



Rise & Decriminalize:

our solidarity

to survive

the darkest night before

dawn

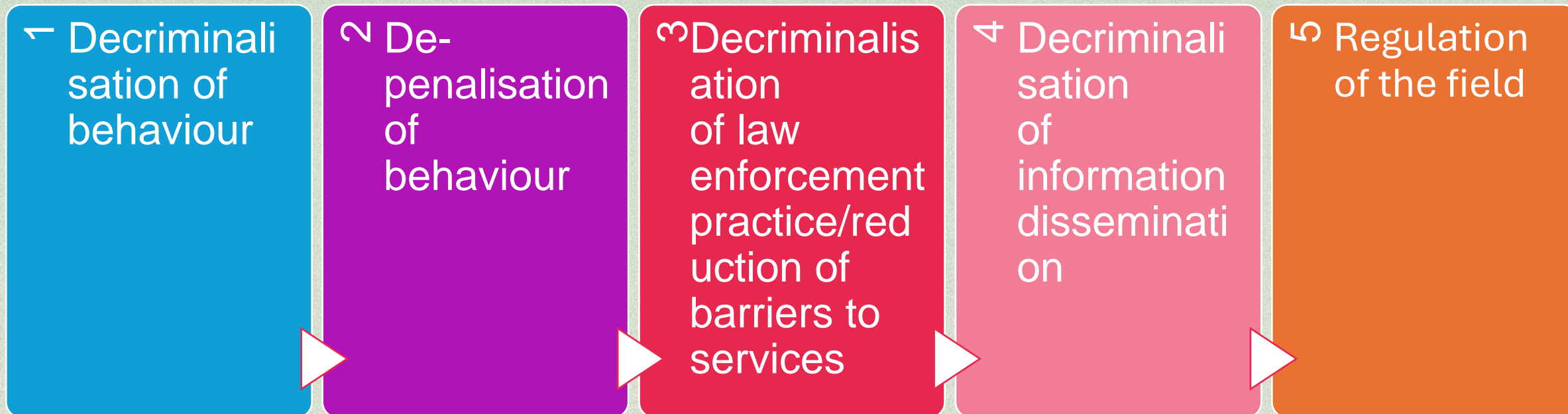
Ganna Dovbakh,

Eurasian Harm Reduction Association
(EHRA)





Decriminalization scale



Legal opportunities and security for NGOs and activists



Why should communities advocate together?

- **Populist movements and political agendas** often exploit fear, ignorance, and prejudice to target all marginalized communities.
- **Shared challenges, shared solutions**
- **We advocate to the same institutions**
- **The power of solidarity:** We should not let them divide us
- **Nothing about us without us**



Rise & Decriminalize Movement

5 Networks Intersecting Communities



Intersectionality a person belongs to several communities and identities

Building on each others' efforts and experience

4 pillars of our free world: **Bodily autonomy**, **Access to justice**, **Freedom from legal restrictions**, **Availability of comprehensive care services**

Fight **criminalization of activists** and advocacy to secure the future

In 2024 was supported by





Non-Negotiables: Core Principles Upholding Our Unity

- 1. Inclusivity of All Communities***
- 2. Autonomy and Self-Representation***
- 3. Human Rights-Centered Approach***
- 4. Ethical Partnerships and Refusal of Conditional Funding***
- 5. Transparency and Accountability.***
- 6. Intersectional Advocacy***



