



GENDERDOC-M

**REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF LGBT PEOPLE'S RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF
MOLDOVA
YEAR 2018**

*The report is prepared by: Angela Frolov, Lobby and Advocacy Programme Coordinator,
GENDERDOC-M Information Center, e-mail: angela.frolov@gdm.md, phone: +373 022
990 992*

This report reflects the situation regarding respect of the rights of LGBT people, the political and social influence reflecting homophobia and transphobia in society, as well as positive changes for LGBT people in the Republic of Moldova.

The European People's Parliamentary Group, the mandate of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova 2014-2019 blocked the final adoption of the draft law which includes the adjustment of the legal framework of the Republic of Moldova to international standards on combating hate speech and hate crimes (the draft law No 301). The draft law no. 301 was adopted at first hearing on 8 December 2016 and only after amendments and national/international expertise was included to be voted in the second hearing on 26 April 2018. On 26 April 2018, however, the draft law no. 301 was excluded from Parliament's agenda at the request of Mr Carpov, the member of the parliamentary group, on the grounds that the fraction had additional comments but the authors were absent at the meeting and would like to be present at their adoption. By the end of Parliament's mandate, on 30 November 2018, the draft law no. 301 was still not voted. The Republic of Moldova has an inadequate legal framework which, along with the vicious practice of law enforcement institutions, leaves hate speech and hate crimes unpunished. The hate speech increases during electoral period, creating a harmful environment in society and endangering minority groups. Unfortunately, the hate speech is already becoming a weapon by politicians who build their electoral campaign on fears and prejudices, helped by representatives of the Orthodox Church of Moldova.

Valeriu Ghilețchi, a member of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova in an interview given on May 28, during the Sputnik Moldova's "Logic of Power" program, [has declared](#) the following:

"It is true that I was not accepted as an ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to the United States of America because I voted against the equal opportunities law (note: it is the Law on Ensuring Equality, which prohibits discrimination), here that I pay a price for my religious conviction, I was unjustly accused of homophobia. I have not become an ambassador because of a democracy issue and I wonder where democracy is, if I am not guaranteed the right to expose my point of view ... You know my fight for family values, for life, for human dignity. And when certain values are imposed on us that we should not accept from my point of view, it disturbs me, this values must not become mandatory, but they should be at the discretion of each state."

On October 11, 2018, Vlad Batrincea, criticized the resolution in support of the legalization of same-sex marriages in the member countries of the Council of Europe. [He said](#): "In my country, in the Republic of Moldova, the Constitution clearly stipulates that a marriage is a union between a man and a woman. Respectively, the authors of this resolution tell us about the

amendment of the Constitution. A World Family Congress took place in Moldova, attended by about 130 countries. These are our values, and today in the Council of Europe our country is in a very delicate situation because we are bound to respect the Constitution"; "We think the time has come to stop this attack against the traditional family institute. We observe the demographic situation in Europe. This must be stopped. This way, in 50 years, Europe will disappear."

The Delegation of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova participated PACE at autumn session . The meeting took place in Strasbourg on 8-12 October.

The delegation included Marian Lupu, the head of the national delegation at PACE, the vice president of Parliament Valeriu Ghilețchi, deputies Inna Șupac, Ion Apostol and Vlad Batrincea.

MASS-MEDIA reflection of the Pride march "No Fear"

On May 19, 2018, the "No Fear" March took place in Chisinau. The event was organized by GENDERDOC-M Information Centre with the occasion of the XVIIth edition of Moldova Pride Festival. Participants at the event held on May 19th , started at the intersection of the Bucharest and Ismail streets and went to Maria Cebotari Street. This year it was the first time when the participants finished the whole route approved by the City Hall of Chisinau. As during the previous years, a group of counter-demonstrators tried to oppose the March, but they were stopped by the police, which ensured the peaceful conduct of the event.

According to [research conducted by Victor Gotțisan](#) (media researcher), this year's "No Fear" March coincided with the local election period, which held the forefront of all TV stations and news bulletins. However, a part of the media institutions reflected the subject of the March, but chose to present the information for the presentation of the information in a tendentious and unbalanced way (Sputnik.md, Noi.md), giving an exclusively negative connotation for the event. Others offered, with only a few exceptions, the information about the March in a relatively neutral manner and without major deviations (Moldova 1, Deschide.md), while Prime TV, Publika TV, Channel 2 and Channel 3., reflected the event in a derogatory tone, the news followed the same scenario, images and way of exposing the text.

Moldova 1 reflected the subject in the Messenger of 19 May 2018. The public television broadcasted news about the "No Fear" March, with a total broadcast of 2 minutes and 5 seconds. The news outlined the details of the event, the organizers - GenderDoc-M organization - and the March participants, such as the counter-protest organized by some representatives of the Orthodox Church in Moldova. Moldova 1 reflected the information in a neutral and objective manner. The balance of sources has been ensured, with television providing the broadcasting space to all those involved and / or targeted in the news. However, Moldova 1 emphasized the LGBT term, even though the March had a concrete name and even though the organizers mentioned that this event is not exclusively organized for LGBT people: *"They went out to the street to promote tolerance and respect for others, but as in other years they were hooted. Dozens of people participated in the LGBT march. This is the first time when the entire planned route has been completed "; "The march of the LGBT community has caused negative reactions from passers-by."*

Prime TV broadcasted the news - "No Fear of Love" - with a total broadcast of 2 minutes and 53 seconds. The information has been reflected in an equidistant manner, while ensuring the right to opinion for all concerned of the news. The main deviation made by Prime TV was the expression of some sayings that could be categorized as pejorative and discriminatory, as well as the mixture of facts and opinions: *"Dozens of people with non-traditional sexual orientation and their supporters marched with pink hearts in their hands on Bucharest Street."*

Publika TV reflected the event in two live broadcasts during the day of May 19, 2018, reflecting both camps involved in the event: a) organizers and participants of the march; b) the group of religious counter-demonstrators who have attempted to oppose its deployment. In the first report of the event, with duration of 1 minute and 53 seconds, Publika TV broadcasted the images and live coverage of the Publika TV reported, which reflected that *"...dozens of people went out into the street to request rights for people with non-traditional sexual orientations "*

(slightly pejorative emphasis). The second live broadcast during the day attributed a longer duration to the protest of the counter-demonstrators (6 minutes and 23 seconds) and reflected their views on the event, without any intervention or text by journalists. The third material was the following news - *"The LGBT march contested again"* - (2 minutes and 9 seconds) that included both sides. The information was reflected in a neutral and equidistant manner, however, in the following case, Publika TV journalists used the mixture of facts and opinions: *"The Orthodox believers haven't left and have organized a protest on 31 August Street"; "The believers say the actions of homosexuals and lesbians are immoral."*

Canal 2 has published news article named *"A March with booing"*, with a total broadcast of 2 minutes and 47 seconds. Canal 2 has sometimes used a pejorative language: *"Supporters of people with non-traditional sexual orientation..."*. Similarly, Canal 3 reflected the event in a release on May 19 with a total of 2 minutes and 39 seconds. Both televisions reflected the events, with a very few exceptions, in the same way, following the same scenario and stating about the same information as Prime TV and Publika TV. Note that the video images used by all four televisions were the ones from Publika TV, and yet this was not specified by any of them.

In the case of **online media institutions**, in order to have a more complex picture of the way in which the "No Fear" March was reflected, the content published during the period May 10-21, 2018 was monitored. Thus, during this period, Noi.md has published four news articles, of which only three were a product of their own, and a news article titled *"A priest [who] was filmed while he was fighting the law representatives at the Solidarity March"* was taken over from another online platform (**Diez.md**).

In those three news materials of their own, Noi.md disfavored the "No Fear" March, reflecting only the negative attitude towards this March: Church representatives (May 10, 2018), Capital residents (May 12, 2018) and some of the journalists (May 16, 2018). Thus, Noi.md presented the information about the monitored subject in a tendentious and unbalanced manner. At the same time, Noi.md did not include in none of the three news items the opinion of the organizers of this March or those who support the initiative. In this way, Noi.md did not provide the right to reply and/or express opinion of the second party involved.

