-0.4)	0	--
Purchase at pharmacy	**178**	**50.8 (40.5-60.9)**	**208**	**60.7 (54.1-67.3)**	**229**	**70.8 (64.1-77.6)**	68	32.1 (23.4-40.8)
On the street	4	0.9 (0-1.9)	1	0.1 (0-0.2)	2	0.5 (0-1.3)	0	--
Get only used syringes	1	0.1 (0-0.1)	0	--	0	--	0	--
KNOWS OF ANY ORGANIZATIONS IN CITY THAT PROVIDES FREE AND NEW NEEDLES/SYRINGES/INJECTION EQUIPMENT								
	341	91.2 (86.7-95.7)	354	98.8 (97.4-100)	315	96.1 (94.1-98.1)	317	98.7 (97.7-99.7)
SERVICES RECEIVED FROM OUTREACH SERVICE, DROP-IN CENTRE OR SEXUAL HEALTH CLINIC IN PAST 12 MONTHS:								
Anonymous counseling and voluntary HIV testing								
	152	38.2 (29.7-46.8)	117	29.5 (23.4-35.7)	66	19.4 (14.6-24.3)	88	23.5 (17.9-29.1)
New needle and syringe								
	188	51 (40.7-61.5)	110	27.9 (22.5-33.5)	80	23.3 (16.7-29.8)	168	44.3 (37-51.6)
H**IV** prevention services (education about HIV prevention)								
	134	35.5 (27.7-43.4)	70	18.3 (13.2-23.4)	22	6.47 (3.6-9.8)	149	36.7 (30.9-42.4)
Free condoms								
	179	47.9 (38.3-57.5)	108	27.9 (22.1-33.7)	81	22.8 (16.5-29.1)	161	41.2 (34.4-47.9)
Free disinfectants								
	174	46.9 (37.6-56.1)	97	24.2 (18.7-29.6)	73	22 (16.4-27.6)	164	43.1 (36.8-49.5)
Self-help groups								
	108	30.7 (22.6-38.6)	15	3.3 (1.5-5.1)	4	1.1 (0-2.1)	23	6.4 (3.4-9.3)
Methadone / buprenorphine substitution therapy								
	6	2.3 (0.2-4.4)	2	0.4 (0-0.9)	0	--	0	--
Drug addiction treatment								
	10	2.6 (0.9-4.3)	4	1.1 (0-2.2)	0	--	0	--
Medical consultation for STI								
	58	14.5 (8.4-20.7)	10	1.5 (0.5-2.6)	6	1.9 (0.2-3.6)	8	1.9 (0.6-3.2)
Treatment of sexually transmitted diseases								
	5	1 (0-1.9)	0	--	0	--	0	--
Psychological counseling								
	106	27.7 (20.5-35.1)	33	8.3 (4.4-12.3)	6	1.3 (0.2-2.3)	1	0.3 (0-0.8)
Free hygiene bags/pads used								
	35	10 (6.4-13.5)	14	2.4 (1-3.9)	17	4.2 (2.2-6.2)	31	11 (6.1-15.9)
Overdose prevention services								
	86	21.9 (15-28.8)	38	9.8 (6.3-13.4)	1	0.9 (0.7-1)	11	2.3 (1.1-3.5)
Legal advice								
	97	25 (18.8-31.3)	20	4.4 (1.8-6.9)	5	1 (0.2-1.8)	27	6.3 (3.9-8.7)
No one								
	147	43.58 (33.6-54)	188	57.6 (51.4-63.9)	221	67.8 (60.8-74.9)	151	54.9 (48.2-61.5)

Overdose and treatment

Between 6% of PWID in Tiraspol and 16% in Balti overdosed in the last 12 months; between 6% in Tiraspol and 42% in Chisinau know about naloxone and between 4% in Ribnita and 31% in Balti used it to treat an overdose themselves or other users. The majority of PWID have never been in a treatment program to stop injecting drugs. Each third respondent in Ribnita and fifth in Tiraspol would accept the opioid substitution therapy for spot injecting drugs. [15]

Table 2.6. Overdose and treatment among PWID Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
OVERDOSED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS								
Yes	61	14.6 (9.8-19.4)	68	16.3 (11.9-20.8)	24	5.8 (3.4-8.3)	17	6.3 (3.2-9.3)
KNOWS WHAT NALOXONE IS								
Yes	153	41.7 (32.6-50.9)	89	21.3 (16.2-26.4)	31	6.4 (3.8-9)	95	21.6 (16.8-26.5)
USED NALOXONE TO TREAT AN OVERDOSE IN THEMSELVES OR OTHER USERS								
Yes	22	11.8 (4.8-18.8)	27	31.2 (18.6-43.9)	9	19.5 (5.6-30.8)	3	4 (1-9.8)
EVER BEEN IN A TREATMENT PROGRAM TO STOP INJECTING DRUGS								
Currently in treatment	2	0.3 (0-0.7)	0	--	0	--	0	--
Previously treated, but not currently	105	28.9 (22.8-35.1)	106	25.3 (20.1-30.5)	23	6.1 (2.8-9.3)	28	9.4 (4.7-14.1)
Never been treated	**256**	**70.7 (64.5-76.9)**	**250**	**74.6 (69.4-79.8)**	**309**	**93.8 (90.5-97.1)**	**294**	**90.6 (86-95.3)**
EVER BEEN IN A TREATMENT PROGRAM TO STOP INJECTING DRUGS IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS								
Yes	18	16.4 (6.1-26.9)	9	6.3 (1.4-11.1)	0	--	2	5.1 (2.5-7.6)
WOULD ACCEPT OPIOID SUBSTITUTION THERAPY FOR STOP INJECTING DRUGS								
	72	17.5 (12.7-22.4)	65	16.6 (12-21.2)	70	18.5 (13.3-23.7)	135	36.1 (29.9-42.3)

HIV/AIDS knowledge

Most PWID have ever heard of HIV/AIDS (Tables 2.7) and, except for PWID in Ribnita (75%), almost all know that having sex with one faithful, uninfected partner and that proper use of

[15] The substitution opioid therapy is not implemented on the left bank of Nistru (transnistria region) due the political context.

condoms during each sexual intercourse reduces the risk of HIV transmission. Except for PWID in Ribnita (82%), roughly 90% know that a health looking person can still have HIV. High percentages of PWID correctly know that you cannot get HIV from a mosquito bite and from sharing a meal with and from using the same toilet as some living with HIV. Most PWID believe a student living with HIV should still continue attending school, a teacher living with HIV should still be teaching and that it is safe to buy food from someone who is living with HIV.

Table 2.7. HIV Knowledge, perception and stigma towards people living with HIV in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
Ever hear of hiv/aids								
	364	99,9 (99.8-100)	357	100	327	97.9 (96-99.8)	318	98 (96.1-99.9)
Having sex with one faithful, uninfected partner reduce risk of HIV								
	314	86 (80.6-91.4)	331	91.5 (87.6-95.3)	295	90.7 (87.7-93.6)	225	75.4 (70.1-80.7)
Risk from HIV transmission is reduced by a proper use of condoms during each sexual intercourse								
	338	90.4 (85.5-95.2)	338	95.6 (93.5-97.7)	300	92.5 (89-95.9)	283	86.8 (82.3-91.4)
A health-looking person can be living with HIV								
	325	89 (84.5-93.4)	334	93.7 (90.7-96.6)	289	89.3 (85.6-92.9)	260	82.3 (77.6-87)
A person can get HIV from mosquito bite								
	75	19.9 (13.8-26)	40	14.1 (9.5-18.6)	63	20.2 (15-25.5)	8	2.1 (0.7-3.5)
Can get HIV from sharing a meal with someone living with HIV								
	52	12.9 (8.1-17.7)	31	8.7 (5.3-12.2)	52	14.2 (10.3-18.1)	39	10.5 (7-14)
Can get HIV by using the same toilet with someone living with HIV								
	61	18.3 (12.6-24)	33	6.9 (4.4-9.4)	50	13.8 (9.6-18)	40	12.8 (8.5-17.1)
Ready to use the same utensils with someone living with HIV (of those who have heard of HIV)								
	194	51 (43.6-58.4)	192	53.6 (47.5-59.7)	224	69.1 (63.3-75)	161	53.7 (46.8-60.7)
He would not keep it a secret if he found out that any of his acquaintances or friends were HIV positive								
	80	21.1 (15.5-26.8)	37	10.8 (6.8-14.7)	57	17.6 (12.5-22.8)	21	5.8 (3.2-8.3)
Can a student who is living with HIV but does not show AIDS symptoms continue to study								
	328	91.3 (87.4-95.3)	311	86.5 (82.3-90.6)	284	86.8 (82.1-91.6)	290	87.9 (83.3-92.3)
Can a teacher who is living with HIV but not showing AIDS symptoms continue teaching								
	310	85.9 (80.5-91.2)	299	82.3 (77.4-87.2)	274	83.7 (78.3-89)	274	80.8 (74.9-86.8)
Would still buy food from an owner of a grocery store or catering establishment if he/she is living with HIV								
	260	75 (69.1-80.8)	262	72.6 (66.5-78.7)	271	81.3 (75.9-86.7)	230	72.2 (66.3-78.1)
INTEGRATED INDICATOR OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HIV								
	204	54.3 (46.2-62.4)	249	68.8 (63.1-74.5)	181	57 (50.9-63)	147	51.3 (44.6-58.3)

Sexual behaviors

All or almost all PWID ever had sex, most of whom did it for the first time during adolescence (Table 2.8). Most PWID reported having sexual intercourse in the past six months, among which between 32% in Chisinau and Ribnita and 46% in Balti reported sexual intercourse with non-marital, non-cohabitating partners. Among them, between 46% in Tiraspol and 64% in Chisinau used a condom at last sex with non-martial, non-cohabitating partner. Between 2% in Ribnita and 5% in Chisinau and Balti of PWID who had sex in the last year, did not do so in the last six months.

Table 2.8. Sexual Behavior among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Rpublic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
EVER HAD SEX								
	365	100	357	100	331	99.2 (98.2-100)	321	98.8 (96.9-100)
AGE OF FIRST SEX								
15-18	**340**	**93.1 (89-97.2)**	**336**	**92.5 (88.8-96.2)**	**303**	**96.3 (93.8-98.8)**	**291**	**91.5 (87.3-95.8)**
19-24	18	6.5 (2.5-10.5)	20	7 (3.4-10.7)	10	3.6 (1.1-6)	18	7.4 (3.2-11.4)
25-34	2	0.4 (0-0.8)	1	0.5 (0-1.4)	1	0.1 (0-0.3)	2	1.1 (0-2.6)
AGE AT FIRS SEX								
<24	358	99.6 (99.2-100)	356	99.5 (98.6-100)	313	99.9 (99.7-100)	309	98.9 (97.4-100)
25+	2	0.4 (0-0.8)	1	0.5 (0-1.4)	1	0.1 (0-0.3)	2	1.1 (0-2.6)
SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IN LAST 12 MONTHS								
	334	89.9 (85-94.7)	328	90.7 (86.6-94.7)	289	85.9 (81.2-90.7)	309	94.5 (91-98)
SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IN LAST 6 MONTHS								
	313	84.7 (78.8-90.6)	316	86.9 (82.3-91.4)	282	83 (77.9-88.1)	305	92.1 (87.8-96.4)
SEX WITH NON-MARITAL NON-COHABITATING PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS								
	111	32.4 (25.6-39.1)	153	46.2 (39.4-53)	117	36.5 (30.4-42.6)	117	31.7 (25.9-37.6)
USED CONDOM WITH NON-MARTIAL NON-COHABITATING PARTNER AT LAST SEX								
	63	64.2 (53.2-75.4)	74	51.9 (41.9-62)	53	46.4 (36.3-56.5)	72	60.3 (51.7-68.8)

Sexual partners' types

Between 29% of PWID in Chisinau and Ribnita and 45% in Balti had a casual sex partner in the last six months, among which around half in all cities had two and more occasional partners and more than half to three quarters used a condom at last sex with their occasional partner (Table

2.9). Between 73% in Balti and 84% in Chisinau had a steady sex partner in the past six months, among which the majority had one such partner and between 23% and 42% used a condom at last sex. Between 3% in Balti and 6% in Ribnita reported having a payed sex partner in the past six months, among which the majority had two or more such partners and between 48% in Tiraspol and 100% in Chisinau and Ribnita used a condom at last sex with their commercial partner. Most PWID in all cities reported that their last sex partner was a steady partner. Between 10% in Balti and 51% in Chisinau always used a condom in the last month with a casual partner, while from 37% in Balti to 49% in Ribnita never used a condom in the last month with a steady partner.

