

www.singlestep.bg



Every journey starts with a single step..

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

SINGLE
STEP

ABOUT SINGLE STEP

Mission

Single Step Foundation was established in November 2016 with the mission of supporting young people from the LGBTI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex) community, their parents, friends, and allies in the process of self-awareness, disclosure, and affirmation of their sexual orientation and gender identity.



In 2023, we provided support to **373 community members**, a significant increase from 2022.

Our activities include:

- A free, nationwide online chat for psychological support;
- One-to-one consultations with psychologists in 10 cities across the country;
- Support groups for young people and parents;
- HIV and sexually transmitted infections testing and counseling;
- A comprehensive program to support transgender people;
- Career counseling;
- Community events to raise awareness on the topic at our social enterprise The Steps.



The Steps

The foundation is the sole owner of Single Step EOOD - home to our cultural and social enterprise The Steps. The business model of the enterprise is for 100% of the profits from its commercial activities to be reinvested in the foundation, with the aim of ensuring our financial sustainability, an innovative model of a social enterprise in Bulgaria, and a unique model for LGBTQ+ organizations worldwide. The Steps includes a bistro/cafe and a multifunctional hall for cultural, artistic, and community events.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT



Wonderful attitude! I would recommend Single Step's support to anyone from the LGBT community.

- Our nation-wide network of psychologists continued supporting youth from various cities in Bulgaria.
- Our anonymous online chat celebrated **2000 chats** since its launch in 2017.
- The most common issues that young people turn to our online chat for are **coming out, family problems, mental health, and homophobic or transphobic attitudes.**
- Our **four mutual support groups** (online and in person) continued to provide a safe space for discussions and peer support throughout the year.

Annual number of consultations

300+

Psychological support programme users nationwide

140

Unique chat users

143

Trained family therapists on providing inclusive support for LGBTI+ clients:

60

Single Step Foundation is a licensed provider of the social service “Information and consulting” with a license №L-3129-651 issued by the Agency for the Quality of Social Services on 13.10.2021.

SEXUAL HEALTH & HIV PROGRAM

Events

- In March, we took part in the discussion "Access to Sexual and Reproductive Rights: Challenges and Solutions", organised by the French Institute in Bulgaria;
- In May, we took part in a lecture on "Living with HIV/AIDS" on the occasion of World AIDS Day, organised by the Association of Medical Students in Bulgaria;
- In June, we organized four days of free HIV and syphilis, hepatitis B and C testing, as well as free sexual health consultations.



65

users got free HIV and STI testing

45

had free sexual health consultations

The manager of our Sexual Health and HIV programme Momchil Baev, PhD, participated in a working group at the Ministry of Health regarding the need to introduce national PrEP guidelines in Bulgaria.

As a result of the working group meetings, a detailed report was prepared discussing the need and benefits of introducing PrEP in the country as part of the National HIV and AIDS Prevention Program.

SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF TRANS PEOPLE

Our progress

Throughout the year, we saw an unprecedented increase in the number of transgender clients who took advantage of our comprehensive support services.

We continued our efforts to establish an efficient working process for medical transition by building a network of supportive specialists to ensure that transitions happen in a legal manner.

We are also collecting statistical data for advocacy purposes, encouraging medical professionals to make an official diagnosis of gender dysphoria in the medical records of our clients so that the data can reach the Ministry of Health.



New support requests

98

Health consultations

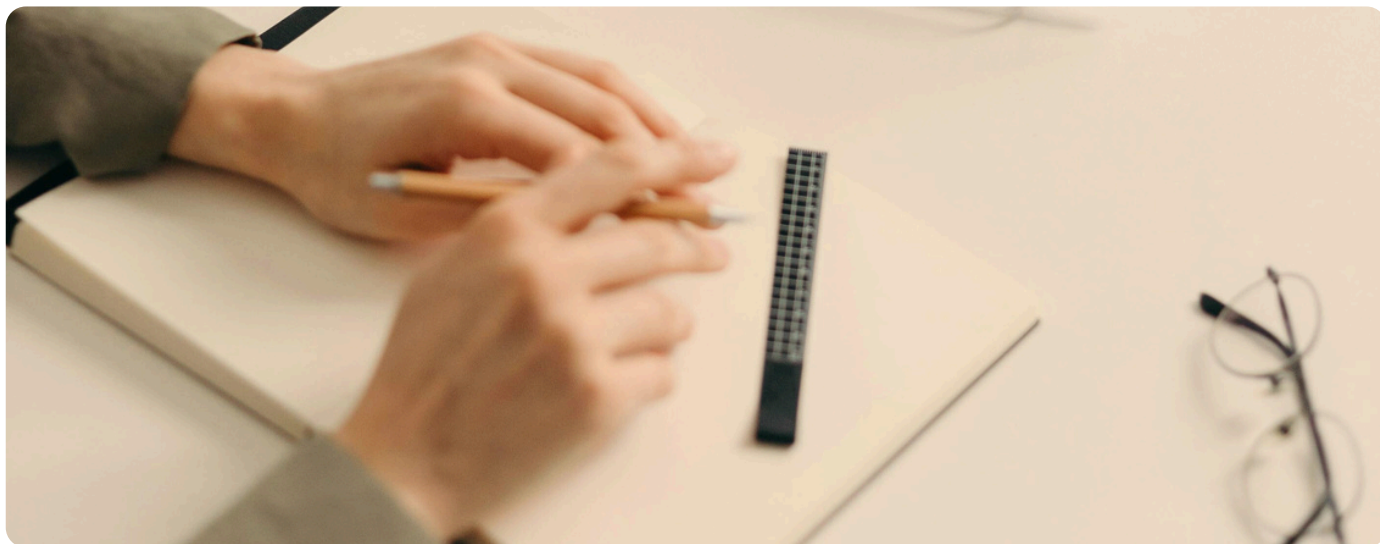
295

Psychological support requests

38



VENTUREOUT CAREER PROGRAMME



In 2023, VentureOut has provided 39 users with individual consultations.

