



**ANNUAL LEGAL  
REPORT**

**2025**

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# ANNUAL LEGAL REPORT

# France



*The report was prepared by Dignity Humanitarian NGO, with financial support of the Embassy of France in Armenia.*

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND CONCEPTS

RA	Republic of Armenia.
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights.
CEI	criminal executive institution.
NGO	Non-governmental organization.
DIGNITY	Dignity Humanitarian NGO.
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex.
SOGI	Sexual orientation and gender identity.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	A person's emotional, romantic, and sexual attractions, as well as their intimate and sexual relationships and/or desire for such relationships with another person.
GENDER IDENTITY	A person's own understanding and lived experience of their gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth. It is a category of social identity and refers to a person's identification as male, female, or another gender.
HOMOSEXUAL	A person who experiences emotional, romantic, sexual, and other forms of attraction toward individuals of the same sex.
TRANSGENDER	A person whose gender identity does not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.
DISCRIMINATION	Differential treatment of persons in the same or substantially similar situation without any objective justification.
HOMOPHOBIA	An irrational and unjustified fear, aversion, hatred, discrimination, or opposition toward homosexual persons or their behavior and self-expression.
TRANSPHOBIA	An irrational and unjustified fear, aversion, hatred, discrimination or opposition toward transgender persons or their behavior and self-expression.

# INTRODUCTION

Dignity Humanitarian NGO (Dignity) is a non-profit non-governmental organization founded in 1998 in Armenia. The Organization carries out its activities based on humanitarian principles.

**The mission of Dignity Humanitarian NGO is to contribute to the development of an inclusive and equitable society through the protection of human rights, accessible healthcare services, capacity building and social support.**

**Within the framework of its strategic goal of human rights protection and advocacy activities, the Organization implements the following**



Legal and attorney support



Strategic litigation



Actions for legislative reforms



Monitoring and documentation

***This report presents a brief overview of the legal consultations provided by Dignity during 2025, as well as selected cases of human rights violations recorded on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and other grounds.***

***The report also addresses key patterns in hate speech in online environments. In addition, it outlines gaps in the existing legal framework and challenges identified in its application.***

# M E T H O D O L O G Y

This report, covering 2025, has been prepared by Dignity based on:

- Legal consultations provided
- Applications submitted by affected and other interested individuals
- Correspondence with state authorities
- Ongoing strategic litigation
- Documented online cases
- Review of relevant legislation

In the case descriptions presented, the data of affected individuals is protected and is provided in anonymized or modified form in order to ensure their safety and maintain confidentiality.

The report highlights the most notable cases of human rights violations recorded across different sectors and among vulnerable groups, with analysis conducted in accordance with the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia (RA) and relevant international legal obligations.

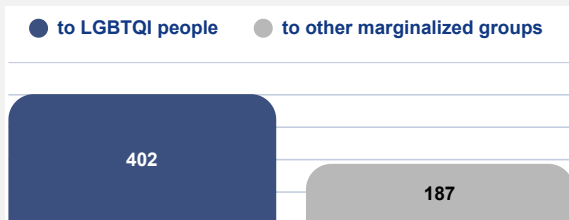
Special attention was paid to the collection and analysis of information on national legal regulations concerning discrimination, which allows for an understanding of existing gaps in the legal framework and the need for reform.

Based on this analysis, the report is summed up with a conclusion and includes recommendations aimed at addressing the identified issues. These recommendations are intended to support legislative reforms, policy improvement and the development of more effective protection mechanisms for marginalized communities.

# STATISTICS

## In 2025 Dignity provided

**589** legal consultations, out of which



Of the **589** legal consultations provided, **139** involved cases of rights violations, **74** of which were based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI).

In **89** of the documented cases of violations, the NGO initiated appropriate actions.

- **64 cases had a positive outcome**

- **23 cases are still ongoing**

*In the remaining cases, no actions were initiated due to the absence of the victims' consent.*

## Within the overall scope of consultations:

**94** cases of support were provided in the preparation of documents

**113** cases were facilitated communication with state and private institutions

## As of 2025

cases are currently pending proceedings before national courts **4 Cases**

cases are currently under review before international mechanisms **4 Cases**

**In 2025, Dignity, individually or in cooperation with other local and international organizations, also submitted alternative reports to a number of international bodies.**

- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE ODIHR)
- Human Rights Watch (HRW), a non-governmental organization for monitoring, investigating, and documenting human rights violations[1]
- EU-Armenia Human Rights Dialogue
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)
- Universal Periodic Review (UPR)
- United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT)
- Etc

[1] <https://dignity.ngo/human-rights-watch-hrw-report-on-armenias-human-rights-situation-2025->

# LEGISLATIVE REGULATIONS AND GAPS



The Republic of Armenia is based on the principle of the rule of law, and the Constitution serves as the foundation of the country's legal system, with all laws and legal acts required to comply with it. The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia declares the country to be a sovereign, democratic, legal, and social state, while the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals and citizens are enshrined as supreme values.

Since the adoption of the 1995 Constitution, the amendments introduced have aimed at strengthening the protection of human rights and ensuring alignment with the international obligations undertaken by the Republic of Armenia. However, despite these reforms, certain gaps remain that hinder the full and effective protection of human rights.

**In particular**, Article 29 of the Constitution provides for the prohibition of discrimination; however, sexual orientation and gender identity are not included among the protected grounds, which limits the comprehensiveness and applicability of protection.

**No comprehensive anti-discrimination law is in place**

In order to regulate the field of combating discrimination, the draft law “On Ensuring Equality before the Law” was introduced in 2018. The draft has been under discussion for several years due to a number of existing gaps. According to the 2023–2025 Action Plan of the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection, the final version of the law was to be submitted to the National Assembly by the end of 2024; however, as of 2025, it has not been submitted. In 2025, discussions on the draft law were resumed, and a revised version was circulated by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia under a new title, “On Ensuring Equality and Protection from Discrimination.” [3] However, as of the end of the year, no substantial progress has been made, and the final adoption of the draft, as well as the inclusion of protected grounds such as sexual orientation and gender identity, remains pending. The absence of a comprehensive regulatory framework results in the lack of unified legal standards, ineffective examination of discrimination cases, and the absence of specialized institutional mechanisms for protection.

**Criminal Code Provisions[4]**

Under the current Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia, liability is envisaged for discrimination, public speech inciting or promoting hatred, discrimination, intolerance or hostility, public calls for the use of violence, public justification or promotion of violence, as well as the distribution of materials or objects for such purposes. However, the relevant provisions do not explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds or as motives of hatred or discrimination.

[2] <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/75780>  
[3] <https://www.e-draft.am/projects/7408>  
[4] <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/221619>

In practice, such a gap results in violations committed on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity often not being qualified as motivated by hatred. As a consequence, they are not recorded as such, are not subject to proper investigation, and do not receive an adequate legal assessment.

Furthermore, in law enforcement practice, there is a lack of clear criteria and guidelines based on which law enforcement bodies can identify a hate motive in such cases. This leads to inconsistencies in practice and insufficient protection of victims' rights.

Under these conditions, manifestations of hatred based on sexual orientation and gender identity often remain unrecognized or are misclassified, which hinders both the effectiveness of prevention efforts and the proper administration of justice.



## The Right to Health

- Domestic legal and regulatory frameworks continue to retain an outdated classification<sup>[5]</sup>, -of homosexuality as a mental disorder, which is not in line with the standards adopted by the World Health Organization and contributes to the creation of a discriminatory legal environment. This approach reflects a situation in which the State is, in practice, not only unable to ensure the safety of homosexual persons during compulsory military service, but also applies differential and discriminatory treatment. As a result, individuals are exempted from compulsory military service<sup>[6]</sup> not on the basis of an individual medical assessment, but on a presumed inability to ensure their safety. In addition, reported cases of pressure and degrading treatment during military service indicate the existence of an unsafe environment. During the conscription process, in cases of exemption from military service on the grounds of SOGI (classified as mental disorder"), the relevant information is recorded in Armenia's mandatory electronic health information system ("Armed"), which creates risks related to access to sensitive personal data and breaches of confidentiality. As a result of psychiatric registration, legal restrictions arise that effectively prevent individuals from exercising their rights to employment or education, thereby leading to discrimination and a violation of the principle of equality before the law.
- The legal framework of the Republic of Armenia lacks clear legal mechanisms and regulations for the recognition of gender identity, including medical procedures for gender transition and the process of legal gender recognition. This limits the recognition of the personal identity of transgender and gender-diverse individuals and the full realization of their equal rights.

[5] The ICD-10 used in the Republic of Armenia is not localized in accordance with the version adopted by the World Health Organization.

