

# NEWSLETTER



INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

## [This Affects You Campaign](#)

On March 19, participant organizations of the This Affects You campaign held a demonstration. The gathered citizens, and representatives of the civil society and media protested the disclosure of recordings depicting private life by holding a procession from Tbilisi Concert Hall to the Government Chancellery.

The Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) is an active member of the This Affects You campaign. IDFI hopes that an independent oversight mechanism for secret surveillance and wiretapping is set up and that the powers of the court and other responsible bodies are increased.



## [Recent Amendments to the Legislation Greatly Complicate Monitoring of Security Liaison Officers](#)

On the 27th of October an amendment was made to the Georgian legislation, which highlights that public access will be restricted to the asset declarations of those high-ranking public officials the position of which has been classified as secret information according to the Law on State Secrecy.

## [IDFI and Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia Hold First Working Meeting](#)

On March 25th, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI) and Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) hold the first working group meeting within the framework of Developing Transparency and Integrity Framework for the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia the project. The project is implemented within the framework of the Good Governance Initiative in Georgia Program (GGI) funded by the the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The project aims to increase accountability and strengthen the principles of good governance in the ministry, as well as create a strategic framework for integrity and anti-corruption.

During the meeting, the Project Coordinator Saba Buadze presented the goals and planned activities of the project to the heads of departments and subordinate entities of MRDI. The working group established within the framework of the project will create a policy document, which will improve transparency, accountability and integrity in the ministry. After the presentation, the participants of the working group meeting had an opportunity to hear answers to their questions related to specific details of the project.



## Quality of Governance Expert Survey - Assessing Bureaucracy in Georgia in 2014

In 2015 the Quality of Government Institute at the University of Gothenburg published an Expert Survey Report II. The report assesses the design and the administration of bureaucracy as of 2014 in 159 countries, including Georgia. The survey was sent out to seven experts from Georgia, including the Chairman of the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) – Levan Avalishvili.

According to the report, the practice of recruiting public servants is the most problematic area in Georgia. In this category Georgia has the lowest score for public sector employees being selected based on their skills and merits. Therefore, the level of professionalism in Georgia significantly lags behind the indicators of the countries such as Estonia, Lithuania, Sweden and Germany.

As the survey of the University of Gothenburg illustrates, there are some problems in the administration of public sector in Georgia, requiring systemic approach to the issue. The Government of Georgia has already started the Public Administration Reform, including in the areas of public fund management system, human resource management and policy planning.



### Non-governmental organizations appeal to Georgian Government on the ongoing events at Tbilisi State University

In response to the ongoing events at Tbilisi State University, the signatory organizations appeal to Ministry of Internal Affairs to take precautionary measures on the territory of University in order to protect the freedom of assembly.

Institute for development of freedom of information (IDFI) signs the abovementioned demand with other Non-Governmental organizations.

### IDFI Report on Digital Switchover in Georgia

Since December 2012 non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) has been involved in support and advocacy process of transition from analog to digital broadcasting in Georgia. IDFI conducts its activities within the frames of the Project of Support and Monitoring of the Digital Switchover Process in Georgia with the support and funding from Open Society Georgian foundation.



IDFI completed monitoring and support process of the digital switchover by the beginning of 2016. According to the assessment of various organizations and entities answerable for the process, the contribution of our organization to the implementation of the model adapted to successful and democratic values is quite substantial. Despite the lack of attention of the government to a number of issues, in general the process was carried out successfully and according to the interests of broadcasters and customers, main actors of the media market.

Despite certain small flaws in the work of the national coverage multiplexes and business sustainability problems facing regional multiplex platforms, overall, as of today, digital broadcasting system in Georgia comprises of 17 small regional, 2 private nationally broadcasted and one state-owned operational national digital networks, which, in a single specific residential area, gives viewers possibility to watch at least 20 and at most 60 free channels while in case of the analog system, it was possible to receive only up to 10 channels in a given local territory and often of a very bad quality.

### Letter of IDFI to Prime Minister of Georgia

On March 29, 2016, IDFI addressed a letter to the Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili asking him to look into the reasons behind the failure of the Georgian Government to fulfill 2 important commitments undertaken within the framework of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Action Plan for Georgia. IDFI also asks the Prime Minister to personally ensure timely implementation of the obligations. Both of these obligations were accepted into the OGP Action Plan as per the IDFI's recommendations.



## [Giorgi Kldiashvili Elected as Working Group Coordinator of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum's Georgian National Platform](#)

The Georgian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) held its 7th General Assembly on February 29, 2016, with the purpose of summarizing the platform's one year performance, and electing its chairman and working group coordinators. The assembly was attended by 130 representatives from 86 member organizations.

The activities of the Civil Society Forum include four thematic platforms of the Eastern Partnership, organized in four working groups:

- Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability
- Economic Integration and Convergence with EU Policies
- Environment, Climate Change and Energy Security
- Contacts between People

One of 4 total candidates for the coordinator of Working Group I (democracy, human rights, good governance and stability) was Giorgi Kldiashvili, director of the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI). A total of 84 member organizations voted for the 4 candidates, resulting in a split vote between Giorgi Kldiashvili, director of IDFI, and Ana Natsvlishvili, chairwoman of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association. They will together coordinate Working Group I.

## [Charter of the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Open and Transparent Governance](#)

On December 30th, 2015, in accordance with the #195/3 Order of the Chairperson of the Parliament of Georgia David Usupashvili, the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Open and Transparent Governance was established. Primary functions of the Parliamentary Council is ensuring parliamentary openness, elaborating the Open Parliament Action Plans within the scopes of Open Government Partnership Initiative (OGP) and monitoring their implementation process.

By the order of the Chairperson of the Parliament issued on 12th February, 2016, the [Charter](#) of the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Open and Transparent Governance was approved.



Other Activities :

[Governance Data Alliance - Assessing Georgia in 2015](#)

[Preventing Corruption in Civil Service - Brief Overview of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy](#)

[Independent Reporting Mechanism Published the Progress Report on Georgia's Participation in OGP](#)

[Civil Society Representatives of Georgia Address the President of European People's Party](#)

[IDFI Conducted a Freedom of Information Training for the Project - 50 Public Servants](#)

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