



# Inside IRIS Georgia

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## Human rights-related articles published by IRIS

As part of IRIS Georgia's efforts to increase public awareness of constitutional rights and to supply relevant research papers and articles to legal professionals, we have translated and published three chapters of Keir Starmer's book, *European Human Rights*

*Law*. These chapters address some of the most pressing issues for Georgia: modern European standards for the pre-trial stage of criminal investigations, fair trial guarantees in criminal cases, and powers of the police.

Georgian translation of the chapters, which GYLA used for the publication indicated below, is available for download from the Resources section of IRIS Georgia's website at: <http://www.iris.ge/en/resources.html> > *Other*.

## New publication from GYLA



The Georgian Young Lawyers Association, with the financial support of IRIS/USAID, recently published a textbook entitled *Liberty and Security of a Person*, based on Article 5 of the European Convention for

the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The publication includes:

- An overview of the Convention and other international documents regarding liberty and security of the individual;
- An analysis of the practices of the European Court of Human Rights regarding detention and other related issues;

- An analysis of the practices of the European Court of Human Rights for protecting the liberty and security of the individual;
- Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights based on Article 5 of the European Convention (19 cases).

GYLA has published 500 copies of the textbook, which is distributed free of charge.

## New publications from UNAG



Under a grant received from IRIS/USAID, the UN Association of Georgia has published new materials for public agencies on the

implementation of FOI provisions. The brochure, titled *Guidelines for Managing the Public Register*, is published in Georgian, English and Russian and provides a model for public agencies to comply with Article 35 of the General Administrative Code. The supplemental handout, *Questions and Answers on the Freedom of*

*Information Chapter of the General Administrative Code*, is a unique informative tool which contains answers to 40 questions relating to the freedom of information provisions.

UNAG has also created four illustrated bookmarks that explain various articles of the Freedom of Information Chapter.

**Featuring IRIS grantee  
Alfami**



*A creative approach to communicating the importance of individual liberties*

As one of IRIS Georgia's human rights grantees, the organization Alfami takes a creative approach to communicating the importance of individual liberties. Through artistic exhibitions and original films and videos, the group reminds citizens to be actively involved in protecting their rights as granted under the Constitution.

One of the goals of the IRIS-supported project is to present concepts of individual liberty through the eyes of Georgian artists. Through imagery and sometimes irony, artists will promote ethical standards and address concepts of individuality and community. To

involve the public and enhance their understanding, artwork will be accompanied by public performances and exhibitions.

In this project, the roles that painters, artists and other cultural actors have in solving important social issues will also be recognized. Painters, designers, actors and photographers will be invited to create multimedia projects and to present their work publicly throughout different regions of Georgia. Print media and dramatic representations depicting concepts of individual liberty will be presented in regions where the populations are often

isolated from the country's socio-political life and cultural sphere.

The planned series includes "Society and Art Images," in which classic Georgian paintings will be re-created in modern contexts; a video series called "Lonely Scenes of Freedom" to be broadcast on television and shown at the Movie House in Tbilisi; regional art exhibitions to reach a countrywide audience; and a website tracing the project's progress.

**Roundtable discussion on freedom of thought, conscience and religion**



*Discussion at GYLA*

On December 2, 2003 the GYLA Tbilisi office organized a roundtable discussion on freedom of thought, conscience and religion. The discussion brought together diverse participants from the Georgian Orthodox Church, the Baptist Church and other religious organizations in addition to NGOs, USAID and IRIS Georgia. The main topic of discussion was the legislative gap arising from the enjoyment of the right to religious freedom, the

legal status and types of property of religious organizations, and other sensitive issues requiring urgent resolution. The participants also discussed protection of the rights of all religious groups operating in Georgia, fight against religious extremism, and respect for cultural heritage.

At the meeting, GYLA also presented their guidebook titled *Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion*, which was published with

the support of IRIS/USAID. The guidebook is a compilation of national and international laws regulating legal relations arising from the enjoyment of the right to religious freedom. The authors of the guidebook also reviewed existing court practices, including those of European Court of Human Rights, and discussed legal status and types of religious property, the connection between religion and education, etc.

## Institute of Law constitutional roundtable



On November 28, 2003 the Institute of Law of the Georgian Academy of Science organized its first constitutional roundtable under a grant agreement with IRIS. Mr. Konstantine Kublashvili, who authored a number of commentaries to the human rights chapter of the Georgian Constitution, made a

presentation on the constitutional protection of human dignity. Mr. Kublashvili emphasized the importance of the legal definition of human dignity for the entire human rights system. He reviewed the theoretical foundations of the modern understanding of the right to human dignity and the practical use of this concept in different legal systems. He also presented an analysis of the relevant articles of the Georgian Constitution and other laws, and cited specific legislative gaps and holes, which will need

to be addressed in the future.