[6] <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/218807>



## Labor Code Provisions

- The Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia enshrines the general principle of equality in employment and the prohibition of discrimination (Article 3<sup>1</sup>); however, sexual orientation and gender identity are not included as protected grounds. The wording “other circumstances” used in the Code lacks sufficient legal certainty, as a result of which cases of discrimination based on SOGI often fall outside the scope of effective legal protection. The legislation of the Republic of Armenia also provides mechanisms for the protection of workers’ rights (including the right to apply to the courts and the labor inspectorate); however, the complexity of proving discrimination and the absence of sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds limit their effective application.
- As a result of the classification of homosexuality as a mental disorder within domestic regulatory frameworks, in cases where individuals disclose or are identified as having a particular sexual orientation or gender identity during military service-related procedures, they are registered at a mental health center. Such registration leads to legal consequences, including restrictions on access to certain types of employment, in cases where legislation or employer requirements mandate the submission of a certificate confirming the absence of registration at a mental health center. As a result of the above-mentioned regulations and their application, a differential treatment based on SOGI is formed, which lacks an objective and reasonable justification in terms of the performance of work functions and therefore contradicts the principles of equality and non-discrimination enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and labor legislation.



## Legislative Provisions Related to Sex Work

In the Republic of Armenia, the provision of sex work is not considered a criminal offence<sup>[7]</sup>; rather, it is classified as an administrative offence <sup>[8]</sup>, with administrative liability under Article 179<sup>1</sup> of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Armenia.

In contrast to the previous Criminal Code, the current Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia, which entered into force on 1 July 2022, introduces the concept of sex work<sup>[9]</sup>. The Code provides for liability for forcing a person into sex work (Article 135), procuring/pimping (Article 298), and facilitating engagement in sex work (Article 299).

Thus, the existing regulatory framework does not contribute to the effective protection of the rights of sex workers and, in practice, further deepens their vulnerability and social marginalisation.

[7] Given that domestic legislation contains discriminatory terminology—for example, “prostitute,” “prostitution,” and similar terms—this report replaces them with acceptable and non-discriminatory terminology, such as “sex worker” and “sex work.”

[8] <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=164913>

[9] <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docid=165138>



## Legislative Framework on Domestic Violence

The constitutional prohibition of marriage between homosexual couples results in the absence, within the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Subjected to Domestic Violence, and Restoration of Family Harmony,”<sup>[10]</sup> of clear mechanisms for addressing cases of violence between homosexual partners, which significantly limits the effectiveness of protection for affected individuals.

Under the aforementioned law, the police are obliged to ensure an immediate and effective response to any report of violence. However, in practice, responses are often delayed or carried out incompletely, without adequately assessing the age, social situation, sexual orientation, or gender identity of the person subjected to violence.

This approach has particularly negative consequences for marginalized groups, as the failure to take individual circumstances into account leads to the mis-assessment of risk, the non-application or merely formal application of protection measures. As a result, victims of violence are left without effective protection, while the risk of continued violence remains unmitigated, which is inconsistent with the State’s preventive and protective obligations.

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[10] <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/221080>



**SECTORAL ANALYSIS OF  
MANIFESTATIONS OF  
DISCRIMINATION**

## General Overview of Discrimination and Intersectional **Discrimination**

The cases documented in 2025 demonstrate the systemic nature of discrimination, particularly on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as HIV-positive status, migrant or refugee status, prisoner's status, engagement in sex work, and other social grounds. Instances of intersectional discrimination were also documented, where unequal treatment was based on a combination of several grounds simultaneously, such as sexual orientation, HIV-positive status, and other personal or social characteristics.

### **Law Enforcement and Access to Justice**

The analysis of cases shows that a significant proportion of violations occurred with the involvement of law enforcement bodies or within the scope of their functions, raising concerns regarding the provision of effective and non-discriminatory protection. In other words, instances of double discrimination and victimisation are frequently observed, where victims are confronted not only with violence but also with inappropriate treatment by law enforcement authorities.

These issues lead to a situation in which victims often refrain from seeking legal remedies due to a lack of trust in the law enforcement system.

As a result, cases of discrimination and violence do not receive an adequate legal response, and those responsible frequently evade accountability, thereby fostering a climate of impunity.

### **The following issues have been identified in the documented cases:**

- delays or inadequacy in the response of law enforcement bodies,
- improper documentation of cases and shortcomings in legal assessment,
- ineffective or merely formal application of protection measures,
- failure to adequately take into account the vulnerability and individual circumstances of victims,
- in some cases, manifestations of discriminatory or biased treatment,
- harassment by law enforcement authorities of individuals from vulnerable groups and organizations engaged in the protection of their rights.

## **Domestic Violence** and Protection Mechanisms

In the area of domestic violence, cases have been recorded in which violence was perpetrated against LGBTQI persons by their family members, creating additional vulnerability for the victims and limiting their ability to effectively access protection and legal remedies.

**The recorded cases of domestic violence included:**

- psychological violence, including manifestations of insults, threats, and coercion,
- physical violence, including bodily harm or the use of physical force,
- restrictions on movement, including control over or prohibition of a person's freedom of movement by family members,
- cases of expulsion from the home or deprivation of housing by family members,
- inadequate response by the police to such incidents.

## **Healthcare** system

The analysis of cases indicates that systemic issues exist within the healthcare sector, which contribute to the emergence of discrimination and hinder equal access to medical care for vulnerable groups.

### **In particular:**

- discriminatory treatment by medical personnel,
- breaches of medical confidentiality,
- refusal or delay in the provision of medical care,
- fear of and avoidance of accessing healthcare services,
- lack of access to and regulation of medical interventions for gender transition for trans persons.

These issues lead to reduced access to healthcare services, discourage victims from seeking medical assistance and create additional risks for public health.

## **Labor** Relations

The collected data indicate a high level of systemic discrimination and social vulnerability in the employment sector, particularly affecting LGBTQI+ persons by limiting their equal access to employment opportunities and the provision of a safe working environment.

### **The following issues have been identified:**

- discriminatory treatment in recruitment processes and refusal of employment on the alleged grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity,
- risks of exploitation during probation periods, including unpaid work or work with minimal social guarantees,
- cases of dismissal or deterioration of working conditions following the disclosure of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity,
- absence or improper formalization of employment contracts,
- creation of a discriminatory and abusive workplace environment, including stigmatization and psychological pressure,
- reluctance of employees to access legal protection mechanisms due to the risk of disclosure and further discrimination.

These issues lead to unequal participation in the labor market, an increase in informal employment and a heightened risk of exclusion from social protection mechanisms.

### **Military** Conscription and Service<sup>[11]</sup>

The analysis shows that there are systemic issues in the processes of military service and conscription, which may lead to discriminatory treatment, improper use of personal data, and unequal conditions in the organisation of service.

#### **In particular:**

- discriminatory treatment and stigmatizing approaches in conscription and military registration processes related to sexual orientation or gender identity,
- disclosure of personal and medical confidential data by military commissariats and medical commissions,
- inconsistent application of professional and ethical standards during medical examinations,
- instances of psychological pressure and degrading treatment during service or the pre-conscription phase

### **Sexual** Services

The study and documented cases show that individuals providing sexual services are in a particularly vulnerable situation due to existing legal regulations.

#### **The documented cases reveal the following issues:**

- incidents of violence and exploitation,
- barriers to seeking assistance from law enforcement due to fear of administrative liability,
- cases where individuals are subjected to liability instead of being recognized as victims.

These circumstances lead to a situation where individuals providing sexual services are deprived of adequate protection, and cases of violence remain undisclosed.

### **Hate Speech** and Online Platforms

Manifestations of unequal treatment also extend to the online environment. In 2025, social media and media platforms continued to serve as primary channels for the spread of hate speech.

#### **The following patterns have been documented:**

- targeting of LGBTQI+ individuals on social media,
- dissemination of offensive and degrading expressions,
- inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals in political or religious discourse with a negative label, stigmatisation and/or as a tool for manipulation,
- incitement of hatred and hostility.

These phenomena contribute to the deepening of intolerance and may also lead to manifestations of violence in real life.

[11]The response letter received from the Ministry of Defence can be found in Annex 6.

## **Closed Institutions** (Criminal Executive Institutions)

In closed institutions, particularly in criminal executive (penitentiary) facilities, the situation of GBT persons remains concerning.

### **They are subjected to differential treatment, including:**

- discriminatory treatment and isolation,
- degrading treatment and pressure,
- lack of adequate safety guarantees,
- involvement in humiliating and unpaid labor influenced by criminal subculture,
- segregation in food provision and unequal conditions,
- inhuman and degrading treatment resulting from the influence of criminal subculture.

