

[Sensoa, Flemish expertise centre for sexual health \[1\]](#)

Sensoa promotes sexual health as a centre of expertise in Flanders (Belgium) and does so with an international perspective.

Sensoa works on the basis of the World Health Organisation's definition of "sexual health". Sexual health is **more than just the absence of disease and preventing the risks** of unplanned pregnancy, sexual abuse, STDs or HIV. Attention should also be paid to the **pleasurable and positive aspects of sexuality**. This then translates itself into a constructive, respectful approach towards sexuality and sexual relationships.

For Sensoa, sexual health is inextricably linked with promoting and safeguarding **sexual rights**. We believe that sexual rights should be respected, safeguarded and upheld so that everyone is able to experience his or her sexuality free from coercion, discrimination and violence.

Key issues

Key issues for Sensoa are the promotion of comprehensive sexuality education, the prevention of STDs and HIV, the prevention of unplanned pregnancies, the prevention of sexual abuse and the integration of people living with HIV.

Our principles

Sensoa is a **dynamic organisation** that not only responds to change but also plans for and pre-empts future developments. Wherever possible, we work together to ensure the maximum involvement of our partners.

Evidence-based work is essential: our approach is based on (proven) facts and best practices.

Sensoa is not only directed towards the **general public**, but also towards **specific vulnerable groups**.

Finally, Sensoa **defends sexual rights**. Everyone is entitled to the fullest possible expression of their sexuality, as long as there is consent from all parties involved and no harm is inflicted on oneself or one's partner.

Six areas for action

Based on target groups, Sensoa delivers its work in six areas:

- Providing information to the general public about sexual health.
- Promoting comprehensive sexuality education for young people.
- Limiting the impact of HIV and STDs on the sexual health of gay men.
- Strengthening sexual health interventions for vulnerable migrants.
- Promoting integration of people living with HIV and limiting the impact of HIV on their sexual health.
- Raising awareness in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights in international policy.

Our core activities

- Sensoa **develops**: we research and analyse relevant social developments and trends and translate these into interventions for specific target audiences.
- Sensoa **informs**: we provide information and advice to the general public, to specific groups and appropriate intermediaries, mainly using digital media.
- Sensoa **educates**: we provide teaching, education and training to intermediaries. We aim to incorporate the issue of sexual health into existing (professional) training and into the school curriculum
- Sensoa **advocates**: we work hard to provide support for sexual health and to promote sexual rights. We achieve this by setting up initiatives to promote awareness, by formulating clear positions in relation to sexual health and rights, by identifying discrimination and promoting better access to sexual and reproductive health care for vulnerable groups.
- Sensoa **supports**: we provide support for policy development and implementation, both to governments and policy makers in relevant sectors, institutions and facilities.

Sensoa's international perspective

Sensoa's international activities are based on its core principles: advocacy and building capacity.

In terms of advocacy, Sensoa calls for attention to be given to sexual health, HIV and AIDS in the **Flemish and Belgian development cooperation policy**. We strive to achieve scrupulous monitoring of international agreements on these issues and respect for the sexual and reproductive rights of every individual worldwide. Sensoa also supports the **Belgian Parliamentarians for the Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs).

Sensoa also works with **partner organisations within and beyond the EU**, with the aim of **exchanging experience and strengthening their resources and impact in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights**. Through training and advice, we support two international projects that aim to provide comprehensive sexuality education in schools.

Sensoa also operates in a variety of European and international networks. Sensoa is an active member of the [European Network of the International Planned Parenthood Federation](#) [2] (IPPF) and of the [European Civil Society Forum on HIV/AIDS](#) [3].

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Bron-URL: <http://www.sensoa.be/en/about-sensoa>

Links:

[1] <http://www.sensoa.be/en/about-sensoa>

[2] <http://www.ippfen.org/en/>

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/health/sexual_health/hiv_aids/civil_society_forum/index_en.htm