



European Human Rights Advocacy Centre

Bringing justice to the world through the translated word

When the European Court of Human Rights delivered judgments on the first six Chechen cases against Russia in February 2005, we had a long list of individuals to thank, in particular the many volunteer translators who contributed a great deal towards achieving justice for the applicants.

'Human rights' is an issue that EHRAC and many others consider to be of great importance for the common good of people around the world. Translating legal documents relating to human rights violations not only offers the chance to use your foreign language skills, but is also rewarding on a personal level, for you will be helping to bring justice to the world. The documents you translate will be used for research for specific cases, and could even be sent to the European Court of Human Rights to support our submissions.

Seeking experienced Armenian translators

EHRAC began working in Armenia in 2012. We currently collaborate with several NGOs on the ground including: Helsinki Citizen's Assembly Vanadzor, Legal Guide, PINK Armenia and Foundation Against the Violation of Law. We also provide support on an individual basis to Armenian lawyers taking cases to the European Court. As the number of cases increases, we are seeking Armenian translators to support our work.

Your translation skills would be crucial in working towards the improvement of human rights standards and legal practice in Armenia.

We are looking for **experienced translators** (both volunteer and professional) for the translation of case documents. You may be based in Armenia, the UK, or elsewhere, and should have the **relevant skills to undertake translations of this calibre**, which may include legal and medical documents (see below). You will be required to sign a **confidentiality agreement**, and to **respect the inherent sensitivities** of accessing certain case materials. As part of the application process we always ask new translators to complete a one-page test translation to ensure the translation produced is of the quality required for litigation before the European Court of Human Rights.

If you are interested in being included on our roster of professional translators for Armenian, please send us a quote (cost/1000 words), details of the agency for which you work (if applicable), your CV and a short covering email detailing your experience and motivations to Oksana Popova at: o.popova@mdx.ac.uk

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer translator, please send your CV and a short email detailing your experience and motivations to Oksana Popova at: o.popova@mdx.ac.uk

What kind of translation?

Legal documents and some evidence documents, for example post-mortem reports, contain highly specialised vocabulary and sometimes require extensive research on the part of the translator as well as linguistic, cultural and historical knowledge of the region. Other documents, for example witness statements, rarely contain technical vocabulary as the content relates mainly to descriptions of people, places and actions. There may be opportunities for translators with little legal experience to work with these types of documents. Sometimes unconventional documents such as Soviet-era passports, insurance receipts or school reference letters are used as evidence to support cases. When tackling old documents, which have been copied repeatedly, an understanding of the social, cultural and historic background of the Soviet Union in the 1980s will assist the translator.

Documents are usually scanned and sent to us by email and arrive in varying states of legibility, whether handwritten or typed. The subject matter of EHRAC's cases is varied – from armed conflict, to protests, to ethnic, sexual and gender-based discrimination.

When translating legal documents, the translator has to strive for precision. The translator may have to research the actual meaning of a particular term and then find the most suitable equivalent for terms and concepts, which may not exist in the second language of translation. While legal dictionaries can be of great help, the translator will ultimately have to rely upon their own experience. The translator is expected to take great care in translating provisions of laws, names of institutions, references to specific incidents, or abbreviations.

EHRAC provides a glossary of terminology, which is distilled from international law-based institutions, to encourage uniform transliteration and translation of the documents – a benefit to translators wishing to enrich their legal vocabulary. Translating with EHRAC provides a solid experience of translating in the area of human rights law which can serve as a good foundation for any further work in this field. Over time the translator will build up a good understanding of the European Court systems, as well as domestic legal systems, even if they previously had no background in law or human rights.