RIGHT SIDE

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

"TRANS ARMENIA"

N 3

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2018

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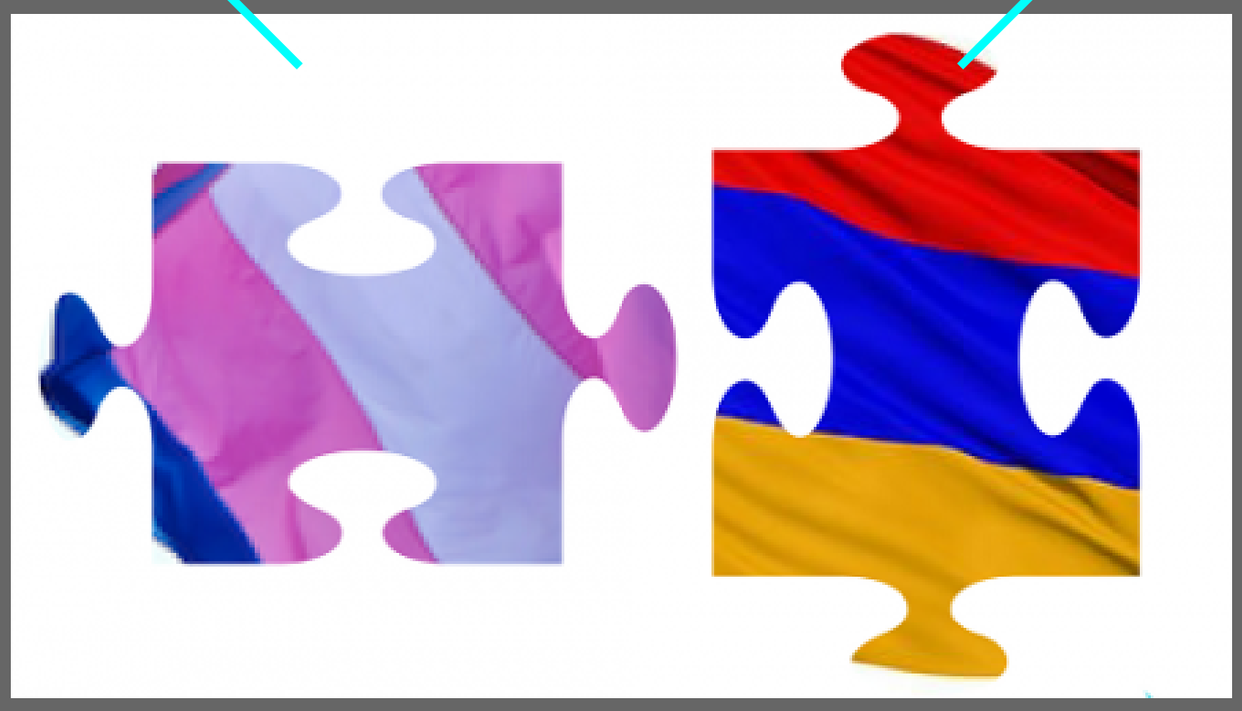
PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS TWO TRANS PEOPLE

On September 3, 2018 "Right Side" human rights defender NGO got a complaint from two trans people about discrimination towards them, violation of their consumer rights, violation on restrictions of their freedom of movement and degrading treatment towards them by the employees of one of the sport clubs in Yerevan. In August of this year, the citizens of RA M.S. and N.A. were forbidden to use the services of the sport club, with the "justification" that they are trans people to be directly proclaimed to M.S. and N.A. M.S. and N.A. were ridiculed, insulted, humiliated, revoked the sport club membership and rejected the access to the sport club by the employees of the sport club. The director of the sport club has confirmed the discriminative attitude of her employees towards trans people, and there is a a record of that conversation. The latter also addressed to Lilit Martirosyan with surprise whether Martirosyan saw the appearance of those people and whether it was normal. In her words: "the normal Armenian men were constrained by the presence of trans people because it was not clear whether that person is a boy or a girl. Men with breasts are coming, and you do not know whether the keys of which wardrobe to hand them". She as a director prefers these kind of people not to visit the sport club rather than losing their "normal" customers.Based on the abovementioned, ”Rights Side” human rights defender NGO made a request of clarification to the director of the sport club requesting to explain the legal bases of denial of the entry of M.S. and N.A. to the sport club revoking the already provided membership.