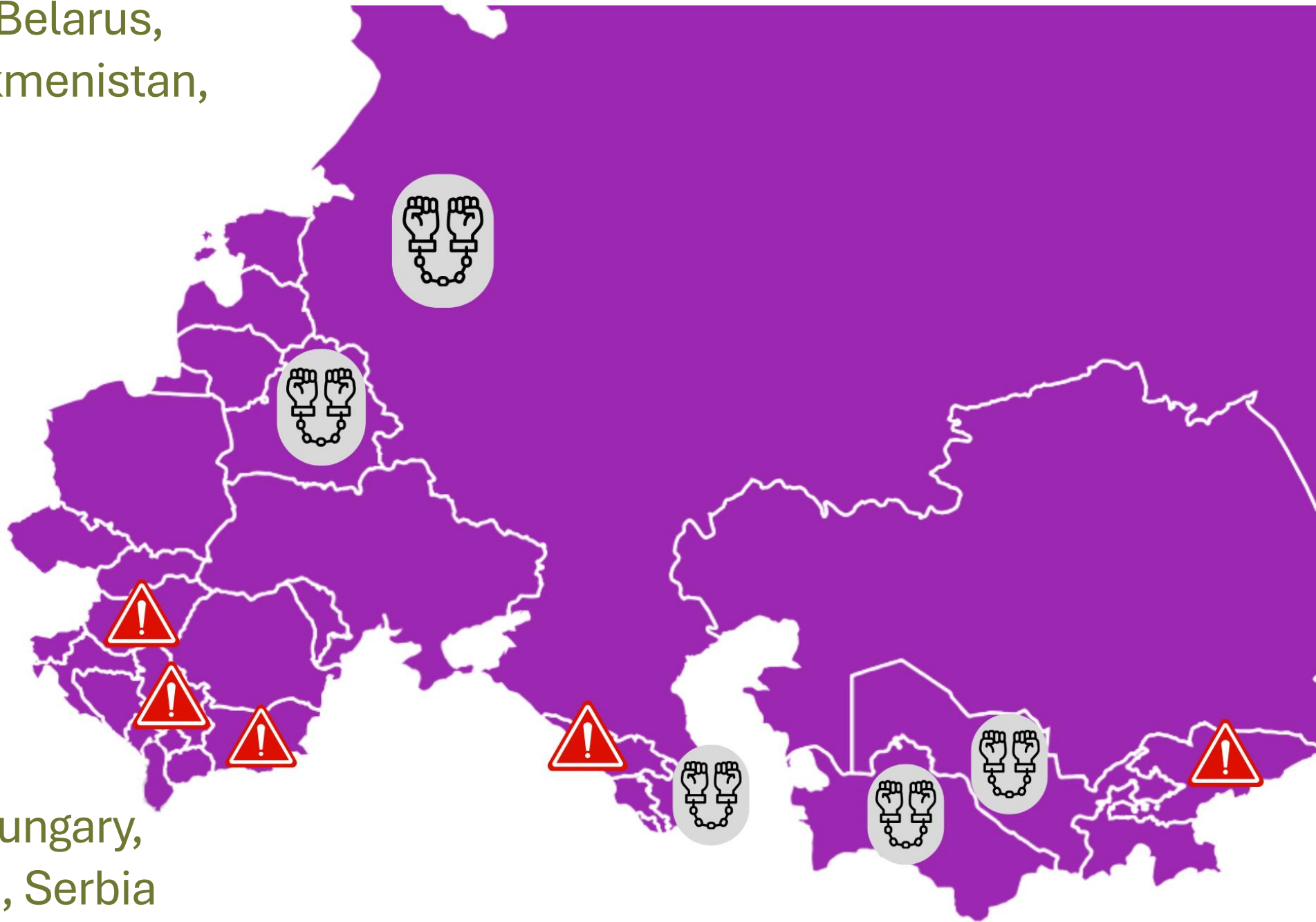


Tenacity in the shrinking civic spaces in totalitarian states behind the new Iron Curtain

- Creating barriers to NGO registration;
- Restricting participation in decision-making bodies;
- Imposing surveillance, interference in NGO activities, and control over programs by state and security;
- Labeling NGOs as "foreign agents," reporting and fines, thereby excluding them from domestic funding ;
- Constricting NGO's and individuals' access to information, knowledge, and scientific progress through the imposition of 'drug propaganda' laws and „Homo propaganda“;
- Criminal punishment for contact with impactful international organizations (labeled as "undesirable organizations");
- Criminal and administrative prosecution for advocacy, human rights protection, harm reduction services, and information provision.



