



INSIDE IRIS GEORGIA

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Renovated Citizens' Reception Hall at the Ministry of Justice

The Rose Revolution has led to many public-sector reforms in Georgia. Among them is the reorganization of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to provide better services to the public. IRIS, together with other international and local organizations, is supporting the MoJ's efforts to become a more transparent and accountable public agency as exemplified by the opening of the MoJ's newly renovated Citizens' Reception Hall on the 4th of November. This office serves as the primary link between



the Ministry and the public. A new operations system will ensure accessibility to free information, transparency of the Ministry and better service to the public. People will be able to obtain information and see the Public Defender (who will represent them in dealings with Ministry offices) without having to pass security gates.

"Services at the Reception Hall have become speedy. Generally this place is cleaner," commented citizen Tamar Pataridze after visiting the renovated Citizens' Reception Hall.



Through IRIS, USAID played a significant role in realization of this plan. With USAID funds, IRIS contributed approximately \$25,000 toward furniture and computers for the reception hall, staff offices and the Public Defenders Office. In addition to IRIS's contributions, UNDP created software to simplify workflow at the Reception Hall and to provide improved data protection, and JSC Tbilviamsheni funded office space renovations.



Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania, Minister of Justice Giorgi Papuashvili and the USAID/Caucasus Mission Director Denny Robertson spoke at the opening ceremony. The ceremony was attended by local and international organizations as well as the media. IRIS will continue to collaborate with the Ministry of Justice in the future.

Draft Regulations For Public Transportation



IRIS grantee, Association of Young Economists of Georgia (AYEG), is working on licensing issues, which includes the issuance of licenses within the vehicle transportation sector. Project experts recently developed a draft regulation on issuance of permits for route taxis in Tbilisi. AYEG hosted a roundtable on October 13th to present the draft to the Tbilisi Mayor's office and entrepreneurs. Public transportation licensing has long been a problem

27 Contradictions Revealed Among Chapter III of GAC and Other Acting Laws

A legal expert was hired by IRIS grantee UNAG to reveal contradictions between the 3rd Chapter of General Administrative Code and other laws. During the three-month period, the expert researched 42 different laws, made comparative analysis, revealed 27 contradictions and prepared relevant drafts on amending those laws in contradiction.

Lawyers of the project intended to arrange meetings with representatives of different institutions, as the laws in conflict cover different issues.

One of these meetings was held with IRIS Georgia. Staff attorneys

in the capital. There are so-called "route owners" in Tbilisi, who have no legal claim to the routes. According to rough calculations, illegal annual revenues from the routes total some 15-20 million GEL.



Mayor of Tbilisi, Chiaberashvili attended the roundtable. He noted that the work done would support and accelerate reform in this sector. The Mayor expressed his gratitude to AYEG and requested continued assistance with the regulations.

discussed drafts and together with UNAG prepared the final version of changes to the legislation.

The draft was further submitted to the Legal Committee of the Parliament. Preliminary work with the head of the staff at the Legal Committee is complete. UNAG representatives are scheduled to meet with the Chairman of the Legal Committee during the upcoming weeks.

"We expect the Legal Committee to send these drafts to different agencies concerned and after getting feedback, present them to Parliament," said UNAG's Zviad Devdariani.

Civil Monitoring Group To Be Formed

In a previous issue of this newsletter, a joint initiative of Liberty Institute and the Public Defender to form a civil monitoring group for pre-detention precincts and police departments was presented. This issue was raised during an October 11th meeting with President Saakashvili and on October 19th, a decision was announced at a joint press conference of the Public Defender, Minister of Internal Affairs and Prosecutor General to move forward with this idea. This group will be granted authority by the Public Defender's Office and will have unrestricted access to pre-detention sites.

Public Defender Sozar Subari said, "The aim of this project is to eliminate torture and other forms of human rights violations. We will implement the project in regional centers and cities first. After undergoing training, representatives of NGOs will have access to pre-detention precincts and police departments. In the event of human rights violations, they will immediately contact our office. Lawyers and doctors, if needed, will be sent immediately to respond to violations. Also, we will inform the Prosecutor General's Office and the General Inspection of the Ministry of Internal Affairs."

Anti-trafficking Component Launched

“Georgia is a source and transit country for women and men trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor...” - reads the 2004 Trafficking in Persons Report issued by the U.S. Department of State. Georgia is placed on the Tier 2 (Watch List). Moving to Tier 3 would mean that Georgia would lose American assistance, except of humanitarian aid.

Support of anti-trafficking efforts has recently been added to IRIS’ scope of work. The aim of the program is to help create structured mechanisms to combat trafficking. To accomplish this goal, IRIS will collaborate with the government, international organizations and local NGOs.

IRIS began its anti-trafficking activities with doing a research about current situation and possible perspectives in the anti-trafficking field. Further these materials were distributed to the General Prosecutor’s Office,

which under Georgian legislation is in charge of investigation of trafficking cases.