The presentation was followed by a discussion among more than 25 participants of the roundtable, including law professors, judges, defense lawyers, public servants, NGOs, and representatives from USAID and IRIS Georgia.

Many of the participants provided valuable advice and comments to the authors of the constitutional commentaries and

expressed their willingness to participate in follow-up discussions on this topic. The meeting, which lasted for more than 3 hours, ended with concluding remarks by Mr. Kublashvili on the issues raised by participants. He promised the participants to include their comments in a new version of the presentation, which will soon be published in Georgian legal periodicals.

## Georgian cultural traditions and modern liberal values

Until the recent political events that occurred in the country, the ruling government was determined to change the political policy proclaimed a while ago, which would put into doubt the establishment of western values for the country. A number of influential political groups declared that a fight against western values was the only way for the nation to survive. The authors of these ideas asserted that closer integration with the West endangered Georgian traditions, and in turn created fertile soil for the development of fundamentalism and isolationism.

Despite the recent change of political power in the country, the issue of the

media promoting western values in society remains important. The purpose of the "Georgian cultural traditions and modern liberal values" project, implemented by Radio Green Wave under a grant awarded by IRIS, is to assure the Georgian society that human rights and other values of modern democracy are natural and historically characteristic for Georgia. For this purpose, Radio Green Wave (FM 107.4) will broadcast 48 topical radio programs and 60 radio clips at 11:15 am on Thursdays during the period of one year. Programs will also be broadcast by the free radio stations network, comprised of six regional radio stations.

## Research on constitutional issues

IRIS is currently researching a number of important issues that may arise as a result of the country's changing political environment. IRIS Georgia's attorneys are currently working on the following research projects:

- An analysis of national legislation on state of emergency, which is a matter of great interest and importance and is directly linked with the enjoyment of constitutional rights and liberties.
- An examination of the procedures for presidential oversight of administrative acts, focusing on identification of areas of presidential authority with regard to the oversight/repeal of

administrative acts and the development of rules and procedures to formalize review and repeal processes.

- An analysis of constitutional issues in order to quickly respond to a potential initiative by the government to rearrange the current constitutional model of governance, which will involve the collection and systemization of relevant materials and the development of a checklist of constitutional issues to which each possible proposal must have clear responses.

**Introducing IRIS Georgia staff**

**Tina Ebanoidze, Office Manager**



*Tina Ebanoidze*

Tina manages the office technical staff, organizes and maintains the filing system, purchases and maintains office supply reserves, participates in organizing meetings and workshops/conferences, updates the inventory list and performs other administrative duties.

Tina has a degree in English and Literature from Tbilisi State University. She has previously worked in an administrative capacity for the Eurasia Foundation, the United States Information Agency, and the Worldwide Fund for Nature.

A native Georgian, Tina speaks fluent English and Russian.

IRIS Georgia would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Tina on her new baby boy.

**IRIS Georgia's calendar of events – December 2003**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Events</b>
Dec 2	GYLA's town hall meeting in Dvabzu, Dusheti on children's rights
Dec 4	AYEG's conference for entrepreneurs concerning licensing Radio Green Wave's program on "Georgian cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Dec 5	AYEG's conference for entrepreneurs concerning licensing Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Kutaisi on human rights violations during pre-election campaign and voting
Dec 9	GYLA's town hall meeting in Dvabzu on the right to property GYLA's town hall meeting in Akhasheni on the right to property
Dec 10	GYLA's roundtable discussion on the right to legal counsel GYLA's town hall meeting in Kutaisi on human rights protection and the right to legal counsel GYLA's town hall meeting in Gori on human rights
Dec 11	GYLA's town hall meeting in Tsereteli on the right to health and in Telavi on the rights of conscripts Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Telavi on human rights violations during the pre-election campaign and voting Radio Green Wave's program on "Georgian cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Dec 12, 15	GYLA's town hall meeting in Tskaltubo on freedom of information GYLA's town hall meeting in Natanebi on the right to health and the rights of patients
Dec 16	GYLA's town hall meeting in Gori on the right to education Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Akhaltsikhe on human rights violations during the pre-election campaign and voting
Dec 18	GYLA's town hall meeting in Telavi on freedom of speech Radio Green Wave's program on "Georgian cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Dec 19, 20	GYLA's town hall meeting in Kutaisi on women's rights GYLA's town hall meeting in Natanebi on the European Convention on Human Rights The Institute of Law constitutional roundtable
Dec 23	GYLA's town hall meeting in Lemshveniera on Article 42 of the Constitution
Dec 25	Radio Green Wave's program on "Georgian cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Dec 29	Internews documentary on traffic police to air on TV channel Rustavi 2

**Editorial Policy**

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