Table 2.9. Sexual partners' types in past six months among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	N	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
CASUAL SEX PARTNER								
	96	28.9 (22.8-35)	148	44.8 (38-51.5)	109	34.2 (27.1-41.1)	106	29.1 (23.5-34.6)
Number of casual sex partners								
1	39	49 (36,3-62,2)	63	49.9 (39.9-60.2)	33	36.2 (25.7-47.5)	45	47.2 (36.5-58.8)
2	28	24.1 (16-31.9)	44	27 (19.2-34.6)	24	19.6 (12.3-26.7)	28	25.5 (16.5-34.1)
3+	29	26.9 (12.7-40.8)	41	23.2 (14.8-31.3)	52	44.2 (31.7-56.1)	32	26.3 (18-34)
Condom use with casual sex partner at last sex								
	61	75.7 (65.3-86.3)	88	63.9 (52.9-75.1)	59	54.8 (45.2-64.2)	79	73.9 (61.2-86.3)
Frequency of condom use during sexual intercourse with casual sex partner in the last month								
Always (100%)	**43**	**51 (32.5-70)**	16	9.9 (2.8-16.9)	**35**	**32.2 (22.1-42.3)**	**43**	**37.7 (23.8-51)**
Most times (75%-99)	6	3.5 (0-7.5)	**38**	**30.8 (17.2-44.5)**	9	5.9 (2.2-19.1)	19	15.4 (6-24.4)
Every second time (25-74%)	4	6.8 (0-28.9)	26	18.1 (9.2-27.2)	16	11.8 (4.7-18.4)	5	4.3 (0.4-8.2)
Rarely (1-24%)	6	8.1 (0-20.1)	21	13.2 (6.2-20.2)	13	14.7 (6.4-23.4)	4	4.9 (1.3-8.7)
Never (0%)	17	12.8 (5.5-19.9)	24	15.1 (6.9-23.3)	15	15.3 (7.2-23.7)	13	14.5 (6.1-23.2)
No contacts in last month	19	17.8 (5.1-30.5)	22	12.9 (3.2-22.6)	20	20.2 (8.4-31.9)	22	23.2 (9.8-37.2)
STEADY SEX PARTNER								
	259	84.3 (78.6-90.1)	227	73.3 (67.5-79.1)	211	77.8 (72.1-83.6)	243	82.7 (78.4-87.2)
Number of steady partners								
1	207	82.7 (77-88.4)	183	85.2 (80.9-89.6)	208	99.1 (98-100)	231	90.9 (83.9-97.8)

2	40	13.8 (8.4-19.1)	23	7.9 (4.6-11)	2	0.6 (0-1.5)	8	5.2 (0-10.5)
3+	12	3.5 (0.7-6.3)	21	6.9 (3.8-10)	1	0.3 (0-0.9)	4	3.9 (0-8.2)
Condom use with steady sex partner at last sex								
	91	39.4 (27.9-51)	73	33.9 (26.5-41.3)	86	41.8 (33.5-50.1)	40	22.5 (14.7-30.6)
Frequency of condom use during sexual intercourse with steady sex partner in the last month								
Always (100%)	52	22.9 (15-30.7)	36	14.9 (8.7-20.9)	49	22.9	17	11.9 (4.2-19.7)
Most times (75%-99)	7	3.2 (0.6-5.9)	13	7.1 (2.2-11.9)	13	7.7 (2.8-12.7)	8	4.7 (0.8-8.7)
Every second time (25-74%)	10	4.9 (1.4-8.4)	19	8.9 (3.9-13.9)	25	9.9 (4.5-15.2)	20	6.4 (3.3-9.4)
Rarely (1-24%)	38	13.5 (8.5-18.5)	50	21.7 (14.4-29)	9	5.4 (1.2-9.5)	32	13.9 (8.6-19.1)
Never	**127**	**47.4 (38.8-56)**	**89**	**37.1 (28.8-45.6)**	**87**	**38.4 (30.6-46.1)**	**132**	**48.7 (40.6-56.7)**
No contacts in last month	23	8.1 (3.3-12.9)	20	10.2 (5.5-15.1)	26	15.8 (9.3-22.5)	34	14.4 (9.2-19.6)
PAYING PARTNER/CLIENT/ PARTNER WHOM YOU PAID FOR SEXUAL INTERCOURSE								
	23	5.2 (2.6-7.7)	15	3.2 (1.6-4.8)	13	3.8 (1.8-5.7)	25	5.7 (3.4-7.9)
Number of paying / whom you paid sex partners								
1	9	38.4 (12.4-64.3)	7	58.7 (35.5-83.4)	5	50.9 (25-79.5)	10	39.3 (24-53.9)
2	8	35.4 (14.2-56.7)	3	15 (-0.2-29.6)	2	16 (-4.7-36.9)	5	23.6 (9-39.4)
3+	6	26.2 (3-49.4)	5	26.3 (6.9-44.9)	6	33.1 (11-52.3)	10	37.2 (16.5-57.2)
Condom use with paying / whom you paid sex partner at last sex								
	23	100	9	63.8 (39.6-88.6)	7	47.6 (16.9-75.9)	23	100
Frequency of condom use during sexual intercourse with paid/paying partner sex partner in the last month								
Always (100%)	20	89.2 (89.3-89.3)	4	39.9 (13.7-67.5)	3	22.3 (1.6-42.5)	10	43.7 (27-61.4)
Most times (75%-99)	0	--	5	24.1 (6.1-40.9)	2	11.4 (1.1-20.7)	4	11.6 (1.2-20.7)
Every second time (25-74%)	1	2.9 (2.9-2.9)	1	8.7 (0-25)	0	--	1	2.8 (0-12.1)
Rarely (1-24%)	0	--	2	9.7 (0-20.2)	2	9.7 (0-18.8)	0	--
Never	0	--	2	11.8 (0-25.9)	3	42.9 (18.1-71.3)	0	--
No contacts in last month	6	7.9 (7.8-7.8)	1	5.9 (0-16.5)	2	13.7 (0-29.9)	10	41.9 (24.8-59.5)
TYPE OF PARTNER AT LAST SEX								
Steady	**259**	**80 (74.1-86)**	**209**	**66.1 (59.9-72.4)**	**202**	**73.7 (68.1-79.5)**	**224**	**76.8 (71.9-81.6)**
Paid/paying partner	7	2 (0.2-3.8)	8	1.5 (0.2-2.8)	6	1.6 (0.4-2.7)	11	2.5 (0.8-4.1)
Casual	63	18 (12.3-23.6)	107	32.4 (26.2-38.6)	80	24.7 (19-30.4)	74	20.8 (16.2-25.4)

HIV testing

Most PWID know where to get a confidential HIV test (Tables 2.10). Between 58% in Ribnita and 74% in Chisinau have ever been tested for HCV and greater than half of respondents from Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita had an HIV test more than 12 months ago. In Chisinau, three quarters of

respondents were tested in the last 12 months. Almost all PWID know the results of their last test, among which 8% in Chisinau to 26% in Tiraspol had positive test results (Figure 2.6).

Table 2.10. HIV Testing among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
KNOWS WHERE TO GET A CONFIDENTIAL HIV TEST								
	287	80.6 (74.6-86.6)	308	85.9 (81.1-90.7)	257	76.3 (70.8-81.7)	302	91.7 (86.9-96.5)
EVER TESTED FOR:								
Hep. B (HBV)	4	1 (0-2.1)	4	1.2 (0-2.4)	1	0.2 (0-0.5)	1	0.3 (0-0.9)
Hep. C (HCV)	96	25.7 (18.4-32.9)	17	4.1 (1.7-6.5)	16	2.8 (1.6-4)	66	20.7 (15.5-25.9)
Hep. C (HCV) & Hep. B (HBV)	**175**	**48 (40.9-55.2)**	**193**	**49.7 (43-56.4)**	**171**	**51.7 (45.3-58.2)**	**103**	**36.8 (29.5-44.1)**
HIV	291	79.2 (72.2-86.1)	246	63.9 (57.2-70.7)	267	78.3 (72.7-83.9)	263	81.6 (76.2-87.1)
TIME OF LAST HIV TEST								
6 months	**165**	**58.5 (49.7-67.3)**	19	7.4 (3.6-11.3)	70	27 (20.7-33.4)	98	37.5 (29.9-44.9)
6-12 months	35	13.7 (7.7-19.6)	62	23.8 (17.8-29.8)	30	10.5 (6.2-14.7)	28	12 (6.5-17.7)
>12 months	91	27.9 (20.9-34.9)	**165**	**68.8 (62.1-75.5)**	**165**	**62.5 (55.5-69.5)**	**137**	**50.5 (42.8-58.2)**
KNOW RESULTS AT LAST TEST								
	286	98.5 (97.1-99.8)	240	98.1 (96.4-99.8)	261	97.7 (95.1-100)	262	97.1 (94.8-99.3)
RESULTS FROM LAST TEST								
Positive	24	8.1 (3.6-12.5)	27	10.2 (5.9-14.4)	68	26.3 (20.2-32.5)	31	16.1 (9.2-23.3)
Negative	261	91.7 (87.2-96.1)	210	88.7 (84.3-93.1)	192	73.1 (66.8-79.4)	231	83.9 (76.8-90.8)
Indeterminate	1	0.1 (0-0.1)	2	0.5 (0-1.2)	1	0.6 (0-1.5)	0	--
HIV TEST IN PAST 12 MONTHS AND KNOWN RESULTS								
	199	99 (97.6-100)	80	100	97	98.6 (97.4-99.9)	126	100

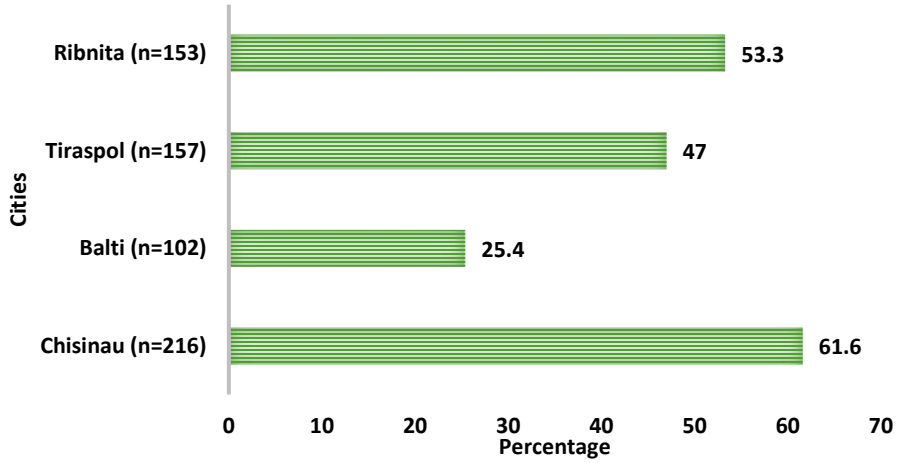

Figure 2.6. HIV test in past 12 months and received results or has known HIV status [16]

Stigma and discrimination

One quarter or under of PWID have avoided seeking medical services or avoided HIV testing services because of fear or concern about stigma from staff or neighbors, someone will find out they inject drugs, or possible or experienced violence or police harassment or arrest (Table 2.11).

Table 2.11. Avoiding medical services and testing because of stigma or discrimination among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	N	%.CI	N	%.CI	N	%.CI	N	%.CI
IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS HAD TO AVOID SEEKING MEDICAL SERVICES BECAUSE OF FEAR OR CONCERN ABOUT:								
STIGMA FROM STAFF OR NEIGHBORS								
Yes	32	6.3 (3.7-8.9)	79	23.3 (17.3-29.3)	32	9.3 (6.1-12.4)	15	7.9 (3.2-12.6)
THAT SOMEONE KNOWS THAT YOU ARE INJECTING DRUGS								
Yes	46	8.1 (5.2-10.9)	87	25 (19.1-31)	27	8.3 (5.5-11.2)	69	21.1 (15.8-26.3)
POSSIBLE OR EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE								
Yes	16	3.1 (1.4-4.9)	63	18.8 (13.8-23.9)	4	1.9 (0-3.7)	6	4.2 (0.1-8.4)
POSSIBLE OR EXPERIENCED POLICE HARASSMENT OR ARREST								
Yes	25	4.6 (2.6-6.6)	80	22.6 (17.1-28)	46	12.8 (8.8-16.8)	74	20 (15.4-24.6)
IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS HAD TO AVOID SEEKING HIV TESTING SERVICES BECAUSE OF FEAR OR CONCERN ABOUT:								
STIGMA FROM STAFF OR NEIGHBORS								
Yes	10	2.2 (0.6-3.8)	68	20 (14.4-25.6)	8	2.5 (0.9-4.1)	25	7.4 (4.4-10.4)
THAT SOMEONE KNOWS THAT YOU ARE INJECTING DRUGS								
Yes	20	3.9 (1.8-6.1)	69	19.5 (14.5-24.5)	7	2.3 (0.6-3.9)	30	8.2 (5.2-11.3)
POSSIBLE OR EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE								
Yes	7	1.5 (0.1-2.8)	52	15.2 (10.5-19.8)	2	0.7 (0-1.6)	2	1.3 (0-3)
POSSIBLE OR EXPERIENCED POLICE HARASSMENT OR ARREST								
Yes	12	2.7 (0.8-4.7)	63	17.6 (12.6-22.7)	9	2.5 (0.6-4.4)	25	8.5 (4.6-12.3)

[16] GAM Indicator nr.3.4 HIV testing among key populations

HIV/AIDS and other infections

Between 42% in Tiraspol and 63% in Ribnita have antibodies to HCV, between 1% in Balti and 11% in Ribnita have antibodies to HBV, and between 4% in Chisinau, Balti, Ribnita and 5% in Tiraspol are positive for Syphilis. HIV prevalence among all PWID is 11,4% (n=205); 8,1% (n=34) in Chisinau, 14,9 (n=59) in Balti, 23,5% (n=77) in Tiraspol, 14,5% (n=35) in Ribnita (Figure 2.7).

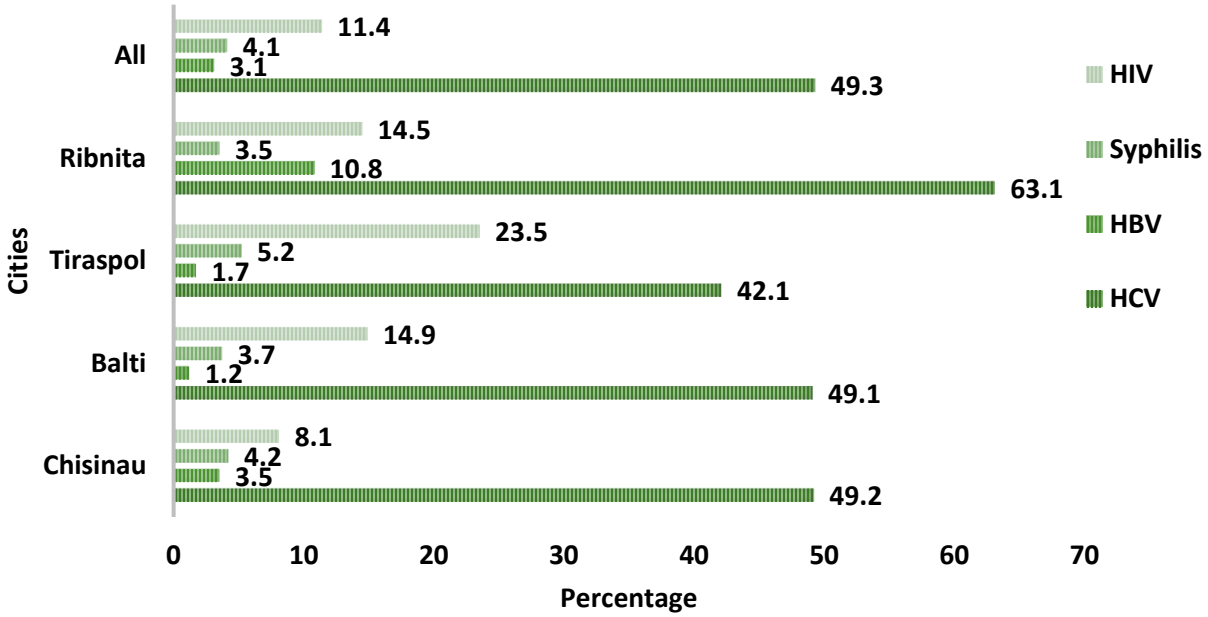

Figure 2.7. HIV/AIDS and other infections among PWID, Republic of Moldova, 2020

Discussion and recommendations of PWID findings

HCV prevalence is high

PWID have high HCV prevalence. The spread of HCV among this group is likely attributed to needle and paraphernalia sharing practices (30% of PWID reported indirect sharing and 4% direct sharing of syringes; 22% of PWID who were in prison shared injecting equipment in

prison[17]). It is imperative that the government prioritizes prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of HCV among PWID, including routine screening of all PWID.