Azerbaijan, Belarus,
Russia, Turkmenistan,
Uzbekistan



Bulgaria,
Georgia, Hungary,
Kyrgyzstan, Serbia



Georgia (Sakartvelo)



- **Fines:** failure to provide personal data – **5.000 lari (1.800 USD)**; Failure to register - up to **25.000 lari (9.100 USD)**.
- **Lawsuits** to Sakartvelo Constitutional Court & European Court of Human Rights.
- April 2024 Parliament vouted **law based on US Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)**.
 - Would replace current legislation on foreign agents.
 - **Criminal liability** for avoiding registration/ improper information, imprisonment up to 5 years.
 - To cover diplomats, media outlets and commercial activities, which are related to political influence.



Georgia (Sakartvelo)



**Anti-LGBT
propaganda
law**

Word “gender” dismissed from national and municipal level documents.

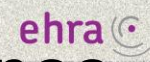
National and municipality institutions/ units on gender issues dismissed.

Word “**gender**” is a “**red flag**”, next to LGBTQI+, feminism, democracy, etc.

CSOs/ beneficiaries **afraid of online events.**

Huge chilling effect for community organizations – rearranged communication strategy, services.

150 days and nights of citizens’ peaceful resilience





NGOs seek novel funding sources amid global crackdown

Authoritarian regimes worldwide are hampering non-governmental organisations through laws targeting funding sources, imperilling health care. Ed Holt reports.

Fears for Georgia's NGOs

A contested election with allegations of vote rigging could be damaging to health NGOs in the country. Sharmila Devi reports.

Setbacks and advances in the global HIV response

The 25th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2024) was held in Munich, Germany, on July 22–26, 2024. Ed Holt reports.

AFP Forum

NGOs helping most vulnerable fear oblivion in Georgia

Tbilisi, Georgia | AFP | Friday 10/25/2024 - 08:49 UTC+3 | 593 words



Health Policy Watch

Independent Global Health Reporting

Antimicrobial
Resistance

Infectious
Diseases

Pandemics &
Emergencies

Non-Communicable
Diseases

Why HIV Could Be Poised for a Monumental Comeback

Inside View 21/01/2025 • Beatriz Grinsztejn & Birgit Poniatowski

AIDS AT A CROSSROADS

2024 GLOBAL AIDS UPDATE



Criminalisation in The Constitution of **Hungary**



In March 2025, the Hungarian government launched a war on drugs.

- Amendment to the Constitution with a prohibition of the use and “promotion” of drugs.
- Critical civil society organisations are accused of **being foreign agents** and “accomplices of drug traffickers”.
- The pro-government press regularly carries out **vicious attacks against professionals and activists** who provide pragmatic, compassionate prevention and harm reduction programs.





Decriminalization: a joint path to equality and compassion

Developing joint decriminalization narratives and powerful messages:

No harm - no judgement/No victim – no crime

ComPassion - Community Passion for Freedom from Conviction

Dignity is not a privilege

Choices are not crimes





Eurasian Regional Community Consortium: Funding crises affect regional advocacy

5 Networks

Multiple
Communities

NO support

<https://www.facebook.com/risedecriminalize>

<https://risedecriminalize.org/>

For 2025-2027 regional networks EHRA, EWNA, SWAN, ECOM didn't get any funding from the Robert Carr Fund and 3 times less funding within Global Fund's HIV multi-country regional grant:

- **Cut in 60-80% of core budget**



- Significant reduction in staff (especially starting from 2026) and in key activities.
- No funding for regional assessments or analysis. Planned research on the damage of shrinking space done to public health is not possible
- No funding for capacity building and technical support for communities, specifically on CLM
- Less ability to organize regional advocacy and react on country-level crises to address challenges with service access, human rights violations and shrinking space for civil societies





In solidarity is our power!



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