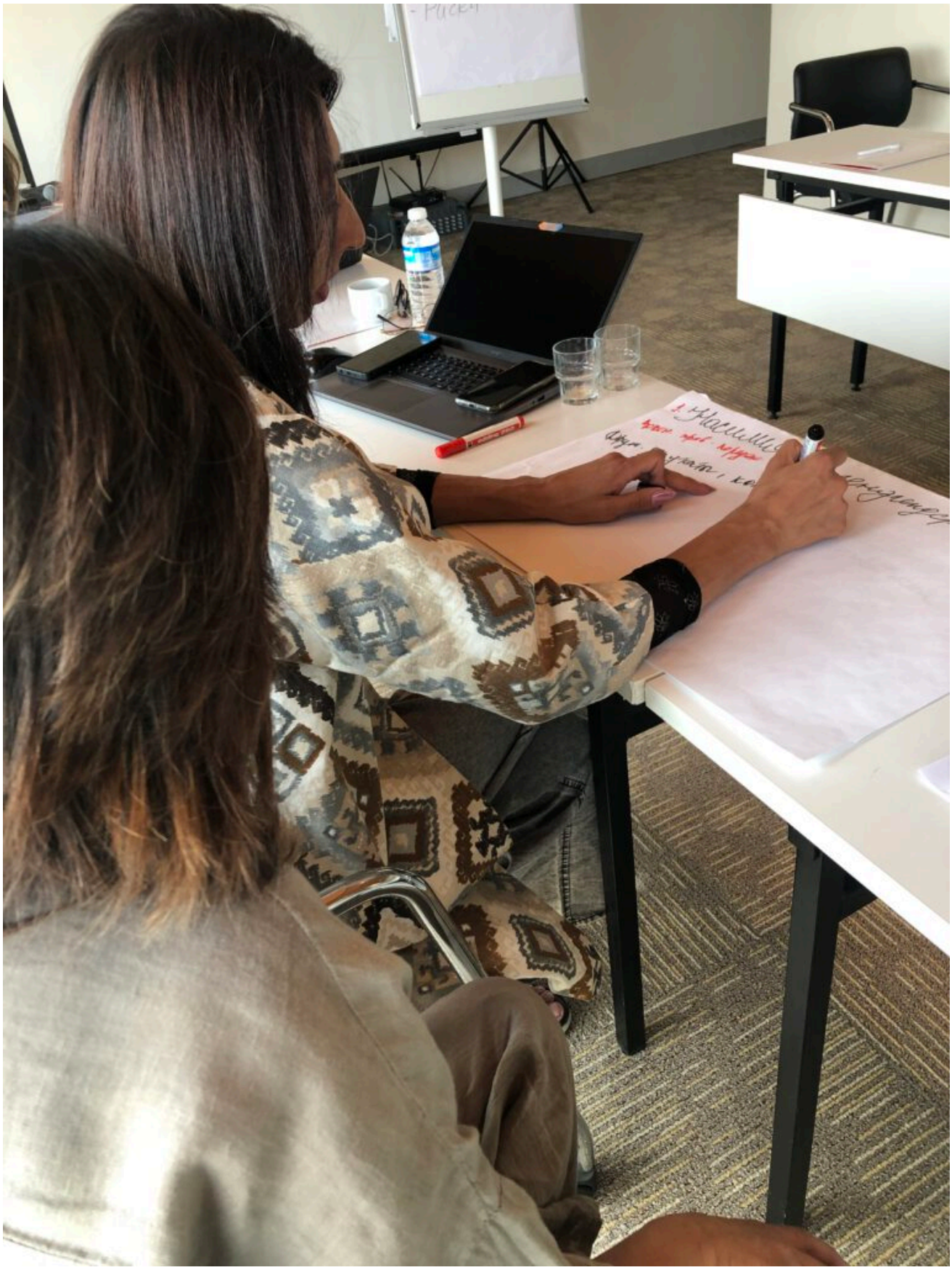
Central Asian lawyers and activists unite for TGEU's trans rights training

article, advocacy resources, resilience against anti-gender ideology, trans activists

The two-day training in July 2026 aimed to strengthen participants' knowledge and practical skills in strategic litigation and the use of international human rights mechanisms. It combined legal capacity-building, sensitisation on trans issues, regional networking and peer learning, creating a space where lawyers and activists could jointly develop approaches to advancing trans rights in their respective countries.

It brought together 15 lawyers and activists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as well as five community organisations. In the future, we envision activists and lawyers from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan joining as well.

The training was organised as part of the development of our **Central Asian Legal Network (CALN),** a new informal regional platform bringing together lawyers, paralegals and trans activists from across Central Asia. The trainer was Kseniya Kirichenko (she/her) and the event was co-financed by TransCoalition.



