



human

We and
Our Rights

sexual

gender

discrimination

orientation

“Dignity and justice
for all of us”

respect

violence

identity

“Public Information and Need of Knowledge” non-governmental organization, concerned with the negative consequences of discrimination and intolerance toward LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered) people, decided to conduct a research study. The sociological research made it possible to receive reliable information on incidents where the rights of LGBT people in Armenia were violated, while making an attempt, through analyzing legislation, to clarify to what extent the law guarantees the protection of LGBT citizens in Armenia.

An individual cannot consider himself or herself to be a full and equal citizen of the state when his or her rights are being violated by the public as result of stigma and discrimination.

Whatever one’s sexual orientation or gender identity, an attitude of respect and tolerance is required, as well as the need for accepting sexual diversity and in some cases, professional care and support. Also important is the state’s clear approach, which should be defined in appropriate legal acts and guarantee the protection of LGBT people and prohibit any discrimination and intolerance toward them.

As a result of the study, it became clear that discrimination toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people begins with the family. Discrimination toward LGBT people by family members manifests itself through breaking off all contact, kicking them out of the house and disowning them. Afterwards, discrimination continues in nearly all stages and facets of life:



study and work, military service, healthcare and other services, media, entertainment, and so on. Cases of violating anonymity and confidentiality, which more often take place in establishments that provide healthcare services and psychological support, legal bodies or military commissariats, are not uncommon.

LGBT people don't separate their rights from the rights of others; on the contrary, they criticize any experience that sets them apart. With this in mind, they note the following important circumstances, in which they have a right:

- **not to be isolated or alienated from the public**
- **not to be ridiculed**
- **not to be victimized**
- **not to be persecuted**
- **to be accepted**

**To live not as they are forced to,
but as they are.**

Intolerance toward LGBT people more so relies on unwritten norms, customs and social memory.

According to respondents' opinion:

it is possible to reduce discrimination through awareness and education.


According to respondents, there are cases of LGBT people in Armenia being raped and even murdered. The majority of respondents note that they have never and will never go to the police or law enforcement bodies for protecting their rights, since they not only don't resolve the issues at hand, but also become cause for new issues to arise.

In reality, some respondents found that one way or another, they must come to terms with the society in which they live, to respect society's current norms and rules, and to conform. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that the public and the state must take into account its citizens' individual right to live freely and without violating other people's rights. However, the more an individual's external appearance or the way he/she carries himself/herself reveals his/her sexual orientation or gender identity, the more serious the level of discrimination can become. Discrimination can manifest itself not only through articulating offensive statements, but also by carrying out physical, sexual and psychological violence.

Not being protected against discrimination (the threat of being revealed, the feelings of shame and fear) can sometimes endanger LGBT peoples' health; e.g. by not fully disclosing their sexual history when seeking medical services.

Some respondents, for instance, if not attempted then at least had thoughts of committing suicide. To overcome the situation, they avoid seeking professional help because of a lack of trust (a fear of not preserving anonymity and





confidentiality).

On the topic of legal analysis, legislation and international documents that regulate or are connected to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against LGBT people, spread of public tolerance, and the protection of LGBT rights were examined. As a result of this research, we can conclude that not only is the justice system that regulates the sector in which LGBT people's rights should be protected in the Republic of Armenia not united, but also legislative definitions within the boundaries of understanding and the legislative formation connected to this sector, which would guarantee the possibility of protecting their rights, are actually absent from legislation.

From a point of view of favorable legal regulation, it is particularly important to draw attention to the following issues:

It's necessary to adopt a law which would recognize gender identity and prohibit all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

It's necessary for amendments and additions to be implemented in RA legislation which will ensure that torment, cruel, inhumane and humiliating treatment and preaching hate based on sexual orientation and gender identity are prevented and LGBT people's rights are protected.

According to respondents, it's necessary

on one hand, to implement legislative reform and track its process of execution,

on the other hand, to carry out activities in different sectors and levels to change public opinion,

which will promote

increasing respect toward human rights,

sowing the seeds of tolerance,

as well as a positive step toward the process of democracy in the Republic of Armenia.

The complete results of the “We and Our Rights” legal analysis and sociological research can be found on the Public Information and Need of Knowledge NGO official website <http://www.pinkarmenia.org>



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