

New Council of Europe Project “Strengthening Media freedom, Internet governance and Personal data protection in Georgia” launched

On 1 February 2021, the Council of Europe has started implementation of the new Project “Strengthening Media Freedom, Internet Governance and Personal Data Protection in Georgia”. The Project will be implemented for 24 months and is funded by the voluntarily contributions of donors in the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia for 2020-2023. The Project’s total budget is EUR 481.000.

The Council of Europe has been co-operating and supporting reforms in Georgia in the fields of media, internet governance and personal data protection since 2015. This Project is a follow-up to the “Supporting Freedom of media and Internet in Georgia” project which ended in January 2021 and has serious achievements related to all three pillars.

Activities of the “Strengthening Media Freedom, Internet Governance and Personal Data Protection in Georgia” Project are structured around three components focusing on: (1) Enhancement of the law and policy in the field of Freedom of Expression and Internet Governance; (2) Improvement of the professionalism, diversity and safety of journalists; 3) Better alignment of personal data protection law and practice with relevant CoE standards. These components are in line with the priorities highlighted in the Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023 in the field of Information Society.

The project will also support improvement of the law/practice in the field of access to public information in line with the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Public Documents (Tromsø Convention), which has entered into the force in December 2020.

The Project’s key expected results are:

- Key legal and policy instruments in the field of Freedom of Expression and Internet Governance are enhanced in line with the CoE standards and best European practice in the field.
- CoE Recommendations in the field of electronic communications are made available and elaborated enabling an effective application and implementation of the respective laws and policies.
- Internet related law and policy is further enhanced through improved dialogue among stakeholders and their increased engagement into international internet governance forums; CoE standards on human rights protection online are further promoted among stakeholders.
- Knowledge of key stakeholders about CoE access to information standards (Tromsø Convention) and existing needs in Georgia is enhanced; the environment for dialogue among stakeholders about potential ratification of the Convention is created.
- Professionalism, diversity and safety of journalists are improved.
- Journalistic faculties of national Universities have improved tools to teach professional journalism.

- Georgian legislation and practice in the field of personal data protection are better aligned with relevant Council of Europe standards. Stakeholders possess necessary expertise to ratify CoE Convention 108+ for the Protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data.
- State Inspector's Service has a strategy and action plan concerning personal data protection in the light of algorithmic solutions.

The main partners of the Project are the Georgian National Communications Commission, State Inspector's Service, Charter of Journalistic Ethics, the Parliament, Public Defender's (Ombudsperson) Office, Ministry of Interior; civil society organisations working in the field of media and Telecom Operators' Association of Georgia.

➤ **How to stay in touch?**

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