These conditions lead to continuous violations of victims' rights and do not comply with international human rights standards.



# CONCLUSION

**Analyzing the cases of 2025, it can be concluded that efforts to combat discrimination and violence in the Republic of Armenia fall short at least at three levels:**



### At the legislative level

Comprehensive and effective anti-discrimination mechanisms are lacking.

The existing legal framework does not ensure clear and equal protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, as well as social status, as a result of which affected individuals are often deprived of access to effective legal protection.



### At the policy level

There is a lack of sufficient political will to address existing legislative gaps and to introduce regulations in line with international standards.

This is reflected both in the absence of relevant legislative initiatives and in the limited systemic response to existing issues.



### At the societal and cultural level

High levels of intolerance, discriminatory attitudes, and hate speech persist. This environment is shaped not only by negative narratives in public discourse but also by deeply rooted societal stereotypes that form and reproduce discrimination against various groups.

At the same time, such attitudes are often fueled and reinforced by public statements and discussions led by certain political and religious actors, contributing to the normalization and perpetuation of discrimination and violence.

As a result, LGBTQI persons, individuals providing sexual services and other marginalized groups continue to find themselves in high-risk and unprotected situations. This situation highlights the need not only for legislative reforms but also for the promotion of human rights, equality and a tolerance-free environment within society.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## LEGISLATIVE

- Include sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited grounds of discrimination in Article 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia.
- Adopt the Law “On Ensuring Equality and Protection from Discrimination” of the Republic of Armenia, including sexual orientation and gender identity in the list of protected characteristics.
- Amend Articles 203, 329, and 330 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia to explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity as motives for discrimination, hate speech and incitement to violence.
- Align the national disease classification system with the ICD-11 international standards.
- Exclude data related to sexual orientation and gender identity from electronic health information systems (“ArMed”).
- Adopt a Law on Legal Gender Recognition/Gender Marker Change to ensure clear and accessible procedures for legal gender recognition, including gender-affirming processes.
- Include sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited grounds of discrimination in Article 3.1 of the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia.
- Decriminalize sex work and amend relevant provisions of the Criminal and Administrative Codes accordingly.

## PRACTICAL

- Ensure mandatory and continuous training for staff of law enforcement, military, healthcare, social, penitentiary and other public institutions on preventing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and on human rights standards.
- Introduce clear monitoring and accountability mechanisms within state systems to prevent discriminatory practices based on SOGI.
- Ensure the full and effective implementation of legal provisions by law enforcement bodies in responding to cases of domestic violence.
- Implement public awareness-raising programs aimed at reducing SOGI-based discrimination and promoting social tolerance.
- Strengthen data protection oversight in state information systems, particularly in the healthcare and military sectors.

## SOGI-BASED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION CASES

Below are some of the most notable cases of SOGI-based human rights violations documented by Dignity during 2025.

### CASE 1



#### Description

On January 22, 2025, during the mandatory military conscription process, A.S. reported to the territorial military commissariat to undergo the required medical examination as prescribed by law. The military commissariat did not have a psychologist present, therefore A.S. requested that the administration arrange a consultation with a psychologist with the intention to disclose his sexual orientation, i.e. he identifies as homosexual.

During the process of explaining the reason for requesting the psychologist, A.S. was compelled to publicly disclose information about his sexual orientation. Following this disclosure, discriminatory treatment by military commissariat staff began. In particular, according to A.S., derogatory and humiliating remarks were made by staff members, stating that “such people” should be conscripted into the army in order to “become men” or “become real people.”

A.S. requested respectful and dignified treatment; however, according to him, the mocking behavior by the commissariat staff continued.



#### Provided support and follow-up process

On the same day, A.S. approached Dignity seeking legal assistance. He was provided with legal counseling regarding his rights, and the Organization’s lawyer contacted the relevant military commissariat.

As a result of the intervention, the discriminatory treatment against A.S. was discontinued, and access to psychological counseling was ensured without further obstacles.

## CASE 2



### Description

A.S. was employed in January 2025 at one of the restaurants in Yerevan on a probationary basis. At the time of hiring, no employment contract or any other individual legal act was concluded with A.S. to regulate the employment relationship between the parties.

In February 2025, the restaurant manager informed A.S. that he was considered officially employed as a regular staff member; however, he was also told that no remuneration would be provided for the one-month probation period, and that any future salary would be formed solely from tips left by customers.

On February 12, 2025, after the end of his work shift, the manager informed A.S. that, by decision of the restaurant owner, further cooperation with him was being terminated without any justification.

According to A.S., through conversations with other employees, it became known that another staff member of the restaurant—who has a mutual acquaintance with A.S.—had disclosed information about A.S.’s homosexual orientation to the management[12].



### Provided support and follow-up process

On February 13, 2025, A.S. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO.

With the Organization’s support, relevant written complaints were submitted to the Health and Labor Inspection Body of the Republic of Armenia and the State Revenue Committee. Based on these submissions, an administrative proceeding was initiated by the Inspection Body on February 20, 2025, and on February 21, an inspection team was formed to conduct an on-site review at the restaurant.

Following the complaints, the restaurant management offered A.S. a settlement on the condition of withdrawing the complaints, which A.S. did not accept.

The administrative proceedings were concluded in March 2025. The Inspection Body recorded violations and issued relevant orders.

As a result, the restaurant paid A.S. the amount of the statutory minimum wage in accordance with Armenian legislation, including the probation period.

[12] <https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/06/27/another-case-of-labor-rights-violation/>

## CASE 3



### Description

On February 20, 2025, officers of the Police of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia entered “Stoyka” pub operating in Yerevan.

According to the victims, the police had prior knowledge that the pub was predominantly frequented by LGBTQI individuals, and based on this circumstance, disproportionate and violent actions were used against them. In particular, police officers forcibly removed all visitors from the premises, used physical force, and made them lie on the ground.

The victims assessed the actions of the police as discriminatory and degrading in nature, based on the real or alleged sexual orientation and gender identity of the visitors.



### Provided support and follow-up process

On February 21, 2025, one of the victims applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO seeking legal assistance.

The Organization provided legal counseling regarding the legality of the actions carried out by police officers, as well as available remedies for protection and appeal under applicable national legislation and international human rights standards.

## CASE 4



### Description

In September 2024, unknown individuals repeatedly followed, harassed A.V. and made remarks related to his sexual orientation. A.V. attempted on several occasions to avoid confrontation with these individuals and to prevent potential escalation.

On September 27, 2024, A.V. noticed the same individuals in the vicinity of his residential building and attempted to change his way; however, he was unable to do so. The individuals attacked A.V., used physical force against him, and damaged his personal belongings.

A.V. submitted a criminal complaint to law enforcement authorities regarding the incident; however, according to his statement, the investigation was ineffective. Following the incident, A.V. changed his place of residence due to security concerns and rented an apartment in another administrative district of Yerevan. However, in February 2025, he again observed the same individuals

near his new place of residence. They continued their stalking behavior and, according to A.V.'s, attempted to cause him harm, which significantly increased his sense of insecurity and psychological distress.



### Provided support and follow-up process

A.V. was provided with legal counseling by Dignity regarding his rights, as well as available protection and appeal mechanisms.

At the same time, A.V. was referred to the Organization's psychological services in order to address and overcome the consequences of the harassment he had experienced and the ongoing psychological pressure.

## CASE 5



### Description

R.A.'s partner's mother is against the relationship between R.A. and her son and, through various means, she attempted to hinder their interaction. The woman threatened R.A. that if he continued his relationship with her son, she would disclose information about R.A.'s sexual orientation to his relatives.

In April 2025, the same woman visited R.A.'s residence, attacked R.A., and attempted to cause him harm.



### Provided support and follow-up process

On April 15, 2025, the victim applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO seeking legal assistance.

The Organization provided R.A. with legal counseling regarding his rights and available legal remedies for protection. As a result, R.A. submitted a criminal complaint to law enforcement authorities, based on which a criminal proceeding was initiated; the case is currently under investigation.

## CASE 6



### Description

M.A. is a lesbian. Her family members had been aware of her sexual orientation for approximately one year and, as a result, subjected her to restrictive and isolating treatment, limiting her freedom of movement and keeping her confined at home. In addition, M.A. was subjected to physical

violence by her family members; she was repeatedly beaten, resulting in bodily injuries. These actions were of a continuous nature.

In May 2025, M.A. managed to escape from her home and found refuge at her friends' residence.



### Provided support and follow-up process

On May 20, 2025, M.A. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. She was provided with legal counseling. The victim declined to submit a criminal complaint, as she did not wish to file a report against her parents.

