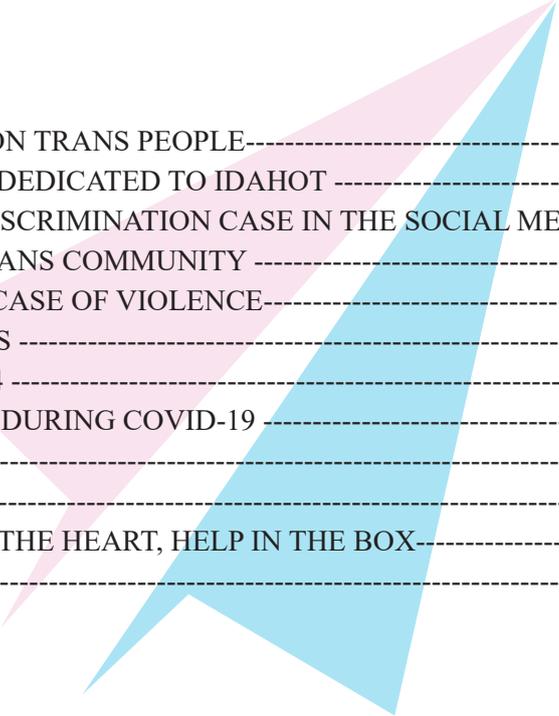


# TRANS NEWS

May - June - July 2020



# No.13



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# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TRANS PEOPLE

Survey on the social consequences of coronavirus (COVID-19) among the transgender community members.

A state of emergency was declared in Armenia on March 16, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., with the aim of preventing the spread of a new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the country.

The purpose of the survey is to find out how many representatives of the transgender community are considered the beneficiaries of state support programs, and what social impact the obstacles caused by the coronavirus pandemic have had on the transgender community.

The surveys are conducted anonymously and secretly, only for the purpose of analysis. The received information will be published, ensuring the confidentiality of personal data of the people interviewed, personal data will not be stored, will not be provided to third parties, will not be published in separate or comprehensive local or international reports.

**COVID-19  
and  
Trans people**

**RIGHT SIDE**  
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN DEDICATED TO IDAHOT

Today the whole world celebrates the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia, Biphobia and Interphobia. We still celebrate this day because hatred and fear in the world and the crimes committed on the grounds of them have not been properly compensated, as fear and loathing continue to accompany us in almost every segment of our life. Like every year, this year also the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO celebrates this day together with all the representatives of the world LGBT+ community, with their relatives and friends, by strengthening them and raising the issues of the trans and LGB community, by making them more accessible and audible to the public.

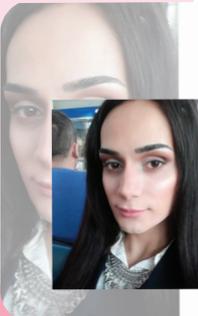
Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 outbreak this year, we do not have the opportunity to ensure our visibility on the streets, but that does not mean that we do not exist. For two weeks now, Lilit Martirosyan, the President of the Right Side NGO, has been holding online meetings with the representatives of the trans community in a live broadcast format and during these broadcasts, she has been speaking about the most obvious problems of the trans community by trying to find possible solutions. For this year we have identified the dreams and goals of the trans activists hosted by Lilit Martirosyan during the so-called #instatrans broadcasts. And we are glad to present you the quotes of 6 brave trans activists which you can find in the following pictures.



**IDAHOIT2020**  
Breaking The Silence  
#INSTATRANS

*Someewhere over the rainbow there's a world where nobody needs to give up on their dreams because of discrimination against them. And I really hope that very soon the world of my dreams will exist not only in my mind.*

**Milena**

**IDAHOIT2020**  
Breaking The Silence  
#INSTATRANS

*Love is the only cure for hatred. Just spread love to the world instead of hate, and you'll see how the world is changing and becoming a place where every day is a joy.*

**Nora**




**IDAHOIT2020**  
Breaking The Silence  
#INSTATRANS

*All the people in the world should be accepted and protected no matter if they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, straight, disabled or something else.*

**Angel**




**IDAHOIT2020**  
Breaking The Silence  
#INSTATRANS

*Maybe there will come a day, possibly sooner than we expect, when we will no longer need days such as this on our calendar. But for now, we need to be watchful, we need to log and report incidents and we need to remain organized.*

**Electra**



# TRANSGENDER WOMEN' DISCRIMINATION CASE IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA

On April 23, two transgender women, E.P and A. Gh., applied to the "Right Side" Human Rights Defender NGO by informing that a number of people had posted photos and information of their passports on Facebook and Instagram social networks.

As a result of these actions, transgender women were subjected to discrimination and hate speech on the online platform, received numerous threats, mocking and insulting comments. In this regard, the Right Side NGO submitted a report to the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Armenia on the crime of illegally collecting, keeping, using and disseminating information pertaining to personal or family life provided in Article 144 of the RA Criminal Code.

Based on the report, there was initiated a criminal case, specifically against Narek Malyan for illegally disseminating the personal data of transgender woman E.P.

