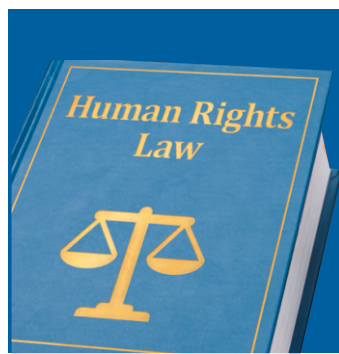


PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BIOMEDICINE III



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

 Start of the Project: **1st January 2025**  Duration of the project: **24 months**

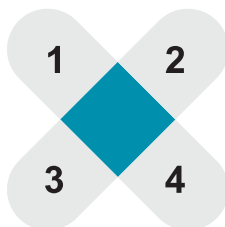
 Budget: **600 000 EUR**  Funding: **The Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2023-2026**

 Partners: **Ministry of Health, National Assembly, Human Rights Defender's Office, Ministry of Justice, The Office of the Representative on International Legal Matters, National Institute of Health**

Project contributed to achieving the following specific results of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia

The existing legislative norms and law-enforcement processes are aligned with the principles enshrined in the Oviedo Convention

Public dialogue on health-related issues has improved



The level of human rights protection in the field of biomedicine was strengthened

Armenia is better prepared for the possible future ratification of the Oviedo Convention

Project Objectives

-  To raise awareness on and facilitate the implementation of European standards in the field of biomedicine
-  Further strengthening healthcare and legal professionals' skills and capacities to apply human rights and ethical standards in their daily practice for the best interest of the patients
-  Promoting patients' centred approach in health care
-  Supporting the Government of Armenia in their efforts to integrate healthcare professionals from Karabakh region into Armenian healthcare system addressing both professional and psychological aspects
-  Promoting a public dialogue on health issues

Improvement of domestic legislation vis a vis European standards

- Alignment of national legislative framework with European standards enshrined in the Oviedo Convention
- Support to the execution of EctHR judgements, in particular "Nikolyan vs Armenia" and "Botoyan vs Armenia"
- Support to the implementation of National Human Rights Strategy
- Ethics committees in the field of healthcare

Strengthened legal and policy framework aligned with European human rights standards

- Armenia ratified the Council of Europe Oviedo Convention on 15 October 2025
- The adoption of the RA Law on the "Comprehensive Health Insurance System," aligned with the provisions of Article 3 of the Oviedo Convention

- Several by-laws were developed for RA Law on “Medical Care and Assistance to the Population” with the Council of Europe expertise aligning with the European standards.
- The procedure of “The implementation of providing information to the population about the meaning of organ and tissue transplantation, donation prerequisites and other issues related to transplantation, as well as the right to disagree to act as a cadaver donor, the right of cadaver donor family members to give consent” was prepared by the consultants of the Council of Europe.
- The adoption of the RA Law on the “Individual Licensing of Healthcare Professionals” in accordance with Article 4 of the Oviedo Convention
- Improvement of the RA Law on “Medical Care and Assistance to the Population”
- Recommendations were provided on the draft RA Law on “Reproductive health rights” with regards to the provisions on sex-selection of the fourth child.
- The new draft Law on “Fighting kickbacks in healthcare and professional standards of healthcare professionals” developed according to the Article 4 of the Oviedo Convention is in the process of internal circulation within the Government to be adopted.

Increased respect for autonomy and rights of persons with mental health issues

ECtHR judgements

- An extensive report on the “Analysis of domestic legal framework and practice on the restriction of legal capacity of persons with mental health issues: Execution of ECtHR judgement “Nikolyan vs Armenia”
- Revision of the RA Law on “Involuntary placement and treatment in psychiatric institutions with a specific focus on the procedural safeguards”
- The legislative amendments regarding the compensation of non-pecuniary damage resulting from medical malpractice, in accordance ECtHR judgement “Botoyan vs Armenia”

National Human Rights Strategy

- Development of the manual on “Medical Secret and Confidentiality”.
- Legislative amendments regarding the compensation of non-pecuniary damage resulting from medical malpractice, in accordance with Activity 3.3 of the Action Plan for the Human Rights Strategy.
- Package of draft laws on “Amendments and Additions to the Civil Procedure Code”; on “Additions to the Law on Mental Health Services and Servicing”; on “Amendments and Additions to the Law on State Duty” in accordance with the 3.12 Activity of the National Human Rights Strategy 2023-2025.

