



Eurasian Women's Network on AIDS

March 8  
2026



## Our Voice is Stronger than Restrictions

The Eurasian Women's Network on AIDS once again draws attention to the increasingly **shrinking space for feminist activists and organisations** in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.

In many countries in the region, women living with HIV and women from key populations face not only violence, stigma, and discrimination, but also growing pressure on feminist movements and human rights organisations. Restrictive laws, stigmatising rhetoric, anti-gender campaigns, and attacks on civil society undermine the ability of feminist organisations to defend women's rights, promote gender equality, and provide vital services.

The shrinking of feminist space manifests itself in restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, the discrediting of activists, harassment in the media and social media, and the creation of legislative and administrative barriers to the work of organisations. Feminist activists are increasingly becoming the target of campaigns accusing them of promoting "alien values," and their work is subject to pressure and attempts to delegitimise them.

**On International Women's Rights Day, we express our support for feminist activists and human rights defenders who:**



continue to speak out about women's rights, gender equality, HIV, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, despite censorship and pressure



defend the rights of women living with HIV and women from key populations in the face of growing stigma and discrimination



despite the war and humanitarian crisis, continue to maintain and develop vital services for women living with HIV and women from key populations in Ukraine

-  continue to hold peaceful protests and defend rights and freedoms, despite pressure and risks, as is happening today on the streets of Georgia
-  face bans on holding feminist marches and peaceful assemblies on March 8
-  are subject to online harassment, threats, and smear campaigns
-  are forced to operate under increasing scrutiny and pressure on civil society
-  continue to advocate for women's rights despite the risk of persecution, funding restrictions, and administrative barriers
-  maintain vital services for women living with HIV and women from key populations

Today, the feminist movement in the region plays a key role in protecting women's rights, advancing gender equality, and ensuring access to healthcare and social services. Despite pressure and restrictions, activists continue their work, uniting in solidarity networks and supporting each other.

We stand in solidarity with you. Your voice, your courage, and your struggle continue to change the world for women.