The mentioned act is punishable with a fine of two hundred to five hundred times the minimum wage, or imprisonment for a term of one to two months.

For more information about this and many other cases please follow us on our official pages in social networks and on our website.



## SOCIAL ASSISTANCE TO TRANS COMMUNITY

Dear trans community,

As it is already known, because of the state of emergency in the country, trans community members are not able to earn much needed resources for their survival, and they cannot receive state support due to non-compliance of established standards.

Therefore, the Rights Side Human Rights Defender NGO expresses its willingness to support the trans community to overcome the social consequences of the coronavirus. We will only assist those who are in critical situations and do not expect assistance from other sources, who have not been supported from other organizations or the state before.

This is a short-term project and is intended exclusively for the trans community members. Because of the limited financial means, everyone who will be the beneficiary of this project will not be able to apply to the project for the second time.

Within the framework of this project, we will take care of the urgent needs of the trans community, such as apartment rents (partly), utilities, food, hygiene supplies, etc.

## TRANSGENDER WOMAN'S CASE OF VIOLENCE

In May 2020 transgender woman L. living in a province, who was being regularly abused by her family because of her gender identity, moved to Yerevan according to her request with the help of Right Side NGO.

On June 5th, late in the evening, Lilit Martirosyan, the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO's President received a call from transgender L., who reported that her family members had found out her address, and by arriving at her apartment they forced her to come out, otherwise, they would break the door and kill her.

Lilit Martirosyan made a call to the Right Side NGO's lawyer, who, in turn, called the police. The police arrived at the apartment of transgender L., and her relatives were brought to the police department.

With the help of the lawyer at the police station, transgender L submitted an application for an attack and left the police station.

While leaving the police station, the father of transgender L tried to attack the Right Side NGO's lawyer and transgender woman L., but the lawyer prevented the attack.

Transgender L. is currently in a safe place and is negotiating with her family members.

The Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO will provide assistance to the transgender woman within the framework of a social support project.

## SERIES OF JOINT WEBINARS

Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO, in collaboration with the Sex Workers Rights Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), has launched a series of webinars on "Community perspectives and responses to criminalization, violence, discrimination and repression against sex workers in the region." The first 2 webinars have already been successfully implemented.

During the webinars, transgender sex worker activists learn about their rights and mechanisms for their application, they acquire skills on different platforms to fight for their rights, as well as they learn about the importance of being involved in decision-making processes.

The series of webinars are being conducted by the experts and trainers certified by SWAN, who, based on their own and community experience, pass on their knowledge to Armenian transgender sex worker activists through non-formal education and interactive discussions.

The participants, by completing the series of webinars successfully and mastering the provided information, will be able to use and implement the tools included in the SWIT (Sex Workers Implementation Tool) within the framework of our further activities funded by SWAN.

Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO highly appreciates the cooperation with SWAN and is proud to be a member of the network for two years now by fighting for equal rights for sex workers in Armenia and on international platforms.

## WEBINAR NUMBER 3 AND 4

Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO, in collaboration with the SWAN - Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), has implemented the third and fourth webinars on "Community perspectives and responses to criminalization, violence, discrimination, and repression against sex workers in the region."

Webinar topics are updated and adapted for the Armenian transgender sex workers' context at most. The trainers of the first webinar were Chartiy Organization Legalife-Ukraine's Легалайф-Україна Director Nataliia Isaieva and Head of the Board Fiskova Elena who have skillfully passed their knowledge and experience on "documenting violence and using the collected data" to the transgender sex worker activists, and the latter have received the answers to their questions through Interactive discussions.

The topic of the next webinar has been "Community-based Services" which has been conducted by Шахназ Исламова the Director of the Tais Plus NGO. Through interactive discussions and multi-content slides, participants have learnt about Kyrgyzstan's experience in providing community-based services, and at the end of the webinar participants asked questions arisen during the webinar, and the trainer has given satisfying answers to them.

Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO highly appreciates the cooperation with SWAN and is proud to be a member of the network for two years now by fighting for equal rights for sex workers in Armenia and on international platforms.

## SEX WORKERS' PROBLEMS DURING COVID-19

On July 2, the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO, with the support of the Sex Workers Rights Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), conducted the first webinar concerning to sex workers' problems in Armenia.

The webinar was conducted by Lilit Martirosyan, the Founder and President of the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO.

The themes discussed during the webinar were maximally up-to-date and tailored to the sex workers' needs and scope of interest. The discussion was focused on the issues like the impact of COVID-19 on sex workers in the country, social-structural determinants of health and health-care access among sex workers in Armenia, and the key actions that the state and other stakeholders could take to ensure access to health care services. The discussion was heated, as many of the sex workers in Armenia were unemployed and lacked state support, which would allow them to buy food and hygiene items, which in turn could lead to a number of serious health problems. And because a number of sex workers were living in the regions, they often faced problems with access to quality healthcare services as well as discriminatory treatment, the most interesting topic to them was the major steps they could take to reform the health care system.

