



The European MSM Internet Survey (EMIS)

Community Report 2.eu

The EMIS team would again like to thank you for being part of the first European internet-based research project on homosexuality, homosexual behaviour and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among men who have sex with men (MSM), and – with over 180,000 participants – the largest study ever conducted on sex between men!

This is the second community report written especially for you - members of Europe's diverse LGBT communities. We hope that you find this information interesting and helpful! The first community report covered testing for HIV, knowledge about testing, being 'out', sexual happiness and the 'sexiest man on the planet'. All EMIS community reports are available in 25 languages at www.emis-project.eu.

The Eurovision of MSM Sex Lives!

In this second report we will focus on a range of topics dealing with sex and the number and type of sexual partners, as well as testing for STIs other than HIV. Please be aware that this information is only preliminary, and that we are in the process of preparing a more detailed report for publication later in 2011. Similar to the previous community report, we have included an overview of the data discussed in this report on page three.

When reading the table, if you compare the numbers of EMIS respondents in the left column with the first report, you will notice that they have slightly decreased. This is due to changes in the criteria used to exclude respondents' data from the study if responses were not consistent. We do our best not to report on data from men who hastily clicked through the survey and who did not provide answers that actually corresponded to their knowledge and experiences.

Who You Had Sex With

In each country a significant number of you, who completed the EMIS questionnaire, did not identify as 'gay or homosexual'. This means we clearly reached a wide range of men who have sex with men. Indeed, around 15% of all respondents reported having had sex with a woman in the twelve months prior to completing the survey. As the table on page three shows, this went from a low of nearly 'one in ten' of you in Belgium (.be), the Netherlands (.nl), Poland (.pl) and France (.fr) to over a quarter of you in Slovenia (.si), Bulgaria (.bg) Romania (.ro) and Bosnia & Herzegovina (.ba).

How Many Men You Had Sex With

In the table on page three you can see in which countries partner numbers were particularly high or low. Many of you (43% to 59%) had between two and ten partners, while having more than ten partners went from 10% to over 25% across the 38 countries. The number of sexual partners tells us a few things, such as, how easy or difficult it is to find partners (because they might not be 'out' or there might be no places or venues for you to meet). This may also tell us about how hard it might be for many of you to build steady relationships, particularly in societies where same sex couples are not officially recognised or allowed.

Of course many men choose to have multiple sex partners. It is advised that the more partners you have, the more often you need to have a sexual health check-up.

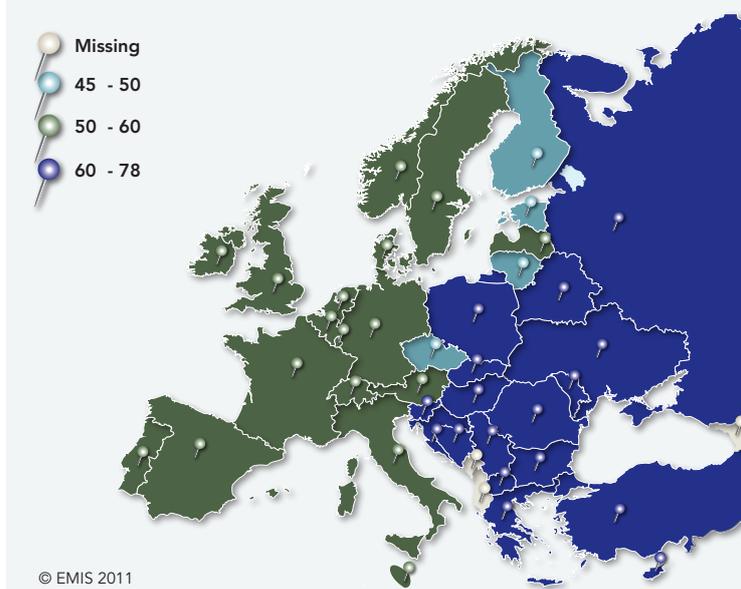
Where You Met Men to Have Sex

We asked you where you met your last non-steady male sex partner (of those who had a non-steady partner in the last twelve months). The most common response was "on the Internet", followed by various sex venues including gay saunas and backrooms of bars and clubs.