## CASE 7



### Description

L.S. is a lesbian. Since 2023, her family has learnt of her sexual orientation, after which she was subjected to restrictive measures limiting her freedom of movement and kept confined at home. L.S. has been subjected to both physical and psychological violence by her family members.

Dignity Humanitarian NGO was previously able to provide support to L.S. in 2023–2024; however, in recent months, incidents of renewed psychological and physical violence by her family have been reported. In May 2025, her parents took away L.S.'s passport with the aim of restricting the exercise of her rights.



### Provided support and follow-up process

Dignity Humanitarian NGO provided legal counseling to L.A. With the Organization's support, the necessary legal steps were undertaken, as a result of which L.A. obtained a new passport.

## CASE 8



### Description

On April 8, 2025, A.H. visited his new local polyclinic for medical examinations. Following the consultation, the doctor decided to refer him to a certain specialist based on his medical condition. During the consultation, A.H. asked the doctor to clarify a previous visit registered under his name in the "ArMed"

system, of which the doctor had no prior knowledge. At the doctor's request, A.H. showed his "ArMed" profile, where, among other data, a note regarding his sexual orientation was displayed.

After seeing this information, the doctor's attitude towards A.H. changed abruptly. In a rude tone, the doctor stated that no referral was needed and that A.H. could leave. A.H., not understanding the reason for the sudden change in attitude, asked for clarification as to why the referral was no longer necessary. The doctor, without providing any explanation, began shouting and then forced A.H. out of the room, stating that he would no longer provide him with medical services[13].



### Provided support and follow-up process

At the very moment, A.H. contacted Dignity Humanitarian NGO. The Organization's lawyer reached out to the polyclinic administration and subsequently to the doctor involved. As a result of the discussion, the appropriate referral was issued to the patient, and the doctor apologized for the conduct.

## CASE 9



### Description

A.L. is a homosexual person and subject to mandatory military conscription. In April 2025, he received a summons to undergo medical examinations and reported to the relevant military commissariat.

A.L. completed all required medical examinations, during which he disclosed his sexual orientation in a conversation with a psychologist. In accordance with the established procedure, he was referred to a mental health center.

On May 7, 2025, upon returning home, A.L.'s parents inquired about the reason for his visit to the mental health center. A.L. attempted to avoid answering the question, after which his father stated loudly that he had been informed by the military commissariat that his son was a "pervert." This statement was accompanied by aggressive behavior and shouting.

Following this disclosure, a tense confrontation arose within the family, during which the parents prohibited A.L. from ever speaking about his sexual orientation and insisted that he proceed with mandatory military service.

[13] [https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/07/10/policlinic\\_april\\_eng/](https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/07/10/policlinic_april_eng/)



### Provided support and follow-up process

On May 10, 2025, A.L. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. He was provided with legal counseling, during which the procedure for mandatory military service, the legal basis for medical and psychological examinations, as well as the rights and protection mechanisms of conscripts were explained in detail.

With the Organization's support, the conscription process continued, and as a result, A.L. was declared unfit for mandatory military service. At the same time, the Organization ensured that no more information regarding A.L. was disclosed by the military commissariat to his family.

## CASE 10



### Description

In March–April 2025, A.A. rented a room in one of the hostels in Yerevan. On May 5, 2025, A.A. had a phone conversation with his partner, who was abroad. Overhearing the conversation and learning that A.A. was homosexual, the hostel manager immediately entered the room and forcibly removed A.A. from the hostel, using discriminatory and insulting language, stating, in particular, that “there is no place for a f\*\*got here.”

A.A. attempted to collect his personal belongings, but the manager prevented him from re-entering the hostel premises.

Since A.A. had valuable belongings in his room, he reported the incident to the police on the same day. Police duty officers, upon being informed of the circumstances and details of the eviction, told him that the matter could only be addressed the following day during working hours [14]:



### Provided support and follow-up process

The next day, on May 7, 2025, A.A. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. With the Organization's support, a written complaint was prepared for submission to the competent authorities.

## CASE 11



### Description

On May 14, 2025, M.A. and his friends were in the vicinity of Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi, when unknown individuals began to follow and harass them. Hearing the conversation of the following individuals,

[14] [https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/05/05/lgbt\\_may\\_eng/](https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/05/05/lgbt_may_eng/)

nduring which they discussed M.A.'s and his friends' alleged sexual orientation and gender identity, they decided to leave the area. However, the unknown individuals continued to chase the group [15]:



### Provided support and follow-up process

Experiencing psychological stress and fear, M.A. and his friends approached the Drop-In Center of Dignity Humanitarian NGO seeking safety and legal assistance. The unknown individuals continued the pursuit up to the vicinity of the Center but were unable to determine the exact location of the individuals.

With the Organization's support, the unknown individuals ceased their chasing of M.A. and his friends.

## CASE 12



### Description

A.A. was conscripted into compulsory military service in January 2025. During the conscription process, A.A. refrained from disclosing his sexual orientation to the military commissariat due to concerns about the potential disclosure of this information.

In May 2025, information about A.A.'s sexual orientation was disclosed within the military unit through one of his fellow soldiers. Following this disclosure, discriminatory treatment and pressure against A.A. began from both soldiers and command personnel [16]:



### Provided support and follow-up process

In May 2025, A.A. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. The Organization provided him with legal counseling and assistance aimed at recognizing him as unfit for military service in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Armenia. As a result, A.A. was transferred to the Yerevan Garrison Military Hospital. At the hospital, the admitting physician informed A.A. that the process would be completed formally and that he would be sent to another military unit "to serve with people like him." The Organization's lawyer contacted the relevant medical staff of the hospital unit and discussed the applicable legal provisions, requesting that the procedure be carried out in accordance with the law. The issue was also raised with the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Ministry of Defense. A few days later, the same physician informed A.A. that his mother should be invited to the hospital to discuss A.A.'s situation. This caused A.A. significant psychological distress, as he feared that

[15] <https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/07/10/chasing-in-the-center-of-yerevan-citizens-apply-to-ngngo/>

[16] <https://dignity.ngo/with-the-support-of-ngngo-the-person-was-prematurely-discharged-from-military-service-/>

disclosure of his sexual orientation would lead to rejection by his family. The Organization contacted the hospital physician, the Human Rights Defender, and the Ministry of Defense regarding the issue. Ultimately, it was ensured that the physician's plan to invite A.A.'s mother and discuss his situation with her was prevented.

**Subsequently, A.A. underwent the necessary medical examinations at the hospital and, in July 2025, was declared unfit for compulsory military service.**

In order to ensure the confidentiality of A.A.'s personal data, with the support of Dignity Humanitarian NGO, his military registration was transferred to another military commissariat. After being discharged from compulsory military service, A.A. was not provided with his military service booklet within the prescribed timeframe. It was obtained as a result of the Organization's intervention.

## CASE 13



### Description

On May 20, 2025, A.H. was taken into custody by the Police of the Republic of Armenia and transferred to a police station. At the station, his mobile phone and other technical devices were seized, after which a search was conducted. During the search, an IT specialist began examining A.H.'s personal data, which included information and materials related to his sexual orientation.

Due to a failure to maintain proper confidentiality of personal and non-public data obtained by the investigator and the IT specialist, the information became accessible to another official within the department. This official disclosed A.H.'s sexual orientation to A.H.'s sister and made a derogatory comment, stating: "He can't do it, he's not a real man."

These actions led to tension in the relationship between A.H. and his sister, as well as psychological distress for A.H. A criminal complaint was submitted by A.H. on the grounds of violation of personal data confidentiality.



### Provided support and follow-up process

On August 12, 2025, A.H. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. The Organization provided him with legal counseling and support, including information on legal procedures, the obligations of state authorities, and the protection of personal data.

The support process is ongoing with the aim of ensuring the protection of A.H.'s rights.

## CASE 14



### Description

On August 15, 2025, A.E. applied to the Migration Center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia to submit an application for refugee status. According to A.E., upon learning that she is a lesbian, the staff of the Migration Center refused to accept her application, stating that it could not be processed at that stage and advising her to return and reapply after several months.

A.E. tried to obtain clarification regarding the reasons and legal basis for the refusal to accept her application; however, she reported that no clear explanation or justification was provided. In A.E.'s assessment, the conduct of the Migration Center staff was discriminatory, based on her sexual orientation, as a result of which she was deprived of the opportunity to submit an application for refugee status at that time. Under these circumstances, A.E. was forced to leave the Migration Center.



### Provided support and follow-up process

On September 12, 2025, A.E. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO seeking legal assistance. The Organization's lawyer contacted the Migration Center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, and an agreement was reached to rectify the procedural deficiencies identified during the initial refusal to accept the application.