Sputnik.md published during the monitored period four articles about or with the reference to the "No Fear" March. Two of these were opinion articles, and the other two were news materials. Sputnik.md reflected the information referring to the event in a negative light, presenting information tendentious, unbalanced and only from a single perspective (of those who opposed the March).

Thus, Sputnik.md admitted in their news the following:

- A mixture of facts and opinions: *"A less common story: Deputy Head of the General Police Inspectorate, Gheorghe Cavcaliuc, declared that the police will make all effort for the good conduct of the homosexual march, announced for May 19, in the center of the capital"* (a piece of news of May 18, about the meeting of the Deputy Chief of PGI Gheorghe Cavcaliuc with the organizers of the march); *"Now in the center of the capital: homosexuals are parading, protected by the police"* (news release on May 19th); *"The number of policemen and journalists who came to stream the event is higher than the participants of the parade of homosexuals";*

- Labeling: *"The Deputy Head of the General Police Inspectorate himself, Gheorghe Cavcaliuc, led the operation of the police to protect those who prefer deviant sexual relations."*

At the same time, Sputnik.md made use of the manipulation technique "Image of an enemy", which is, according to experts, a technique very often used by the local media. It aims to induce media consumers a sense of fear about something. Coming also with certain actions, or "solutions", which allegedly are meant to protect them against an internal or external "evil". The participants in the event are thus "the enemy" or "the evil", which incites fear in society and attacks on national, moral and religious traditions.

Sputnik.md: *"The representatives of the homosexual and lesbian community gathered in the center of the capital to participate in the march which they call "no fear" and which is organized*

in the capital, within Pride Week 2018. At 12:00, about two hundred demonstrators who promote homosexual sexual relations began to parade through the Capital, flanked by hundreds of policemen, protecting them from the discontent and anger of those who are adepts of morality and normality."

May 19th news piece: *"Now in the center of the capital: homosexuals are parading, protected by the police"*. On May 19, 2018, the online portal **Deschide.md** published two news releases on the monitored event. Both materials were neutral and equidistant, as they emphasized the conflict between the two camps: March participants and religious counter-demonstrators. Also, in some situations, Deschide.md admitted the mixture of facts and opinions: *"Although the organizers of the "No fear of love" March, organized by the LGBT community said that the event passed without major incidents, facebook images after the event show us the opposite"* (The news material: *"Church representatives tried to attack the LGBT march. Police applied tear gas"*); *"Some people who showed signs of aggressive behavior appeared near the intersection of Puskin Street and Banulescu Bodoni, but because of the police cordon they could not interact with the march participants"* (News material: *"Church representatives tried to attack the LGBT march. Police applied tear gas"*).

NTV Moldova and Accent TV did not reflect the theme of "No Fear" March on 19th, 20th or 21st of May 2018. The omission can be explained by the fact that on Saturdays and Sundays these televisions do not produce news. However, during this time, new local elections took place, and both institutions had a special edition of news, with materials exclusively dedicated to the elections.

Subsequently, in an informative bulletin of May 22, **Accent TV** broadcasted context information on the "No Fear" March in one of the news - *"Dodon is against LGBT marches"* - reflecting President's Igor Dodon opinion on the March, rather than the event itself. The news material was built with deviations from deontological norms:

- The mix of facts and opinions: *"Asked by journalists about the LGBT march, Igor Dodon said on the run: he wants a good relationship both with the East and with the West, but he will not allow the imposition of values that are foreign to us. At the same time, the president was dissatisfied that due to the march, the center of the capital became impractical"*;

- Lack of the right to reply: Igor Dodon in his statements accused the Government, police and local authorities for allowing the organization of the March, Accent TV did not assure them the right to opinion.

NTV Moldova approached the theme of the "No Fear" March in the news bulletin of May 22, 2018, in the context of the visit to Moldova of Brian Brow, President of the International Organization of Families, as well as the meeting he had with Igor Dodon. In the news story *"In Support of the Traditional Family"*, NTV Moldova included video clips from the "No Fear" March, and the reporter mentioned that *"Igor Dodon condemned the government's actions to support the LGBT community's demonstrations and marches"*, while not ensuring the right to opinion of those who were targeted in the news.

Both NTV Moldova and Accent TV politicized this issue in their narratives, suggesting that such activities and marches are imposed by the West and the European Union: *"President Igor Dodon also said that in a state where the authorities do not have verticality in economic management, are ready to do anything to direct the country's external vector according to the preferences of the West, or even impose values that are unfit for society"*. Thus, the given institutions manipulated media consumers using the manipulation technique of the "external enemy": it is based on a mechanism of fear, which attempts to induce a sense of danger from the outside (in this case, the external enemy being the West and the European Union). At the same time, the public is being suggested that there is someone else who can defend them against this danger (the president, the Orthodox Church in Moldova or certain political parties).

RTR Moldova and Jurnal TV did not reflect the event on 19 and 20 May when it took place, since the given stations do not produce newscasts on Saturdays or Sundays, but neither they did on the following days (21 or 22 May 2018).

HATE MOTIVATED DISCOURSE, INCITEMENT TO HATE AND DISCRIMINATION

ECRI has developed the "[Fifth Report on the Republic of Moldova](#)" taking into account the progress happened up to March 23, 2018. ECRI is a human rights monitoring body of the Council of Europe that specializes in issues related to the fight against racism, discrimination (based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, language, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance; prepares reports and issues recommendations to Member States.

According to this report, hate speech against Roma, LGBT community and people of color is intensifying in public discourse of the Republic of Moldova, and the authorities fail to take a strong position on statements of intolerance.

The report stresses that only a few cases of hate speech reach the courts (6 cases between 2015 and 2017) and calls on the authorities to develop a comprehensive strategy to prevent them and ensure that they are effectively prosecuted and punished.

ECRI recognizes progress in fighting racism and discrimination in certain areas of Moldova, but at the same time expresses its concern about a number of issues.

The report highlights the fact that there is a high level of underrepresentation of hate speech and hate violence, most of which are treated as administrative offence - and that the failure to prosecute these crimes does not provide an effective discouragement effect against them. In addition, it finds a lack of knowledge and expertise within the organs of justice in recognizing these offenses.

ECRI notes that prejudice against LGBT people is spreading in Moldova and urges the authorities to urgently adopt an action plan to protect LGBT people against hate speech, violence and discrimination, and to reform the criminal law in order to make homophobic / transphobic motivation an aggravating circumstance.

Other concerns are the severe lack of human and financial resources of the Council for the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Equality (CPPEDAE) and the Ombudsman, the fact that the Republic of Moldova has not yet ratified the Protocol no. 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights and some shortcomings in the legislation on combating racism and racial discrimination.

ECRI makes two priority recommendations to the Moldovan authorities, to be further evaluated within two years:

- Strengthen the institutional capacity of CPPEDAE and the Ombudsman.
- Scaling up training of law enforcement officers and the judiciary system on hate crimes, including hate speech.

Year 2018 included several important events. One of them was the election of the mayor of Chisinau municipality, which provoked a series of homophobic hate speech addressed to some candidates.

The Socialist Party of the Republic of Moldova has used several homophobic statements on various occasions. The same tactic had the former party leader - the President of the Republic of Moldova, Igor Dodon.

According to the Promo-LEX Association's Report "[Hate speech and incitement to discrimination in the public space and the media in the Republic of Moldova](#)" of 2018, the results of the monitoring of the hate speech in the Republic of Moldova denote a significant gap in the discriminatory tendency of LGBT people compared to other groups, all of them being targeted in 154 cases out of the 368 registered. Speech to LGBT is direct and aggressive, with the use of denigrating qualities, insults, association with immorality, sin and evil. This mode of expression is influenced by the rhetoric of Church representatives. In other cases, homophobic

prejudices are used in the political rhetoric, as a negative element of association, to denigrate a politician or a party.

Most often, hate speech against the LGBT group occurs in a religious context, followed by a political one. Sometimes prejudices linked with homosexuality are used by journalists or public figures, in order to humiliate or offend, by projecting a negative image to the target.