Over half of you met sex partners online and this was more common in the east.

Map 1. provides information about the percentage of respondents who met their last non-steady partner on the Internet. It shows there is a relatively even divide between Eastern and Western Europe. This might be because there are fewer physical places to meet partners where online use is highest, or maybe EMIS reached primarily those of you who use the Internet to meet partners. There are multiple possible explanations for this difference.

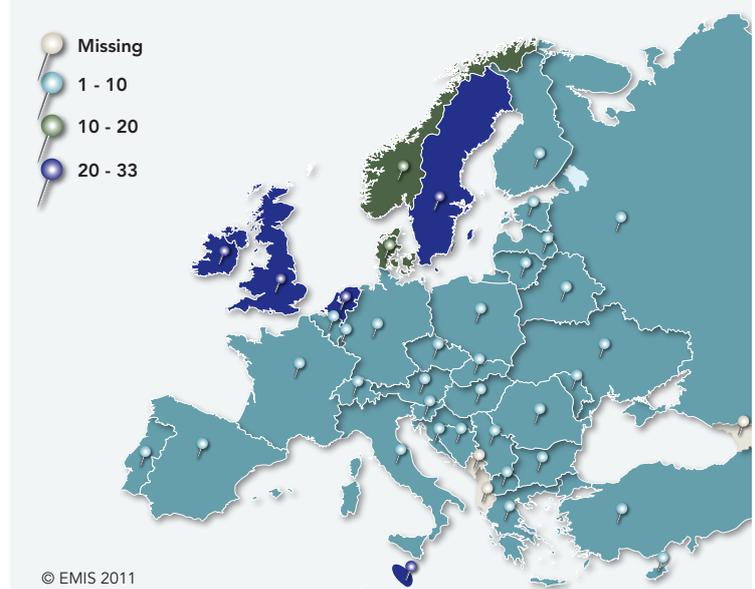
Map 1. Percentage of respondents who met their last non-steady partner online among those who had non-steady partners in the previous 12 months.



However, this doesn't inform us about the quality or range of STI-testing performed. STIs such as anal warts, rectal gonorrhoea and rectal Chlamydia are very common among MSM and need to be considered by medical professionals. Simple inspections of the penis and anus are rarely part of an STI check-up in most European countries, as you can see in the table. The same holds true for rectal swabs for detecting rectal gonorrhoea and Chlamydia, which in most cases have no obvious symptoms.

Map 2. highlights that only in the United Kingdom (.uk), Ireland (.ie), Malta (.mt), the Netherlands (.nl), and Sweden (.se) are anal swabs used frequently. This means that STIs such as anal or genital warts, rectal gonorrhoea and Chlamydia infections are likely to be under-diagnosed in most European countries.

Map 2. Percentage of respondents reporting an STI check up that included an anal swab.



Meeting at Sex Venues

Not every country has sex venues such as gay saunas, porn cinemas, or backrooms in bars and clubs, yet some of you in all countries visited sex venues in the previous year, either in your own country or while travelling. The table shows that fewer than 10% of you in Bosnia & Herzegovina (.ba), Turkey (.tr), Serbia (.rs), Ukraine (.ua), and Belarus (.by) met your last non-steady sex partner in a sex venue while over a quarter of you did so in France (.fr), Belgium (.be) and the Netherlands (.nl).

When Was Your Last STI Check Up?

The table indicates that testing for STIs other than HIV was most common in the Netherlands (.nl), the United Kingdom (.uk), Russia (.ru), Belarus (.by), Belgium (.be), France (.fr), Ireland (.ie), and Sweden (.se).

Rectal STIs most likely under-diagnosed.