As a result, on the same day, A.E. revisited the Migration Center, where her application for refugee status was accepted. On September 15, 2025, A.E. was issued an asylum seeker certificate.

## CASE 15



### Description

M.A. is an adult and was raised in a traditional family environment in a village, accordingly he has consistently concealed information about his sexual orientation from his parents. In 2024, M.A. moved to Yerevan to continue his studies. In the summer of 2025, during the holiday period, he returned to his parents' home. In August 2025, the father accidentally overheard M.A.'s phone conversation and learned about his son's sexual orientation. Following this, he prohibited M.A. from returning to Yerevan and continuing his studies. As a result, M.A. was isolated for approximately two months. On November 11, 2025, several M.A.'s friends visited his parents' home to find out what was happening.

Upon understanding the situation, they attempted to assist M.A. in leaving the house; however, his parents, with the support of relatives and neighbors, used physical force to prevent M.A. from leaving, and compelled his friends to leave the village area. On the same day, M.A.'s friends called the police and reported the situation. Community police officers arrived at the scene and spoke with the parties; however, their intervention was limited to advising M.A.'s friends "not to interfere in family matters," as a result of which the friends were forced to leave the area. On November 29, 2025, M.A.'s friends again visited his parents' home after notifying the police in advance. The response of law enforcement was again of a solely formal nature [17]



### Provided support and follow-up process

On November 29, 2025, M.A.'s friends contacted Dignity Humanitarian NGO. The Organization provided legal counseling and support. The Organization's lawyer contacted the relevant police division and presented the obligations of law enforcement authorities in such situations, in particular:

- ensuring freedom of movement of the individual,
- obligations related to the prevention of domestic violence.

As a result, with the direct support of law enforcement authorities, M.A. was safely removed from his parents' home. In addition, a warning was issued to M.A.'s parents as a preventive measure in relation to domestic violence.

## CASE 16



### Description

On April 5, 2025, I.A. was walking along Nalbandyan Street in Yerevan while simultaneously communicating with friends via social media. During this time, an unknown man approached I.A. and asked I.A. to follow him. While following the individual, I.A. realized that they were heading toward the building of the National Security Service. After entering the building, I.A.'s personal data was collected, after which he was told that he could leave.

Several months later, in July 2025, I.A. received a phone call and discovered that the caller was the same individual, who introduced himself as an NSS officer. The officer informed I.A. that he needed to appear at the NSS for an important conversation.

I.A. attended the meeting accompanied by his mother; however, she remained outside. I.A. had a private meeting with the officer, during which he was asked personal questions. Moreover, I.A.'s mobile phone was examined, and as a result, the officer became aware of I.A.'s sexual orientation.

The officer then attempted to determine whether this information was known to I.A.'s family members. Upon learning that I.A.'s family was unaware of his sexual orientation, the officer compelled I.A. to sign a written statement that he would "help the state" by providing information under the condition that the information about his sexual orientation would not be disclosed.

Subsequently, over several months, the same officer repeatedly called and messaged I.A., requesting information about LGBTQI individuals and organizations, including social media pages, publications, and members of vulnerable groups. The stated justification for the requests was "security purposes," including preventing potential threats to the LGBTQI community.

I.A. found himself in a coercive situation, fearing that any refusal or negative response could result in disclosure of his sexual orientation to his family and/or lead to further pressure.



### **Provided support and follow-up process**

In October 2025, I.A. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. He was provided with legal counseling. An agreement was reached to proceed with the case, subject to I.A.'s final decision.

## Cases of Discrimination on Other Grounds

## CASE 17

**Description**

On February 15, 2025, an unknown client visited A.M.'s apartment with the intention of using sexual services. After receiving the services, the client refused to pay the agreed amount.

During the dispute over payment, when A.M. threatened to contact the police, she was subjected to physical violence. The client struck her multiple times on different parts of the body, causing visible bodily injuries<sup>[18]</sup>:

**Provided support and follow-up process**

A.M. reported the incident to the police. Law enforcement officers who arrived at the scene prepared the relevant report. On February 17, 2025, at the request of the police, A.M. appeared at the police station to provide additional clarification; however, she was not issued a referral for a forensic medical examination.

On the same day, February 17, A.M. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. The Organization provided her with legal counseling, and with its support, A.M. was referred for a forensic medical examination.

## CASE 18

**Description**

In April 2025, G.B. visited the maternity department of "Surb Grigor Lusavorich" Medical Center CJSC due to health complaints. As a result of the examination, medical issues were identified and surgical intervention was indicated.

In June 2025, a surgical procedure was performed at the same medical center without conducting additional examinations. On June 4, 2025, G.B. was discharged from the hospital without undergoing further check-ups. A few days after discharge, G.B.'s condition worsened, and she contacted the doctor and returned to the medical center. The doctor stated that inflammatory processes had developed and subsequently made offensive remarks directed at G.B.

A few days later, G.B.'s condition deteriorated again, and she was transported by ambulance to Erebuni Medical Center, where she was referred back to the medical center where the surgery had been performed. Due to lack of financial means, G.B. was forced to take a taxi to reach the medical center. The following day, examinations were conducted at the medical center; however,

[18] [https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/07/10/sw\\_february\\_eng/](https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/07/10/sw_february_eng/)

the results were not explained to G.B. A medical intervention was carried out by the doctor without informing her of its nature. After the intervention, and following G.B.'s complaints, a CT scan was performed. Upon receiving the results, the doctor informed G.B. that her bladder had been perforated as a result of the intervention. The doctor further stated that such incidents occur in almost all hospitals and that G.B. would have to “manage somehow” for three months, after which another surgery would be required to repair the bladder.

In fact, G.B. was provided with incomplete medical care and services; moreover, harm was caused to her health, the consequences of which she continues to endure<sup>[19]</sup>:



### Provided support and follow-up process

G.B. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO in June 2025. The victim was provided with legal counseling and support.

On July 24, 2025, with the support of the Organization, a complaint was submitted to the Health and Labor Inspection Body of the Republic of Armenia. An administrative proceeding was initiated by the Inspection Body. On August 13, 2025, the Inspection Body issued a decision to terminate the proceedings. Certain facts recorded in the decision did not correspond to the issues raised by the applicant; therefore, the decision is currently under appeal.

*In early July 2025, G.B. submitted a criminal complaint to the Investigative Department of the Nor Nork Administrative District. The investigator did not provide G.B. with a referral for a forensic medical examination; therefore, on July 24, 2025, with the support of Dignity, a complaint was submitted to the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Armenia. A few days after submitting the complaint, G.B. was referred for the relevant examination.*

For approximately one month, G.B. did not receive any information regarding the progress of the criminal case. With the support of Dignity, official letters were sent to the relevant authorities in order to obtain information about the status of the case.

## CASE 19



### Description

On the night of September 26, 2025, A.A. was walking in Yerevan downtown with a friend when they were approached by individuals in civilian clothing. These individuals identified themselves as police officers and demanded that A.A. and his friend empty the contents of their pockets and bags.

The officers noticed medication in A.A.'s bag and asked what it was. A.A. did not explain the purpose of the medication but stated that it had been

[19] <https://dignity.ngo/dueto-negligent-medical-care-the-individual-suffered-health-damage-a-criminal-case-has-been-initiated/>

prescribed by a doctor, as he did not wish to disclose his HIV-positive status. The officers questioned whether the medication was a narcotic substance and, after taking it, attempted to search for information about it online. After determining that the medication consisted of antiretroviral drugs, they told A.A. that he could leave.

A.A. requested that the officers identify themselves, but they refused. He then expressed his intention to go to the police station to file a complaint regarding their unlawful actions; however, the officers did not allow him to enter their vehicle.

A.A. subsequently went to the police station on his own and filed a complaint[20].



### Provided support and follow-up process

On September 26, 2025, A.A. applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO and received legal counseling. Dignity continues to provide support as of now. The case remains under review.

## CASE 20



### Description

A.M. is a woman providing sexual services. On October 15, 2025, she was subjected to physical violence by a client. As a result of the assault, A.M. sustained bodily injuries and suffered property damage.

Immediately after the incident, on October 16, 2025, the victim submitted a written complaint to the territorial police department, reporting the crime and requesting the protection of her rights, as well as the conduct of a proper investigation in accordance with the requirements of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia.

On October 21, 2025, A.M. received the investigator's decision not to initiate criminal proceedings. Despite the presence of bodily injuries, the victim had not been referred for a forensic medical examination[21].



### Provided support and follow-up process

In order to protect her rights, on October 28, 2025, the victim applied to Dignity Humanitarian NGO. The Organization provided legal counseling. As a result of the consultation, a complaint against the investigator's decision was prepared and submitted to the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Armenia. The submission also included a request for a referral for a forensic medical examination.