“Right Side” human rights defender NGO qualifies such activities by the staff of the sport club as a discrimination and strongly condemns such treatment towards trans people. So far trans people have not been protected from discriminatory practices by the Armenian legislation, as it does not regulate the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender identity and self-expression. “Rights Side” human rights defender NGO is going to restore the rights of transgender people trough a court procedure.



LETTER TO THE ARMENIAN STATE BODIES ON THE INDEPENDENCE DAY OF ARMENIA

On September 21, 1991 after the referendum Armenia was proclaimed independent, democratic Republic by being separated from the USSR. Nevertheless, traditional Armenian perceptions and clear gender roles are of great importance in the Armenian society, which has already been regarded as independent for 27 years now. However, it should be taken into consideration that any "role" labeling already limits the individual's freedom. Unfortunately, the lives of trans people still depend on these perceptions of society. In the Republic of Armenia, trans people are deprived of their right to private life, subjected to violence, oppression, public blaming, family rejection, discrimination and stigma, being stoned for their free will expression when revealing their gender identity and expression outside of the cube of the stereotypical perceptions of the society. The Armenian society expresses not only hate speech against trans people but also it is often turned into hate crimes against them. In 2017, “Right Side” human rights defender NGO registered 100 cases of hate crimes committed against trans people and 123 cases in 2018. From the statistical data it is evident that the number of crimes against trans people has been increasing year by year. Unfortunately, this is not the only problem that trans people face. The RA legislation does not regulate issues related to trans specific healthcare: there are no medical regulations and corresponding specialists for transition and hormone replacement therapy, the legal name change process requires a psychological assessment, and gender legal recognition processes are humiliating and require mandatory sterilization of trans people."Right Side" human rights defender NGO reminds that human rights and dignity are the supreme values according to the RA Constitution. "Right Side" human rights defender NGO calls the Armenian authorities to ensure the equal rights of trans citizens of the Republic of Armenia through the adoption of comprehensive legislation on anti-discrimination, gender reassignment surgery, hormone replacement therapy, legal name change and hate crimes. This statement was sent to the President of RA, to the Prime- Minister of RA, to the Prosecutor's Head office of RA, to the Head of Police of RA, to the Minister of Labour and Social Issues of RA ,to the Minister of Justice of RA, to the Minister of Health of RA,to the Minister of Education and Science of RA, to the Head of the National Assembly, to the Ombudsman Office of RA.

"Right Side" human rights defender NGO congratulates Agnes Malkhasyan on getting a legal name change.

We are happy to announce that due to the legal support within the project run by “Right Side” human rights defender NGO and with the financial support of the European Endowment for Democracy Agnes Malkhasyan is already able to act as a transgender person in compliance of her gender identity and expression with her new renamed passport.

"Right Side" human rights defender NGO expresses its gratitude to the Civil Acts Registration Office under the RA Ministry of Justice for their conscientious work."Right Side" human rights defender NGO has been working with the Civil Acts Registration Office since 2016 and as a result of cooperation with them the procedure of the legal name change is much more easy now for many transgender people.

"Right Side" human rights defender NGO as the first transgender organization in Armenia and the South Caucasus will continue to support transgender people to solve their problems

We are pleased to inform that Nora is hired as a make-up teacher in "Right Side" human rights defender NGO after graduating the course of make-up classes with 3 months duration organized by "Right Side" human rights defender NGO.

“Right Side” human rights defender NGO and the Transgender Community are grateful to European Endowment for Democracy for the financial support of make-up and sewing classes, due to which transgender, intersex people and sex workers have the opportunity to acquire new professions and find a job in Armenia.