High HIV prevalence

Prevalence of HIV range between 8% and 23.5%. PWID should be routinely screened and treated for HIV and syphilis, as well as other infections to reduce further transmission. Access to PrEP should be scaled up for PWID, especially those that share drugs. However, the focus of reducing the risk of HIV transmission among PWID should be on harm reduction[18]. PWID practice risky sexual behaviors (more occasional partners and low consistent us of condom) which indicates possible further transmission of HIV into the general population. Needle exchange programs should be tailored to the special needs of PWID and include prevention education for sexual partners of PWID as well.

PWID engage in high-risk sexual behaviors with multiple partner types

Age at first sexual intercourse among PWID under the age of 18 years. Despite most PWID living without a partner, the majority have multiple sex partners in the past year. PWID reported inconsistent condom use with regular and non-regular partners. Having unprotected sex with multiple sex partners increases the risk of acquiring and transmitting STI. Condom promotion programs in conjunction with PWID harm reduction services should be made available and accessible to all PWID[19].

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[17] Appendix C, table C2, table C4

[18]Coleman RL, McLean S. Commentary: the value of PrEP for people who inject drugs. J Int AIDS Soc. 2016;19(7(Suppl 6)):21112. Available from: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27760686

[19] World Health Organization. Consolidated guidelines on HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for key populations. Geneva, Switzerland; 2014. Available from: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/128048/1/9789241507431_eng.pdf?ua=1&ua=1

Non-injection drug use is common among PWID

High percentages of PWID use non-injection drugs. The concurrent use of non-injection and injection drugs contributes to overdose mortality among PWID[20]. Survey findings highlight the need for the integration of substance abuse services, including other non-injection drugs, into HIV prevention interventions, targeting PWID. Although hemp do not have known morbidities or mortalities related to its use, other non-injection drugs being used such as analgesics, opioids and stimulants can be highly addictive.

Injecting drug use and sharing behaviors are high among PWID

The drug most often injected by PWID in the last one and last 6 months was NPS in powder, crystal or tablet form in Chisinau and Balti, poppy (shirca) in Tiraspol and methamphetamine in Ribnita. Although between 2% and 6 % of PWID injected with a needle previously used by someone else in the past month (in the last one to six months, the range is between 7% and 19%), high percentages of PWID indirectly exchanged injecting equipment in the past six months (28% to 55%). The scale-up of harm-reduction programs, including the provision of sterile needles and injection equipment, is crucial in reducing HIV and HCV transmission in this population. Prevention interventions should educate PWID on how to properly sterilize needles and emphasize the risks associated with sharing needles and other injecting equipment. Effective treatment for drug addiction should be accessible for all PWID who want it and in the required amount.

PWID reported wanting to stop injecting

A quarter of PWID from the right bank reported trying to quit drugs, however given that these people are still injecting indicates that the programs are not working well. Effective treatment

[20] Johnson C, Dong H, Ahamad K, Hayashi K, Milloy MJ, Kerr T, et al. Impact of binge alcohol on mortality among people who inject drugs. Addict Behav Reports. 2015; Degenhardt L, Bucello C, Mathers B, Briegleb C, Ali H, Hickman M, et al. Mortality among regular or dependent users of heroin and other opioids: a systematic review and meta-analysis of cohort studies. Addiction. 2011.

modalities, including methadone or buprenorphine therapy treatment, are essential to reducing drug addiction. One fifth of PWID from Tiraspol and one third from Ribnita expressed interest in opiate substitution therapy to quit drug use. If PWID are wanting to stop injecting, accessible programs along with ongoing social support, education and training opportunities should be made available.

PWID inject drugs while incarcerated

High percentages (from 40% to 48%) of PWID had been imprisoned and about half of them had injected drugs while in prison (See Appendix C). The sharing of injecting equipment in prison is higher than out of prisons. Policies for punishing and imprisoning PWID for drug use, including carrying clean needles, should be evaluated. Although prisons provide HIV testing, treatment, and linkage to care programs, as well as harm reduction services, for PWID while they are in prison, there is still a lot of risk behaviors.

HIV knowledge was high and perceived risk was low

While many PWID are knowledgeable about HIV transmission, high HIV knowledge does not necessarily translate into low risk behaviors. HIV/AIDS education campaigns should be emphasized alongside harm reduction programs. Existing interventions should continue to emphasize the risks associated with injection drug use and unprotected sexual activity and dispel any myths about the cause, transmission, and treatment of HIV.

HIV testing is low among PWID

Although most PWID reported accessibility to HIV testing services, under 40% of PWID from Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita had an HIV test in the past year and received their results. Routine HIV screening should be encouraged for all PWID. Because PWID are often criminalized or

discriminated against, provision of safe, PWID-friendly testing services, in clinical and non-clinical settings, are essential to increase HIV testing[21].

Summary Of Key Recommendations

- Scale up non-clinical and clinical routine HIV, HCV and STI testing services for PWID.
- Harm reduction services should be made available and easily accessible to PWID. Programs should include opioid substitution therapy (OST), needle and syringe exchange programs, and naloxone to prevent overdose.
- Advocate for an enabling political environment, integration with public health policy, the presence of supportive laws, and opposition to violence to reinforce the effectiveness of HIV prevention, especially for key population who may currently find it extremely challenging to access service.
- Integrate mental health services, to include substance abuse counseling and treatment, with HIV prevention programs targeting PWID.
- Scale up of coverage of methadone substitution therapy, including on the left bank.
- Educate health care and other service providers on the specific needs of PWID.
- Provide sensitivity training to health care and other service providers to ensure a welcoming and supportive environment for PWID who seek services.
- Scale up HIV/AIDS education services, specifically focusing on risks associated with injection drug use.
- Formative research to better understand the injecting and sexual behaviors of females who inject drugs.
- Scale-up coverage of combination prevention services.
- Form advocacy groups to increase awareness and create environments to support PWID.

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[21] World Health Organization. Consolidated guidelines on HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for key populations [Internet]. Geneva, Switzerland; 2014. Available from: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/128048/1/9789241507431_eng.pdf?ua=1&ua=1

- Decriminalize drug using behavior, especially for carrying clean needles and syringes.
- Implement testing, treatment, and linkage to care programs in prisons.
- Provide HIV/AIDS education and harm reduction services to PWID who are incarcerated.

III. Men who have sex with Men (MSM)

The maximum number of waves reached in the recruitment chains of Chisinau was 8 (Figure 3.1) and in Balti was 7 (Figure 3.2). In Chisinau 363 MSM were sampled and in Balti 291 were sampled.

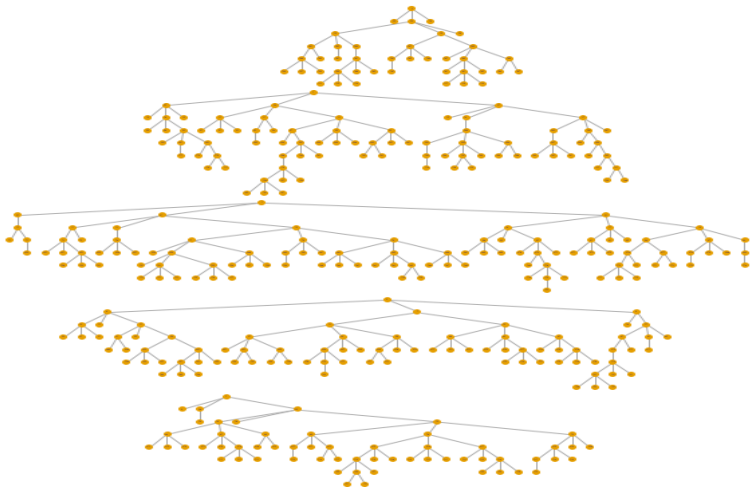

Figure 3.1. Recruitment graph of the MSM sample (n=363), with five recruitment chains, Chisinau, 2020.

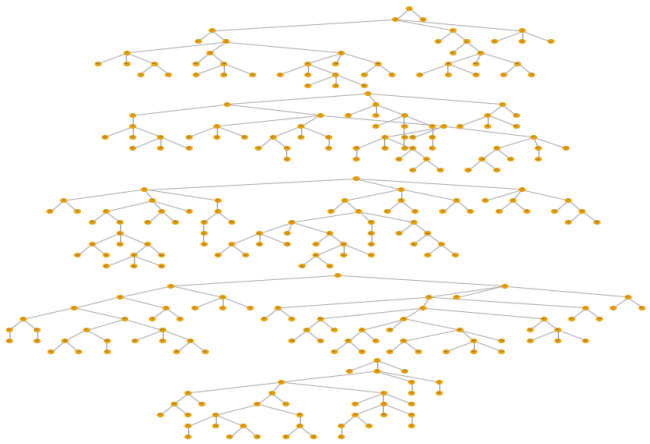

Figure 3.2. Recruitment graph of the MSM sample (n=291), with five recruitment chains, Balti, 2020.

Socio-demographic characteristics

About 2% of MSM in Chisinau and in Balti were adolescents (15 to 18 years) (Figure 3.4) and the majority of all MSM in the two cities were over the age of 25 years (Table 3.1).

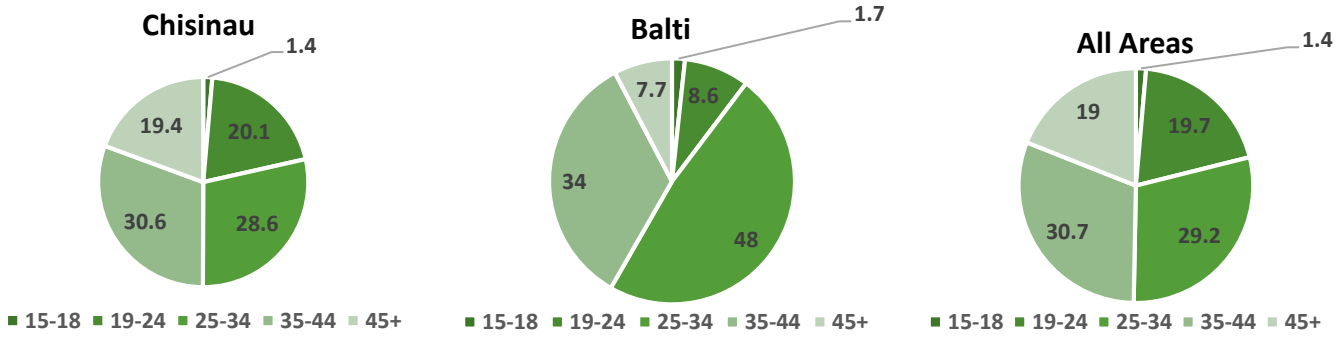

Figure 3.3. Age groups among MSM, 2020

About half of MSM are single, living without a partner. More than half of the MSM in Chisinau (56%) have secondary or specialized secondary education and 46% of the MSM in Balti have nine classes and less. Sixty-three percent in Chisinau and 70% in Balti have permanent-full-time jobs as their source of income. Few MSM have no income. Half of MSM in Chisinau have an

average monthly income of ≥6001 MDL and 46% of MSM in Balti have an average monthly income of 3001-6000 MDL. Seventeen percent of MSM in Chisinau and 18% in Balti have travelled abroad in the last 12 months.