On November 11, 2025, a response was received from the Prosecutor's Office, stating that the complaint had been forwarded to the prosecutor's office of the relevant administrative district for review.

On November 20, 2025, the investigator issued a decision to initiate criminal proceedings, and the victim was referred for a forensic medical examination.

[20] <https://ngngo.net/police-officers-revealed-an-individuals-hiv-positive-status/>

[21] <https://ngngo.net/proceedings-in-a-violence-case-reopened-through-ngngo-intervention/>

## COURT CASES

This section presents several strategically significant cases of ongoing strategic litigation during 2025:

### CASE 1



#### Description

On September 22, 2017, a criminal case was initiated against transgender women S.P. and A.S. under Part 4 of Article 258 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia. The background of the case is presented in the 2018 legal summary (Case 3).<sup>[22]</sup>

During the period of detention, S.P. was repeatedly subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as torture, in relation to which a criminal complaint was also submitted by her lawyer. S.P. and A.S. were held in unlawful detention for approximately two years, and an application was submitted to the European Court of Human Rights in this regard<sup>[23]</sup>:



#### Legal proceedings and procedural developments

The case is taken by Dignity Humanitarian NGO's defense-lawyer, Ara Karagyozyan. On September 24, 2020, the European Court of Human Rights delivered judgments in the cases A.S. v. Armenia and S.P. v. Armenia. The Government of the Republic of Armenia acknowledged the violation of the applicants' rights guaranteed under Article 5 § 3 of the Convention, and the Court ordered the State to provide compensation <sup>[24]</sup>.

The proceedings in the case were concluded on December 11, 2025. By court decision, the criminal prosecution was terminated on the grounds that the statute of limitations for criminal liability had expired.

### CASE 2



#### Description

On 17 May 2014, an article entitled "They Serve the Interests of International Homosexual Lobby: the Blacklist of Enemies of the Nation and the State." was published on the online news website [www.iravunk.com](http://www.iravunk.com), written and signed by its editor-in-chief journalist Hovhannes Galajyan (H.G.). The article contained offensive and defamatory information that harmed the honor and dignity of Grigor Gevorgyan, Arman Sahakyan, and Hovhannes Mkrtychyan.

[22] [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cvfS\\_2Qtdnc2a1ONjqmSMPzu\\_YXkR7LI/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cvfS_2Qtdnc2a1ONjqmSMPzu_YXkR7LI/view)

[23] <https://old.ngngo.net/2019/07/02/%D5%B6%D5%B8%D6%80-%D5%BD%D5%A5%D6%80%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B6%D5%A4-%D5%B4%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%A4%D5%A1%D5%BD%D5%AB%D6%80%D5%A1%D5%AF%D5%A1%D5%B6-%D5%B0%D5%AF-%D5%AB-2-%D5%BC%D5%A1%D5%A6%D5%B4%D5%A1%D5%BE%D5%A1/>

[24] <https://old.ngngo.net/en/2020/09/25/the-next-in-turn-victory-the-echr-verdict/>

The latter filed a claim in court against Hayk Babukhanyan (H.B.), Chairman of the Editorial Board of Iravunk Media LLC, and Hovhannes Galajyan.

By the judgment of 14 May 2015 (which mentioned Iravunk Media LLC and H.G. as respondents), the First Instance General Jurisdiction Court of Yerevan (District Court) granted the applicants' claim in part.

Hayk Babukhanyan filed an appeal. On 26 May 2016, the Court of Appeal quashed the District Court's judgment of 14.05.2015 and remitted the case for fresh examination.

In 2016, Ara Ghazaryan, lawyer for Dignity Humanitarian NGO, filed an application to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), arguing that the decision of the Civil Court of Appeal of 26 May 2016, which quashed the final judgment previously issued in their favor, violated the principle of legal certainty in accordance with Article 6 §1 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

On 9 March 2021, the applications were communicated by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)[[25](#)].



### Legal proceedings and procedural developments

- On 18 December 2025, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) published its judgment concerning the application submitted by Ara Ghazaryan, defense-lawyer for Dignity Humanitarian NGO, in the case of A. Sahakyan and Others v. Armenia (application lodged on 9 August 2016). According to the applicants, there was a violation of Article 6 §1 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to a fair hearing.

**The ECHR's judgment recognized that there had indeed been a violation of Article 6 §1 of [[26](#)].**

- On February 6, 2025, the Civil Court of General Jurisdiction of the First Instance of Yerevan city (the Court) issued the decision on the case. The Court ruled to terminate the proceedings of the civil case based on the death of defendant Hovhannes Galajyan. Simultaneously, the Court rejected the claim of Arman Sahakyan and Hovhannes Mkrtychyan against Iravunk Media LLC, reasoning that Iravunk Media LLC, which conducts journalistic activities (the publisher), disclosed the author of the published material when publishing the Article by indicating the name of Hovhannes Galajyan, which in turn means that only Hovhannes Galajyan, and not Iravunk Media LLC, should have responded to the plaintiffs' claim, i.e. been the proper defendant [[27](#)]. An application was submitted to the European Court of Human Rights by Dignity Humanitarian NGO's defense-lawyer, Arayik Zalyan.

[25] <https://old.ngngo.net/en/2021/05/07/mied-2/>

[26] <https://dignity.ngo/sahakyan-and-others-v-armenia/>

[27] [https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/03/03/new\\_decision\\_eng\\_2025/](https://old.ngngo.net/en/2025/03/03/new_decision_eng_2025/)



### Description

On March 23, 2023, at around 13:00, Dignity Humanitarian NGO received a report that a group of individuals had attacked foreign national K.M. and RA citizen A.S. on Vardanants Street in Vanadzor, allegedly due to K.M.'s "non-conforming" appearance. K.M. and A.S. sustained bodily injuries. K.M. experienced partial loss of consciousness and was transported by ambulance to Vanadzor Medical Center. At the medical center, K.M. received first aid and was discharged after his condition was assessed as satisfactory. Police officers accompanied the victims to the Vanadzor police department to file a criminal complaint<sup>[28]</sup>:

A.S. refrained from seeking medical assistance due to his psychological and emotional distress and a fear of possible retaliation from the attackers. He initially declined to submit a criminal complaint; however, according to his account, pressure was exerted on him by police officers at the police station, compelling him to file a complaint.



### Legal proceedings and procedural developments

Dignity Humanitarian NGO took up the case immediately after receiving the application from the beneficiary and provided legal assistance. The Organization contacted the relevant police officer, after which the pressure exerted on A.S. was stopped, and the victim was able to leave the police station. K.M. submitted a criminal complaint, on the basis of which criminal proceedings were initiated. In this case, the "Arkat" Law Office, represented by attorney Mariam Saghayan, was engaged by the Organization. On May 19, 2023, K.M. was recognized as a victim.

One of the perpetrators involved in the incident was identified by law enforcement authorities.

In March 2025, the victim's lawyer submitted a motion requesting a face-to-face interrogation between the victim and the suspect; however, the investigator decided to postpone the motion in order to clarify circumstances essential to the case. Subsequently, on March 9, 2025, the investigator issued a decision to reject the motion.

[28] <https://old.ngngo.net/en/2023/03/23/another-hate-crime/>

## SITUATION OF GBT PERSONS IN CRIMINAL EXECUTIVE INSTITUTIONS

GBT persons face heightened challenges in closed institutions, particularly in criminal executive institutions. In addition to a range of systemic issues, they encounter specific difficulties related to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Due to prevailing societal stereotypes, individuals kept in prisons are often subjected to stigma and discrimination; however, GBT persons experience multiple layers of discrimination and are treated as a particularly stigmatized, marginalized, and neglected group within the penitentiary system.

The criminal subculture prevalent in criminal executive institutions is characteristic of post-Soviet countries, including the Republic of Armenia. It is based on a hierarchical system among persons kept in prisons, where those at the top of the hierarchy enjoy respect from both other detainees and penitentiary staff, while those at the lowest level are subjected to degrading and neglectful treatment. Within this hierarchy, homosexual persons are often placed at the lowest level.

In this criminal subculture, “homosexuality” functions as a status that may not be related to an individual’s actual sexual orientation. The term “homosexual” is used as a stigma or label to humiliate and punish individuals who have committed acts considered unacceptable under the informal rules of the criminal subculture.

Discrimination against GBT and persons labeled as homosexual is systemic in nature in criminal executive institutions and manifests across nearly all aspects of their life and exercise of rights, including:

- Are held in separate cells, which differ from other cells due to their poor and inadequate conditions
- Are assigned unpaid work that is considered humiliating and degrading to their dignity
- Receive food separately in single-use containers to prevent it from being mixed with food of other inmates
- Are not allowed to use communal showers, and their bathing is organized within their cells
- Are not allowed to use the communal laundry facilities
- Etc

Discriminatory treatment of GBT persons in criminal executive institutions is manifested not only by other prisoners, but also by penitentiary staff.

