

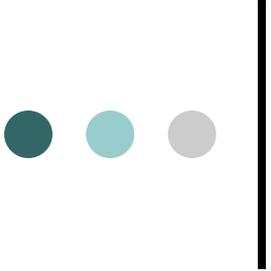


## HIV Knowledge, Attitude, Practice (KAP) Study on teenagers with parents working abroad (Republic of Moldova)

“Parents are not home...  
What can I do ?!”

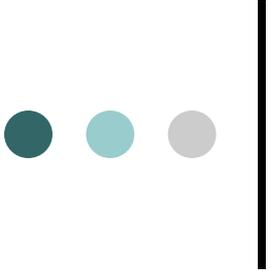
Berlin, 2012





# Context

- On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 every fifth individual was under the age of 18. Adolescents and young people in Moldova make up over one quarter of the total population.
- HIV affects mostly young adults, as 85% of total HIV cases have been registered in the age group 15-39 years, including 29.7% among those aged 15-24 years;
- 25% of abortions in 2010 were demanded by teenagers aged between 13 and 17 years old;
- On average, every fifth family with children has at least one member working abroad. On 1 October 2010, the official data show a number of 91,802 children left without parental care, of whom 28,863 children were without the care of both parents, who work abroad.



# Methodological aspects

- **Qualitative study**

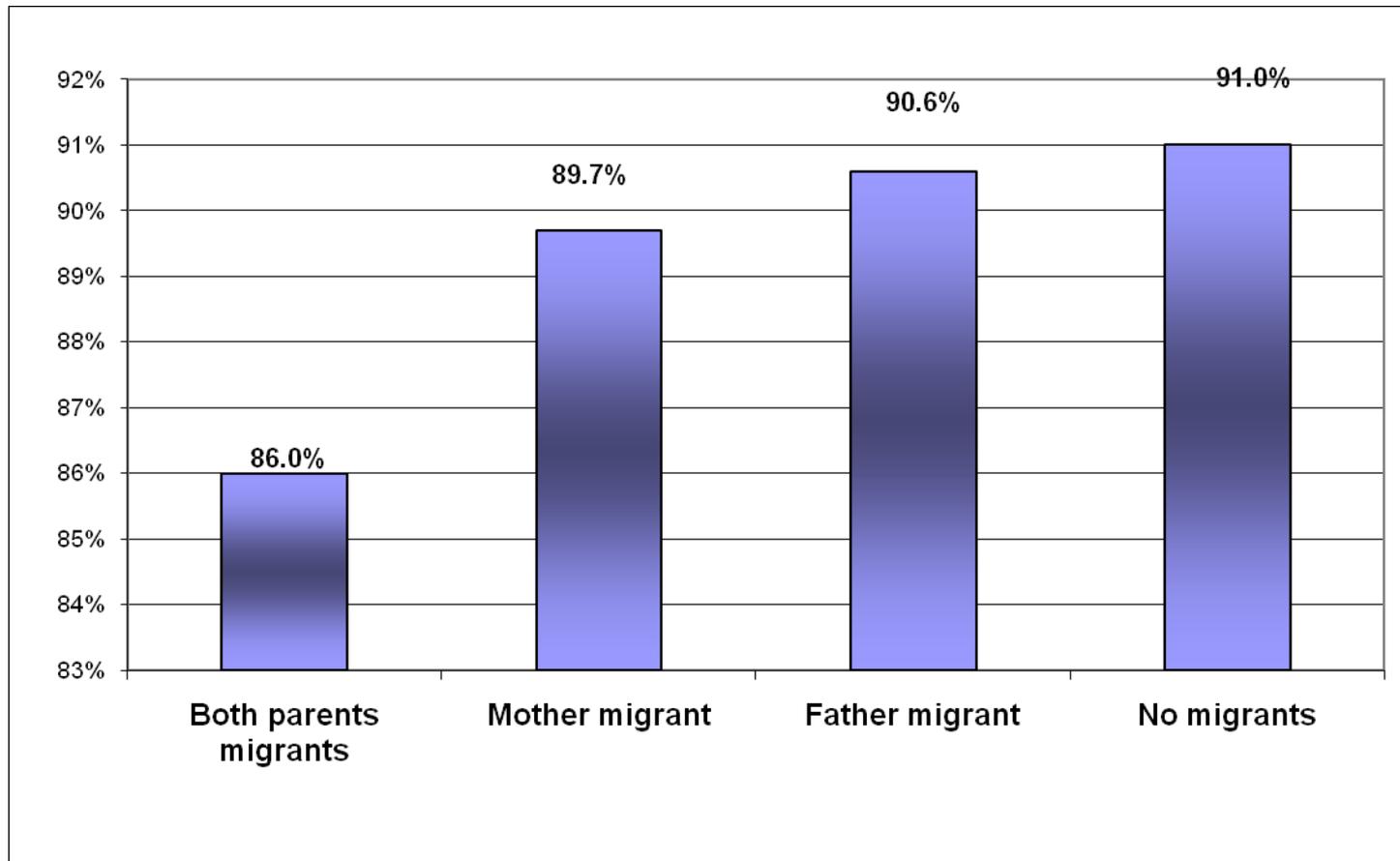
- **three focus-groups with adolescents** (14-18 years old), whose both parents left to work abroad;