Table 3.1. Sociodemographic characteristics among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
AGE						
<24	90	21.5 (15.9-27)	28	10.3 (6.2-14.4)	118	21.1
25+	**273**	**78.5 (73-84.1)**	**262**	**89.7 (85.6-93.8)**	**535**	**78.9**
AGE; MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
	34.7/35/±11		33.5/33/±8.3		34.6/34/±10.9	
MARITAL STATUS						
Married, live w/wife	42	22.9 (16.1-29.8)	33	10.3 (6.4-14.1)	75	22.5
Married, live w/partner	0	--	0	--	0	--
Married, live with male sex partner	2	0.6 (0-1.3)	1	0.3 (0-0.6)	3	0.5
Married, not living with sex partner	11	2.7 (0.6-4.7)	1	0.6 (0-1.6)	12	2.6
Single, live with sex partner	9	2.1 (0.5-3.6)	12	4.8 (2.4-7.2)	21	2.2
Single, live with male sex partner	58	13.3 (9.1-17.5)	50	16.7 (12.4-20.9)	108	13.4
Single, do not live with sex partner	**203**	**49.4 (42.7-56.1)**	**137**	**51.8 (46.2-57.5)**	**340**	**49.4**
Widowed/divorced, live w/sex partner	5	1.5 (0.5-2.6)	8	2 (0.8-3.1)	13	1.6
Widowed/divorced, live w/male sex partner	7	1.8 (0.4-3.3)	5	0.8 (0.2-1.5)	12	1.8
Widowed/divorced, do not live w/sex partner	22	5.8 (2.7-8.9)	44	12.8 (9.1-16.4)	66	6
EDUCATION						
5-9 classes	30	8 (4.4-11.7)	**135**	**48.1 (41.1-54.7)**	165	9.4
Secondary/specialized secondary	**197**	**55.9 (48.6-63.1)**	119	38.5 (31.7-45.3)	**316**	**55.3**
Unfinished higher	36	7.8 (4.4-11.3)	1	0.4 (0-0.9)	37	7.6
Higher education	100	28.3 (21.8-34.7)	36	13 (8.5-17.6)	136	27.7
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT						
Permanent place of work	**211**	**62.5 (56.2-68.9)**	**204**	**70.1 (63.7-76.5)**	**415**	**62.8**
Seasonal work: abroad /in multiple locations	69	18.2 (13.5-22.9)	36	11.3 (6.9-15.6)	105	17.9
Other (pensioner/disabled person)	8	1.8 (0-3.6)	8	2.3 (0.9-3.6)	16	1.8
Student	47	11.4 (7.2-15.6)	6	2.2 (0-4.4)	53	11.1
Unemployed	23	5.7 (2.7-8.6)	35	13.2 (8.7-17.8)	58	5.9

Other	3	0.4 (0-1)	2	0.9 (0-1.9)	5	0.5
AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME IN LAST MONTH (MDL)						
661-1000	2	0.3 (0-0.7)	11	3.5 (1.5-5.4)	13	0.4
1001-3000	34	8 (4.5-11.5)	81	26.1 (21.1-31.1)	115	8.6
3001-6000	123	34.4 (28.1-40.7)	**131**	**46.4 (40.3-52.5)**	254	34.8
≥6001	**179**	**49.9 (42.9-56.8)**	66	23.1 (18-28.1)	245	48.9
Money savings	14	4.8 (1.3-8.2)	0	--	14	4.6
No income	10	2.7 (0.6-4.8)	2	0.9 (0-2.1)	12	2.7
TRAVELED ABROAD						
	62	16.7 (12.3-21.1)	49	18.2 (14-22.4)	111	16.7

Alcohol and non-injection drugs

Eighty-eight percent of MSM in Chisinau and 96% in Balti consumed alcohol or spirits in the past month and 14% in Chisinau and 28% in Balti reported ever-using non-injection drugs (Figure 3.4).

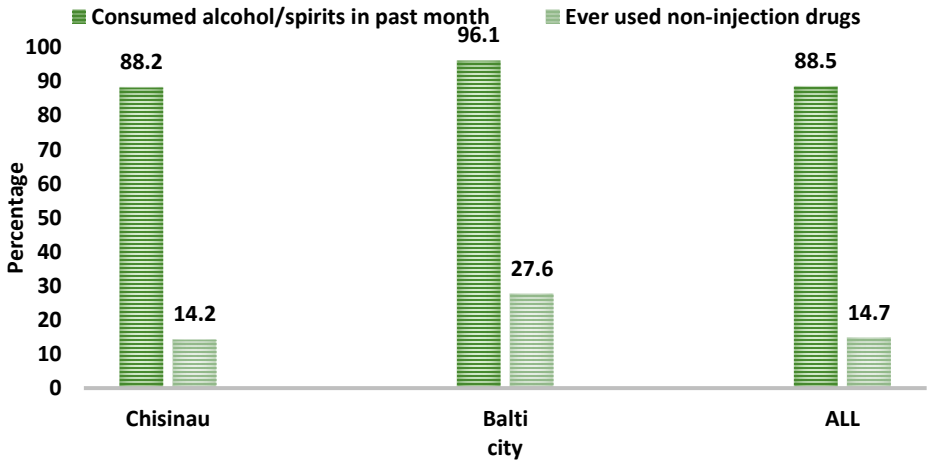

Figure 3.4. Alcohol and non-injection drug use among MSM, 2020

Among those who consumed alcohol in the past month, most in Chisinau did so daily or almost daily and PWID in Balti did so once a week (Table 3.2). Sixty-five percent of MSM from Chisinau and 85% from Balti had sex with men while being intoxicated in the last 6 months. Fourteen percent of MSM in Chisinau and 28% in Balti ever injected drugs. Only one respondent in Chisinau and 9% in Balti injected drugs in the last 12 months, all of whom used a sterile needle/syringe at their last injection.

Table 3.2. Drug and alcohol use among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
FREQUENCY OF ALCOHOL USE IN LAST MONTH						
Less often than once a week	8	1 (0.3-1.7)	**100**	**38 (31.7-44.4)**	108	2.4
At least once a week	57	12.7 (8.2-17.1)	95	35.3 (29.3-41.2)	152	13.6
Several times a week	129	41.7 (34.1-49.4)	57	18.9 (14.2-23.7)	186	40.9
Daily or almost daily	**129**	**44.5 (36.7-52.4)**	7.8	7.8 (4-11.6)	**154**	**43.1**
HAS HAD SEX WITH MEN, BEING INTOXICATED WITH ALCOHOL IN THE LAST 6 MONTHS						
	221	65.2 (58.5-71.8)	235	84.6 (79.5-89.8)	456	65.9
EVER USED NON-INJECTION DRUGS						
	77	14.2 (10.2-18.2)	80	27.6 (21.9-33.2)	157	14.7
HAD ANAL SEX IN THE LAST MONTH, BEING IN A STATE OF NARCOTIC INTOXICATION						
	9	11.9 (3.4-20.6)	41	58.2 (47.3-70.6)	50	14.9
EVER USED INJECTION DRUGS						
	3	0.3 (0-0.7)	33	12 (8.2-15.8)	36	0.7
INJECTED DRUGS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS						
	1	0.2 (0-0.3)	24	8.5 (5.2-11.7)	25	0.4
STERILE NEEDLE AND SYRINGE USED LAST INJECTION DRUG USE						
	1	100	24	100	25	0.4

Sexual orientation

Just over half in Chisinau and 65% in Balti reported their sexual orientation as gay and between 35% in Balti and 41% in Chisinau reported it as bisexual (Figure 3.5).

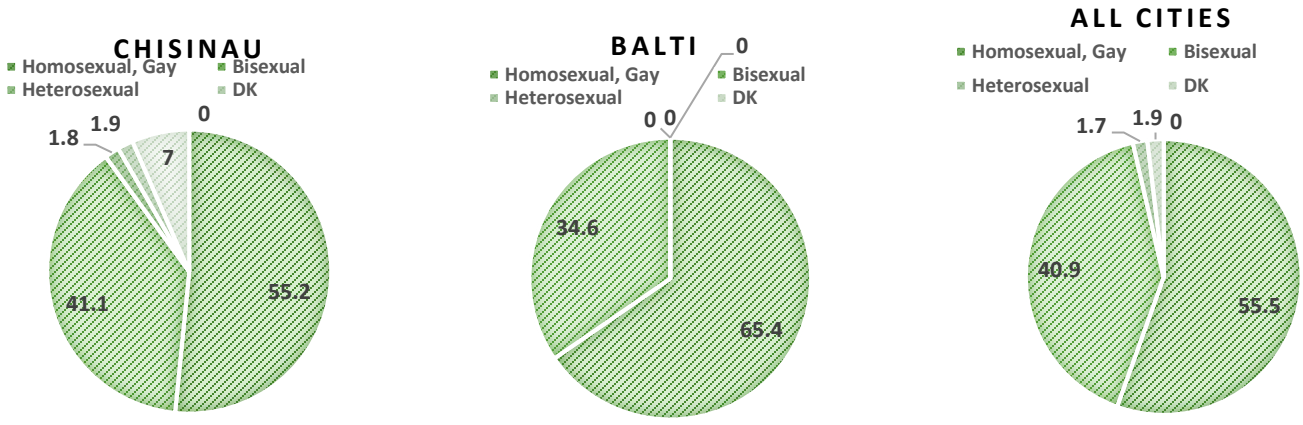

Figure 3.5. Sexual orientation among MSM, 2020

General information about sex

Most MSM in both cities have sexual preferences for males and between 50% in Chisinau and 61% in Balti used a condom during their most recent sexual intercourse with a man or woman (Table 3.3). Most MSM reported that the gender of their last sexual partner was male. The median age of first anal sex ranged from 17 years in Balti to 18 years in Chisinau. Almost half of MSM in Chisinau and 59% in Balti were active sex partners and 41% in Balti and 51% in Chisinau were passive partners during their last anal intercourse. Consistent condom use during anal sex among all MSM who had anal sex in the past six months was reported by only 10% in Chisinau and 27% in Balti. Half of respondents from Chisinau and 69% in Balti had sex with a non-marital, non-cohabitating partner in the last 6 months, among which 58% in Balti and 67% in Chisinau used a condom at last sex. Half did not use condoms during their last anal sex because they considered it not necessary; one third did not think about it.

Table 3.3. General information about sex among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
PREFERENCE OF SEX FOR SEXUAL INTERCOURSE						
MALES	**263**	**63.7 (57-70.4)**	**191**	**67.8 (62.6-72.9)**	**454**	**63.8**
FEMALES	4	1.8 (-0.3-3.9)	2	1.5 (-0.6-3.5)	6	1.8
BOTH	89	34.5 (27.7-41.4)	96	30.8 (25.8-35.8)	185	34.4
USED CONDOM AT MOST RECENT VAGINAL/ANAL SEXUAL INTERCOURSE (MAN OR WOMAN)						
	201	49.7 (43.3-56)	178	60.5 (54.3-66.8)	379	50
GENDER OF LAST SEXUAL PARTNER						
MALE	**320**	**80.4 (74.5-86.3)**	**286**	**98.5 (97.2-99.9)**	**606**	**81**
FEMALE	40	19.6 (13.7-25.6)	4	1.5 (0.1-2.8)	44	19
AGE OF FIRST ANAL SEX; MEAN/MEDIAN/STANDARD DEVIATION						
	21.1/18/±6.8		17.9/17/3.2		21.1/18/±6.7	
LAST ANAL SEX AS A PARTNER:						
ACTIVE	163	48.7 (42.6-54.8)	176	59.1 (53.3-64.8)	339	49.2
PASSIVE	156	51.3 (45.2-57.4)	110	40.9 (35.2-46.7)	266	50.8
CONSISTENT CONDOM USE DURING ANAL SEX EVER						
	32	10.1 (5.9-14.3)	82	27.3 (21.9-32.8)	114	10.8
HAD ANAL SEX WITH MALE PARTNER IN PAST 6 MONTHS						
	363	100	291	100	654	100
SEX WITH NON-MARITAL NON-COHABITATING PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS						

	233	50.4 (43.4-57.5)	193	68.6 (63.6-73.5)	426	51.1
USED CONDOM WITH NON-MARTIAL NON-COHABITATING PARTNER AT LAST SEX						
	154	67.4 (59.9-75)	113	58.2 (50.7-66)	267	66.7
MAIN REASON FOR NOT USING A CONDOM AL LAST SEX ANAL						
NOT AVAILABLE	0	--	6	3.9 (0.5-6.8)	6	0.1
PARTNER DID NOT WANT	7	3.4 (0.4-6.3)	15	12.2 (5.2-19)	22	3.6
DOES NOT LIKE	7	4.2 (0.3-8.2)	34	29.5 (19-40)	41	4.9
USED OTHER METHODS	11	3.8 (1.3-6.3)	1	0.5 (-0.3-1.2)	12	3.7
NOT NECESSARY	87	52.4 (43.2-61.5)	53	51.6 (37.8-65.9)	140	52.3
I DID NOT THINK OF IT	37	33.2 (23.6-43.1)	2	2.4 (-1.1-6)	39	32.5
OTHER	9	3 (0.5-5.3)	0	--	9	2.9

Types of partners in past six months

High percentages of MSM in all cities had a steady male sex partner and around 36% in Balti and 50% in Chisinau had a casual male sex partner in the past six months (Table 3.4). Of those, two-thirds in Balti and three quarters in Chisinau used a condom at last sex with their casual partners and 51% in Chisinau and 65% in Balti used a condom at last sex with their steady partners (Figure 3.6). MSM in all cities had multiple casual and steady partners in the past six months. Five percent of MSM in Chisinau and 37% in Balti had a male commercial sex partner, with an overall median of three such partners in the past six months. In both cities 40% of MSM always used a condom during anal sex with casual partners, 33% with steady partners, 56% with commercial partners. 45% in Chisinau and 53% in Balti reported that their last anal sex was with a steady partner and accordingly 46% and 64% reported using a condom. Between 14% of MSM in Chisinau and 17% in Balti had anal sex with a foreigner in the previous year.