In a religious context, discourse is often accompanied by manipulation elements. The authors use actual images or news and distort their essence by associating the negative element with the LGBT group.

A Disney Company (The Walt Disney Company) news piece, which initiated actions to support LGBT rights, was presented as a gay propaganda campaign. This material contrasts the company's activity with prejudices towards homosexuals, alluding to the danger of gay propaganda for children.

The association of homosexuality with negative, dangerous or illegal images, events or acts is intensely used. For example, the [news](#) titled: "Meanwhile, in Sweden, the atheist country, which has legalized sodomy and implanted chips for its citizens: wild fires across the country", incites the reader the idea that there are fires in Sweden due to the legalization of sodomy, which refers to LGBT rights inclusively:

"God punishes this atheist country, who has legalized many habits against the flesh and implants its chips and gives up cash money."

Similarly, another [news article](#) titled, "News that no one writes about: more than 500 sodomites burned in a fire that covered a Taiwanese party" refers to a fire in a nightclub in Taipei and associates homosexuality with death for the "sin of sodomy":

"The conclusion is next: (...) God certainly looked embarrassed upon the encounter of these Young People, and unleashed His anger upon the youth."

A manipulation tool often used in articles published on these platforms is the association of homosexuality with pedophilia. Thus, the LGBT group is associated, on the one hand, with an amoral and unacceptable act, serving as an emotional argument, and on the other, with an act forbidden by law, serving as a legal argument. Such materials present out of context and distorted information, and sometimes they operate with false information.

Orthodox news pages have a large number of followers and sometimes overcome many of the most popular media institutions. For example, the Orthodox Moldova portal has over 100,000 followers on Facebook, almost equal to the number of followers on Facebook pages of JurnalTV and PUBLIKA.MD, and double the number of followers on Agora.MD. Therefore, audiences of these materials are considerable.

On May 12, the **Metropolitan Church of Moldova** organized a march of silence in Chisinau in support of the "traditional" family.

The march was attended by hundreds of people, assisted by a group of Orthodox Church clerics headed by Moldovan Metropolitan Vladimir. Participants wore banners that said "Viva Traditional Family!" and "We Promote Family Values" and sang church songs.

The march began at Ciuflea Monastery and ended at the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Great National Assembly Square, where President **Igor Dodon** joined the marching participants. In the speeches held in the Cathedral Square, Metropolitan Vladimir and President Dodon resumed their criticism on the law on equality, but also the allusive reproaches against the MPs who have agreed to vote.

The head of state reminded that on Saturday, on his initiative, a family festival in Comrat will take place, which will continue in Balti, and will be organized in Chisinau on 15 May on the International Family Day. Dodon [hinted](#) at the LGBT community march held on May 20:

"Every year there are attempts to threat our values, laws that have been approved in the Parliament and that have to be revised, marches that are not close to us, Moldovans, and have never been. We must do our best not to allow these ... to destroy our national values. I have

always been, I am and will be a faithful defender of these values: the Orthodox faith, the traditional family, the history and the Moldovan traditions."

In political and electoral contexts, prejudices against LGBT people are increasingly being used to create the impression of an imminent danger to be faced. The rhetoric of the protection of traditional values is becoming more and more popular. For example, during the early local elections of May 20, 2018, PSRM candidate **Ion Ceban** [stated](#) on several occasions that he would ban the gay community from the Republic of Moldova: *"I am for the traditional family. No one forbids them to do what they want in their own space. Do what you want at home, but do not outsource these things in public. I will not allow such actions to take place."*

This speech was taken over by former PSRM president [Igor Dodon](#), who, after winning the presidential election, said he would not be able to represent the gay community as president.

On 25 February 2018 on the official Facebook page of the President of the Republic of Moldova, **Igor Dodon**, appeared a post with the following content:

*"We Moldovans are Orthodox people. Our grandparents and great grandparents have preserved this faith for centuries. Attempts are now being made to lure us with false teachings such as **liberalism, tolerance, gender equality**. Attempts are made to force us to believe that our Orthodox faith, our family values are obsolete and outdated values. Our people, who have gone through all the trials, will preserve the faith that has preserved it throughout our history. They bring the best thoughts to all Orthodox believers in Moldova on the occasion of the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. I wish you all peace and goodness, and to those who are in a post-strength of spirit."*

This post was taken over by ortodox.md.

After several messages and letters of indignation, Ion Ceban, the spokesman for the president, posted on his Facebook page the following text:

"Unfortunately, the President's busy schedule does not allow him to personally manage his Facebook page, and this time in the text of the post, which was not coordinated with the head of state, there was made a regrettable mistake, which is why I withdrawn the thesis that has affected feelings of several distinct groups in society", Ion Ceban wrote, apologizing for the mistake."

The original post of the president was corrected.

On May 22, 2018 **Igor Dodon** [declared](#):

*"I am totally against any violent action. But you **do not have to provoke**. Why intentionally organize such marches in a society where people categorically do not accept this. Isn't it a **provocation to violent actions**?"*

We do not do that, we do not provoke anyone. I understand that there are other people existing, but why would you organize and show this to Moldovan society? We have our children. Who would need that? We respect our Western partners, but you do not have to impose what we do not need.

If there, to you, these things are normal, let them stay there. To us, it was, it is and will not be normal. This is our attitude. Like it or not."

A petition was filed in the name of the President for incitement to discrimination and hate speech.

On September 14, at the 12th World Congress of Families, Moldovan President **Igor Dodon**, in a speech held at the opening of the event, declared the following: *"The organization of sexual minority festivals, other manifestations that contribute to the dissemination of immoral principles must be strongly condemned, perhaps even outlawed."*

On May 31, 2018 during the Parliamentary Session, **Vlad Batrincea**, PSRM deputy, made a speech on some additions to the administrative offence code.

He [said the following](#):

"Today there are hundreds of priests and believers from across the country, they prayed respectfully, it is a public addressing ... the believers from Republic of Moldova ask the Parliament to amend the administrative offence code and to prohibit the dissemination of public information: pedophilia, pornography and other relationships than those related to marriage and family in accordance with the constitution and family code. That is, society is disturbed by those marches of sexual minorities and believers want the law to make it very clear that such measures are forbidden in the public space and that the state of RM will protect a traditional family, a healthy family and we will ask the secretariat to distribute this appeal, this public addressing to all fractions."

After the "No Fear" March organized by GENDERDOC-M Information Centre, **Vlad Bătrâncea** said via a Facebook post: *"The responsibility is not only on LGBT people who have decided that they can block the center of the capital of an Orthodox state, organize a propaganda parade of a perverse minority..."*

The deputy condemned the authorization of march's development by the authorities, thus instigating the violation of freedom of assembly and using offensive phrases "perverse minority", "bacchanal", thus promoting public intolerance towards LGBT people.

PSRM candidate for the position of general mayor of municipality of Chisinau, **Ion Ceban**, [declared](#) on May 23, during debates, that if he becomes the city's mayor, he would not allow the annual "March of Solidarity" event, organized by the LGBT community:

*"My position is well-known. I am for a traditional family. At the same time, freedom is limited where there is a **common sense and morality**. There are many other things we need to promote in society. Nobody ever forbids them to do what they want in their space, isn't it so? **Do what you want at home, but let's not exteriorize these things in public. No one forbids or blocks you, but propaganda, I think, should not be and is not acceptable under these circumstances. I will not allow them to conduct marches of LGBT community.**"*

On November 18, 2018, during the rally organized by the Socialist Party of the Republic of Moldova, Socialist Deputy **Bogdan Țirdea** made a statement [mentioning the following](#): *"The only difference between the President of the Parliament and the PAS leader is that Sandu goes openly to gay parades, and Candu still cannot decide. However, if the US ambassador says so, everyone will go [too]."*

Stereotypes and hatred towards the LGBT group are used as a tool for denigrating opponents and for creating a coalition of an intolerant electorate against these opponents. For example, the leader of *Partidul Nostru* ("Our Party"), **Renato Usatîi**, [declared](#) during the TV-program "Cabinetul din umbră":

"Vlad Batrincea is (...) a faggot (...) Vlad Batrincea is responsible among the socialists of all those close relations with homosexuals."