Dignity Humanitarian NGO is a member of the group of public monitors implementing supervision over the criminal-executive institutions and bodies of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia. Within the scope of its mandate, the Organization raises existing issues and undertakes steps aimed at their solution.

## HATE SPEECH ON ONLINE PLATFORMS

**Hate speech**, according to international standards, is defined as any public expression or communication (written, digital, or oral) that is intended to incite discrimination, hostility, humiliation or violence against a person or group based on protected characteristics, including sexual orientation or gender identity.

This approach is also reflected in the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), where freedom of expression cannot prevail at the expense of other individuals' rights to dignity and protection from intolerance.

The general patterns of discrimination and intolerance present in Armenian society are also reflected in the digital environment. In 2025, social media platforms and online spaces in Armenia continued to play an important role in shaping public life, facilitating public discourse, and forming opinions, while at the same time serving as one of the main channels for the dissemination of discriminatory speech and hate speech.

The online platform, being widely accessible and highly responsive, not only reflects existing discriminatory attitudes in society but also often contributes to their further amplification. In 2025, it was observed that manifestations of hate speech remained at a high level, appearing both in the content shared by individual users and on the official social media pages of media outlets as well as other online platforms.

In the Armenian online environment, LGBTQI+ persons continue to be among the primary targets of discrimination, intolerance, and hate speech. Hate speech directed at them is recurrent and systemic in nature, manifesting through insulting and degrading expressions, as well as explicit or implicit calls for violence or social exclusion.

At the same time, as observed in 2025 monitoring, online hate speech is not limited to the behavior of individual users but is often amplified through the politicization and instrumentalization of LGBTQI+ issues in public discourse. Such political manipulation contributes to the normalization of discriminatory speech and its wider dissemination, further deepening social polarization and increasing risks faced by the affected groups.

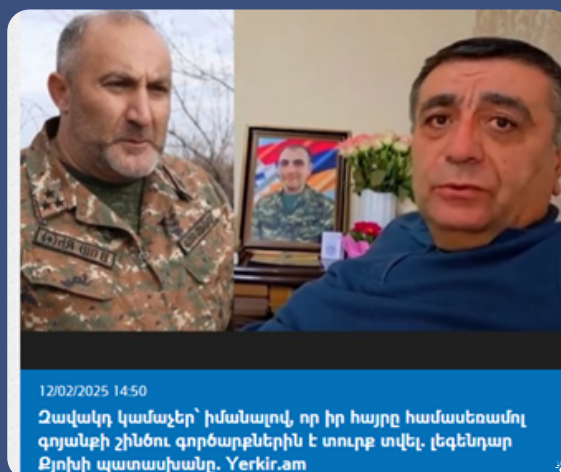


## BELOW SEVERAL NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF HATE SPEECH MANIFESTATIONS ARE PRESENTED:

In February 2025, a video circulated online containing allegations addressed to military figure Karen Javalian. The latter responded to these allegations, and his response was published by Yerkir.am.

In his statement, K. Javalian concluded:

**“Your child would be very ashamed if he knew that his father had supported fabricated deals of a homosexual (homo-addicted) being that defile the sacred values of the homeland, and had even spared nothing to tarnish heroic episodes of war. What did you even want, I still did not understand...”**



When publishing the material, the media outlet used the following headline: “Your child would be ashamed to know that his father supported fabricated deals of a homosexual/homo-addicted being: the response of legendary Kyokh. [29].

In this material, the juxtaposition of the term “homosexual” with the expression “being” carries not only an offensive character but also appears aimed at systematically undermining a person’s dignity by portraying sexual orientation as something immoral or unacceptable. Through such wording, LGBTQI+ persons are deliberately drawn into political and public controversy as a negative label, which indicates that sexual orientation in this context is not used as a factual reference but rather as a rhetorical device intended for public discrediting and the dissemination of hate speech.

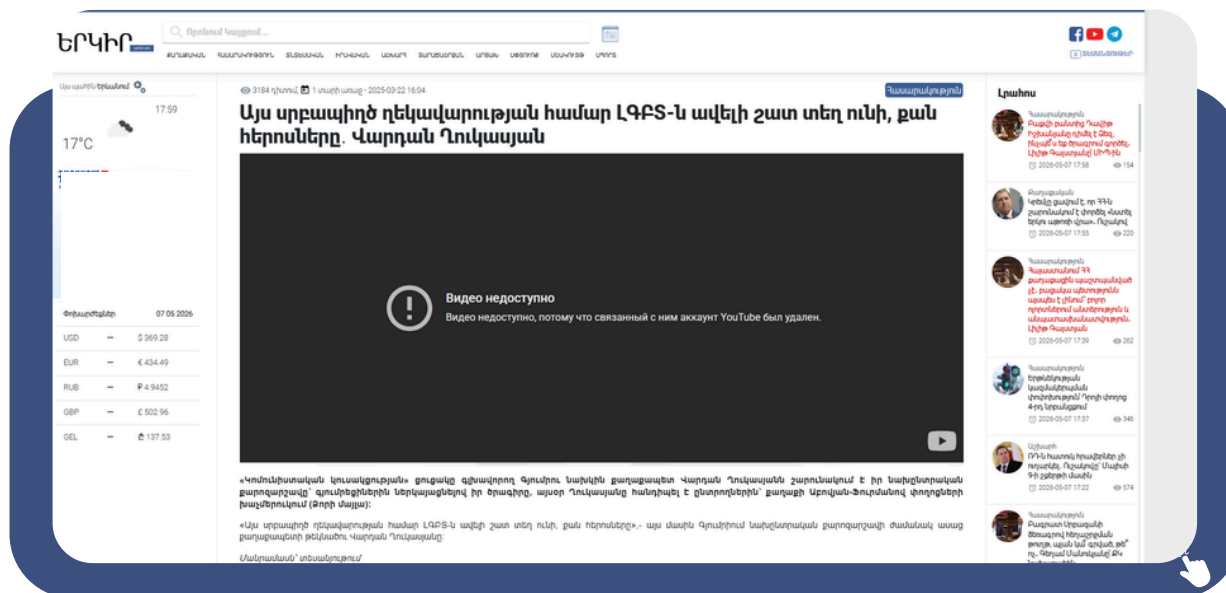
The article was subsequently republished by several other media outlets, generally retaining the same headline or adding elements that further intensified the existing discriminatory and dignity-undermining framing. In particular, iravunk.com, a website previously noted for disseminating discriminatory content, republished the material under the following headline: “Your child would be very ashamed if he knew that his father supported fabricated deals of a homosexual being: Kyokh’s slap to the slanderers. [30].



[29] <https://yerkir.am/hy/article/2025/02/12/287128>

[30] <https://iravunk.com/?p=305182&l=am>

During the Gyumri mayoral elections launched at the beginning of 2025, LGBTQI persons once again became targets in the public and political sphere. Vardan Ghukasyan, former mayor of Gyumri and leader of the Communist Party list, referred to LGBTQI persons during his election campaign, attempting to use the issue for political manipulation. He stated: “For this blasphemous leadership, LGBTQ people have more value than heroes”<sup>[31]</sup>.



The day after the Gyumri mayoral elections, on March 31, 2025, during a press briefing with journalists, in response to a question regarding the possible organization of public events for LGBTQI+ persons, Vardan Ghukasyan stated: “**LGBT cannot hold a parade in the father city... If you also feel disgust toward LGBT, come stand next to me and you will see what I will do to LGBT.**” He further added that if the Armenian Apostolic Church were to “marry homosexual couples like in Europe,” he would openly say:



**“I would shoot that priest inside the church if he dares to do such a thing. I say it openly, I would surrender myself, let them take me and judge me.”<sup>[32]</sup>:**

During 2025, there was an intensification of public and online debates and criticism related to the Church, triggered by actions undertaken by the Government. These developments were accompanied by widespread public reactions and active discussions across social media platforms and news outlets. In this context, instances documented on the online platform where the LGBTQI+ community once again became a target of scrutiny and

[31] <https://yerkir.am/hy/article/2025/03/22/289180>

[32] <http://www.asekose.am/am/post/ekexecou-mej-km-ed-qahanayin--barcracayn-asoum-em-vardan-xoukasyane-lgbt-i-masin>

hostility, despite the absence of any direct connection to the subject matter of the discussions themselves.

