

WHO ARE TRANSGENDER PEOPLE?

The answers to your questions about transgender people,
gender identity, and gender expression.



Right Side
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PROLOGUE

Hate speech towards transgender people in the Republic of Armenia (RA) has become one of the most common forms of intolerance and ostracization and the main reason for it is that society doesn't have enough information about transgender people.

The spread of degrading and insulting opinions towards different communities and social groups, including transgender people, contributes to the increase in the number of cases of hatred and violence. Should we really allow people to disguise hate speech under the term freedom and attack certain groups of society with hateful words, is it really allowed to them to reproduce the violent language of the extremists? Some developing and already developed countries have no doubts about this issue, they have enacted laws and regulations that ban transphobia and other arbitrary expressions of hatred.

In order to decrease the hate speech towards transgender people, it is vital to give accurate information about gender and sexuality to society.

Taking into consideration the lack of quality information about gender and sexuality, the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO has made this booklet in order to better the knowledge of various strata of society on gender and sexuality and bestow knowledge, about gender and sexual minorities, upon anyone interested in writing articles about the aforementioned communities. In this booklet, one can find the main terms and concepts about gender and sexuality, presented by thematic sections.

We are hoping that this booklet will be used by every stratum of society, by the decision-makers, by the media representatives, by local organizations, and that it will spread across the internet, contributing to the decrease of hate speech and implementation of transgender rights in the Republic of Armenia.

IS BEING TRANSGENDER A MENTAL DISORDER?

The psychological condition is considered a mental disorder, only if it is the cause of suffering or disability. Transgender people do not feel that their gender identity causes them suffering or disability, which demonstrates that being transgender is not a mental disorder, a psychological, or a social problem.

Because of stigma, discrimination, and violence, it is very often essential for transgender people to get social-psychological support, as well as, based on their needs, be under medical supervision for hormonal therapy or other medical interventions. Stereotypes, bullying, violence, and disrespect can amount to suffering and psychological problems. This is the reason that, in our society, transgender people tend to suffer from depression more often and even attempt suicide.

“It is important to remember that even though gender identity is conditioned by the psyche, nevertheless being a woman, a man, or a transgender person cannot be a deviation or a disorder. We are convinced that regardless of one’s gender identity or inner psychology, mutual understanding is a vital condition for human communication” – Lilit Martirosyan, the president of the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO.

WHO ARE TRANSGENDER PEOPLE?

The term “transgender” is an umbrella term for everyone whose gender identity is different from their biological sex. It is inclusive for non-cisgender identities and expressions, including transsexual women and men, people who identify as transsexual, transgender people, transvestites\cross-dressers, etc.

WHO ARE TRANSSEXUAL PEOPLE?

Transsexual people are still considered transgender, this is just an older and more of a medical term, which is preferred by some people who have gone through hormonal therapy, have had sex reassignment surgery, or intend to get the necessary medical interventions for it. The period of life, during which people get different medical interventions to correspond their biological sex to their gender identity, is called the transition stage. The person who was assigned female at birth, but has changed, is changing or intends to change their body, to masculinize it, is considered a transsexual man, or just a trans man, on the contrary, a person who was assigned male at birth but has done, is doing or intends to do a gender reassignment surgery, is considered a transsexual woman, or just a trans woman.

Please, be informed that, in 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) has removed being transgender from the updated list of mental disorders. Thus, it was removed from the chapter of “Mental Behavioral Disorders” to the section of “Sexual Health”. Nevertheless, in the statistical classifier of disorders of the Republic of Armenia, transsexuality is marked as a disorder, which is included in the act of F64.0 and is described as having a desire to live in the image of the opposite sex and is usually accompanied by a state of dissatisfaction of their anatomical structure and gender. The sick person wants to get surgery and go through hormonal therapy, to correspond to their preferred sex as much as possible.

WHO ARE TRANSVESTITES/CROSS-DRESSERS?

A transvestite person prefers dressing up from time to time or frequently, wearing clothes that are considered to be or specific to another gender.