The claim itself that a politician is homosexual is not discriminatory. But Renato Usatîi used the allegation in the context of a denigration speech to project LGBT intolerance against his opponent, thus promoting prejudices against gay people.

Similar to the media from the religious field, the classical media produces news and materials capable of instigating hatred. For example, in the [article](#) on the **flux.md** page, the author makes several homophobic statements and promotes prejudices towards LGBT persons:

"Duduița (remark:term of address for unmarried woman/single woman) Maia was surprised from the profile, smiling smugly and marching in the middle of the group of lesbians on duty, copiously funded by Soros network funds and other promoters of "Western values" such as euthanasia, homosexual marriages, child adoptions by homosexual couples, juvenile police, and others of this kind."

On 12 March, [an article](#) was written on the Flux newspaper's official website: *"Maia (remark: Maia Sandu, leader of the PAS opposition party) at the march of lesbians without Andrei (remark: Andrei Năstase, leader of the Platforma DA opposition party), but with a smile on her face"*.

The article contained the following: *"We find out, with some delay, that there was an epochal event, that of the 8 March, in Chisinau. The some time ago parachuted in the bulwark of Moldovan politics gal, Sandu Maia, marked the international women's day by participating in the triumphal march of lesbians.... Duduița Maia was surprised from the profile, smiling smugly and marching in the middle of the group of lesbians on duty, copiously funded by Soros network funds and other promoters of "Western values" such as euthanasia, homosexual marriages, childadoptions by homosexual couples, juvenile police, and others of this kind."* *"Andrei, do not be stupid! If you want Europe and America to support you, you have to go with them on the other side. Otherwise you have no chance"*

"P.S .: Unconfirmed information has come to our editorial, that at the lesbian celebration on 8th of March, Sandu Maia would have received a marriage offer from one of their forerunners. We categorically rejected the concerned insinuations. We only operate with verified sources."

The newspaper and the **Flux** site belong to the leader of the Christian Democratic Party - Iurie Roșca.

Sputnik.md page has published some news materials that promote intolerance towards the LGBT community. For example, the [news](#) on the No Fear March includes author's ratings based on prejudices:

"At around 12:00, about two hundred demonstrators promoting homosexual sexual relations began scouring through the Capital, flanked by hundreds of policemen, protecting them from the discontent and anger of those who are adept at morality and normality."

"This march takes place even if the Moldovan Orthodox Church urged local authorities not to admit to the centre of the city this immoral demonstration that promotes homosexual sexual relations."

The authors use a picture unrelated to the event, and the link to the news is accompanied by the message:

"It's terrible what's happening right now in the centre of the capital: Homosexuals scramble, protected by the Police."

The name and way of expression of journalists present subjective and biased news, suggesting that it is an abnormal and disgusting event. The authors perpetuate a negative image of LGBT people, which can be taken over by readers, thus instigating to discrimination.

Bloknot.md (belonging to the Socialist Party of the Republic of Moldova) has made a negative and manipulative [news](#) material about the No Fear March:

"Today, May 19, the streets of the capital of the Republic of Moldova were flooded by strange looking young people. ... Homosexuals, lesbians and transgender people were left to organize the outrageous Silvia Radu' march , who occupied the mayor's chair.

Representatives of sexual minorities in white t-shirts with pink hearts scared many residents of Chisinau, who did not expect to see such an "orgy" at the weekend. The mothers were dragging their little children who were interested in the unusual sight, \from the place of action..

Because of the march, car traffic in the city centre was blocked. LGBT activists walked the main streets.

Young participants in the march had a provocative behaviour. Periodically, they screamed and yelled."

Also on **bloknot.md** on June 24, 2018 was displayed a manipulative news and hate speech about an employee of GENDERDOC-M Centre Angela Frolov:

"Head of GENDERDOC-M, Angelica Frolov, on her Facebook page, posted a photo of her in a room. The blonde has a poster with an eloquent inscription and a sad emoticon. The woman said she will go to the protest, which shall take place today in the centre of Chisinau.

Her previous political declaration was unsuccessful. She actively supported Maia Sandu during the presidential campaign in the Republic of Moldova in 2016, and together with her she was defeated. Maia Sandu, in response, supported the action that took place on 8th of March by GENDERDOC-M and other LGBT activists."

Immediately under the news, the following question was published to the vote of readers: ["Do normal people support Năstase? Yes No"](#)

A complaint on the publication of the defamatory article, incitement to hatred and violence was filed to police . The police did not find the constituent elements of a crime or offence.

On 23th of October, the article *"In Netherlands, the children of LGBT community's opponents were begun to be taken away"* was published on the **A-tv.md (Accent TV)** website, which states that the courts of that country issue a decision whereby people accused of homophobia or any other kind of intolerance towards the LGBT community are deprived of their children. The article refers to the statements that the Astra Marie Jacobs, Ombudsman of children in Netherlands, would have made. In fact, this information, as well as the source, is false, and the text was taken without any verification from a satire website.

The article says, referring to the Panorama.com website, that the action of "taking children away from the families" began after a law about people suspected of intolerance towards the LGBT community risk being amended or deprived of parental rights came into force The author states that in "local media", are reported situations when children of people, who do not recognize LGBT families as normal, are sent to "re-education camps" for three months, and then they will be adopted by other families. Astra Marie Jacobs is cited in the text, is declared Children's Ombudsman in the Netherlands by the journalists. "According to Dutch Children Rights Commissioner Astra Marie Jacobs, the state will take all possible steps to protect the young generation from the "nightmare of intolerance", the article states.

The A-tv.md website quotes the **Panorama.com** website as the primary source, which in reality is a page of a consultant company and has not published such an article. In fact, the article appeared on the **Panorama.pub** website, which is said to be a "satire publication", a fact actually specified on the front page. This "news" had also been taken over by sites of Cont.ws and vk.tula.su, on the latter being placed under the "Humour" rubric. **Accent TV** had taken over the integral text without verifying the information. The Dutch Ombudsman of Children is Margrite Kalverboer, not Astra Marie Jacobs, as quoted in the text. This was confirmed for the **Stopfals.md** portal and by the sources from the press service of this Dutch institute. The situations described are equally invented and interpreted with a bad intention. Image illustrating the article was taken from another website with no connection to the Netherlands.

Stopfals.md contacted the **A-tv.md** portal to get a reaction, but when they found out about this, the editors switched off the phone and did not respond.

The A-tv.md portal is the web page of the TV station Accent TV, a media institution affiliated to the Socialist Party of Moldova. The owner of this TV station is **Vadim Ciubara**, the former counsellor of **Igor Dodon**, during those times when he was president of PSRM.

The so-called satire websites have prolonged their work in 2018 using homophobia to attack some political leaders. GENDERDOC-M could not find the owners of these websites because they are registered outside the Republic of Moldova.

Typically, this type of news uses denigrating information and uses prejudices against the most marginalized social groups in order to present politicians or other public figures in the most unfavourable light.

On April 27, 2018, an alleged interview with a priest of the native village of PPDA leader, Andrei Năstase, was published on the **presaindependenta.wordpress.com** website. The article promoted more denigrating images and prejudices, both to the LGBT community and women, and directly to politicians Andrei Năstase and Maia Sandu:

Source of image: sputnik.md

"Oh ... God forbids such people (about gay). They will burn in the fire of hell. I think that's why Maia Sandu is not married and has no children. I honestly did not even know about the link of PAS with LGBT or what do they call them..."

After being repeatedly [reported](#) as a false news platform, the page has been deleted.

The impact of opinions of public people or news that promote intolerance can be analysed through commentaries on such articles. Usually, the degree of hate expressed in comments is higher, and the speeches are more aggressive. For example, an article about Ion Ceban's statement on banning LGBT marches has caused particularly aggressive comments that incite to violence:

"Generally, all this dirt should be burned! Like during the times of the inquisition! and [we should] call on everyone to the [central] square so they stop wanting!"