On October 17, 2025, Facebook user Priest Ter Sahak Galstyan made the following post on his page:

**“By order of Ktrich Nersisyan, the homo-addicted fake bishop Sissy is gathering participants for a rally against Nikol Pashinyan.”[33].**



The content of the above-mentioned publication includes degrading and offensive language based on sexual orientation, used in the context of discrediting a political process.

The use of sexual orientation-based labeling in this context appears intended to construct negative and hostile perceptions of LGBTQI+ persons, associate them with political manipulation, and promote discriminatory attitudes and social hostility.

On October 22, 2025, during a question-and-answer session with members of parliament in the National Assembly, in the course of discussions on issues related to the Church, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan made the



following statement regarding the Church and its clergy: **“One is a vagrant, another is a sexual maniac... and are we the ones fighting against the Church? Is the vagrant the Church? Is the sexual maniac the Church? Is the embezzler Church? Is the KGB agent the Church? I would give my life to free our sacred institution from them.”[34].**

The Prime Minister’s wording includes degrading and offensive characterizations expressed at a high-level public and political forum. In particular, the use of the expression “sexual maniac” is stigmatizing in nature and is perceived as hate speech related to sexuality, contributing to the reinforcement of negative stereotypes associated with sexual behavior or identity in public discourse.

In the online environment, manifestations of discrimination and hate speech are directed not only at LGBTQI persons but also at civil society organizations working on issues concerning the LGBTQI community.

[34] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UdQLsmbQhME>

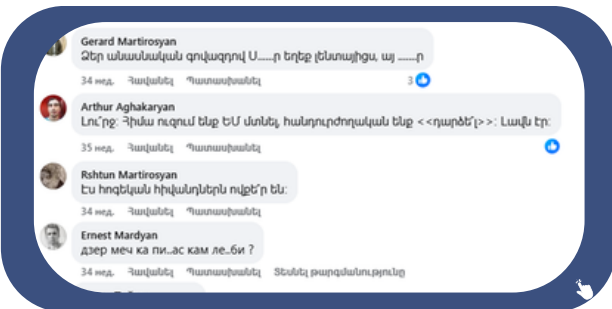


The image shows a social media post dedicated to IDAHOBIT on the Dignity NGO social page, with users comments that contain abusive and hostile language directed at the human rights organization and the guests of the event, including ambassadors, representatives of diplomatic missions and international organizations, civil society.



**Particularly:**

Anahit Hakobyan: "... have you come out again? You just can't sit still? Get out of the Christian country... And don't impose your so-called non-traditional rights on us!!! You are corrupting our lives with your immoral desire for everything around you... FEAR GOD."



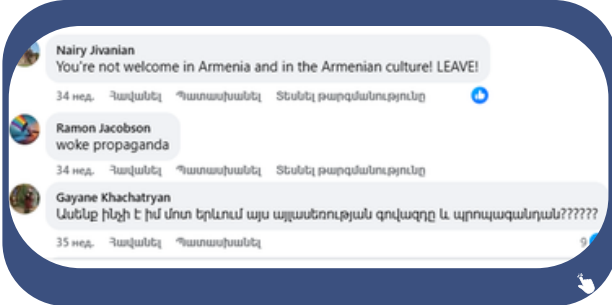
**Gayane Khachatryan:** "Why am I seeing this ad and propaganda of perversion?"

**Gerard Martirosyan** "Get the f..ck out of my news feed with your disgusting ad."

**Arthur Aghakaryan:** "Are you serious? Now we want to enter EU, and have "become" tolerant. That's a good one."

**Rshtun Martirosyan:** " Who are these mentally sick people?"

**Ernest Mardyan** " Are there fa..ots or les..ians among you?"



### Translation of the letter from Republican Military Commissariat of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia


Date: 07.08.2025

We hereby inform you regarding your application submitted to the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, the person's disorders, as well as prevailing majority of mental and behavioral disorders related to sexual identification, preference, development and orientation are examined under Article 8 providing the list of diseases that define the degree of the citizen's fitness for military service, Annex 1 of 2012 April 18 N 404-Ն decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. It shall also be noted that those forms of sexual orientation that are not mental or behavioral disorders or are not accompanied by those disorders, are not an obstacle for military service. Issues related to sexual identification, preference, development and orientation create mostly disorders of conforming behavior in our social environment. The description in your study opinion of the National Center for Mental Healthcare CJSC of the Ministry of Health of Armenia also predominantly speaks of disorders of conforming abilities conditioned by sexual orientation. Moreover, in your preferred social environments – workplace, different groups, conforming behavior is described. Disorders of conforming abilities are conditioned by change of environment, including the armed forces, where the majority of staff are male and often display negative attitude towards non-traditional sexual orientation.

Disorders of conforming abilities are examined under Clause b of Article 7 providing the list of diseases that define the degree of the citizen's fitness for military service, Annex 1 of 2012 April 18 N 404-Ն decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, on the grounds of which you have been recognized as unfit for military service.

Best regards Acting Military Commissar, colonel G. Mkheyan  
SIGNATURE

Made by CS N. Jamalyan  
Telephone: (010)- 28-34-96



**ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ  
ՊԱՇՏՊԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՆԱԽԱՐԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ  
ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԶԻՆՎՈՐԱԿԱՆ  
ԿՈՄԻՍԱՐԻԱՏ**

№ [redacted] 2025թ.

Հասցեն՝ ք. Երևան, Քարապետ 6  
Էլ. հասցեն՝ hmk@mail.am  
Տեlex. (010) 20-15-68

«Այս պաշտպանության նախարարին հասցեագրված Ձեր դիմումի առկայության հայտնում եմ, որ ՀՀ կառավարության 2018 թվականի ապրիլի 12-ի N 404-Ն որոշման հավելված 1-ով հաստատված զինվորական ծառայության համար քաղաքացու կամ զինծառայողի պիտանիության աստիճանը որոշող հիվանդությունների ցանկի 8-րդ հորվածով են փորձաքննվում անձի խանգարումները, ինչպես նաև սեռական նույնասեռական, նախընտրության, զարգացման և կողմնորոշման հետ կապված հոգեբանական և վարքային խանգարումների գերակշիռ մեծամասնությունը: Հարկ է նշել, որ սեռական կողմնորոշման այն ձևերը, որոնք չեն հանդիսանում հոգեկան և վարքային խանգարումներ կամ չեն զուգակցվում դրանցով, խոչընդոտ չեն զինվորական ծառայության համար: Սեռական նույնասեռական, նախընտրության, զարգացման և կողմնորոշման հետ կապված հարցերը մեր սոցիալական միջավայրում առաջացնում են առավելագույնս հարմարվողական վարքի խանգարումներ: ՀՀ ԱՆ «Հոգեկան առողջության պահպանման ազգային կենտրոն» ՓԲԸ-ում Ձեր հետազոտական եզրակացության մեջ առկա նկարագրությունը ևս խոսում է առավելագույնս հարմարվողական ունակությունների խանգարման մասին, որը պայմանավորված է սեռական կողմնորոշմամբ: Ընդ որում Ձեր նախընտրած սոցիալական միջավայրերում աշխատակալը, տարբեր խմբակներ, Ձեր մոտ նկարագրված է հարմարվողական վարք: Հարմարվողական ունակությունների խանգարումները պայմանավորված են միջավայրի փոփոխությամբ, այդ թվում նաև զինված ուժերում, որտեղ անձնակազմի գերակշիռ մասը արական սեռի»

2

են և ոչ ավանդյալ սեռական կողմնորոշման նկատմամբ վերաբերմունքը որստրվում է հաճանք քաղաքացու:

Հարմարվողական ունակությունների խանգարումները փորձաքննվում են ՀՀ կառավարության 2018 թվականի ապրիլի 12-ի N 404-Ն որոշման հավելված 1-ով հաստատված զինվորական ծառայության համար քաղաքացու կամ զինծառայողի պիտանիության աստիճանը որոշող հիվանդությունների ցանկի 7-րդ հորվածի «բ» կետով, որի հիմքով Ռուք ճանաչվել եք ոչ պիտանի զինվորական ծառայության համար:

Հարգանքով՝

ԶԻՆՎՈՐԱԿԱՆ ԿՈՄԻՍԱՐԻ ՊԱՇՏՊԱՆԱԿԱՆ  
ՊԱՏՏԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ԿԱՏԱՐՈՂ  
զնդապետ Գ. ՄԻՅԵԱՆ

Կատարող՝ ՔՆ Ն.Ջամալյան  
Տեlex. (010) 28-34-96

**2025**

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**ANNUAL LEGAL  
REPORT**

Dignity Humanitarian NGO (DIGNITY) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization established in 1998 in Armenia.

The NGO mission is to contribute to the development of an inclusive and equitable society through the protection of human rights, accessible healthcare services, capacity building and social support.



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