Increased respect for human dignity

Strengthened protection against trafficking in human organs

- An extensive report on the “Analysis of domestic legal framework and practice with the compliance of the Council of Europe Santiago de La Compensata Convention.
- Legal reforms can further strengthen the protection of human dignity, bodily integrity, free and informed consent and the principle of non-commercialisation of the human body, while enhancing prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of offences related to trafficking in human organs.

Development of the new Council of Europe HELP Course “Mental Health and Human Rights”

18 certified HELP tutors **11** roll-outs for about 185 healthcare and legal professionals practising in the field of mental health **4** workshops for the cohorts of the HELP course on “Mental health and Human Rights” to promote autonomy of patients with mental health issues



Improved protection of patients' rights and quality of healthcare services Strengthened ethical and biomedical research framework

- Establishment of the Ethics Committee for Healthcare Professionals and examination of 13 cases concerning possible violations of ethical rules by healthcare professionals.
- Development of the regulatory and operational framework of the Ethics Committee for Healthcare Professionals in accordance with Council of Europe recommendations.
- Development of the website of the Ethics Committee for Healthcare Professionals, available at www.mec.am.
- Development and implementation of the e-course on “Ethical Rules for Healthcare Professionals”, with approximately 12,000 successful completions by healthcare professionals.
- Implementation of eight capacity-building activities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of members of the Ethics Committee for Healthcare Professionals and the Research Ethics Committee.
- Facilitation of the participation of representatives of the Ethics Committee for Healthcare Professionals and the Research Ethics Committee in the 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Annual Meetings of National Ethics Councils.
- Adoption of Government Decision No. 613-N on 22 May 2025, making it mandatory for senior and mid-level healthcare professionals to obtain 10 credits in ethical rules during each five-year certification cycle, starting from 1 September 2025.
- Certification of 28 tutors who contributed to the dissemination of ethical rules among 100 healthcare professionals.
- Examination of 20 research applications by the Research Ethics Committee in 2025, contributing to the strengthening of research ethics in Armenia in line with European standards.

Capacity Building activities for healthcare and legal professionals

- Improved capacities on the Oviedo Convention and its Additional Protocols
- Strengthened capacities and skills on public debates and health literacy
- Gained knowledge on ethical rules and the functioning of the Ethics Committee for healthcare professionals

Integration of refugee healthcare professionals



Psychological support to **200** refugee healthcare professionals



Support to professional integration and accreditation of **240** refugee healthcare professionals

The health literacy to build trust in health system is effectively promoted and the public dialogue on health issues is widely increased

- Development and institutionalisation of a Health Communication Guide for regional medical centres, based on the Council of Europe Guide to Health Literacy, and its approval by the Order of the Minister of Health. The Guide is widely used and promoted by regional medical centres.
- Translation, adaptation and dissemination of the Guide to Public Debate in Human Rights and Biomedicine among healthcare professionals and relevant authorities, contributing to more informed and inclusive public dialogue on health issues.
- Organisation of a capacity-building workshop for 20 journalists covering health-related topics, promoting human rights-based approaches to healthcare and strengthening media engagement in public debate on health issues.
- Engagement of approximately 100 young people from Lori and Shirak regions in interactive workshops on healthcare rights, bringing human rights and access to healthcare to the forefront for the next generation of rights holders.
- Implementation of four capacity-building activities on health literacy for approximately 100 diverse professionals, including civil society representatives and refugee healthcare professionals, contributing to the development of more accessible, inclusive and people-centred health systems.

Results in numbers



6
reports developed



51
training sessions/
131 days



7
Study visits



11
HELP roll-outs on the HELP
Course on Mental Health and
Human Rights/
182 successful participants



10
Council of Europe
documents and reports
translated



19
policy and expert discussions,
including 5 high-level



6
HELP roll-outs on the HELP Course on Human
Rights and Biomedicine
85 successful participants



2
A high-level international conference on patients' rights
A regional conference on Human Rights and
Mental Health

Contact information:

■ Council of Europe Human Rights and Biomedicine Division website:
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/bioethics/home>

■ Council of Europe Office in Yerevan website:
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/yerevan>

ENG

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.