What Sex you Had

When asked to indicate what kind of sex you've had in the last twelve months, oral sex (blow jobs) came out on top followed by mutual masturbation (jerking off). This was followed by anal sex (top or bottom). In the table, you can see the rate of anal sex was lowest in Sweden (.se), Finland (.fi), and Estonia (.ee) and highest in France (.fr), Spain (.es.), Portugal (.pt), Belarus (.by), Russia (.ru), and Moldova (.md).

Blow-jobs the most popular!

HIV is mostly transmitted via anal sex among MSM when not using condoms or if a condom breaks or slips off. Certainly, not using a condom is the highest risk, especially if you don't know your partner's HIV status (even if he or she is your steady partner), or if your partner's HIV status is different from yours.

Preliminary Findings from the European MSM Internet Survey (EMIS): Overview

Country	Number of respondents	Sex with women in previous 12 months	Tested for STIs in previous 12 months	Had both penile & anal inspection in previous 12 months	In steady relationship with a man	Had 2 to 10 sex partners in previous 12 months	Had over 10 sex partners in previous 12 months	Met last non-steady sex partners in sex venues	Met last non-steady sexual partners online	Had anal sex in previous 12 months	Possible HIV transmission risk in previous 12 months (1)
.at (Austria)	4085	14%	30%	6%	39%	48%	24%	20%	58%	85%	23%
.ba (Bosnia & Herzegovina)	150	28%	19%	2%	22%	62%	10%	1%	77%	80%	34%
.be (Belgium)	3982	8%	42%	5%	46%	43%	33%	26%	53%	86%	25%
.bg (Bulgaria)	1036	25%	29%	3%	35%	49%	21%	16%	66%	85%	36%
.by (Belarus)	367	17%	43%	9%	53%	57%	12%	10%	68%	90%	40%
.ch (Switzerland)	5028	15%	32%	6%	42%	46%	32%	25%	58%	85%	22%
.cy (Cyprus)	267	17%	21%	4%	29%	48%	26%	16%	61%	85%	34%
.cz (Czech Republic)	2400	10%	18%	5%	48%	49%	14%	16%	55%	84%	33%
.de (Germany)	54387	14%	28%	6%	41%	47%	23%	21%	60%	83%	25%
.dk (Denmark)	1742	13%	35%	12%	35%	48%	27%	21%	55%	86%	30%
.ee (Estonia)	594	19%	22%	4%	40%	51%	14%	20%	46%	78%	35%
.es (Spain)	13111	10%	37%	6%	32%	42%	31%	20%	58%	90%	30%
.fi (Finland)	2026	15%	22%	8%	42%	47%	16%	19%	47%	78%	28%
.fr (France)	11164	9%	40%	5%	47%	37%	38%	26%	58%	88%	25%
.gr (Greece)	2944	17%	31%	5%	35%	48%	27%	16%	64%	86%	26%
.hr (Croatia)	517	15%	20%	3%	36%	51%	16%	13%	70%	86%	36%
.hu (Hungary)	2067	16%	24%	6%	41%	51%	18%	19%	50%	85%	32%
.ie (Republic of Ireland)	2194	14%	38%	26%	29%	50%	24%	18%	57%	84%	33%
.it (Italy)	15984	13%	30%	5%	36%	44%	30%	22%	59%	88%	30%
.lt (Lithuania)	595	16%	17%	3%	44%	49%	10%	14%	48%	79%	40%
.lu (Luxembourg)	280	15%	27%	3%	40%	46%	27%	23%	62%	84%	21%
.lv (Latvia)	708	20%	26%	5%	45%	54%	15%	16%	54%	83%	38%
.md (Moldova)	117	21%	37%	6%	43%	47%	15%	11%	65%	94%	37%
.mk (FYR Macedonia)	117	24%	24%	4%	26%	63%	16%	11%	63%	86%	31%
.mt (Malta)	119	12%	30%	24%	37%	43%	33%	20%	55%	83%	32%
.nl (Netherlands)	3787	8%	53%	25%	47%	44%	37%	30%	51%	86%	30%
.no (Norway)	2096	11%	36%	13%	34%	52%	16%	13%	57%	83%	32%
.pl (Poland)	2746	8%	25%	4%	42%	48%	20%	15%	60%	87%	32%
.pt (Portugal)	5187	15%	28%	3%	37%	51%	20%	21%	56%	91%	30%
.ro (Romania)	2327	26%	32%	3%	37%	58%	20%	11%	63%	85%	42%
.rs (Serbia)	1106	21%	24%	2%	32%	57%	15%	9%	67%	86%	33%
.ru (Russia)	5035	15%	44%	10%	52%	52%	20%	14%	61%	91%	35%
.se (Sweden)	3132	13%	38%	19%	39%	49%	20%	18%	57%	78%	30%
.si (Slovenia)	990	24%	18%	5%	35%	51%	12%	16%	65%	79%	24%
.sk (Slovakia)	586	10%	15%	3%	40%	49%	11%	12%	64%	83%	37%
.tr (Turkey)	1807	20%	16%	3%	34%	42%	34%	6%	71%	87%	49%
.ua (Ukraine)	1711	20%	35%	6%	49%	59%	13%	9%	64%	88%	36%
.uk (United Kingdom)	17718	10%	44%	27%	37%	46%	30%	21%	57%	84%	32%
Total	174,209										
Median % (2)		15%	29%	5%	39%	46%	20%	16%	59%	85%	32%