Table 3.4. Types of anal sex partners and condom use among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
ANAL SEX PARTNERS IN LAST SIX MONTHS:						
Casual male sex partner						
	231	50.3 (43.5-56.7)	104	35.8 (29.9-41.6)	335	49.7
Number of casual sex partners past six months; Mean/Median/Standard deviation						
	6.2/4/±10.7		5.1/4/3.9		6.2/4/±10.5	
Steady male sex partner						

	214	67.2 (61.3-73.2)	229	76.1 (71-81.2)	443	67.5
Number of steady male partners past six months; Mean/Median/Standard deviation						
		2,7/2/±1,9		2,7/2/±1,9		2,7/2/±1,9
Paying male partner/client/ male partner whom you paid for sexual intercourse						
	26	4.7 (2.3-7.1)	93	37 (31-42.9)	119	5.8
Number of commercial male partners in past six months; Mean/Median/Standard deviation						
		4.4/2/±5.8		10.2/7/±10.2		5.7/3/±7.3
Anal sex partners in last six months as:						
Active partner	258	69.8 (63.8-75.8)	251	85.2 (80.9-89.4)	509	70.4
Passive partner	239	61.2 (54.6-67.9)	155	54.7 (49.1-60.4)	394	61
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE DURING ANAL SEX IN LAST SIX MONTHS:						
Casual male partner						
Always (100%)	77	39.8 (31.4-48.6)	28	25.8 (11.3-40.1)	105	39.5
Most times (75%-99)	78	30.1 (23.1-36.9)	21	18.7 (8.5-28.7)	99	29.8
Every second time (25-74%)	30	10.2 (5.3-15.1)	22	22.9 (10.7-35.5)	52	10.6
Rarely (1-24%)	27	13.7 (8-19.5)	16	16.9 (8.2-25.9)	43	13.8
Never (0%)	18	6.1 (2.9-9.2)	17	15.7 (6.8-24.5)	35	6.3
Steady male partner						
Always (100%)	71	36.2 (28.3-44.1)	72	31.8 (24.3-39.3)	143	32.5
Most times (75%-99)	14	5.1 (1.7-8.4)	60	24.5 (18.7-30)	74	16.8
Every second time (25-74%)	40	14.6 (8.3-20.9)	48	23.9 (16.4-31.6)	88	20
Rarely (1-24%)	36	14.9 (8.5-21.3)	19	7.5 (4.5-10.3)	55	12.5
Never (0%)	50	29.3 (21.1-37.4)	30	12.4 (7.5-17.3)	80	18.2
Commercial partner						
Always (100%)	12	61 (0-154.8)	35	36.7 (21.9-51.4)	47	55.6
Most times (75%-99)	10	16.7 (0-100)	18	18.6 (7.8-29.3)	28	17.2
Every second time (25-74%)	0	--	13	15.2 (6.5-24.1)	13	3.3
Rarely (1-24%)	2	10.6 (4.4-17)	13	14.9 (5.5-24.4)	15	11.5
Never (0%)	2	11.8 (5.3-18.6)	14	14.6 (7.1-22)	16	12.4
USED CONDOM AT LAST ANAL SEX WITH A MALE PARTNER						
	228	59.6 (52.8-66.3)	187	63.3 (57.9-68.7)	415	59.7
USED CONDOM AT LAST ANAL SEX AS AN ACTIVE PARTNER						
	167	61.4 (53.2-698)	165	66.7 (60..3-73.1)	332	61.7
USED CONDOM AT LAST ANAL SEX AS A PASSIVE PARTNER						
	141	54.7 (46.5-62.9)	100	64.7 (57.5-72)	241	54.8
ANAL SEX WITH A FOREIGNER IN LAST 12 MONTHS						
	51	13.7 (9.5-18)	44	16.7 (12.5-20.9)	95	13.8

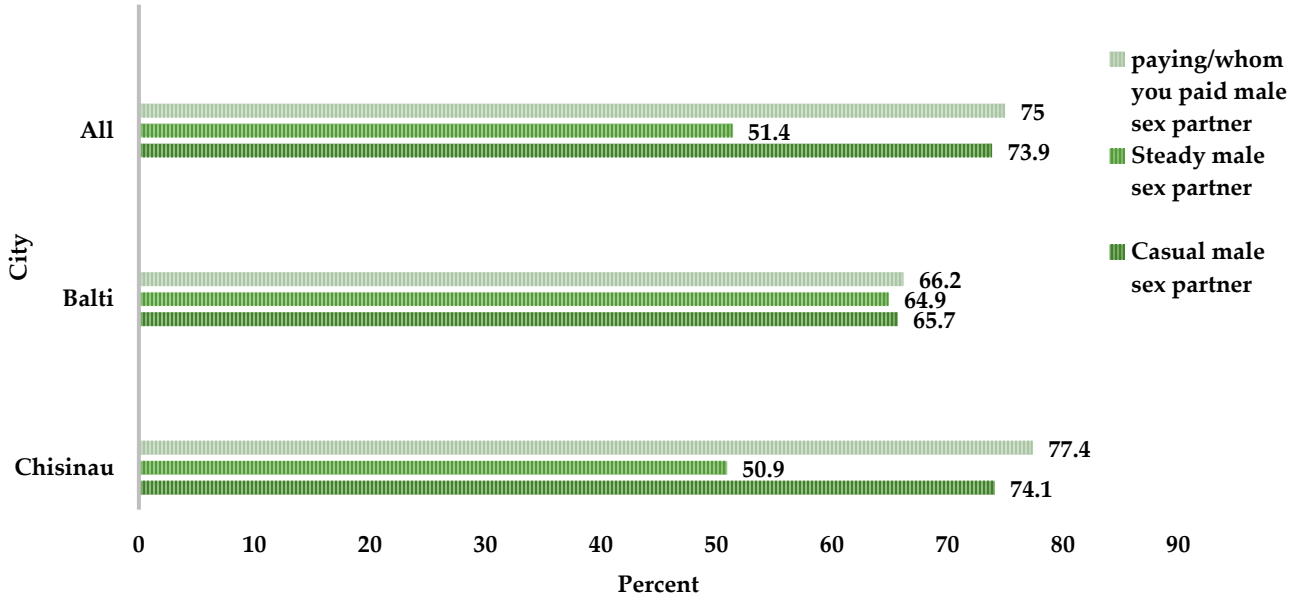

Figure 3.6. Condom use among types of anal sex partners at last sex in the past six months, 2020

Female sex partner

One quarter of MSM in Balti and 16% in Chisinau ever had sexual intercourse with a woman, among which 25% in Balti and 13% in Chisinau used a condom at last sex (Table 3.5). MSM in Balti reported a median of 1 female partner and Chisinau a median of 2 female partners in the past six months.

Table 3.5. Female Sex Partner information among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
Ever had vaginal or anal sex with woman						
	112	25.2 (19.1-31.3)	46	16.2 (11.7-20.8)	158	24.9
Number of different female partners in last 6 months; mean/median/standard deviation						
	1.4/1/±1.6		2.6/2/±1.9		1.4/1/±1.6	
Used condom at last sex with woman						
	19	25.2 (10.5-39.9)	9	13.4 (2.1-25.1)	28	24.9

Sexual health

Few MSM had any signs and symptoms of STI, of which few received any treatment (Table 3.6). Fourteen percent of MSM in Balti and 35% in Chisinau among those that had symptoms of an

STI were diagnosed with an STI in the previous 12 months. Only 3% in Balti and 30% in Chisinau were tested for STI in the last 3 months.

Table 3.6. Sexually transmitted infections among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
Experienced during the last 12 months:						
Genital /anal wounds/ulcers/discharge						
	26	5.2 (2.5-7.9)	18	7.5 (4-11.1)	44	5.3
Received any treatment for genital/anal wounds/sore/discharge from doctor						
	20	55.1 (25.2-85.3)	1	13.9 (0-37.7)	21	53.1
Have been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (by a doctor)						
	13	34.6 (9.7-59.7)	1	14 (0-36.9)	14	33.5
Have been tested for sexually transmitted infections the last 3 months						
	141	29.7 (23.4-35.9)	13	3.2 (1.6-4.9)	154	28.8

HIV knowledge

Almost all MSM have ever heard of HIV (Table 3.7) and most know that HIV transmission can be reduced having one faithful, uninfected partner and by always using condoms. Although there is little risk for HIV transmission for having anal sex (just as there is no risk to having vaginal sex) with someone who has the same HIV status or uses a condom, somehow a high percentage of MSM believe that avoiding any anal sex will reduce the risk of HIV infection. Five of MSM in Chisinau and 35% in Balti incorrectly believe that HIV could be transmitted through mosquito bites and 6% in Chisinau and 23% in Balti believe that HIV could be transmitted by sharing food with someone living with HIV. High percentages of MSM believe that a student should continue to study and a teacher should continue teaching if they are living with HIV.

Table 3.7. HIV Knowledge, perception and stigma towards people living with HIV among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
Ever heard of HIV						
	363	100	270	92.9 (88.3-97.4)	633	99.8
Having sex with one faithful, uninfected partner reduces risk of HIV						

	338	92.3 (88.6-96)	249	86 (81-91)	587	92.1
Risk from HIV transmission is reduced by proper use of condoms during each sexual intercourse						
	352	96.4 (93.7-99.1)	261	89.9 (85.7-94)	613	96.2
A health-looking person can be living with HIV						
	333	91.1 (87.2-95)	197	65.9 (59.8-72.1)	530	90.2
A person can get HIV from mosquito bite						
	20	4.9 (2.3-7.5)	94	35.2 (29.3-41)	114	5.9
Can get HIV from sharing a meal with someone who is living with HIV						
	20	5.7 (2.4-9.1)	59	23.3 (17.8-28.7)	79	6.4
Can get HIV by using the same toilet with someone living with HIV						
	11	3 (0.4-5.5)	57	23.3 (18-28.6)	68	3.6
Ready to use the same utensils with someone living with HIV (of those who have heard of HIV)						
	186	44 (37.4-50.6)	135	51.6 (45.1-58.1)	321	44.2
Would not keep it a secret if an acquaintances or friend were living with HIV						
	324	91.4 (87.7-95.1)	232	85.5 (80.8-90.2)	556	91.2
A student who is living with HIV but does not show symptoms should continue to study						
	333	91.3 (87.7-94.8)	227	82.1 (77.2-87)	560	91
A teacher who is living with HIV but not showing symptoms should continue teaching						
	332	90.9 (87.1-94.7)	227	82.1 (77.2-86.9)	559	90.6
Would continue to buy food from a grocery store or catering establishment if the owner were living with HIV						
	331	92 (88.6-95.3)	217	78.5 (73.5-83.5)	548	91.9

HIV testing

Most MSM know where to get an HIV test (Table 3.8) and around half in both cities have ever had a test for HCV and HBV. Almost 70% of MSM ever had a test for HIV, among which all reported knowing the result at their last test. Of these, 9% in Balti and 16% in Chisinau received a positive test result. One third of MSM in Balti and 48% in Chisinau had an HIV test and received the results in the past year and or had a previous positive test result.

Table 3.8. HIV testing among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
KNOWS WHERE TO GET A CONFIDENTIAL HIV TEST						
	325	83.5 (77.6-89.3)	250	84.3 (79.1-89.5)	575	83.5
EVER TESTED FOR:						
HBV	0	--	0	--	0	0
HCV	6	2.1 (0.1-4.1)	2	0.5 (-0.1-1.2)	8	2
HCV & HBV	218	48.5 (40.7-56.2)	137	45.5 (39.6-51.5)	355	48.4
HIV	271	65.2 (58-72.4)	208	68.6 (62.4-74.8)	479	65.4

TIME OF LAST HIV TEST						
6 months	147	48.7 (41-56.5)	40	16.5 (11.7-20.9)	187	47.5
6-12 months	48	19.9 (13.6-26.4)	35	19.7 (12.7-27)	84	20
>12 months	76	31.3 (24.3-38.3)	133	63.8 (56.8-70.8)	209	32.5
KNOW RESULTS AT LAST TEST						
	271	100	208	100	479	100
RESULTS FROM LAST TEST						
Positive	36	16 (9.9-22.2)	19	9 (4.9-13.1)	55	15.8
Negative	235	84 (77.8-90.1)	189	91 (86.9-95.1)	424	84.2
Indeterminate	0	--	0	--	0	--
HIV TEST IN PAST 12 MONTHS AND RECEIVED TEST OR HAS KNOWN POSITIVE STATUS						
	209	48.4 (41-55.8)	92	32.8 (27.2-38.4)	301	47.9

Condoms and prevention coverage

Most MSM can get a condom when they need one at pharmacies or through NGO outreach (Table 3.9). High percentages of MSM know of any organizations in their city providing free condoms and services and most reported receiving either condoms and/or lubricants from outreach services, drop-in centers or sexual health clinics in the past 12 months. Main sources of condoms in Chisinau are purchasing in pharmacies and outreach workers and for Balti are outreach workers and NGOs. Main sources for lubricants in both cities are outreach workers with large differences between cities for other sources. Forty-seven percent of respondents in Chisinau and 58% in Balti received free condoms and lubricants in the past three months. The most part of respondents in Chisinau receives free condoms less than once a month and in Balti the majority of respondents receive it at list once a month.

Table 3.9. Condoms and prevention coverage among MSM in Chisinau and Balti, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		ALL	
	n	%. CI	n	%. CI	n	%
Knows the place/person from whom you can get (buy or get) condoms						
	345	95.4 (92.7-98)	231	75.9 (69.7-82.1)	576	88.1
Where respondent can get condom when need one:						
Shop						
	263	69.5 (63.2-75.9)	239	84.3 (80.4-88.3)	502	70.1
Purchase at a pharmacy						
	344	**94.1 (91.1-97.1)**	**278**	**94.8 (92.1-97.6)**	**622**	**94.1**

Market						
	47	9.1 (5.7-12.6)	43	14.2 (10.4-18)	90	9.3
NGO						
	240	51.6 (44.7-58.5)	197	64.6 (58.3-70.9)	437	52
Polyclinic (not family planning)						
	3	0.6 (0-1.4)	15	3.5 (1.9-5.1)	18	0.7
Hospital						
	35	8.6 (4.6-12.6)	0	--	35	8.3
Family planning center						
	8	0.9 (0-1.8)	1	0.6 (0-1.4)	9	0.9
Bar / hotel						
	9	0.9 (0.2-1.6)	1	0.3 (0-0.8)	10	0.9
Outreach worker						
	229	52 (45.4-58.6)	175	58.5 (52.7-64.3)	404	52.2
Friend						
	244	61.2 (54.5-68.1)	105	34.6 (28.4-40.8)	349	60.4
Pharmacy/ free						
	2	0.4 (0-1.2)	2	0.3 (0.1-0.6)	4	0.4
Other						
	71	16.7 (12.3-21.1)	35	11.9 (8.1-15.8)	106	16.6
Main source for received condoms:						
Shop						
	4	0.8 (0-1.6)	4	1.4 (0.3-2.4)	8	0.8
Purchase at a pharmacy						
	85	**29 (22.8-35.3)**	45	16.8 (12-21.6)	**130**	**28.6**
Market						
	0	--	4	1.2 (0.1-2.3)	4	0.01
NGO						
	75	17.3 (12.5-22)	69	20.4 (16.1-24.7)	144	17.4
Bar / hotel						
	5	0.6 (0.1-1.1)	2	0.5 (0-1.2)	7	0.6
Outreach worker						
	126	26.3 (20.4-32.2)	**104**	**36.8 (30.6-43)**	230	26.6
Friend						
	39	12.8 (8.8-16.9)	21	8.2 (4.3-12.1)	60	12.7
Other						
	7	1.2 (0.2-2.2)	6	1.7 (0.7-2.6)	13	1.2
Does not use and does not need condoms						
	22	12.1 (6.3-17.8)	36	13.1 (8.4-17.8)	57	12.1
Main source for received lubricants:						
Shop						
	0	--	5	2.2 (0.7-3.7)	5	0.1
Purchase at a pharmacy						
	52	13.3 (9-17.6)	44	15.3 (10.9-19.7)	96	13.4
Market						
	1	0.4 (0-1)	0	--	1	0.4