Taking into account the social premise, the political instability and the high level of intolerance currently in the public sphere, it is likely that the hate speech towards gay people will increase, especially in the context of the parliamentary and local elections scheduled for 2019.

On April 10, 2018, the "[news](#)" material was published on the satire site **moldovandream.com**:

"The priest of the village, Nicolai Cojocaru, the priest of the "Sf. Archbishop Mihail and Gavriil" church, banished Maia Sandu from the Holy Liturgy! "I was in the church when I saw that Maia Sandu, accompanied by two foreign women, went into the church and started photographing. Father Nicolai immediately stopped his service and banished Maia Sandu from sanctifying Pasca [a tradition in orthodox countries to splash holy water on specialty bread]. The father said that Maia Sandu had to choose, either to drop out of homosexuals and lesbians, or to be with Christians." ...And the people from Risipeni do not see Maia Sandu's participation in homosexual marches as something good... "This girl they should become obedient and marry. She will put to shame her mother with her lesbians... God forbid, I do not want to talk more about this harlot.", Simion ended."

On May 20, the following [article](#) was posted: *"This is what Maia Sandu said today, as soon as she did her civic duty at the voting section: "Today I gave my vote for the Chisinau City Hall. I'm sorry I did not run for it myself, but now I had to make a choice. Today I voted for an independent candidate as I was in the presidential elections of 2016, I voted for Silivia Radu, I like her as a woman as well!", Maia Sandu declared.*

It wasn't clear whether it was a women's solidarity, or a non-traditional sexual orientation, since Maia Sandu attended the LGBT march yesterday in the capital."

Another similar [article](#) was published on September 20, 2018: *"The Action and Solidarity Party leader, Maia Sandu, has put all PAS members through the filter. This political test proved to be catastrophic for poor people. We mention that the PAS filter is a political invention of 3 feminists: Maia Sandu, Natalia Morari and Angelica Frolov. This filter consists of three consecutive stages: The first step is the easiest, you have to become a party member, this stage is passed by all the candidates. The second step is to donate 500 lei [Moldovan currency] to the PAS fund, which is passed by about half of the members. And the third stage is the most difficult, members that donated must definitely deny Orthodox religion and sign a document confirming they are supporting LGBT rights in the Republic of Moldova."*

Another website of this kind is called **telegraph.md**. On February 13, 2018, they published [an article](#) with the following content: *"Shocking statement made by the former Mayor of Balti Municipality, Renato Usatii, in the show "Politics". The controversial politician said a sex tape with PAS leader Maia Sandu and a lesbian would appear in August. "A movie about Maia Sandu is being prepared which will blame her for sentimental relationships with certain women." Usatii. "*

In addition to the cases described above, GENDERDOC-M Information Centre has also documented the following cases:...

Case 1:

On Feb. 24, on the Facebook social network, in the "buy-sell-exchange Moldova" group, a user named Alah Ali posted a screen shot of the profile of a man named Vasea Vasea and the discussion between them. The discussion had flirting elements. The screen shot was accompanied by the commentary: *"Take this candidate, break his ass. Maybe his friends will find out about him too."*

After the post was reported to the administrators, it was deleted.

Case 2:

During the pre-election period for the local elections of the Mayor of Chisinau, an advertising billboard from the contestant, a representative of the Socialist Party - Ion Ceban appeared in the centre of the city with the following message: "Andrei, do not run away from the discovery. Come with no fear. Let the mayor become the most professional out of all of us" (Andrei Năstase, an electoral contestant from the Platform for Dignity and Truth).

We believe that the "no fear" message has been deliberately used to link the LGBT community with the aspirant to the mayoralty Andrei Năstase.

Case 3:

During the Moldova Pride Festival (May 16-20) on Facebook page of Information Centre GENDERDOC-M were published some news about the events of the festival. These news were commented by some users, among the comments were threats or injuries:

Alex Rusu: *"Shoot everyone, faggots that you are."*

Oleg Burca: *"Mercenaries of the 21st century, the whores that "fight" for money."*

Mihai Trohin: *"...Keep calm. If you keep doing what you do, there will be "pogroms," and no one will help you."* ["Pogrom" - mass murder of members of a national minority group, organized by nationalistic, chauvinist elements.]

Case 4:

On May 25, 2018, the **Metropolitan of the Moldovan Orthodox Church**, the High Priest Vladimir, addressed to the President of the Republic of Moldova, the Moldovan Parliament Speaker, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova and the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova in connection with the March "No Fear of Love " of 19 May 2018, which mentions:

"Just one week before the shameful march, hundreds of servants and believers across the country participated in another march of silence, which took place for the fourth consecutive year in response to Genderdoc-M's intentions to conduct gay parade in the centre of the capital.

...

The Moldovan Metropolitan Church insisted that such marching should be denied, urging both authorities and members, supporters and promoters of the LGBT community to abandon this project, which is not only a public offense to religious cults but also to the majority of society.

According to Article 8 of the Law on Assemblies, the authorities have every right not to allow this action, which directly raises public morality and flagrantly violates "the freedoms of others." At the same time, the Constitution of the country in Article 48 expressly states that "The family is founded on the freely consented marriage between man and woman, on their equality of rights and on the right and duty of parents to ensure the raise and education of children."

However, the LGBT march took place, with hundreds of policemen being deployed to ensure the good development of the offensive march.

*This **amoral action** constituted a new challenge for the native society, which maintains its moral verticality, in the spirit of Christian teaching.*

*... In this context, on behalf of the Synod of the Orthodox Church in Moldova and the citizens of this country, we appeal to your Majesties, deputies of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, that **for the future to stop this destructive scourge, which revolts the moral of our declared Orthodox society family values.***

*At the same time, please **review Law no. 121 of 25.05.2012** on ensuring equality, this being not only the request of the servants of the Church, but a desideratum of our entire Christian Orthodox people.*

By concluding this mandate of legislators this autumn, what moral-spiritual values do your Majesties leave young people generation with?"

Case 5:

On May 22, 2018, [a petition](#) was launched on **petitieonline.com**, which was signed by 373 persons. This petition contains a claim to police officers who have protected the No Fear of Love march and the following paragraph:

*"We also mention: According to all surveys, our society overwhelmingly rejects homosexual relations and is against their propaganda in society (98%). We still want to be respected and the majority of the opinion of those who do not agree with such marches, not to be sharpened and removed by force, **we are at home, we are not strangers!!!** That is why we have the right to defend ourselves from new foreign values. We demand the police not to spend **our money** on the force against the natives who are for a **healthy society and traditional values** of the natives with the Orthodox faith we have inherited for hundreds of years from the great rulers that fought for a good society against foreign values!"*

Case 6:

On 23 May, priest **Ghenadie Valuță** and a group of supporters organized a [press conference](#) titled *"Applying Tear and Gas to Peaceful Christians"*.

Valuță appealed to the country's leaders not to encourage public actions of the LGBT community. *"Mr. Filip, Mr. Candu, Mr. Plahotniuc, do not offer protectorate to sexual minorities, do not let yourself be drawn into the protectorate of homosexuality in the Republic of Moldova, because God will take your mind away and you will self-destruct."*

Igor Sârbu, representative of the "Voievod" Youth Movement, said: *"Somewhere, I think these elements that come to us from Europe are moments imposed on our authorities for certain facilities. We blame not only those parade participants, but also those civil servants who have sold their signature to allow these events."*

Case 7:

On June 6, 2018, on his Facebook page, **Ilan Șor**, mayor of Orhei city, published an address to the president of the PAS party, Maia Sandu. The addressing contained the following text: *"... Thirdly, the only thing you are bringing from Europe to Moldova so far is LGBT propaganda, which I, as a healthy person, hate and despise. By the way, I have the impression that you are part of this "community"..."*

Case 8:

On June 21st, Priest **Maxim Melinti**, the Parish of the Church „Acoperământul Maicii Domnului” in the village of Ghidighici, Chisinau mun., was stopped to perform his priest's job because he was awarded by GENDERDOC- M Information Centre with a merit diploma for promoting ideas of tolerance towards LGBT people.

