

PRESS RELEASE

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Public Discussion on the Draft of the RA Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2014-2018 in Lori Region

Public discussion on the “Draft of the Republic of Armenia Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2014 – 2018” was held in Vanadzor with the participation of CSOs and Mass media representatives of Lori region. It was organised by the Armenian Young Lawyers Association NGO in the framework of the EU-funded “Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion” project. Welcome speeches were delivered by the Executive Director of the Armenian Young Lawyers Association NGO and Project coordinator/Grants manager of the “Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion” project Artak Saribekyan, Secretary of the Working group on the Anti-Corruption strategy Mariam Galstyan, who also presented the “Draft of the RA Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2014-2018” developed by the Ministry of Justice. The project experts presented the possibilities of establishing an independent multi-functional anti-corruption body and criminalizing the illicit enrichment in Armenia.

After the presentations active discussions revolved, those present came up with suggestions and expressed their opinions. In particular, member of the initiative group “Initiating youth, developing community” Henry Mkhitaryan suggested to implement the coordination and implementation of Anti-corruption reforms in Armenia through CSOs, and not through state officials. And “Union of Lori residents” charity organisation president Menua Brutyan spoke about the necessity of studying and revealing the underlying reasons of the corruption, and then presented two suggestions: putting the accent of reforms on education and anti-corruption mindset-forming among the young generation, as through this it is possible to reach system reforms. And the second suggestion related to the management of the Council which will implement the control in the anti-corruption system in Armenia and over the reforms. Mr Brutyan suggested to review the provision of having the RA Prime-Minister to head the Council, and in general replace the management function with that of presiding Council meetings. “Peace Dialogue” NGO representative Armine Zakaryan suggested to implement anti-corruption education in schools, and not just by inserting a new subject in the program, but by holding regular seminars and discussions on anti-corruption.

All the suggestions presented by the representatives of CSOs and Media during Public Discussion will be summarized and presented to the Ministry of Justice.

Main aim of the project is increasing the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in promoting anti-corruption reforms and their implementation. The project envisages capacity building for CSOs and the media to engage in monitoring and watchdog activities. Anti-corruption training workshops will be organized throughout Armenia with the purpose of enabling CSOs and media organisations to better comprehend the issues related to anti-corruption and freedom of information. These activities aim at deepening the existing opportunities for carrying out anti-corruption activities. Small grants will be given for raising the effectiveness of public monitoring and implementation of appropriate monitoring, watchdog and investigative activities. A sustainable dialogue between CSOs and the Government will be developed with the participation of CSOs, to strengthen the anti-corruption institutional mechanisms.

The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the “Armenian Young Lawyers Association” NGO in partnership with the “Freedom of Information Center in Armenia” NGO. The project duration is 3 years (January 2014 – December 2016) and its budget is 650.000 EUR.

Armenian Young Lawyers Association (AYLA) was established in 1995 with a Mission to promote to the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and formation of the civil society in Armenia, where the people are aware of their rights and their rights are protected.

Freedom of Information Center in Armenia (FOICA) operates over 10 years. The Mission of FOI is to promote application of the RA Freedom of Information Law, contribute to the transparency and openness of the Armenian government system and to stimulate civic society's involvement in the governance system.

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

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