Ngo						
	73	16.3 (11.7-20.8)	72	20.8 (16.5-25.1)	145	16.4
Bar / hotel						
	4	0.5 (0-0.9)	8	2.7 (0.9-4.4)	12	0.5
Outreach worker						
	134	**29.4 (23-35.8)**	**100**	**35.8 (29.7-41.8)**	**234**	**29.6**
Friend						
	64	23.3 (17.3-29.3)	28	9.9 (6.2-13.5)	92	22.8
Other						
	7	1 (0.2-1.8)	5	1.6 (0.4-2.7)	12	1
Does not use and does not need lubricants						
	28	15.8 (9.3-22.4)	29	11.8 (7.4-16.3)	57	15.7
Services received from outreach service, drop-in centre or sexual health clinic in past 12 months						
Anonymous counseling and voluntary HIV testing						
	148	31.2 (25.5-37)	29	8 (5.2-10.8)	177	30.4
New needle and syringe						
	1	0.4 (0-1)	20	7.2 (4.2-10.2)	21	0.6
HIV prevention services (education about HIV prevention)						
	113	18.8 (14.1-23.4)	28	6.7 (4.5-8.9)	141	18.4
Free condoms						
	246	**53.6 (46.8-60.5)**	186	60.2 (54.2-66.2)	**432**	**53.8**
Free disinfectants						
	216	45.8 (39.2-52.6)	20	6.8 (4-9.6)	236	44.5
Self-help groups						
	51	9.5 (5.6-13.4)	47	16.9 (12.3-21.6)	98	9.7
Medical consultation for STI						
	14	1.4 (0.5-2.2)	0	--	14	1.3
Treatment of sexually transmitted diseases						
	11	1.2 (0.2-2.2)	0	--	11	1.1
Psychological counseling						
	22	4.1 (1.9-6.2)	61	17.9 (13.7-22.1)	83	4.5
Free lubricants						
	244	53.2 (46.7-59.6)	**188**	**61.2 (55.2-67.3)**	432	53.5
Legal advice						
	9	1.3 (0.3-2.4)	18	6 (3.1-8.9)	27	1.5
Other						
	77	18.7 (13.7-23.6)	1	0.4 (0-1.1)	78	18.1
No one						
	109	44.8 (37.9-51.8)	86	32.6 (26.9-38.4)	195	44.4
Received free condoms in past 3 months						
	215	46.8 (39.6-53.9)	176	57.9 (51.9-64)	391	47.1
Received free lubricants in past 3 months						
	220	47.5 (40.6-54.3)	178	58.4 (52.4-64.4)	398	47.8
Have been consulted on condom use and safe sex in past 3 months						
	191	41 (34.4-47.7)	105	34.3 (29.1-39.3)	296	40.8
Frequency of receiving free condoms during past month						

2 - 3 times a week or more	1	0.04 (0-0.1)	0	--	1	0.01
Once a week	0	--	23	14.9 (8-21.8)	23	0.5
2-3 times a month	31	5 (2.6-7.3)	**72**	**40.2 (32.5-47.9)**	103	6.3
Once a month	59	16.8 (11.1-22.5)	32	17.5 (11.3-23.7)	91	16.8
Less than once a month	**155**	**78.2 (72.1-84.4)**	55	27.4 (20.9-34)	**210**	**76.3**

Stigma and discrimination

Overall, low percentages of MSM have avoided seeking medical or HIV services because of fear or concern of stigma from staff or neighbors, that someone will find out he is having sex with males or because of possible or experienced violence or police harassment or arrest.

Table 3.10. Avoiding medical services/HIV testing because of stigma/discrimination among MSM, Republic of Moldova, 2020

In the past 12 months had to avoid seeking medical services because of fear or concern about:						
Stigma from staff or neighbors						
Yes	6	0.4 (0.1-0.8)	9	4.2 (1.1-7.2)	15	0.6
That someone knows that you practice sex with men						
Yes	37	8.8 (5.3-12.2)	10	5.3 (2.2-8.4)	47	8.6
Possible or experienced violence						
Yes	8	1.5 (0.4-2.6)	7	3.4 (0.5-6.3)	15	1.6
Possible or experienced police harassment or arrest						
Yes	6	0.6 (0.1-1.1)	5	2.8 (0-5.6)	11	0.7
In the past 12 months had to avoid seeking HIV testing services because of fear or concern about:						
Stigma from staff or neighbors						
Yes	7	1.7 (0.1-3.4)	7	3.6 (0.8-6.3)	14	1.8
That someone knows that you practice sex with men						
Yes	44	11.4 (7.1-15.6)	6	3.2 (0.5-6)	50	11.1
Possible or experienced violence						
Yes	4	0.8 (0-1.6)	4	2.7 (0-5.4)	8	0.9
Possible or experienced police harassment or arrest						
Yes	4	0.7 (0-1.5)	6	3 (0.2-5.8)	10	0.7

Biological test results

HIV prevalence among MSM is 8% in Balti and 12% in Chisinau, five MSM in Chisinau and four in Balti who self-reported being HIV-negative based on their last test result, are HIV seropositive

(Figure 3.7). HCV is 4% in Chisinau and 15% in Balti, HBV is 3% in Chisinau and 4% in Balti and syphilis is 15% in Balti and 17% in Chisinau.

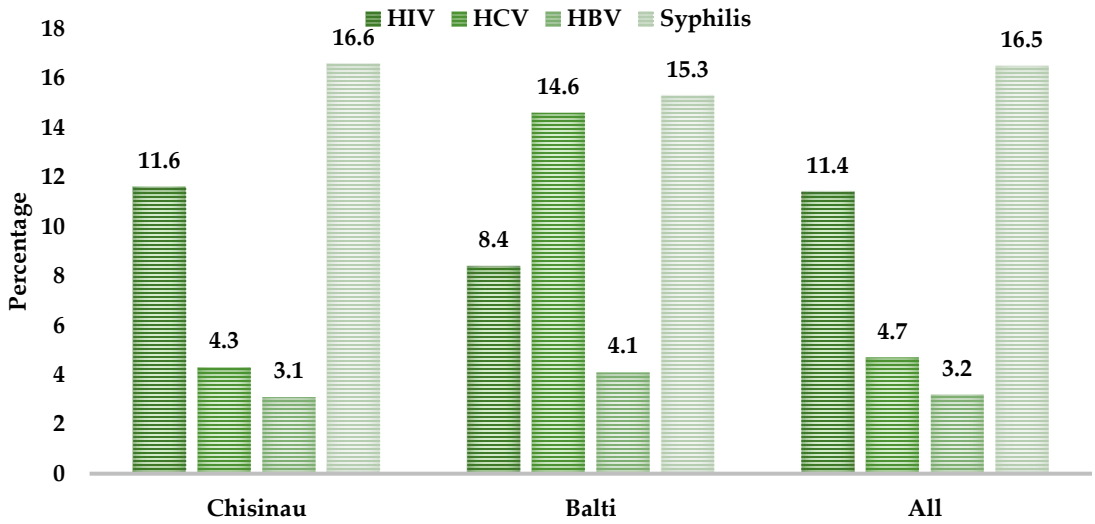

Figure 3.7. Biological test results among MSM, 2020

Discussion and recommendations of MSM findings

High levels of risky sexual behaviors and inconsistent condom use

High percentages of MSM in both cities have casual and steady male sex partners and over one third of MSM in Balti are being paid for sex. Only 50% in Chisinau and 61% in Balti reported using a condom during their most recent sexual intercourse with a man or woman. Most MSM do not consider it necessary to use condom or do not think about it. Tailored HIV/AIDS prevention messages should emphasize the importance of consistent condom use with all partners. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP) should be made available to MSM engaging in high-risk behavior [22]. HIV prevention interventions targeting sexual risk behaviors related to commercial sex should engage sex workers and encourage routine infection screening and

[22] World Health Organization (WHO). Guidance on oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for serodiscordant couples, men and transgender women who have sex with men at high risk of HIV. Recommendations for use in the context of demonstration projects. World Health Organization; 2012. Available from: http://www.who.int/hiv/pub/guidance_prep/en/

consistent condom use, and increase accessibility to harm reduction options, such as condoms, water-based lubricants, and PREP[23]. Prevention messages should be tailored and delivered in venues where MSM meet clients for sexual encounters**.**

MSM identify as homosexual or bisexual, prefer male partners

Among MSM in both cities, 41% report their sexual orientation as bisexual and 56% report it as Gay. Two-thirds of MSM in all cities prefer sex with males (compared to females); Only one quarter or less of MSM reported ever having sex with females. Development of HIV prevention interventions for MSM should focus on the risks associated with inconsistent condom use with both male and female sexual partners. Health care providers and related NGOs should encourage routine HIV testing.

Access to condoms is high

Most MSM reported that they can get a condom when they need one at pharmacies or through NGO outreach. Access to condoms and lubricants (that are more required), especially through the NGO outreach programs, should be maintained and expanded.

MSM have high knowledge about HIV transmission but few adopt risk-free behaviors

Although MSM have high knowledge about sexual transmission of HIV, some incorrectly believed that HIV can be spread through mosquitos and sharing food with someone who is living with HIV.

Alcohol and drug use

Many MSM report frequent consumption of alcohol and ever using non-injection drugs. Among those consuming alcohol in the past month, most MSM in Chisinau do so many times a week or more. Among those who used alcohol in the past six months, 65% in Chisinau and 85% in Balti report having sex while intoxicated. Among those who report using non-injection drugs in the

[23] Ibid

past six months, every ninth in Chisinau and 58% in Balti report having sex while high on drugs. Alcohol and other drugs may affect decision-making about safer sex, which may increase risk of HIV transmission[24]. Provision of substance abuse assessments, counseling and treatment should be provided as a complete package of care to MSM.

MSM are not routinely testing for HIV

Less than half respondent in Chisinau (48%) and Balti (33%) had HIV test and receiving their results in the past year. It is important to increase and maintain access to HIV testing for MSM. Stigma and discrimination may deter MSM from accessing testing services, even if they are accessible. Efforts to control the spread of HIV among MSM should include on-going funding and/or scale-up of routine, MSM-friendly HIV testing centers.

High rates of HIV, HCV and Syphilis

HIV prevalence among MSM in Chisinau is 11.6% and in Balti 8.4% (5 in Chisinau and 4 in Balti were not aware of their positive status). HCV prevalence is three times higher in Balti compared to Chisinau, likely due to injection drug use. Syphilis was 16.6% in Chisinau and 15.3% in Balti. It is imperative to intensify HIV prevention among MSM, by distributing condoms and lubricants as well as educational sessions for correct and consistent condom use and behaviors.

Summary Of Key Recommendations

- Scale up evidenced-based HIV prevention interventions targeting MSM.
- Scale-up coverage, routine screening for HIV and other STI, condom distribution, and implementation of combination prevention services.
- Integrate mental health services, to include substance abuse, into HIV and STI prevention programs targeting MSM.

[24] Jones-Webb R, Somelski D, Brady S, Wilkerson M, Rosser BRS. Drinking settings, alcohol consumption, and sexual risk behavior among gay men. Addict Behav. 2013 Mar;38(3):1824–30.

- Educate health care and other service providers on the specific needs of the MSM population.
- Provide sensitivity training to health care and other service providers to ensure a welcoming and supportive environment to encourage MSM to seek services when necessary.
- Continue with and/or scale-up peer educators and other outreach workers to distribute condoms and lubricants to MSM.
- Provide screening for syphilis, HBV, and other STI in HIV testing and counseling service centers.
- Integrate HIV testing and other infection screening services into HIV prevention programs for MSM in both clinical and non-clinical settings.
- Scale up HIV/AIDS education services.
- Form advocacy groups and coalitions to increase awareness and to create an environment that supports MSM.
- Advocate for an enabling political environment, integration with public health policy, the presence of supportive laws, and opposition to violence to reinforce the effectiveness of HIV prevention, especially for key population who may currently find it extremely challenging to access service.