In the Decree of the Metropolitan Church it was written: "...for activities directed to the disturbance and overthrow of good church ordinances, which in a calumnious manner proved disobedience to the church hierarchy through the multitude of repeated actions "of promoting and encouraging sexual minorities, contributing to the development of the LGBT movement from the Republic of Moldova", manifested publicly through the use of priesthood quality, frequent involvement in the support of sodomite minorities and the promotion of non-traditional behaviour and, thus, of outrageous sins, all contributing to denigration of the image of the Orthodox Church in Moldova as well as of the clergy associates.”

Case 9:

On September 27, 2018 **Unionist Associations from the Republic of Moldova** gave a speech at a [press conference](#) in which they urged Moldovans holding Romanian citizenship to vote at the referendum redefining the notion of family in the Constitution that took place in Romania on 6- October 7. Their message was: *"... go to vote to oppose homosexual propaganda"*. Unionists, represented at the conference by **Vlad Bilețchi, Pavel Vintilă, Ion Jalbă and Oleg Chicu**, said: *"Go to the referendum no matter whether you want to vote yes or no. We see that there's a boycott of the referendum organized by LGBT adherents or USR-affiliated media, a party that has declared disagreement over the plebiscite. One reason for the boycott would be that the referendum would be organized by Liviu Dragnea, the controversial leader of the PSD. The PSD has nothing to do with this referendum, as it was decided by the three million Romanian signatories, by the family coalition. The PSD was forced by law and morality to organize this referendum. This was to be organized from 2016-2017, but even PSD, that is supposed by so many people to be the organizer of the plebiscite, delayed it for a few years "; "This referendum is organized by country associations, for the future of children, pro-family, to oppose homosexual propaganda."*

Case 10:

On October 17, 2018, the official photos of the VIP room of Chisinau International Airport were [published](#), where Igor Dodon and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan hold their hands in a private discussion. These photographs featured in several collages spread through internet sources. In them homophobia is used to humiliate and ridicule the president.

It is a common practice when homophobia is used against politicians to strike in their authority.

Case 11:

Archbishop **Vitaly Shinkari** commented on the court decision against the representatives of the Orthodox Church, who were in favour of the LGBT community in Moldova:

"You have to understand that this (the LGBT community) is a really serious enemy. Out of their interests, both sexual and political, they will act very harmoniously and rigidly. Because the boundaries of vice gather people together: lie, despondency and abomination - they are always very active in solidarity. That is, in front of us appear so-called "guru" leaders, who ask others to be admired - by their struggle, by their beauty. Today, they have gone into great politics, and on that basis we should retaliate..."

HATE-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

There is no effective remedy for hate crimes and incidents against LGBT people in the Republic of Moldova. All cases are perceived as hooliganism, robbery or damage without taking into account hate or bias motivated reasons.

In most cases, people who suffer from crimes and hate incidents refuse to appeal to law enforcement or to sue. In many cases, even relatives or parents are the ones who apply violence. The cases reported to GENDERDOC-M Centre are only a small number of the total number of cases existing in Moldova. In 2018 there were 2 cases of hate crimes and 13 cases of hate incidents:

Case 1:

On July 11, 2018, A.R., a 17-year-old lesbian girl had to leave home after being beaten by her mother because she was at the Pride March, and was threatened for two weeks by her mother and brother because she confirmed she was a lesbian and is in a relationship with a girl. Mother beat her and forbade her to leave the house.

2 years ago, the brother first found out that A.R. had relationships with a girl and had broken three fingers from her hand. The mother said he did well and did not tell the doctor that her fingers were broken by her brother.

The brother says that people like her must be killed.

Case 2:

On November 25, 2018 in the village of Mereșeni, Hincesti district, three teenagers were killed, two of whom were boys dressed in girls' clothes.

The individual, who confirmed that he had killed the three teenagers and burned the house where the victims were, is a 23-year-old from the neighbour village. The suspect's lawyer claims that he would commit the crime because he would be the victim of a prank.

The alleged murderer told the lawyer that he had come home to the victims at the invitation of a 15-year-old girl he met on social networks. But he realized that his partner in that discussion was actually a boy pretending to be a woman. Also the second boy present in the house would have been dressed as a woman, too, and this would have made him mad.

The suspect's father said his son confessed to the prosecutors that the two young men had made sexual advances to the boy.

The girl and a boy were found carbonized on Sunday and the other died, four days later, on the hospital's bed. The alleged murderer was detained and at his home there were discovered the phones of the victims, but also the ax with which they were hit.

This case was discussed in a [TV show](#) involving the victims' parents and the alleged offender.

Hate incidents, intimidation:

Case 1:

On February 10, a 17-year-old homosexual boy - A.M., a resident of Balti municipality, addressed to GENDERDOC-M Information Centre.

A.M. said he was subjected to harassment and psychological violence on the part of his mother and sisters after they learned he was gay. This situation has been going on for two years. The proposal to file a complaint with the police was found not suitable for him. A.M. was directed to the psychologist of the organization to discuss how he can change the situation in the family.

Case 2:

On the night of May 9 to May 10, a group of drunk men tried to vandalize the No Fear of Love installation situated at the „*Open Flat*” territory. The guard approached the administration of the "Eli Pili" local, whose clients were these men, and together they settled the situation. Those men were tempered and convinced not to destroy the facility because otherwise the police

would be called. The installation was part of the No Fear Information Campaign organized by the GENDERDOC-M Information Center.

The other night there were glued sheets on the installation with the following inscriptions: "No way for gay"; "No homosexuals in Moldova" and various indecent signs related to homosexual relations.

A police complaint was lodged, the police response was as follows: "(The place of establishment of the installation) ... is a public space where every citizen is guaranteed freedom of thought, opinion, and freedom of expression in public by word or other possible means... and the sticking of the symbols by which he disagrees with the people of different orientation and the symbols through which he promotes the values of the family does not signify an incitement to hatred or a threat to LGBT persons and does not alert personal life. As a result of the examination, the absence of constitutive elements of a contravention or offense was ascertained and the examination of the denunciation was terminated."

Case 3:

On May 19, 2018, the March of Solidarity "No Fear of Love" took place in Chisinau. A group of Orthodox Christians conter-manifested. They chanted "We want normal children, not homosexuals", and came with basil and holy water that they threw over the participants of the march.

Priest Ghenadie Văluta stood with a bucket of liquid, saying it was holy water and splashing the people who were entering the march through a special place created by the police cordon.

Two people have filed a lawsuit because they were undeservedly subjected to the religious "splashing with holy water" ritual.

Case 4:

On May 20, 2018, during the Pride Park event, a young man came to the gates of the place where the event was hosted with a banner containing an intimidating content and stayed there for several hours. On the banner were the following: "*Pride goes before destruction and victory goes before the fall*"; "*#No Fear of God?*"; "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of science, but fools despise wisdom and teachings*"; "*Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them a male and a female?*"; "*Here is the sign of the covenant ... My rainbow ... and the waters shall no longer be a flood to destroy all flesh*"; "*The heavens and the earth are now guarded and preserved by the same word for the fire of the day of judgment and the destruction of the wicked men.*"

Case 5:

On May 19, a participant in the No Fear of Love March going into the taxi was approached by the driver with the following message:

"Oh, fuck, I do not know how we will get to the Bucharest Street. The whole center is closed. We'll stay in traffic. Do you know what it is today? Gay parade! Do you know who gay men are? This is horrible! A man marries a man! Do you think it's normal? Prohibited! I've never had people like that! And in the Soviet times, they were put in jail! And now we have a homosexual parade ... Crazy people, a man getting married with a man! How are women not enough for them? Look how many women there are! A multitude of prostitutes who need men..."