- **eight in-depth interviews with experts:** representatives of Youth-Friendly Health Centres (YFHC); Consultants of Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) Centres, representatives of NGOs working in this area.

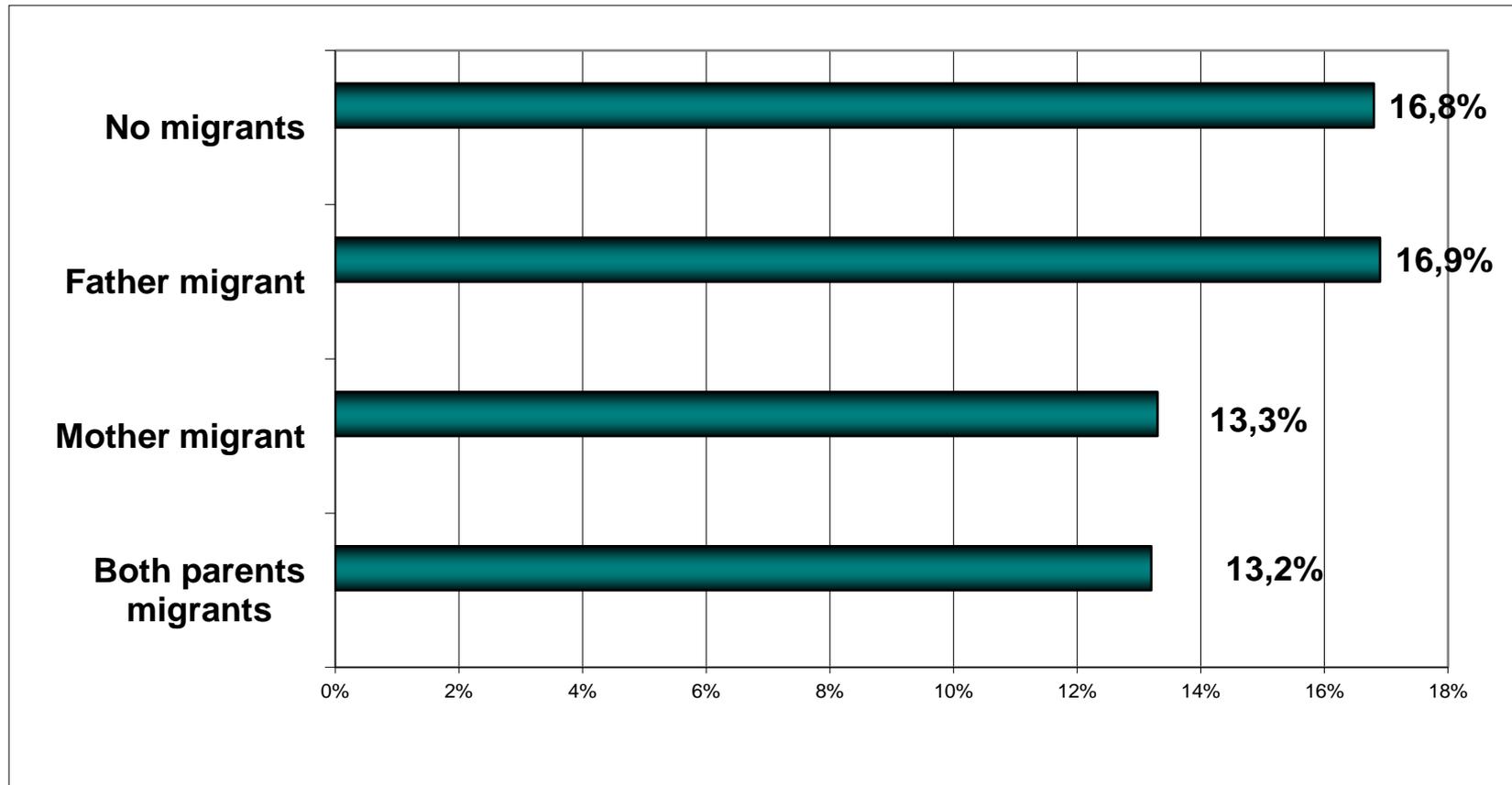
Period of data collection: **May – July 2011**