APPENDIX A: GLOBAL AIDS MONITORING TABLES

HIV prevalence disaggregated by status within age group

POPULATION	YES N, %	NO N, %	TOTAL
MSM			
<25	12, 13.5	106, 86.5	118
25+	53, 10.9	483, 89.1	536
FSW			
<25	2, 1.2	168, 98.8	170
25+	24, 3.6	446, 96.4	470
PWID			
<25	4, 3.7	83, 96.3	87
25+	201, 12.1	1089, 87.9	1290

Female sex workers

	ALL SITES N = 654	
	N	%
HAD HIV TEST IN LAST 12 MONTHS OR KNOW THEY ARE LIVING WITH HIV		
ALL	633	
YES	390	63.5
NO	243	36.5
< 25 YEARS		
YES	115	65.2
NO	55	34.8
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	275	62.5
NO	188	37.5
AVOIDANCE OF HEALTH CARE BECAUSE OF STIGMA/DISCRIMINATION		
ALL		
YES	33	5.1
NO	607	94.9
< 25 YEARS		
YES	8	4.2
NO	162	95.8
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	25	5.6

NO	445	94.4
USED A CONDOM DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH MOST RECENT CLIENT		
ALL	640	
YES	604	95.6
NO	36	4.4
< 25 YEARS		
YES	165	97.3
NO	5	2.7
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	439	94.7
NO	31	5.3
RECEIVED A COMBINED SET OF HIV PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS IN THE PAST THREE MONTHS		
ALL	640	
YES	354	59.1
NO	286	40.9
< 25 YEARS		
YES	105	61.1
NO	65	38.9
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	249	53.0
NO	221	47.0

People who inject drugs

	ALL SITES N = 1377	
	N	%
HAD HIV TEST IN LAST 12 MONTHS OR KNOW THEY ARE LIVING WITH HIV		
ALL		
YES	628	49.7
NO	728	50.3
< 25 YEARS		
YES	22	27.1
NO	63	72.9
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	606	51.5
NO	665	48.5
AVOIDANCE OF HEALTH CARE BECAUSE OF STIGMA/DISCRIMINATION		
ALL		
YES	347	18.8
NO	1030	81.2
< 25 YEARS		
YES	14	9.5
NO	73	90.5

≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	333	19.5
NO	957	80.5
INJECTED DRUGS IN THE PAST MONTH AND USED A CONDOM DURING LAST SEX		
ALL		
YES	319	40.6
NO	488	59.4
< 25 YEARS		
YES	33	73.3
NO	21	26.7
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	286	37.6
NO	467	62.4
USED STERILE INJECTING EQUIPMENT THE LAST TIME INJECTING		
ALL		
YES	946	94.7
NO	58	5.3
< 25 YEARS		
YES	57	93.8
NO	5	6.2
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	889	94.7
NO	53	5.3
RECEIVED A COMBINED SET OF HIV PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS IN THE PAST THREE MONTHS		
ALL		
YES	468	36.5
NO	909	63.5
< 25 YEARS		
YES	17	30.5
NO	70	69.5
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	451	37.0
NO	839	63.0

Men who have sex with men

	ALL SITES N = 654	
	N	%
HAD HIV TEST IN LAST 12 MONTHS OR KNOW THEY ARE LIVING WITH HIV		
ALL	632	
YES	301	47.9
NO	331	52.1
< 25 YEARS		
YES	62	55.2

NO	55	44.8
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	239	45.9
NO	276	54.1
AVOIDANCE OF HEALTH CARE BECAUSE OF STIGMA/DISCRIMINATION		
ALL		
YES	82	17.3
NO	572	82.7
< 25 YEARS		
YES	32	23.7
NO	86	76.3
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	50	15.6
NO	486	84.4
CONDOM AT LAST ANAL SEX WITH A MALE PARTNER		
ALL	654	
YES	415	59.7
NO	239	40.3
< 25 YEARS		
YES	76	56.8
NO	42	43.2
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	339	60.5
NO	197	39.5
RECEIVED A COMBINED SET OF HIV PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS IN THE PAST THREE MONTHS		
ALL	700	
YES	390	47.1
NO	264	52.9
< 25 YEARS		
YES	70	54.7
NO	48	45.3
≥ 25 YEARS		
YES	320	45.1
NO	216	54.9

APPENDIX B. ADDITIONAL TABLES FOR PWID IN FOUR CITIES

Table B.1a. Experiences with police among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
BEEN IN PRISON								
	177	43,9 (36,9-50,9)	164	40,2 (34-46,6)	171	48 (41,9-54,2)	138	44,4 (37,2-51,7)
INJECTED DRUGS IN PRISON								
	94	47,9 (37,7-58,1)	90	47,1 (37,2-57,2)	97	52,6 (43,9-61,3)	78	50,9 (40,561,2)
SHARED INJECTING EQUIPMENT WITH OTHERS								
	15	14,4 (6,5-22,2)	30	38,6 (27-50,5)	30	33,2 (20,4-45,9)	17	19,2 (10,7-27,5)

Table B.2a. Non-injection drugs among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol, and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU		BALTI		TIRASPOL		RIBNITA	
	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
NON-INJECTION DRUGS USED IN LAST 1-6 MONTHS:								
Cannabis/marijuana /hashish/cannabis resin	31	61.1 (45.3-76.9)	**32**	**63.3 (51.1-75.3)**	**77**	**55.8 (45.3-65.7)**	**72**	**73.5 (63.8-82.7)**
Heroin	4	8.4 (0.5-16.2)	3	11 (7.8-14.5)	5	3.7 (0.1-7.1)	1	0.7 (0.6-0.6)
Cocaine	1	0.1 (0.1-0.1)	2	3.7 (2.9-4.5)	2	1.3 (1.3-1.3)	0	--
Amphetamine	6	15 (4.6-25.5)	5	12.2 (2.7-21.8)	9	7.3 (0.4-14.1)	7	5.2 (0.8-9.4)
Ecstasy (mdma, mda)	3	7 (0-17.4)	9	18 (0-55.8)	5	3.4 (0.2-6.5)	3	2.2 (2.1-2.3)
Hallucinogenic mushrooms, mescaline	1	5.7 (0-20.5)	2	1.8 (0-5.4)	1	0.8 (0-2.4)	1	0.8 (0-2.5)
Ketamine	1	2 (2-2)	0	--	4	3 (0-6.3)	0	--
LSD	3	12.5 (0-26.7)	9	17.3 (0-34.8)	2	1.6 (0-4.4)	2	2.2 (2.2-2.2)
Methadone, buprenorphine, fentanyl, subutex	3	2.2 (0-4.7)	9	22.2 (0-94.6)	2	1.1 (0-2.8)	4	6.4 (0-14.8)
Tranquilizers[25]	2	2.5 (2.5-2.5)	11	22.8 (0-68.7)	10	7.7 (2-13.4)	20	27.8 (12.4-44)
Diazepam, alprazolam, rivotril, clonazepam/ krestin	5	7.9 (7.8-7.8)	12	26.3 (0-71.6)	6	4.2 (1.5-6.8)	14	15.8 (7.6-24)

[25] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,

GHB/GBL	0	--	4	11.4 (1.3-21.7)	1	0.8 (0-2.8)	0	--
NPS/mixture of smoking herbs	**32**	**62 (42.4-81.3)**	24	43.4 (25-61.4)	13	9.6 (4.2-14.8)	6	3.9 (2.2-5.4)
NPS/powder, crystal or tablet form[26]	35	61.5 (44.2-78.2)	12	23 (9.7-36.1)	16	16.4 (7.2-25.8)	6	4.5 (1.3-7.5)
NPS/form of liquids	1	1.2 (1.2-1.2)	0	--	5	3.1 (0.1-6)	2	4.3 (4.4-4.4)
Drug combination for erectile dysfunction with drugs[27]	0	--	2	3.9 (0-8.4)	2	1.3 (0-3.2)	0	--
Other	0	--	1	1.4 (0-5.9)	6	5.3 (0.6-9.9)	0	--
DRUG MIXES USE IN LAST 6 MONTHS								
Yes	73	13.3 (8.9-17.6)	59	15.1 (10.7-19.5)	25	5.5 (3.1-8)	25	7.4 (3.9-10.9)
FREQUENCY OF DRUG MIXES USE IN LAST 6 MONTHS								
< once a month	34	49.7 (28.1-70.6)	16	42.1 (25.6-59)	14	47.4 (24-69.1)	18	76.9 (62.1-93)
1 to 4 times a month	13	23.2 (7.6-39.2)	28	41.9 (27.2-56.7)	11	52.6 (30.9-76)	7	23.1 (7-37.9)
2 to 5 times week	12	22.3 (0.1-44.8)	7	9.3 (2.7-15.9)	0	--	0	--
Almost daily	6	4.9 (0.7-8.7)			0	--	0	--
2 to 3 times a day	0	--	6	5.1 (0-10)	0	--	0	--
4 or more times a day			2	1.6 (0-3.5)				
DRUG MIXES USE IN LAST 6 MONTHS								
Poppy (shirka) + methamphetamine	4	6.1 (0-12.5)	12	19.5 (8.1-30.7)	12	41.7 (18.7-62.6)	3	22.1 (23.4-23.4)
Spice + desomorphine	3	2 (0-4.2)	4	4.9 (0-11.8)	3	6.3 (1.3-10)	0	--
Spice + heroin	19	24.7 (13-36.2)	9	13.9 (2.4-25.1)	3	9.4 (5.9-12.2)	0	--
Heroin + diphenhydramine	3	2.9 (0-7.7)	6	12.2 (8.9-15.5)	1	1.3 (0.5-1.3)	0	--
Poppy (shirka) + diphenhydramine	4	4.9 (0-10.7)	14	25.5 (18.4-32.4)	13	36.1 (3.4-64.8)	1	2.3 (2.1-2.1)
Marijuana + spice	34	40 (24.2-55.2)	16	38.4 (21.7-55.5)	11	37.5 (9.2-63.5)	12	43 (20.3-64.1)
Ledcoin + spice	2	2 (0-5.6)	2	4.1 (0-11.1)	1	2.4 (1.2-3.3)	0	--
Cocaine + methamphetamine	3	3.4 (0.3-6.4)	1	2.5 (1.6-3.6)	1	1.2 (0.5-1.3)	0	--
Other	50	75.8 (64.5-87.5)	49	83.4 (72-94.7)	9	49.9 (28.5-74.1)	19	84.6 (84.9-84.9)

Table B.3a. Sexual health among PWID in Chisinau, Balti, Tiraspol and Ribnita, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	CHISINAU	BALTI	TIRASPOL	RIBNITA

[26] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

[27] Chemsex, Chemsex + Viagra, poppers ...

	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI	n	%, CI
Experienced during the last 12 months: GENITAL/ANAL WOUNDS/SORE/DISCHARGE								
	20	5,7 (2,2-9,3)	11	3,2 (1-5,4)	12	5,2 (1,5-8,9)	12	3,3 (1,3-5,4)
Received any treatment for genital/anal wounds/sore/discharge from doctor in past 12 months								
	17	5,8 (2,1-9,5)	10	3,1 (0,8-5,3)	8	3,9 (1-6,8)	7	1,9 (0,4-3,5)

APPENDIX C. TABLES OF PWID, AGGREGATED BY ALL CITIES

Table C1. Sociodemographic characteristics among all people who inject drugs Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
AGE	n	%
15-18	9	1.3
19-24	78	6.0
25-34	424	29.4
35-44	588	44.5
45+	278	18.7
AGE		
<24	87	7.3
25+	1290	92.7
SEX		
MALE	1095	80.7
FEMALE	282	19.3
MARITAL STATUS		
MARRIED LIVE WITH PARTNER	179	8,5
CONCUBINAGE LIVE WITH PARTNER	273	17.9
SINGLE LIVE WITH PARTNER	141	10.4
DIVORCED, WIDOWED, LIVE WITH PARTNER	80	6.8
MARRIED, CONCUBINAGE, SINGLE, DIVORCED, WIDOWED LIVE W/OUT PARTNER	687	56.4
EDUCATION		
PRIMARY EDUCATION (4 CLASSES AND LESS)	17	0.8
5-9 CLASSES	400	25.8
SECONDARY, SPECIALIZED SECONDARY	847	63.8
UNFINISHED HIGHER	54	2.7
HIGHER EDUCATION	58	6.8
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT		
PERMANENT WORK	236	20.9
SEASONAL WORK/LOCAL, ABROAD, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS	433	24.1
PENSIONER/DISABLED/HOUSEIEPARENTAL LEAVE	56	2.9
STUDENT	4	0.3
UNEMPLOYED	630	50.8
OTHER	16	1.0
AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME IN LAST MONTH		
≤ 600	114	5.4
661-1000	178	8.1
1001-3000	364	20
3001-6000	235	21.3
≥6001	34	3.9
NO INCOME	438	40.7

Table C2. Drug use among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%
AGE AT FIRST DRUG USE		
12-18	679	43.4
19-24	360	28.6
25-35	254	20.9
35-45	63	5.6
46+	19	1.5
AGE		
<24	1040	72
25+	336	28
AGE		
MEAN/ MEDIAN/ DS	1376	21.6/20/7.6
NON-INJECTION DRUG USE IN PAST MONTH		
CANNABIS / MARIJUANA / HASHISH / CANNABIS RESIN	**629**	**61.9**
HEROIN	46	3.9
COCAINE	27	2.6
AMPHETAMINE	84	6.9
ECSTASY (MDMA, MDA,)	49	5.2
HALLUCINOGENIC MUSHROOMS, MESCALINE	15	1.5
KETAMINE	4	0.3
LSD	36	4
METHADONE, BUPRENORPHINE, FENTANYL, SUBUTEX	49	5.5
TRANQUILIZERS[28]	106	8
DIAZEPAM, ALPRAZOLAM, RIVOTRIL, CLONAZEPAM KRESTIN	104	9.6
GHB/GBL	18	2.3
NPS/MIXTURE OF SMOKING HERBS	311	41
NPS/POWDER, CRYSTALS OR TABLETS FORM[29]	334	45.3
NPS/FORM OF LIQUIDS	22	2.1
COMBINATION OF DRUGS FOR ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION WITH DRUGS[30]	7	1
OTHER	10	0.8
NON-INJECTION DRUG USE IN LAST 1-6 MONTHS		
CANNABIS / MARIJUANA / HASHISH / CANNABIS RESIN	**212**	**61.9**
HEROIN	13	7.8
COCAINE	5	1.1

[28] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,

[29] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

[30] Chemsex, Chemsex + Viagra, poppers ...

AMPHETAMINE	27	12.6
ECSTASY (MDMA, MDA, ...)	20	8.7
HALLUCINOGENIC MUSHROOMS, MESCALINE	5	3.7
KETAMINE	5	1.5
LSD	16	11.5
METHADONE, BUPRENORPHINE, FENTANYL, SUBUTEX	18	7.1
TRANQUILIZERS[31]	43	9.9
DIAZEPAM, ALPRAZOLAM, RIVOTRIL, CLONAZEPAM / KRESTIN	37	12.4
GHB/GBL	5	2.8
NPS/ MIXTURE OF SMOKING HERBS	75	46.1
NPS/ POWDER, CRYSTAL OR TABLET FORM[32]	69	41.9
NPS/ FORM OF LIQUIDS	8	1.4
COMBINATION OF DRUGS FOR ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION WITH DRUGS[33]	4	1.1
OTHER	7	1
DRUG MIXES USE IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
YES	182	12.9
FREQUENCY OF DRUG MIXES USE IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH	82	47.5
1 TO 4 TIMES A MONTH	59	31.2
2 TO 5 TIMES WEEK	19	16
ALMOST DAILY	12	4.6
2 TO 3 TIMES A DAY	2	0.6
4 OR MORE TIMES A DAY	0	0
DRUG MIXES USE IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
POPPY (SHIRKA) + METHAMPHETAMINE	31	11.6
SPICE + DESOMORPHINE	10	2.9
SPICE + HEROIN	31	20.3
HEROIN + DIPHENHYDRAMINE	10	5.5
POPPY (SHIRKA) + DIPHENHYDRAMINE	32	11.9
MARIJUANA + SPICE	73	39.5
LEDCOIN + SPICE	5	2.6
COCAINE + METHAMPHETAMINE	5	3.0
OTHER	127	77.7
MOST OFTEN USED INJECTION DRUG IN PAST MONTH		
HEROIN	105	17.8
AMPHETAMINE	49	2.6
METHAMPHETAMINE	285	21.1

[31] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,

[32] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

[33] Chemsex, Chemsex + Viagra, poppers ...