Case 6:

On July 18, a GENDERDOC-M employee received a threatening message after she published a photo of Kiev Pride: "*Do you think everything will go unnoticed? You're wrong, bitch. You and your pederasts will not once regret your mournful existence. Soon you will, at least, get into the facio-jaw section. We will see how with you will mourn about your rights with broken teeth, mad slut. Believe me, it's better you to die of AIDS.*"

Case 7:

On 20 May 2018 there was a protest related to the failure of local elections, a protester holding a sheet with the inscription: “*Nu fiți PD-ari, nu vă vindeți la PDM*” [a game of words urging to not be a “faggot” by not “selling” yourself to PDM, Party of Democrats of Moldova].

Case 8:

On July 1, several media sources published [news](#) about a few men among Andrei Năstase's supporters who held hands during public actions:

“Several men were surprised to hold their hands during the protest march organized by PAS, PLDM and DA Platform. The men who held their hands were just behind Andrei Năstase, telegraph.md writes.

The LGBT community is with Andrei Năstase on the first day of the protest, while Angelica Frolov, a declared lesbian, who is also the head of the LGBT community in Moldova, accompanied by several women, was captured in front of Chisinau City Hall.

It is not for the first time that homosexuals in Moldova support the PAS opposition parties and DA Platform. In the presidential campaign in 2016, Frolov openly supported the PAS leader, urging all homosexuals in Moldova to vote for Maia Sandu as President.”

Case 9:

On June 23 and June 6, two gay men (CO0882EF1, MA0395AN1) addressed to GENDERDOC-M with the problem that strangers created fake profiles in social media using their names and other personal data. These profiles contained pictures, sexual orientation, and phone numbers. They were advised to file a complaint with the Center for Personal Data Protection. We have no information on the results.

Case 10:

On October 26, 2018, Alexandru, a young man who actively supports the LGBT community in Moldova, was assaulted in a trolleybus by three young people. They said they knew him, they saw him in the photos of the No Fear March. One of them sat down beside Alexandru, took off his knife, then threatened him, responding, *“I'm going to kill you, pederast. If you're so brave, let's get out”*. Alexandru did not answer them, they prolonged to curse him. In a few stations they got off. Alexandru said he knows one of them, a former ODIP member, and now he's in the Youth of Moldova [association]. Alexandru was directed to the organization's lawyer, but in the end he didn't go.

Case 11:

K. T. is a transgender teenager from Bender, Transnistria. K. was living with her grandmother and older sister (her parents were deceased). Periodically her uncle, who lives in another country, comes to visit. K. wears a haircut and clothes for girls, and is often harassed and assaulted by her sister. At the end of September, between K, her sister and uncle a violent fight arised, after which K. ran away from home to Chișinău and stayed with one of her friends. K. and her friend addressed to GENDERDOC-M for help. A partnership with the organization working for children's rights, CNPAC, has been established to help resolve the issue. K. was taken into custody of the Republic of Moldova.

Case 12:

On November 8, at the workplace of M. A., a young homosexual man, his neighbor who was in a drunk state came and began to accuse him and slander of pedophilia and homosexuality. ME. filed a complaint with the police, the results of the complaint are not available.

Case 13:

On December 30, 2018, at the door of V.B., a lesbian woman, two men knocked. They presented themselves as technical plumbers, as if they invoked clogging of pipes at the neighbors, after which she semi-opened the door and they asked if she called the plumbers, so she told them she did not. Then they asked if "the girl she lives with" called the plumbers, she said that no one called them and that everything was all right. During the discussion, they attempted several times to open the door more, to which V.B. fought back, then they asked where the 10th apartment was, she indicated the apartment, then closed the door and heard that they also called at the neighbor next door.

On the same day, at 23.40 someone called at the door again, presenting themselves as neighbors who came in connection with the pipe problem, it was dark in the hall and the faces were not clearly visible, but as she remembered the morning visit, V.B. thought there really happened a malfunction of the pipes. She opened the door a little (about 20cm) and saw the same two men. One of them said, "I saw you kissing with a girl in the windows, I think both of you need men". V.B. tried to close the door, but they forced it from the outside, after about 10 seconds of pulling the door back and forth, V.B. managed to close and lock the door, they kept bumping violently in the door and pulling its handle for about 15 minutes with brief pauses. V.B. called the police that had arrived in about 40 minutes, the individuals had already left.

Next Day V.B. went to the police station and wrote an explanation, and because she did not make any picture, she did not request to search for them. The police asked questions of clarification and consulted her on how she should behave in such situations.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Notwithstanding the fact that in the Republic of Moldova there is the law on ensuring equality and the Council for Equality and Prevention of Discrimination, the Council does not have the influence to punish the acts of discrimination.

[The National Human Rights Action Plan](#) for 2018-2022, published in May, includes, for the first time, non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, and specific measures such as modification of the legislation against discrimination and hate crimes, raising awareness and capacity building public servants and the population; data collection.

According to the National Action Plan on Human Rights:

"Ensuring equality is one of the national priorities in the field of human rights in the Republic of Moldova and the actual achievement thereof entails implementing the human rights-based approach in the preparation of public policies for the creation of equal opportunities to enjoy fundamental rights for the entire country population, including introducing special measures to ensure equality and combat all forms of discrimination.

The level of acceptance of marginalized people and vulnerable groups is the decisive factor in the persistence of discrimination. According to the Study on the perceptions and attitudes towards equality in the Republic of Moldova¹, the average value of the index of social distance (SDI)² from the vulnerable and marginalized groups is 2.8 points. At the same time, regarding people with mental social and intellectual disabilities and former detainees, social distance is larger - 4 points, the respondents being ready to accept them as citizens, but not as friends or relatives. The maximum social distance is still kept for the LGBT community (which is also the only group where half of the respondents opted for removing that group's representatives from

¹ The study aims to assess the social attitude towards the representatives of the following groups: immigrants, the LGBT community, people with mental and intellectual disabilities, people with physical disabilities, people with HIV positive status, people belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (Roma, Russian, Jewish, Muslim), persons of African origin, foreigners living in the Republic of Moldova, former convicts. The study was drafted by the Equality Council, OHCHR, in consultation with UNDP Moldova in 2015, available online here: http://md.one.un.org/content/dam/unct/moldova/docs/pub/RO_Studiu%20Perceptii%202015_FINAL_2016%20Febr%2025_Imprimat.pdf.

² This index measures the attitudes and the degree of acceptance of people in vulnerable groups.

the country) with 5.2 points and for the people with HIV with 4.3 points, the latter being socially accepted not closer than visitors of the Republic of Moldova.

Change of attitudes towards the above groups can be produced by ensuring an effective interaction between them and the majority of the population, as part of their inclusion in all aspects of community life. In this respect, the activities included in the NHRAP are focused on raising the awareness of the society and public authorities about the existing stereotypes vis-à-vis the vulnerable and marginalized groups, strengthening the media representatives capacity in terms of specifics of presenting materials related to vulnerable and marginalized groups, incrimination of unlawful acts motivated by prejudice, contempt or hatred, and strengthening the capacities of law enforcement bodies to effectively enforce the relevant legislation, enhancing knowledge among vulnerable and marginalized groups of their rights to facilitate access to support services provided by authorities, and mechanisms to protect against discrimination in the process of claiming these rights. At the same time, in order to ensure the effectiveness of monitoring the way in which the rights of individuals belonging to marginalized and vulnerable groups are observed, a mechanism for collection and monitoring of disaggregated data by gender, ethnicity, disability, religious affiliation, etc. is to be put in place. The results of evaluations will underlay the process of drafting and reviewing national and local public policies.”

GENDERDOC-M registered 7 discrimination cases in 2018:

Case 1:

On April 2, 2018, Andrei Colioglo, a young gay man could not donate blood because he wrote in the preliminary questionnaire that he had had sex with a man in the last 12 months. Regardless of the fact that he reported that he regularly does HIV testing and is practicing protected sex, he was dismissed by the Center of blood collection workers.