Afterwards, the sex workers were given a question and answer session, during which they asked their questions and received comprehensive answers.

At the end of the webinar, the participants thanked to the organizers for discussing such an important topic and expressed their readiness to participate in the webinars to be organized in the near future and to disseminate the acquired knowledge among the community members.

## HOTLINE SERVICE

Dear followers, dear TRANS and LGBTQI community and supporters, we are glad to inform you that the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO is resuming its hotline service by providing free legal advice and representation in police stations, ministries and courts.

The Legal Hotline Service is open 24/7. Taking into account the overburdened workload of the NGO, legal representation will be provided only in case of problems with state bodies, including the courts, police and ministries. If necessary, a judicial representation will be provided.

THE SERVICE IS FREE.

You can contact on this phone number:  
+37493500339

You can contact on the following Email address:  
lawyer.rightsidengo@gmail.com  
And apply to our Facebook page:

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The German Marshall Fund of the United States  
Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation.

## HOT LINE SERVICE

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CURRENT WORKLOAD OF THE NGO, THE LEGAL REPRESENTATION WILL BE AVAILABLE IN CASE OF LEGAL PROBLEMS WITH THE STATE BODIES INCLUDING POLICE, MINISTRIES, COURTS, ETC. LEGAL COUNSELLING WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ALL WHO NEEDS IT. IF NECESSARY, THE CASES WILL BE TAKEN TO THE COURT.

THE SERVICE IS FREE OF CHARGE



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The project is funded by German Marshall Fund of the United States and Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation.  
[www.rightsidengo.com](http://www.rightsidengo.com)

**B | S | T** The Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation  
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## WEBINAR NUMBER 5

### The Series of Webinars on SWIT Manual is Completed

The Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO, with the support of the Sex Workers Rights Advocacy Network in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SWAN), completed the series of webinars on “Community perspectives and responses to criminalization, violence, discrimination and repression against sex workers in the region.” In total, 5 webinars were conducted, which were dedicated to the discussion of the "Sex Worker Implementation Tool" (SWIT) guidance and its possible adaptation to the RA context.

During the last, 5th webinar, sex worker activists summed up the materials discussed during previous webinars, discussed their gained experience, accumulated knowledge and competences in order to improve the skills of sex workers and ensure the continuity of knowledge about their rights.

The webinar was moderated by SWAN certified experts and Lilit Martirosyan, President of the Side Human Rights Defender NGO, who, based on their own experience gained over the years, discussed with Armenian sex worker activists further actions envisaged for more comprehensive, meaningful and effective work.

At the end of the webinar, the following questions were also discussed:

- Which chapter was more in line with our work?
- What was not enough clear for us?
- Our group was most interested in which topic from SWIT?
- Ideas and inspiration that probably were born from SWIT, new activities?
- What kind of services for sex workers we have in our organization?
- What type of services the other organizations provide to sex workers in Armenia?

As a result of this webinar, the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO team selected 4 participants with the best results, who, in their turn, would disseminate the gained knowledge through educational and informative webinars and campaigns.

We highly appreciate the cooperation with SWAN, we believe and we are convinced that all the problems can be solved only with joint efforts, constructive cooperation and community involvement.

# SOCIAL SUPPORT: LOVE IN THE HEART, HELP IN THE BOX



Այն արկղույն/ Love in the heart, help in the box

Dear followers,  
We present you our new social video.  
This video is about the "Social Humanitarian Aid during the Difficult Period of COVID-19" activity organized by the "Right Side" Human Rights Defender NGO, within the framework of which social support is provided to the Transgender and Sex Workers' community in Yerevan and RA regions.



We support the trans community:  
love in the heart, help in the box.

**B | S | T** The Black Sea Trust  
for Regional Cooperation  
A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND

#MyHealthAlsoMatters #CoronavirusFastResponseFund #BSTRSCooperation #RightSideNGO #Transgender-Armenia #FirstAndOnlyTransOrganisation

The German Marshall Fund of the United States.  
Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation.

## HOT LINE ATTENTION!

On July 23, 2020 at around 4:30 AM, transgender women G. and V. were attacked by three other transgender women in an area called Closed Market in Yerevan. Transgender G. called the police, after which the arrived police officers showed discriminatory and rude treatment towards G. and V..

After the arrival of the police, frightened transgender women V. and G. did not want to go to the police station, in response to which the police said that if they did not go with them and file a complaint, they would be administratively arrested on suspicion of prostitution. Despite the urgings of transgender women, the police brutally handcuffed on transgender women G. and V. hands and subjected them to administrative arrests by weakening the handcuffs at their request, as they were too rough and damaged their hands.

After the lawyer arrived at the central police station in Yerevan and provided advice to the transgender women, transgender G. filed a report alleging that he had been beaten, as well as he complained about the police actions. At the same time, the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO will pursue to investigate the bad attitude of the police officers.

We would like to inform you that the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO has resumed its hotline service by providing free legal advice and representation in police stations, ministries and courts.

The Legal Hotline Service is open 24/7. To contact, please call +37493500339.









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