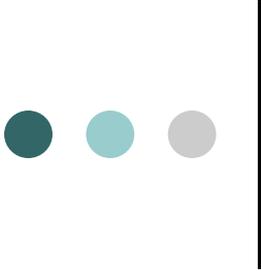
- **Analyses of quantitative study *ESPAD 2011***(The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs) – the Study was conducted in May 2011 for a representative sample of schools of the Republic of Moldova, the questionnaire was self-administered, being filled in by 4,893 13-18 year-old students. (source: National Centre of Health Management (NCHM) /CBS-AXA)

# Share of adolescents who have learned about HIV or AIDS



# Integrated indicator relating to HIV/AIDS knowledge





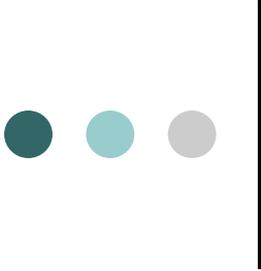
## **Share of respondents who gave correct answers to each of the following questions:**

- „Could the risk of getting infected with HIV be diminished by correct use of condom during each sexual intercourse?“
- „ Could the risk of getting infected with HIV be diminished by having only one sexual partner who is faithful and HIV-negative?“
- „Could HIV infection be passed by sharing the utensils for serving food with a HIV-positive individual?“
- „Could an apparently healthy individual be a HIV positive?“



# The main public awareness and education sources about HIV/AIDS

- The teaching staff;
- Civil society representatives, especially the NGOs working in this area;
- The pertinence and interlink groups for young people – parents, siblings, relatives, friends, neighbours and other individuals they get in touch with;
- Medical institutions;
- Mass-media;
- The Internet;



# Fears about HIV infection

- ***The end of life***

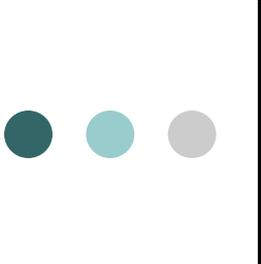
*„ Yes, of course, as they say, this is the end...As for me, God forbidden, in case I have it, I do not think it is worth living. Why should I live to torment myself?!” (M, 18 years old, parents work in Greece).*

*„This disease cannot be treated, and all of a sudden you think you have no chance...” (F, 17 years old, parents work in Italy).*

- ***Social isolation***

*„In case you are infected, then, for sure, all would estrange from you, even the relatives.” (F, 18 years old, parents work in Ukraine).*