“It must be noted, that some people, after undergoing sex reassignment surgeries or hormonal therapy, do not wish to be called transsexual, and some cross-dressers do not wish to be called transgender or transvestite. Some people just want to be a man, a woman, or identify as agender. And some people do not like talking about their medical interventions or their genitals. Therefore, we are confident that regardless of the quantity and the types of medical interventions in a person’s life, every individual deserves respect and has the right to live their life with dignity.” – Lilit Martirosyan, the president of the Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO.

TERMS AND CONCEPTS REGARDING SEXUALITY AND GENDER

When talking about a person’s biological sex, it is necessary to indicate what level of sexual differentiation is observed.

According to that, the observations are:

Genetic sex - which is characterized by the arrangement of the chromosomes of a person can be XX (female), XY (male), as well as XXY (intersex woman), XYY (intersex man).

Gonadal sex - which is characterized by the presence of gonads, the presence of the testes and ovaries is decisive, but the simultaneous presence of both is possible.

Anatomical sex - which is characterized by the inner or outer presence of genitals.

Obstetric sex - which is the sex of the fetus assigned by an obstetrician or a gynecologist, in accordance with the clinical examination of the pregnant person

Birth sex – which is the sex of the newborn assigned by the obstetrician or the gynecologist.

Hormonal sex – which is characterized by the presence of quantitative sex characteristics and secondary sex characteristics of sex hormones produced by a person’s glands (often hormonal disorders are the reason for the difference between a person’s hormonal and anatomic sexes).

Passport sex – the sex marked in a person’s paperwork, which might not be the same as the sex assigned at birth

Psychological sex – sex is determined by a person’s feelings and sexual identification, There can be cases when a person’s sexual identification doesn’t correspond to their biological sex or to any of the sexes. Those people are androgynous. Such identification can be used also to determine a person’s **social sex**. A person’s social sex or gender is the traditional separation between male and female based on geographical, ethnic, social, historical, and cultural norms.

Gender Gender is the social sex of a person, the traditional separation between male and female, based on geographical, ethnic, social, historical, and cultural norms. This distinction is based on the stereotypical roles of the person accepted by society. However, there are cases when a person's social gender doesn't coincide with either female or male classifications.

-Gender identity is the self-perception and the feelings of a person belonging to a certain gender, such as a woman, a man, transgender, etc. This separation is based on socially accepted stereotypical characteristics. However, there are cases when a person's social gender neither coincides with female nor male classifications.

-Cisgender people's gender identity and gender expression correspond to their sex assigned at birth and align with the social expectations of their gender.

-Transgender people's gender identity and gender expression are different from the traditional gender roles of their sex.

-Bigender people identify with two or more gender identities.

-Agender people do not identify with any gender identity.

Sexual orientation is one of the four human sexual ingredients. It is a person's permanent emotional, sensual, and sexual tendencies towards people of a certain gender/sex. It is accepted to say that there are four types of sexual orientation; heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, and asexuality.

In the statistical classifier of illnesses of the Republic of Armenia, it is clearly stated that a person's sexual orientation is not considered an illness. Furthermore, one's sexual orientation must not be associated with their gender identity. Therefore, transgender people can have heterosexual orientation, as well as homosexual, bisexual, etc.

Heterosexuality is the permanent expression of emotional, sensual, and sexual tendencies towards the opposite gender.

Bisexuality is the permanent expression of emotional, sensual, and sexual tendencies towards both; female and male gender genders.

Homosexuality is the permanent expression of emotional, sensual, and sexual tendencies towards the representatives of their own gender.

Asexuality is the absence of any kind of sexual expressions or the wish to identify with any sexual orientation.

It must be noted, that heteronormativity is a viewpoint, where heterosexuality is the default sexual norm. This phenomenon reflects negatively on the life qualities of homosexual and bisexual folks.

CONCLUSION

It is necessary to avoid associating the Transgender community with the LGBTIQ+ community since transgender people are discriminated against on the basis of their gender identity, not on the basis of their sexual orientation.

Articles giving misinformation about transgender people contribute to the violation of transgender people's rights in the Republic of Armenia.

Transphobic extremists often insist that transgender people demand special rights, which disrupts their dignified lives. However, it must be taken into account, that human rights are fundamental standards, which assure and protect the dignity of every human being. Human Rights are universal for everyone, therefore, transphobia is unacceptable in any case.

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