



Post-release

On September 25-27, the first scientific and educational conference titled *Health and quality of life of transgender people in Central Asia: achievements, barriers and perspectives* took place in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan..

The conference was organized with support of Ministry of Health of Kyrgyz Republic, World Professionals Association of Transgender Health (WPATH), Global Education Initiative (GEI +WPATH), Transgender Europe (TGEU), Soros Foundation - Kyrgyzstan (SFK) and Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice .

Central Asian organizations Alma-TQ (Kazakhstan), LighT (Tajikistan), Labrys (Kyrgyzstan) and others did all the planning and organizing of the Conference, identified significant topics and objectives for the event, formed delegations, worked on developing of the Conference program. The organizers were trans* activists representing trans* initiatives and organizations dealing with trans* issues from different countries of Central Asia.

The conference was dedicated to the issues of a healthy and safe life, visibility in conditions of inclusiveness for transgender,gender non-conforming/non-binary people in Central Asia.

The conference became a platform for open dialogue and an exchange of experiences. This open dialogue contributed to the development of partnership between activists, professionals, allies and decision makers from different countries in the region.

The conference became a platform for open dialogue, exchange of experiences and the strengthening of partnership between activists, helping professional, allies and decision makers from different countries of the region.

It is important that trans people themselves speak about the realities of their lives in Central Asia and voice specific needs related to health and safe existence of the trans community.

Specialists in the field of law introduced to the audience with existing conditions that provide an opportunity to receive assistance in the health care system, psychological support and legal protection in Central Asian countries, the ability to live with identity documents that meet with

a person's gender identity, the possibility of unimpeded socialization, realization of their rights and freedoms.

Fundamentally important for us was the overcoming of intolerance and the developing of acceptance and tolerance in civil society, professional communities and states in general, to fight against transphobia and develop of favorable inclusive environment for a person's life with any gender identities and gender expressions, including intersecting stigma, in Central Asian countries, forming loyal society and fair and non-discriminatory state system that provides legal protection and face the needs of transgender, gender nonconforming and non binary people, related to health, safety and possibility of realization.

Trans* respect policy was mandatory for all participants, which obligated to use respectful, non-pathologizing and human rights-based language - that recognize gender and body diversity, affirming the right on self determination to present themselves in accordance with own gender identity.

- to abstain words that mean disease, insane, pain, inadequacy of trans* or any other identity;
- to accept person's identity in which he_she_them identify themselves;
- to address people in the pronoun they prefer, including in situations where it seems to you that their gender identity does not match their appearance;
- don't ask people personal questions outside the appropriate situation without permission.

Even if at the start of the conference the organizing committee and facilitators recalled the principles of tact* tactfulness and inadmissibility of photographing people without their consent, then later the participants themselves supported the given rules and responded to violations. For example, activist-parents expressed their position to protect "their children" and asked the participants not to use disrespectful language in relation to people with different identities.

The main topics of 12 blocks of the program were:

- Realities of living conditions of trans people in Central Asia.
- Legal basis of health and social care and legal gender recognition of trans* people in Central Asia and globally.
- Standards and approaches to health and social care for trans people, that approved on international level.
- Experience of providing health and social, psychological support for trans people in Central Asia.
- Researches that are related to issues of trans people lives in Central Asia.
- Community building and parent's activism.
- Work with body and meaning of body in lives of trans people.

Moreover, during the Conference was organized seminar dedicated on standards of hormonal masculinization and feminization for endocrinologists, gynecologists and other practicing

specialists from Central Asia. The seminar was organized by support of Global Education Initiative of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (GEI WPATH).

As part of these thematic blocks, **35 reports** were presented from trans activists, medical specialists of various specialties (endocrinologists, gynecologists, urologists, psychiatrists, psychotherapists) and psychologists, lawyers, specialists from the international organization Amnesty International, expert on gender recognition, expert at GEI - Global Education Initiative of the World Professional Association for the Health of Transgender People, Health Officer and Specialist of the International Organization TGEU - “Transgender Europe”, past-president of WPATH - the World Professional Association for the Health of Transgender People, expert in evidence-based medicine, head of the master's program psychology department at American University of Central Asia, master of sports of the Kyrgyz Republic in combination with the personal trainer and the parent’s club “Meduza” (they are parents of trans people, lesbians, bisexual, gay people, who support their LGBT children and are ready to provide support to other parents).

The conference was attended by 129 people - trans activists, specialists in various fields, parents, representatives of diplomatic missions and international organizations - from 8 countries, 7 regions of Kyrgyzstan, 6 universities of Central Asia, 5 Republican Health Centers, 5 clinical hospitals, 7 family medicine centers, 4 medical centers, 2 ministries, 1 department, 6 international organizations and 2 embassies, 6 regional community organizations and initiative groups working on trans issues.