During the last month, the Prosecutor General’s Office and the Ministry of State Security have increased joint anti-trafficking activities, due to the fact that trafficking is often accompanied by other crimes.

Recently there have been several trafficking-related arrests. Law enforcement authorities state that victims of trafficking who have committed minor legal violations (i.e. illegal crossing of borders) would not be held liable, if they help to reveal people involved in human trafficking.

Critical to the success of anti-trafficking efforts is the creation of an effective State Action Plan. IRIS is observing the development of a new action plan and will continue to collaborate with government, donor community and local non-governmental organizations.

Management Expert at Liberty Institute



Michael Cornelius, a management consultant from the U.S., was invited by IRIS to work with Liberty Institute, an IRIS grantee, on their organizational and operational systems. This is the third time that Mr. Cornelius has worked in the Post-Soviet region.

During his visit, he spent three weeks in Tbilisi reviewing the internal control, strategic planning, budgeting and accounting systems of Liberty Institute. Mr. Cornelius also had the opportunity to visit Liberty’s regional office in Gori.

Mr. Cornelius formulated recommendations for Liberty on the primary aspects of its operations. The expert also emphasized, “the entire organization appears to be performing with a high sense of dedication.”

Roundtable and Discussion on Family Violence Legislation at GYLA

GYLA conducted a roundtable on international legal standards and domestic legislation in the area of family violence. The session was lead by GYLA’s human trafficking and family violence experts.

Representatives of law enforcement agencies, NGOs, experts in the field, lawyers and psychologists

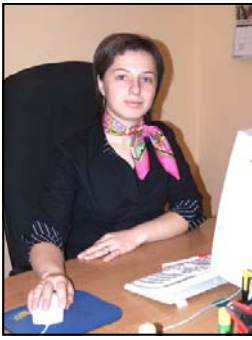
attended the event. Participants discussed the main elements of legislative reform that have been implemented in the U.S. and Europe, and their comparative analysis with Georgian criminal and civil laws.

The textbook *Family Violence and Human Trafficking – How Should*

We Protect Our Rights? was also reviewed.

“This event was important for police employees, prosecutors and legal drafting experts,” commented Ketvi Khutsishvili, the director of the Rule of Law program at Young Lawyers’ Association.

Introducing IRIS staff



Maia Gogidze

Maia Gogidze, Receptionist-Secretary

Maia recently joined IRIS as a receptionist/secretary. Maia's duties include answering phone calls, receiving visitors, preparing agendas, handling meeting arrangements, drafting correspondence, maintaining files and performing minor translations.

Prior to joining IRIS, Maia worked with UNAG and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Maia holds an MA degree in English language and literature from Tbilisi State University.

Schedule of November events:

Date	Events
Nov 9	GYLA: town hall meeting for general public on labor rights in Dusheti region, village Radiosadguri
Nov 11	GYLA: Roundtable for MPs, NGOs, national minorities and various religious organizations on freedom of religion
Nov 12	AYEG: training session for the entrepreneurs engaged in the construction sector
Nov 15	GYLA: town hall meeting in Kutaisi for general public and trade unions on labor rights Liberty Institute: workshop for journalists in Gori "How to Cover HR Issues" (through Nov 19)
Nov 16	GYLA: town hall meeting for secondary schools in Kareli Region, villages Kheoba, Zemo and Kvemo Khveduleti on childrens' rights GYLA: town hall meeting in Telavi for social workers of Kakheti Region on social security
Nov 17	GYLA: town hall meeting for general public in Kutaisi on social security
Nov 18	Internews: broadcasting documentary "Displaced Workers — Rights of Employees of Governmental Agencies"
Nov 19	GYLA: workshop for NGOs and local government representatives in Bakuriani on land law (through Nov 21)
Nov 20	Liberty Institute: press club session in Tbilisi, Reforming the Ombudsman's Office AYEG: workshop for the state agency representatives issuing the permit for the transportation sector (through Nov 23)
Nov 21	GYLA: town hall meeting in Gori on the right to fair trial
Nov 23	GYLA: town hall meeting in Gori for general public on plea-bargaining
Nov 24	GYLA: town hall meeting in Gardabani Region, village Gamarjveba for general public on social rights
Nov 25	GYLA: town hall meeting in Telavi for general public on the right to education AYEG: workshop for the state agency representatives issuing the license for the food products sector (through Nov 28) Internews: broadcasting documentary on "Nepotism / Cronyism"
Nov 29	GYLA: town hall meeting in Kutaisi for general public and mass media on right to liberty and security UNAG: presentation of final results conference of the project
Dec 2	Internews: broadcasting documentary on freedom of speech
Dec 9	Internews: broadcasting documentary on pre-trial detention

Editorial Policy

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