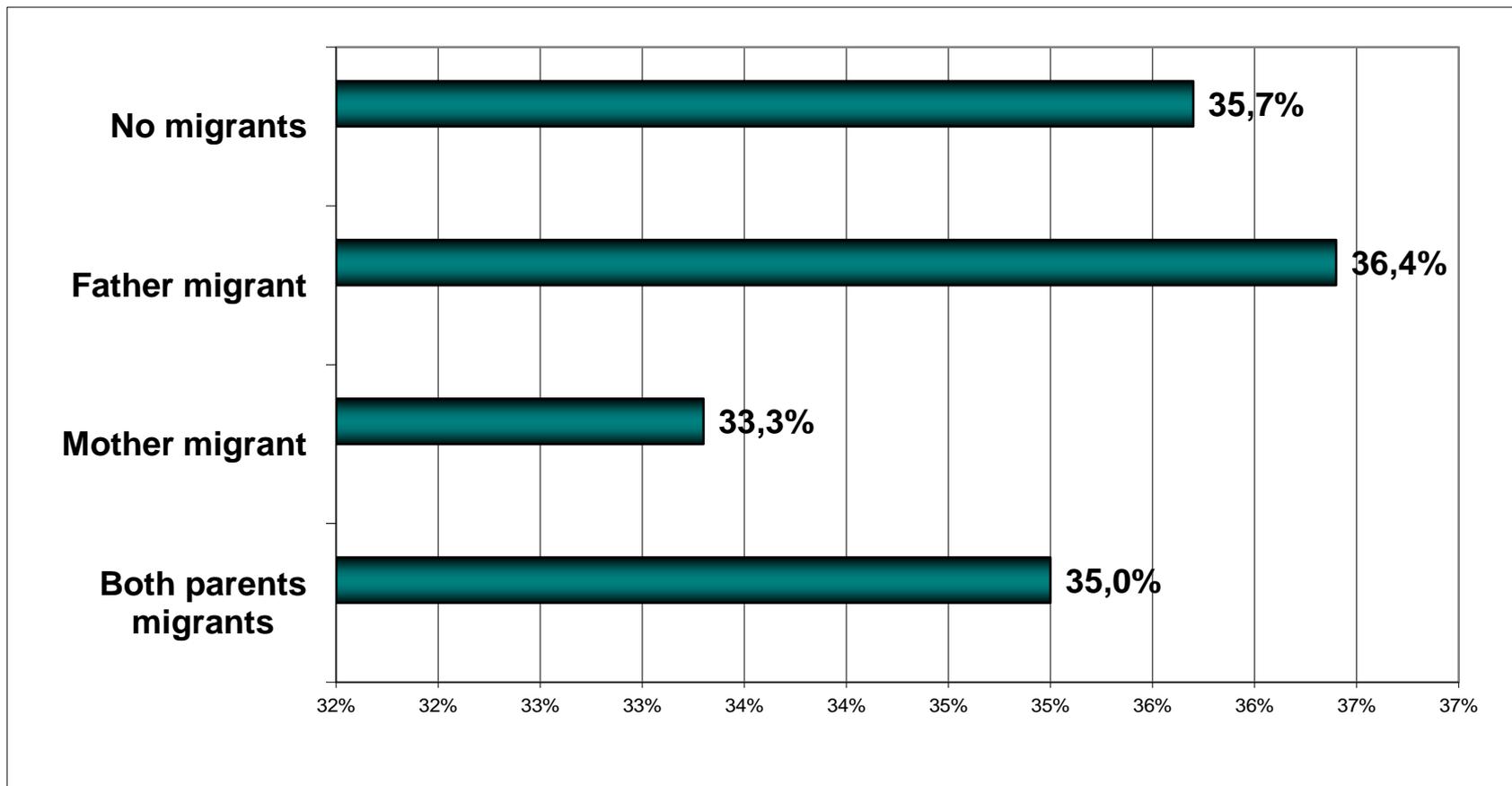
*„A shy individual, who is not taken into consideration by the society, keeps away from the others.”(F, 16 years old, parents work in Ukraine).*

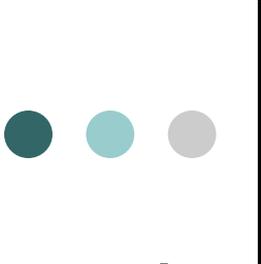


# Sexual education - taboo

- *„I did that, I did it several times. For instance, you have had sexual intercourses, I mean the girls or the boys, when you were 16 and 18 years old; your parents tell you that you shall not have sexual relations at that age.” (M, 18 years old, parents work in Greece).*
- *„I would rather search through the Internet because it puts no questions, while in case I ask one of my parents, then he/she would definitely ask me : why do you need to know that, do you have any concerns about that?... You can also talk to the physician through the Internet without disclosing yourself, i.e., anonymously.” (M, 17 years old, parents work in Italy).*
- *„,, We also know what we need, our friends tell us everything; it depends what kind of friends you have got. They would simply tell you about everything, one would laud himself that he visited that girl, and he took this and did that; thus, there is no need to ask your parents about that.” (F, 17 years old, parents work in Russia).*