The conference became a unique event not only for Central Asia, but also for the entire EECA region.

- For the first time in the region, issues related to the health and quality of life of trans people are discussed on a large international and multidisciplinary platform with the participation of a wide range of specialists and representatives from Ministries and Departments of countries from regions.
- For the first time, a report was presented outside the WPATH platform on the changes that the world professional community expects on the Standards of providing medical care for trans people as part of an updated version of the document. A member of the board of directors and past-president of WPATH, the World Professional Association for the Health of Transgender People, spoke about the process of working on the 8th edition of the standards, which will replace the current 7th version. Standards of Care on 7th version are currently main in forming approaches in providing support to trans people. The 8th edition of the Standards will be officially presented on November 2020 in Hong Kong at the WPATH Symposium.
- International organization Transgender Europe (TGEU), has completed work on Manual on trans-specific health care system based on human rights. Health Officer of TGEU, for the first time presented the results on our Conference. Moreover, the Manual on russian language was published and distributed within participants of Conference.
- For the first time in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia, the issues of reproduction of transmasculine and transfeminine people were raised. In addition, specialists as

gynecologists and urologists from Kyrgyzstan presented reports about experiences on providing support for trans people.

- For the first time, a unique material on approaches on helping for transgender, gender nonconforming, non-binary children, adolescents and their families was systematized and presented on the conference, based on an analysis of international experience and international standards of assistance.
- On the Conference for the first time was presented the brochure “Legal basis for health care and social support, legal gender recognition of transgender, transexual, gender nonconforming, non-binary people in the Kyrgyz Republic”, based on the legal analysis of legislation on gender recognition in Kyrgyzstan and the Manual on providing support for trans*people that was adopted by Ministry of Health of Kyrgyz Republic. The brochure describes the legal basis for changing personal data by trans* people in Kyrgyzstan and international human rights standards applicable to legal gender recognition.
- For the first time at the international multidisciplinary platform, were raised topics related to community development and the specifics of social work among trans* people presented by the communities themselves.
- For the first time in Central Asia, at the Conference with the participation of such a significant number of professionals from different regions, representatives of ministries and departments, allies and foreign guests, was highlighted the situation on trans* sex workers in Central Asia.
- For the first time in the history of the region, by parents and relatives of trans* people was written a brochure that describes the experience of accepting, this brochure is addressed for other parents - who are looking for answers on questions and are on the way to understand their trans* relatives. The presentation of the book took place on the Conference. The book was presented by parents - participants from kyrgyz parent’s club “Meduza”, and parents from Kazakhstan helped them and shared their experiences and plans in developing the parent’s movement, members of the parent’s club T-Zhanya.
- For the first time in such a large international audience, transgender and gender-non-binary people from Central Asia were able to talk about personal experiences on interacting with their body, experience of accepting body, working with body, body changes, share the experience of creating gender self-expression, including taking into account safety issues relevant to trans* person in countries of Central Asia.
- Conference participants had the opportunity to receive printed materials containing information that is useful for understanding trans* specific issues and contributing to the development of providing practices. Were distributed methodological manuals on providing care, comics on trans*people realities and other materials.

Special gift for the conference was the presentation of the video clip “Syyynchy” by singer Zere. The clip was presented by the trans activist of the initiative group MyrzAaym, who were one of the main roles in the clip and trans activist of the initiative group MyrzAyim, the performer of one of the roles in the clip, which became a real social manifest and an event in the cultural life of Kyrgyzstan.

We hope that the Conference and results of the conference will become the basis for further

work in Central Asian countries aimed on improving the quality of life and health of transgender people. Already today, the participants of the conference expressed their willingness and desire to work together in the following areas:

- Changing the legal framework towards facilitating access to legal gender recognition for transgender, transexual, gender nonconforming, non-binary people.
- Implementing the standards on provision of healthcare and social assistance to transgender, transexual, gender nonconforming, non-binary people in the practice of medical professionals and educational programs of medical and psychological professional educational institutions.
- Decentralization of healthcare and social assistance services for transgender, transexual, gender nonconforming, non-binary people, which will allow citizens to get access to high-quality healthcare and social assistance not only in “big” cities, but regardless of region or city.

So in terms of not losing the results that we have achieved, we consider that it is important to disseminate information about the conference and those materials that were presented by speakers on conference. The working group of the organizing committee plans to collect and systematize these materials, get permission from the authors to distribute them, make the materials available for effective use for the benefit of trans* people and the community.

Photo Gallery – Health and Quality of Life of Transgender People in Central Asia: Achievements, Barriers and Perspectives

