



GYLA held presentation of the research on submission of public information

On February 14, 2014 GYLA held presentation of the Research – Obligation to Submit FOIA Reports (practice of Georgia, the United States and Australia).

As the research has demonstrated, public agencies responsible for submission of FOIA reports, as well as agencies authorized to receive the reports have pro-forma approach to the process. They fail to implement even trivial obligations such as publication of freedom of information reports on the web-site of the Legislative Herald of Georgia within the terms established by legislation or submission of the reports to the President, the Parliament and the Prime-Minister according to the established rules.

It is decisive that submission of FOIA reports served increase of accountability of public agencies in terms of submission of public information, as well as assessment of current situation, detection of problems and their further improvement.

As it follows from the international experience apart from the uniform and comprehensive guidelines for submission of FOIA reports there is also the need for setting up monitoring agency. According to the researched countries, the monitoring agencies are generally authorized to submit recommendations on development of applicable legislation and practice. Therefore, detailed examination of their FOIA reports is a guarantee for improvement of legislation and existing practice.

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In view of above, GYLA has worked out two recommendations:

Legislative bases needs to be developed and the obligation to submit FOIA reports should be regulated in details. It should be common for all public agencies and along to other issues should imply detailed rules for the process after submitting the reports;

It is necessary to determine the relevant competent agency obliged to monitor compliance of the FOIA reports with legislative requirements, as well as to examine in details the content of the reports, determine gaps and make relevant reactions thereto.