(1) Unprotected anal sex with a partner whose HIV status was unknown or different from the respondent's.

(2) Average of 38 countries (median), not the average of all respondents.

HIV transmission risk

Unprotected anal sex with partners with an unknown or different HIV status represents a potential HIV transmission risk. Your response varied across the 38 countries, from a low of around 'one in five' of you in Luxembourg (.lu), Switzerland (.ch), and Austria (.at) to a high of 50% in Turkey (.tr).

This risk for contracting HIV can best be reduced by:

- (1) engaging in sexual practices other than anal sex;
- (2) using condoms when having anal sex; and
- (3) having unprotected anal sex only with partners who you can be absolutely sure have the same status as you (which in most cases is difficult to achieve).

In our first Community Report we reported on the question about "the sexiest man on the planet". Most of you listed your boyfriend as the sexiest man. We decided to also conclude this report with information about the number of you who are in steady relationships with another man.

Steady relationships and you!

On average, about 40% of you indicated that you were in a steady relationship with a man when you filled out the questionnaire. These rates were the highest for those of you living in Belarus (.by), Russia (.ru) and Ukraine (.ua). Contrastingly, it was under 30% for those of you in Bosnia & Herzegovina (.ba), Cyprus (.cy), Ireland (.ie), and Macedonia (.mk). In every single country, those of you with a steady male partner reported substantially higher sexual happiness.

The wish for a steady relationship was the most commonly (25%) mentioned reason for not being happy with your sex lives. The main report will look deeper into the patterns of sexual happiness and into what might determine sexual happiness. Whatever the patterns are, we believe that men who have sex with men should have the best sex with the least harm. National policies should therefore aim to provide an environment to promote the health and well being of all men who have sex with men, to reduce discrimination and to introduce legal recognition that supports and enhances same sex relationships.

A HUGE Thank You!

We would like to say thank you for taking the time to read this community report. Please print some copies off and distribute to local agencies and social venues or tell your friends and colleagues about our website www.emis-project.eu where they can get their own copy. The EMIS final report will be published in mid November, 2011. For further feedback and reports please visit the website. If you have any queries or would like further information please email the coordinator@emis-project.eu.

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The EMIS final report will be published mid November, 2011.

Meanwhile, you will find further feedback and reports on www.emis-project.eu. For any questions please contact coordinator@emis-project.eu.