# Integrated indicator relating to the on HIV/AIDS prevention





# The wrong answers regarding HIV/AIDS

- **choosing the sexual partner based on the way he/she looks;**

*„We should avoid sexual intercourses with individuals who could be HIV carrier... We should know him better, look at his cloths, and watch his behavior.” (F, 16 years old, parents work in Italy).*

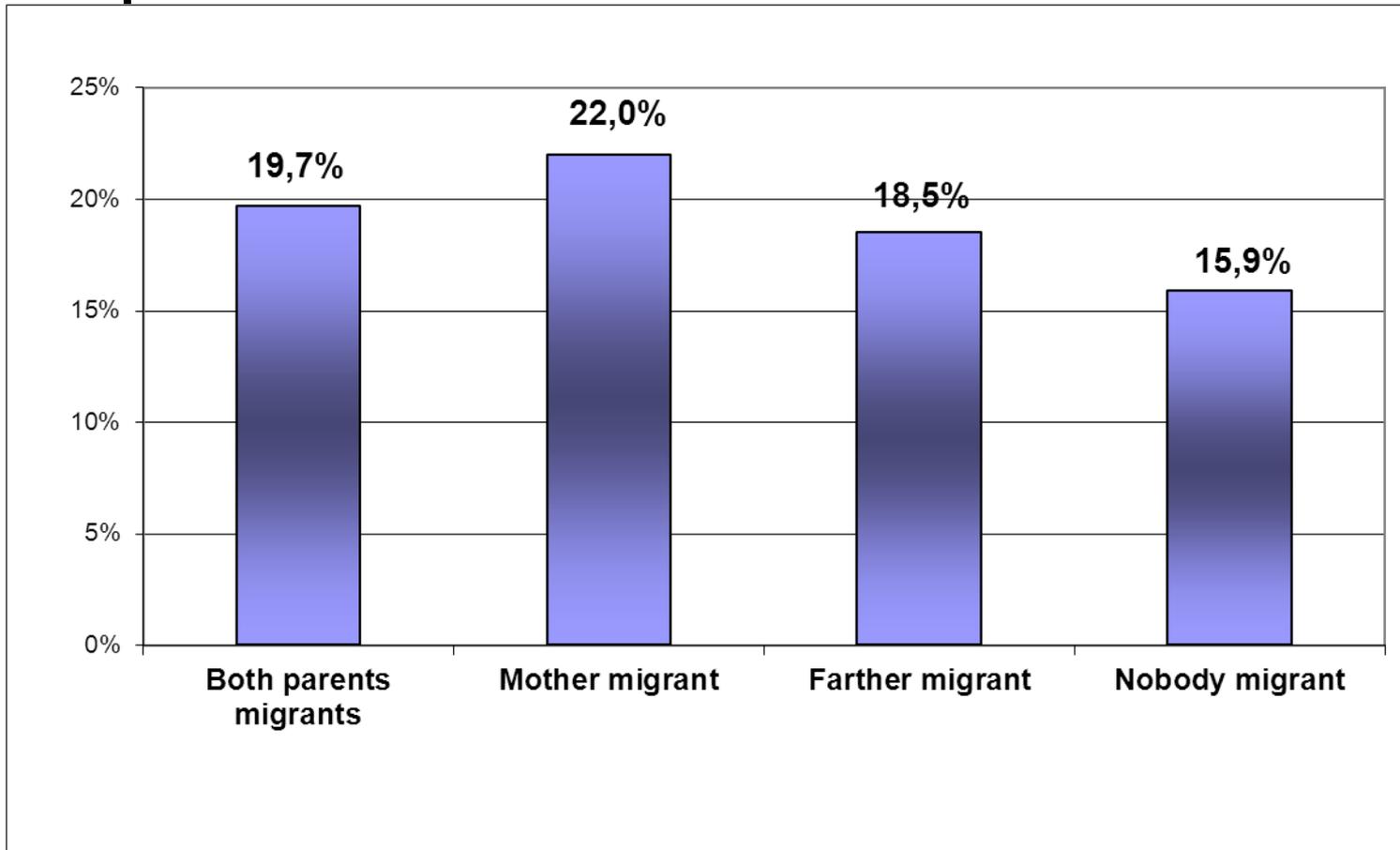
- **Taking pills, „there are different pills”;**