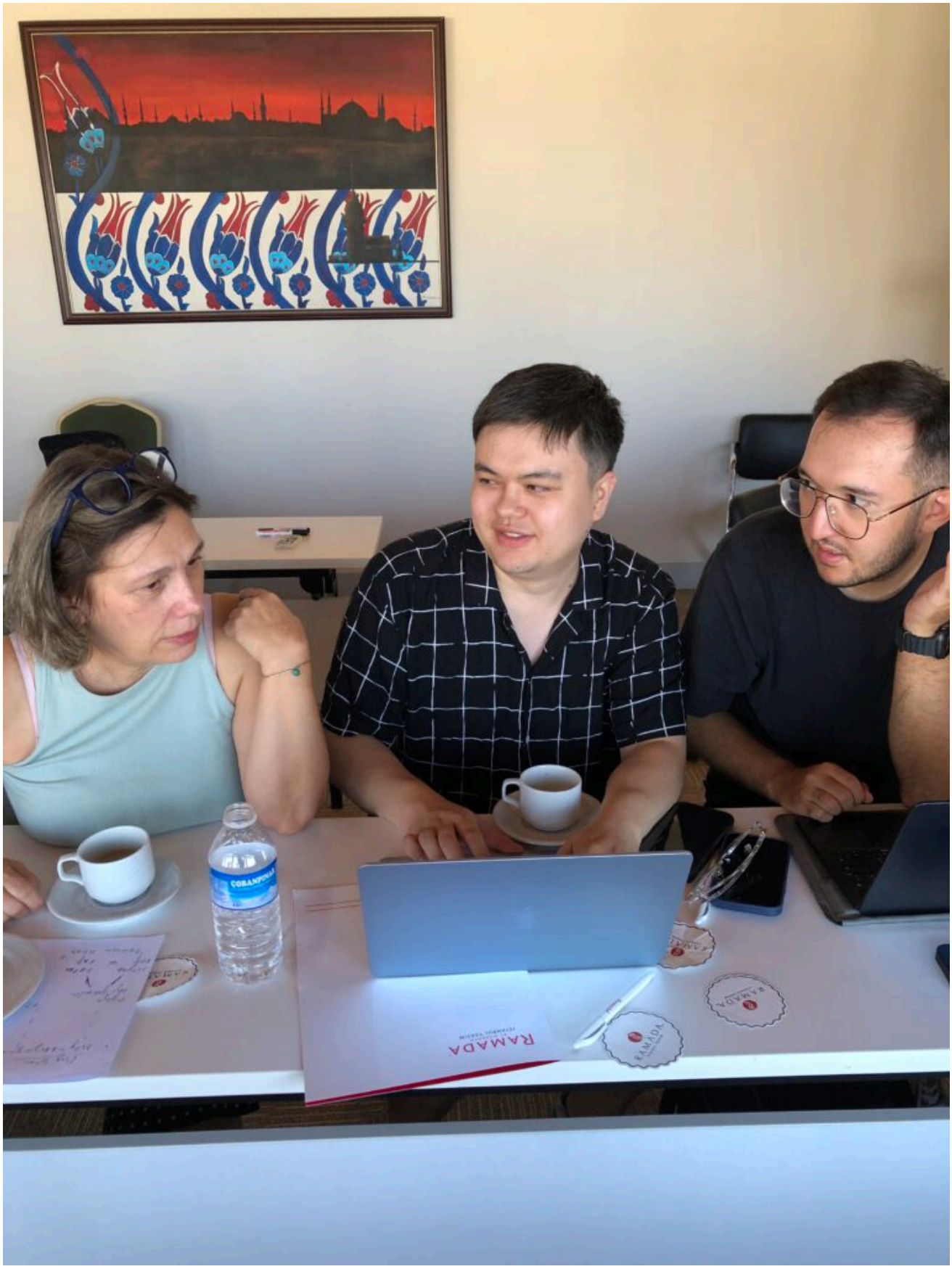

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Photo description: Participants during various training activities

Purpose of the training

The primary goal of the training was to ensure that participants were motivated and prepared to engage in strategic litigation for the rights of trans people and to understand the legal, practical, and political dimensions of strategic litigation. The training also outlined the respective roles of lawyers, paralegals, activists, TGEU, and international human rights mechanisms in advancing trans rights across different Central Asian countries.

Key takeaways

A clear outcome of the training was the raising of awareness among lawyers, leading to a greater and better understanding of gender issues and the link between anti-trans initiatives and the broader attacks on democracy and the rule of law.

Another important outcome was inspiration: a participating paralegal said that she had been considering ‘relevant’ education, but the training inspired her to apply to study law at university.

One lawyer decided to submit an alternative report immediately upon learning about the deadlines and a country-specific case concerning an underage trans woman.

Participants and TGEU agreed on specific activities for CALN over the coming months, including meetings with special rapporteurs, training sessions with overseas legal clinics, peer learning and reporting. We have yet to fully evaluate the positive outcomes of this work, but the fact remains that this is only the beginning of a long and inspiring journey.

> “The state, not only in Central Asia but around the world, instrumentalises fear. Fear can be very easily fueled by hatred — it is easy to stir this emotion in people, but very difficult to extinguish it once it takes hold.
>
> We have a serious task ahead of us: to reshape society’s attitudes toward trans people and human rights — to start from hope and the affirmation of equality, rather than pity and condescension.”

– Tatiana Chernobil (she/her), lawyer, Kazakhstan

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