Case 2:

On May 10, the following message was delivered to GENDERDOC-M Centre from a school teacher from M. village (name is not indicated to protect the young person concerned): *"Today I found out that there is a trip organized by church representatives for high school students from a village, with financially covered buses' costs. Students will visit a monastery and then will be brought to the march of family organized by the Metropolis. Among the pupils there is a homosexual boy whom the teaching staff had the plan to sanctify at the march, to cure him from homosexuality. The boy didn't even know about this intention, good thing that he was at least warned by a person who accidentally found out about this "pedagogical plan".*

We didn't have the possibility to intervene because the name and contacts of this young man were not communicated, but we informed our colleagues from other NGOs who were to monitor that march, so they could have taken immediate action if they noticed any violation.

Case 3:

The following are two of the events planned for Moldova Pride Festival: Queer tour of Chisinau and Solidarity (No Fear of Love) March, both of which required the hire of two buses.

Several companies were contacted: Transport Andragrup, DVD, and others. Initially, companies agreed to collaborate, but after a while, they refused, telling us that they did not have free buses anymore.

Case 4:

Mihail Badasean (Berlin activist) was invited to Moldova Pride to attend the Pride Park event with a performance. Mihail brought some promotional art materials to distribute to the event's participants. At the customs of Chisinau Airport, these materials were confiscated based on the argument that those were a making a propaganda of homosexuality.

Case 5:

GENDERDOC-M organisation was denied by the City Hall to install two art objects that would be inaugurated in the No Fear Social Campaign, which was to take place for the third consecutive year.

The art installations were to be located on the pedestrian street Eugen Doga for two weeks and in Valea Morilor Park for one day. One of the installations, with a length of 4.5 meters, represents the campaign's hash tag (#NoFear).

According to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, social advertising cannot be legally prohibited when it aims at informing public opinion about a topic of social importance or developing a civic attitude towards a subject of human rights. The Chisinau City Hall does not have a set of objective and legal criteria to motivate the permission or refusal to publicly display social publicity. The refusal of the City Hall of Chisinau municipality is contrary to the provisions of Law no. 1227/1997 on advertising and Law no. 121/2012 on ensuring equality and the City Hall's refusal does not refer to any legal provision within the existing normative framework.

Case 6:

On May 25, at GENDERDOC-M arrived a letter in which a homosexual young man complained about the fact that a work colleague harassed him, cursed him, had a very dirty language, and told all his colleagues about the fact that he is gay and represents a "nothing". On the proposal to assist him in filing a complaint to the administration or the police, the young man didn't react anyhow.

Case 7:

Olga Bâtcă, a human rights activist, is threatened by her ex-husband that he will deprive her of child custody because she "is engaged in protecting the rights of gays". Olga communicated this to GENDERDOC-M on 5 September 2018.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

In 2018, for the first time in the history of the Republic of Moldova, the Pride March of the LGBT community was allowed to reach its final point of the route, according to the preliminary notification to the City Hall and the Police. The march was protected in a professional way by the police officers, and this time those who tried to stop the march were evacuated. This sparked dissatisfaction of homophobic counter-demonstrators who made several statements against the police and made a petition in this regard. The petition contains the following:

"On 19-05-2018, the LGBT march took place in Chişinău, during which the police went far beyond their service duties and applied force including abusive special means and without any legal basis or any situational need.

We, as active members of civil society, express our protest and indignation at the mockery of the peaceful people who work in the civil service and with public money, the money we contribute with month by month by working in this country.

During and before this event the police manifested a violent and abusive behavior on the people who came to protest peacefully against the values that are foreign to us as a nation. In a democratic society, it is not acceptable for people who protest peacefully to be assaulted, only for the reason of expressing their opinions freely. In fact, they were trampled, and in this sense there are video and photo proofs from that march with images of the police hitting women, children, the elderly, priests and young people who have come to prevent the forced promotion of values that do not fit into our society, to us the people who remained at home in Moldova. All the more, the position of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the police that applied force is inappropriate and strange, since the people who protested against the march expressed in

countless cases that they did not come to aggress nor intended to apply force but only to make themselves heard and stop the development of this event without entering a direct conflict with the participants of the LGBT march..."

SITUATION OF TRANS PEOPLE

In Moldova, transgender and gender non-conforming people remain the most vulnerable group from the LGBT community. They face multiple forms of discrimination based on gender identity and expression, while only a few cases of anti-trans discrimination and incidents of violence are documented. Survivors often prefer not to report such incidents for various reasons, such as fear of being identified or lack of confidence in the possibility of a positive change. A lot of violence remains invisible, especially when it comes to psychological violence in the family. Many of transgender people in Moldova prefer or are constrained to adapt their gender expression to gender assigned at birth to avoid harassment or loss of work or family. Sometimes this is the reason why they refuse to start the transition. Those trans people who decide to make a hormonal transition can access consultations with the endocrinologist, taking the necessary tests and buying hormones in pharmacies with or sometimes without a medical prescription.

Gender identity is not mentioned at all in any national legislation. There are no specific provisions in the Moldovan legislation that provide a fast, transparent and accessible mechanism for the legal gender recognition of trans people. The only way to recognize gender identity by changing the name and gender indicator in identity documents remains a decision of the court. GENDERDOC-M provides free legal assistance to trans people who, within a relatively reasonable time within the existing reality, may receive a positive judgment. Trans people are required to be psychiatrically diagnosed with "transsexualism", also known as "gender identity disorder", to continue the procedure of changing the documents. At the moment, 12 people have changed their documents through this procedure.

The situation has changed since the state is now represented in court by the Public Services Agency.

In the last three litigations where the transgender claimants contested the refusal of the Public Service Agency to rectify sex and surname according to their gender identity, the judicial practice was changed by dismissing these actions as unfounded. In some, these are rejected the first instance, in others at the court of appeal. The reason is the following: there is no medical act confirming the change of biological sex.

The argument that there is no access to such services in the RM and that there is no clear procedure as to where and how to take such an "act" is not taken into consideration. Now you dispute with an appeal and a remedy.

This situation is now happening in 2018, after the existence of a judicial practice based on the same legislation in 2011 (there were no changes of any kind), which means - an unfounded change in judicial practice.

At the moment, the failure of the state to fulfill its positive obligation of adopting a predictable, clear and effective regulatory framework is placed on the shoulders of the transgender citizens.

THE SITUATION IN GAGAUZIA

Gagauzia remains a region with a very low tolerance level towards LGBT persons. The scandal that arose after a coming-out of a resident of Gagauzia is a proof of that. In the year of 2018 two homophobic cases were registered in the Gagauzia region:

Case 1:

The central and local authorities in Gagauzia adopted a declaration on combating unionism and [declared](#) 2018 the year of 100 years of the occupation of Bessarabia by Romania. The

document was adopted on January 24, after several disputes at an assembly of citizens and authorities of the autonomy at the House of Culture, in the village of Tomai.

Dmitri Zirov, one of the founders of Gagauz Autonomy, also spoke about the danger of Romanians for children. *"This evening we fall asleep as Gagauzians, and the next morning we will find ourselves Romanians where lesbians are raising children"*, he warned the inhabitants of Gagauzia. Judging by the hall's reaction, this perspective scared the participants in the meeting.

Case 2:

On March 11, a gay young man from Gagauzia, Andrei Colioglo, wrote on his personal page on a Russian social network vk.com that he is gay. This confession was followed by a series of threats including death threats, swearing and hate messages. There were many "requests" from relatives and friends to stop calling and coming to visit.

As a consequence of this young man's statements, PSRM deputy Bogdan Țirdea ironized at that expense on his Facebook page, [saying](#): *"He is a hero and it is welcome to rename a street in the name of Andrei Colioglo."*

With GENDERDOC-M's support, Andrei lodged a complaint with the police on the name of several people who threatened him with death, sexual harassment, and harmed his human dignity. The comments contained many messages in which Andrei was accused of putting to shame [the dignity of] Gagauz people. The police representative from Ceadâr Lunga asked Andrei irrelevant questions: *"Are there many gay people in Moldova?"*, *"Are there many gays who address to the police with complaints?"*, *"Were there any similar cases?"*, *„Why did he have to say this in public?"*

The police had not proceeded this request, arguing that the persons on whom the complaint had been filed were not identified.

This case was widely publicized both by mass media from [Gagauzia](#) and [Chisinau](#).