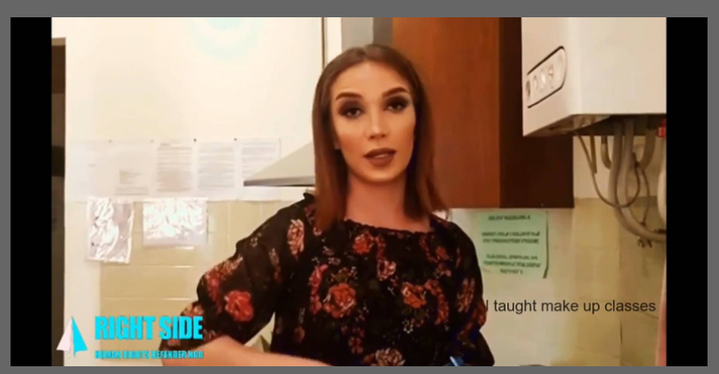
On September 21-23, 2018, representatives of the "Right Side" human rights defender NGO took part in the Trans-Camp organized by the Post-Soviet Trans-Coalition in Ukraine. Many transgender activists from other post-Soviet countries were also present at the camp.
During the camp panel discussions were organized on gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as non-binary issues. The complexity, specifics of sex-work and discrimination against transgender people were also discussed during the camp.
The president of "Right Side" human rights defender NGO Lilit Martirosyan, the administrative and planning assistant of the NGO Vrezh Varzhapetyan and transgender activist Nora Petrosyan presented the experience of the recent 3 years of the "Right Side" human rights defender NGO, discussing the trans-phobic atmosphere in the post-Soviet countries, lack of laws regulating HRT processes in the Republic of Armenia.

We are happy to announce that "Right Side" human rights defender NGO as the only transgender and sex-workers' NGO in Armenia became the first member of ICRSE. The International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe includes 102 organisations in 32 countries in Western, Eastern and Central Europe and Central Asia.

"Right Side" human rights defender NGO hopes that the cooperation with ICRSE and the development of equal human rights for sex-workers and transgender people will change the treatment towards transgender people and sex-workers based on the principles of equity for all human beings.

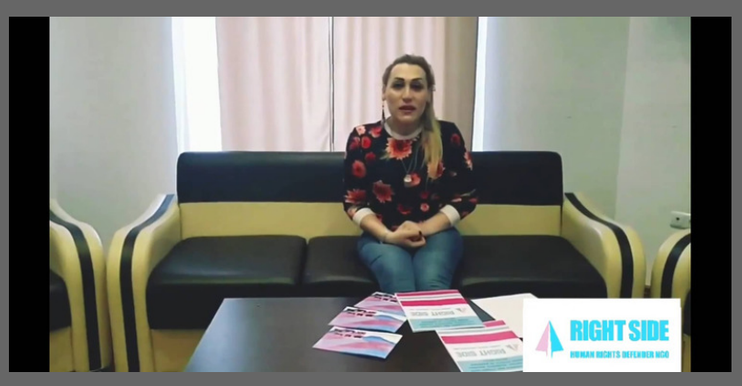
"Right Side" human right defender NGO starts a new project of videos with participation of transgender people to speak about their lives and the input of "Right Side" human rights defender NGO in their life. The videos shooted in September are available by the links below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VL7lsjF_iPk



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUWpVweaPKw

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmgBL_xRTyw



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZtjv8BQAcM

THE NUMBER OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER

FOCUS GROUP MEETING 13

MEETING WITH SEX-WORKERS 5

LEGAL SERVICE 8

HEALTHY TALK WITH WATERMELON 12

SELF-HELP GROUP MEETING IN A MEMORY OF VANESA CAMPOS 13

MEETING WITH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF Y-PEER OF KYRGYZSTAN JAN AKMATBEK 4

The total number of participants of September

55

2018 SEPTEMBER

"RIGHT SIDE" HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

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