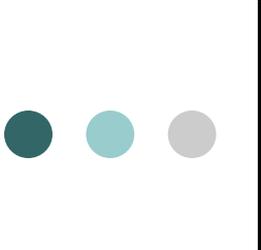
- **Looking after individual hygiene;**

*„I know that those individuals who do not care about their personal hygiene risk to contract HIV and not only this, I do not know all the diseases, but this is a malady with immunity deficiency, while hygiene plays an important role in maintaining stable immunity.” (M, 17 years old, parents work in Italy).*

*„Make sure you take, at least a shower after each sexual intercourse, this is the most important issue, I think.” (M, 16 years old, parents work in Italy).*

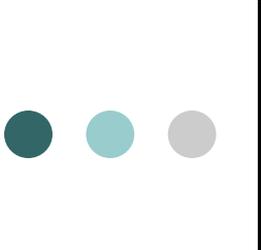
# Share of young people who have had sexual intercourses





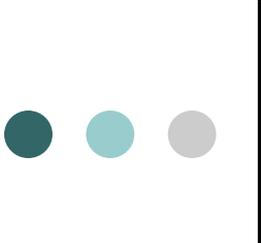
# Conclusions (1)

- The vast majority of adolescents with parents working abroad have learned about HIV/AIDS, but, pretty often, **their knowledge is superficial.**
- More respondents are not confident about the contact situations, which would not involve risks of contamination, like, for instance: communicating, shaking hands, kissing, etc.;
- **AIDS is associated** most often by the teenagers with “**sexual relations**”, “**an incurable disease**” and “**death**”, this causes youth feelings of fear, the wish to stop living or to isolate all the infected people.



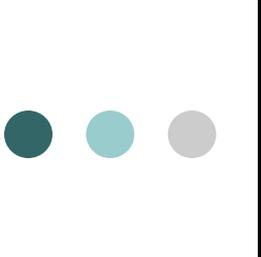
## Conclusions (2)

- In the majority of cases, **the relationships of the adolescents with parents that left abroad are formal**, the teenagers could not discuss with them on the topic of sexual relations.
- The interviewed experts as well as some adolescents think that **young people whose parents work abroad are exposed to higher risk of getting infected with HIV.**
- The categories perceived as the most vulnerable to HIV are as follows: drug- and alcohol-addicted young people, commercial sex workers.



## Conclusions (3)

- The experts think that many adolescents know the ways of HIV transmission and the protection measures against HIV, but they do not quite understand that this is a real threat for them as well; **they do not realize directly the risk to get infected.**
- The experts insist **to focus more on sexual education** to be able to prevent other sexually transmitted infections.
- The education institutions represent the main means through which the adolescents have got information about HIV/AIDS; however, **the teaching staff is not always trained adequately** to be able to provide and disseminate the knowledge the students need.

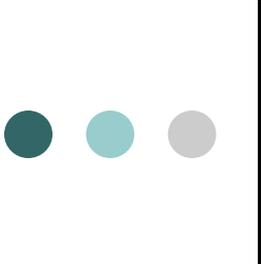


## Intervention (1)

- We present our research study on two conferences on national level;
- The data were disseminated to public authorities and international organizations.

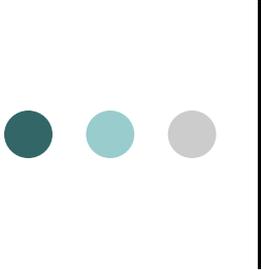
### ***Results:***

- expand the services of the Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) Centers “to decrease the age from 18 years old to 14 years old” – from August 2012 the age decreased from 18 to 16.



## Intervention (2)

- In order to increase the access of the teenagers – we conduct another study regarding adolescents' views about HIV testing and counseling;
- to promote/advertise youth-friendly medical services, in order to inform and assist the young people at the subject of HIV/AIDS – Youth-Friendly Health Centres and services in the enlargement process.



*„When they are far away, I want them to come; when they are nearby, I cannot wait them to leave.” (M, 17 years old, parents work in Russia*

# Thank You!

*“You get used to live independently; migration moves away your parents, and you get used to live without them, and you do not want to stay with them anymore.” (F, 15 years old, parents work in Italy).*