VentureOut's 4th anniversary

In 2023, we celebrated the fourth anniversary of the programme. Since its launch in 2019, VentureOut has helped 401 unique users in Sofia and many cities across the country with free career consultations, educational and professional opportunities for development.

400+

unique users

293

have found a job

34

continued their
education/training



LEGAL SUPPORT

In the autumn, the Single Step Foundation and the youth LGBT+ organization "Deystvie" joined forces to provide comprehensive support for transgender and non-binary people in Bulgaria.

The partnership between the two organisations provides a comprehensive service for the transgender and non-binary community in Bulgaria, with experts from both organisations working together to provide access to psychological, health, professional, and legal support.

Thus, Single Step experts can refer clients to Deystvie's legal programme, which is related to legal support in gender affirmation cases and legal representation before Bulgarian courts, the European Court of Justice, and the European Court of Human Rights.

ADVOCACY & PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, we participated in various civil society initiatives.

In March we became part of the NGO coalition "Together Against Violence" - a project of [The WakeUp Foundation](#), established with the aim of providing systematic assistance to women affected by domestic violence.

We continued to engage with our partners from [National Network for Children](#) and their initiatives.

We also established a successful partnership with ["Teach for Bulgaria"](#) and participated in two teacher trainings under the "Exemplary Schools" programme.



OUR COMMUNITY EVENTS

In January, we participated in an educational discussion on gender equality for students from the American liberal arts college Agnes Scott. **In March**, in partnership with "WoMo" association, we organised the psychophysical training "Body - Space - Identity", aimed at exploring identity in relation to the body's positioning in space. **In October**, we also hosted a screening of Kosta Karakashyan's dance films, followed by a Q&A with the creative team.

In October, we held the multidisciplinary discussion "Creators of the New Future", which brought together well-known public figures and representatives of civil society in a conversation about the fight against discrimination, stigma, and violence.

Throughout the year, we organised **a series of community initiatives** aimed at supporting the physical and mental health and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community - community yoga, pilates, and dance classes, and monthly Art & Social creative workshops aimed at encouraging the artistic potential and socialisation of participants.

We also hosted **the first edition of the Safe Space Festival** - a three-day event with a variety of activities dedicated to the safety of LGBTQ+ people and the creation of a supportive community, which attracted more than 100 participants. Throughout the year, **The Steps hosted over 70 public events** in the field of culture and art - screenings, performances, book presentations, discussions, exhibitions, concerts, bazaars, and others, which attracted a diverse audience.



PROJECTS



Be a Hero

In March, the founder of Single Step, Ivan Dimov, launched the "[Be a Hero](#)" campaign in partnership with [Emprove Foundation](#) - a 31-day CrossFit challenge and a motivational informational and fundraising campaign to raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence, with a focus on mental and physical health, sports and the strength of the community.

Bursting the Bubble

As part of a partnership project with [GLAS](#) and [Bilitis](#) supported by ILGA-Europe, we organised a working group composed of experts from various fields - education, business, human rights and journalism, which aimed to explore different perspectives on the possible communication work to increase the public awareness of the problems LGBTI+ people face.

In July, we became one of the six finalists in "[The Change](#)" - the largest socially responsible initiative of Nova Broadcasting Group, and received tailored training and mentorship from [Reach for Change Foundation](#).

FINANCES

The foundation's total revenue for 2023 came from various sources (individual donors, corporate sponsorships, grants, etc.) and amounted to a total of **108,646 BGN**.



Bank details:

Single Step Foundation

Unicredit Bulbank

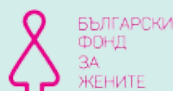
BIC/SWIFT: UNCRBGSF

IBAN: BG98UNCR70001523625709

DONATE

Your donations can make a real difference in the lives of young LGBTI+ people.
We thank you for your continued support!

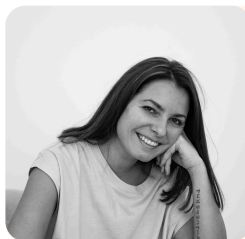
Thank you to all our partners and sponsors!



MEET THE TEAM



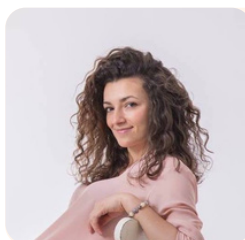
IVAN DIMOV
Founder and Chairman
of the Board



ANNA JOUKIVSKAIA
Psychological Support
Programme Manager



NELI TSVETKOVA
Psychologist & Youth
Support Group
Facilitator



ANI DRAGANOVA
Psychologist & Youth
Support Group
Facilitator



MOMCHIL BAEV
Sexual Health & HIV
Programme Manager



**KONSTANTIN
KUNEV**
VentureOut Manager



**VASILENA
DIMITROVA**
Project Manager

CONTACT US



The Steps

12 Bratya Miladinovi, Sofia

Email

info@singlestep.bg

Website

www.singlestep.bg

Find us on social media:

Single Step Foundation



The Steps



SINGL
ST=P