POPPY (SHIRKA)	166	9.5
DESOMORPHINE / CROCODILE / TROPICAMIDE	2	0
METHADONE, BUPRENORPHINE, FENTANYL, SUBUTEX	68	5.5
TRANQUILIZERS[34]	9	0.9
DIAZEPAM, ALPRAZOLAM, RIVOTRIL, CLONAZEPAM / / KRESTIN	1	0.1
NPS/ POWDER, CRYSTALS OR TABLETS FORM[35]	**290**	**42.6**
NPS/ FORM OF LIQUIDS	1	0
MOST OFTEN USED INJECTION DRUG IN LAST 1 - 6 MONTHS		
HEROIN	17	12.2
AMPHETAMINE	20	2.6
METHAMPHETAMINE	94	28.4
POPPY (SHIRKA)	101	18
DESOMORPHINE / CROCODILE / TROPICAMIDE	1	0.1
METHADONE, BUPRENORPHINE, FENTANYL, SUBUTEX	17	5.6
TRANQUILIZERS[36]	6	1.2
DIAZEPAM, ALPRAZOLAM, RIVOTRIL, CLONAZEPAM /KRESTIN	2	0.2
NPS/ POWDER, CRYSTAL OR TABLET FORM[37]	**43**	**31.7**
NPS/ FORM OF LIQUIDS	0	0
LAST TIME RESPONDENT INJECTED DRUGS		
LAST MONTH	1004	75.6
1-6 MONTHS	305	20.7
6-12 MONTHS	68	3.6
FREQUENCY OF INJECTION DRUG USE IN LASE MONTH		
ONCE	34	7
2-3 TIMES	139	11.9
ONCE A WEEK	65	6.6
MULTIPLE TIMES A WEEK	705	69.6
ONCE A DAY	53	4.9
STERILE NEEDLE AND SYRINGE USED IN PAST MONTH, LAST TIME IT USE		
YES	1004	94.7
SHARED NEEDLE WITH SOMEONE AFTER USE IN LAST MONTH		
	47	4
WAS INJECTED WITH A SYRINGE / NEEDLE USED BY SOMEONE IN LAST MONTH		
YES	52	3.7
INDIRECT SHARING		
INJECTING THE DRUG INTO A PRE-FILLED SYRINGE		
YES	227	17.3
DIVIDE THE DOSE BY THE FRONT OR BACK OF THE SYRINGE		

[34] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,
[35] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"
[36] Promedol, Phenobarbital, Amobarbital, Tramadol, Morphine, Codeine, Ephedrine, Omnopon, Diphenhydramine, Amitriptyline,
[37] mephedrone, pentedrone, alpha-pvp, "soli"

YES	192	20.3
ASPIRATION OF THE DRUG SOLUTION FROM A COMMON VESSEL		
YES	322	25.9
THE INTEGRATED INDICATOR OF THE INDIRECT EXCHANGE OF INJECTION EQUIPMENT DURING THE LAST MONTH		
	411	30.2
STERILE NEEDLE/SYRINGE USED IN LAST 1-6 MONTHS, LAST INJECTION DRUG USE		
YES	286	94.1
SHARED NEEDLE WITH SOMEONE AFTER USE IN PAST 1-6 MONTHS		
YES	16	5.4
WAS INJECTED WITH A SYRINGE / NEEDLE USED BY SOMEONE IN PAST 1-6 MONTHS		
YES	30	11.2
INDIRECT SHARING IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
INJECTING THE DRUG INTO A PRE-FILLED SYRINGE		
YES	111	27.9
DIVIDE THE DOSE BY THE FRONT OR BACK OF THE SYRINGE		
YES	66	25.4
ASPIRATION OF THE DRUG SOLUTION FROM A COMMON VESSEL		
YES	119	29.6
INTEGRATED INDICATOR OF THE INDIRECT EXCHANGE OF INJECTION EQUIPMENT DURING PAST 1-6 MONTHS		
YES	154	38.2

Table C3. Harm reduction among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%
RECEIVED FREE STERILE SYRINGES IN PAST 12 MONTHS		
	633	45.6
RECEIVED FREE STERILE SYRINGES IN PAST 3 MONTHS		
	492	38.6
FREQUENCY OF RECEIVING NEW (STERILE) NEEDLE/SYRINGE TO INJECT DRUGS DURING MONTH		
2 - 3 TIMES A WEEK OR MORE	39	9.7
ONCE A WEEK	57	15.9
2-3 TIMES A MONTH	133	42.3
ONCE A MONTH	193	23.6
LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH	57	8.1
I DON'T USE IT NOW	1	0.4
PLACE RESPONDENT RECEIVED NEW (STERILE) SYRINGES AND NEEDLES, PAST 12 MONTHS:		
PHARMACY/ FREE	301	28.3
NEEDLE-EXCHANGE PROGRAM	527	38.8
FAMILY	66	4
SEX PARTNER	55	1.1
FRIENDS	375	23.5
HOSPITAL WORKERS	8	0.2

HOSPITAL / CLINIC / OTHER MEDICAL FACILITY	16	0.9
OTHER DRUG USERS	237	12.6
DRUG DEALER	25	2.2
PURCHASE AT A PHARMACY	**871**	**64.1**
STEALING	1	0.1
SHOPPING ON THE STREET	13	1.4
GET ONLY USED SYRINGES	2	0.1
MAIN SOURCE FOR RECEIVED NEW (STERILE) SYRINGES AND NEEDLES, PAST 12 MONTHS:		
PHARMACY/ FREE	52	6.4
NEEDLE-EXCHANGE PROGRAM	458	30.6
FAMILY	26	1.5
SEX PARTNER	34	0.7
FRIENDS	75	3.7
HOSPITAL WORKERS	2	0.3
HOSPITAL / CLINIC / OTHER MEDICAL FACILITY	2	0.1
OTHER DRUG USERS	26	1.4
DRUG DEALER	4	0.3
PURCHASE AT A PHARMACY	**683**	**54.2**
SHOPPING ON THE STREET	7	0.6
KNOWS OF ANY ORGANIZATIONS IN CITY THAT PROVIDES FREE AND NEW NEEDLES, SYRINGES OR INJECTION EQUIPMENT		
	1327	94.1
SERVICES RECEIVED FROM AN OUTREACH SERVICE, DROP-IN CENTRE OR SEXUAL HEALTH CLINIC IN PAST 12 MONTHS:		
ANONYMOUS COUNSELING AND VOLUNTARY HIV TESTING		
	423	33.7
NEW NEEDLE AND SYRINGE		
	546	42.1
HIV PREVENTION SERVICES (EDUCATION ABOUT HIV PREVENTION)		
	375	28.5
FREE CONDOMS		
	529	40
FREE DISINFECTANTS		
	508	38.4
SELF-HELP GROUPS		
	150	19.6
METHADONE / BUPRENORPHINE SUBSTITUTION THERAPY		
	8	1.5
DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT		
	14	1.9
MEDICAL CONSULTATION FOR STI		
	82	9.3
TREATMENT OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES		
	5	0.6
PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING		
	146	19

FREE HYGIENE BAGS / PADS USED		
	97	7.4
OVERDOSE PREVENTION SERVICES		
	136	16
LEGAL ADVICE		
	149	16.5
NO ONE		
	707	50
OVERDOSED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS		
YES	170	14.1
KNOWS WHAT NALOXONE IS		
YES	368	32.4
USED NALOXONE TO TREAT AN OVERDOSE IN THEMSELVES OR OTHER USERS		
YES	61	15.3
EVER BEEN IN A TREATMENT PROGRAM TO STOP INJECTING DRUGS		
CURRENTLY IN TREATMENT	2	0.2
PREVIOUSLY TREATED, BUT AT THE MOMENT, NO	262	25.3
NEVER BEEN TREATED	1109	74.4
EVER BEEN IN A TREATMENT PROGRAM TO STOP INJECTING DRUGS IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS		
YES	29	11.6

Table C4. Experiences with the Police among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%
BEEN IN PRISON		
	650	43.1
INJECTED DRUGS IN PRISON		
	359	48.3
SHARED INJECTING EQUIPMENT WITH OTHERS		
	92	21.9

Table C5. HIV/AIDS knowledge among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%, CI
EVER HEAR OF HIV/AIDS		
	1366	99.7
HAVING SEX WITH ONE FAITHFUL, UNINFECTED PARTNER REDUCE RISK OF HIV		
	1165	87.4
RISK FROM HIV TRANSMISSION IS REDUCED BY A PROPER USE OF CONDOMS DURING EACH SEXUAL INTERCOURSE		

	1259	91.8
A HEALTH-LOOKING PERSON CAN HAVE HIV		
	1208	90.9
A PERSON CAN GET HIV FROM MOSQUITO BITE		
	186	17.4
CAN GET HIV FROM SHARING A MEAL WITH SOMEONE WHO IS LIVING WITH HIV		
	174	11.7
CAN GET HIV BY USING THE SAME TOILET WITH A PERSON LIVING WITH HIV		
	184	14.5
READY TO USE THE SAME UTENSILS WITH SOMEONE LIVING WITH HIV		
	771	53.1
WOULD NOT KEEP IT A SECRET IF ANY ACQUAINTANCE/FRIEND WERE LIVING WITH HIV		
	195	17.2
CAN A STUDENT WHO IS LIVING WITH HIV BUT DOES NOT SHOW SYMPTOMS CONTINUE TO STUDY		
	1213	89.4
CAN A TEACHER WHO IS LIVING WITH HIV BUT NOT SHOWING SYMPTOMS CONTINUE TEACHING		
	1157	84.4
WOULD STILL CONTINUE TO BUY FOOD FROM A GROCERY STORE/ CATERING ESTABLISHMENT IF OWNER IS LIVING WITH HIV		
	1023	74.6

Table C6. Sexual behaviour among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%, CI
EVER HAD SEX		
	1374	99.9
SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IN LAST 12 MONTHS		
	1260	89.9
SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
	1216	85.6

Table C7. Types of sexual partners among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	N	%
CASUAL SEX PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
	459	33.9

CONDOM USE WITH CASUAL SEX PARTNER		
	287	69.7
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH CASUAL SEX PARTNER IN THE LAST MONTH		
ALWAYS (100%)	137	33.3
MOST TIMES (75%-99)	72	14.7
EVERY SECOND TIME (25-74%)	51	11.4
RARELY (1-24%)	44	10.4
NEVER	69	13.9
THERE WERE NO CONTACTS IN THE LAST MONTH	83	16.3
STEADY SEX PARTNER IN LAST 6 MONTHS		
	940	80.6
CONDOM USE WITH STEADY SEX PARTNER		
	290	37.2
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH STEADY SEX PARTNER IN THE LAST MONTH		
ALWAYS (100%)	154	20.1
MOST TIMES (75%-99)	41	4.6
EVERY SECOND TIME (25-74%)	74	6.4
RARELY (1-24%)	129	15.2
NEVER	435	44.2
THERE WERE NO CONTACTS IN THE LAST MONTH	103	9.5
PAYING PARTNER/CLIENT/ PARTNER WHOM YOU PAID FOR SEXUAL INTERCOURSE		
	76	4.5
CONDOM USE WITH PAYING / WHOM YOU PAID SEX PARTNER		
	62	89.7
FREQUENCY OF CONDOM USE DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH COMMERCIAL SEX PARTNER IN THE LAST MONTH		
ALWAYS (100%)	37	72.6
MOST TIMES (75%-99)	11	6.3
EVERY SECOND TIME (25-74%)	3	4.0
RARELY (1-24%)	4	2.5
NEVER	5	4.7
THERE WERE NO CONTACTS IN THE LAST MONTH	15	9.9
TYPE OF PARTNER AT LAST SEX		
STEADY	894	75.4
PAID/PAYING PARTNER	32	1.8
CASUAL	324	22.8

Table C8. Sexual Health among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%
EXPERIENCED DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS: GENITAL//ANAL WOUNDS/SORE/DISCHARGE		

	55	4.7
RECEIVED ANY TREATMENT FOR GENITAL/ANAL WOUNDS/SORE/DISCHARGE FROM DOCTOR IN PAST 12 MONTHS		
	42	4.6

Table C9. HIV, HBV, and HCV Testing among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%
KNOWS WHERE TO GET A CONFIDENTIAL HIV TEST		
	1154	82.4
HIV TEST AND RECEIVED RESULTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS OR KNOWS HIV STATUS		
	628	49.7
EVER TESTED FOR:		
HBV	10	1
HCV	195	17.6
HBV & HCV	642	48.3
HIV	1067	74.9
TIME OF LAST HIV TEST		
6 MONTHS	352	42.5
6-12 MONTHS	155	15.8
>12 MONTHS	558	41.6
KNOW RESULTS AT LAST TEST		
	1045	98.2
RESULTS FROM LAST TEST		
POSITIVE	149	10.2
NEGATIVE	890	89.5
INDETERMINATE	4	0.2

Table C10. Biological test results among people who inject drugs, Republic of Moldova, 2020

	ALL	
	n	%
HCV	723	49.3
HBV	73	3.1
SYPHILIS	60	4.1
HIV	205	11.4