



## NGOs unite against the deportation of a foreign, HIV positive, transsexual prostitute living in France

### Issues

Since 1998, following a large scale campaign by HIV/aids NGOs, France created a special residence permit for foreign PLWHIV who do not have access to antiretroviral treatment (ART) in their own country. This permit is still in force.

In September 2009, in the south of France, a representative of state in charge of foreigners' rights wanted to deny the right to this residence permit to a Peruvian, HIV positive transsexual because he claimed that she represented a danger to public health.

### AIDES, a French NGO

Set up in 1984, AIDES is the largest HIV/AIDS and hepatitis community-based organisation in France, with centres in over 70 cities. We work with partner organisations in Europe, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

Our main goals:

- To mobilize people and communities affected by HIV and hepatitis
- To support people living with HIV and/or hepatitis, (social & professional integration, therapeutic education)
- To advocate for the rights of people living with HIV and/or hepatitis

For more information, visit our website on:  
[www.aides.org](http://www.aides.org)

### Description

A centre catering for prostitutes in Nice (France) contacted AIDES, the largest French HIV/Aids CBO to decide on a strategy. We decided to:

1. address a formal letter to the state representative to claim our indignation and to demand the residence permit for the person.
2. go with the person to the official appointment to show our support, as we received no reply to the letter
3. contact politicians working in the health and immigration ministries to request their help in contacting the doctors who could testify to the person's state of health.
4. publish a press release to publicly criticise the actions and words of the representative of state, with the support of organisations working for foreigners' rights, human rights and patients rights.

### Lessons learned

The result of this collective effort was that the person was granted her residence permit. This action allowed the local actors to be empowered and to be involved in lobbying and advocacy, to work better together, to consolidate the balance of power between organisations and the authorities. The media coverage allowed a greater visibility of the affair.

### Next steps

We feel this power struggle must continue as the case revealed the intention of the authorities to get rid of a specific group of foreigners despite the law. Many similar situations may occur in the future.

1<sup>st</sup> december 2008 demonstration - Camille Cabral from PASTT (transgender organisation), member of ODSE



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