



PILGRIM YOUTH DEMO FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT TO IFES

Project Period: Oct 01 – Dec 31, 2012

1. Context of activity¹

The legal framework, regulating the campaign finance in regional elections in Gagauzia is vague, and incomplete. Monitoring of 2010 Gagauz Bashkan Elections and 2012 Elections to the People's Assembly of Gagauzia conducted by Pilgrim-Demo from Gagauzia demonstrated that campaign finance regulations in Gagauz autonomy lacking enforcement mechanisms. Most of the candidates do not present their financial reports to the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia and if do so, reports are incomplete raise questions regarding their integrity and correctness. There was a strong need to conduct a comprehensive analyzes and evaluation the electoral legal framework of Gagauz autonomy in order to identify problematic issues and weaknesses of the campaign finance regulations, raise the awareness of regional stakeholders regarding the problematic issues and weaknesses of the regional campaign finance regulations and to initiate discussion about the need to improve campaign finance regulations of Gagauz autonomy.

2. Activities implemented

In frame of the project were implemented following activities:

- 1) The survey of campaign finance regulations and practices in Gagauz autonomy. The survey included:
 - Analyzes and evaluation of two local laws of Gagauz autonomy: Law on Elections of the Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri) and Law on Elections to the People's Assembly (Halk Toplushu) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri), and other related national and local laws.
 - Processing and evaluation of financial reports of the candidates presented to the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia in 2012 Elections to the People's Assembly of Gagauzia and activities of electoral bodies in this regard.
 - To elaborate recommendation for improvement of campaign finance regulations and practices in Gagauz autonomy.
 - Drafting the Policy Brief including the results of the survey and recommendations.
 - Translation of the Policy Brief to Romanian and English languages.

¹ This activity was made possible by the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this activity are sole responsibility of Pilgrim Youth Demo and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

- 2) 1st TV talk show on regional public TV “Gagauz Televisionu” with the participation of national and regional experts on campaign finances to discuss the campaign finance practices and regulations in Gagauzia. TV talk show “Obsujdaem vmeste” was recorded and broadcasted on Oct 23, 2012. The topic of the talk show “Vybory i dengi”. In talk show participated Mr. Mihail Sircheli, Executive Director of Youth Center Pilgrim-Demo from Gagauzia, Mr. Sergey Ostaf, President of the National Participation Council and Dr. Svetlana Mirionova, Chairwoman of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia created for preparation and conduct of 2012 Elections to the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia. To see the talk show, please, follow the link: http://gagauztv.md/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1608:2012-10-23-16-59-07&catid=43:2011-03-23-08-16-53&Itemid=61
- 3) Press conference to present the Policy Brief. Press conference was organized on December 10, 2012 in news agency Info Prim Neo in Chisinau. Press conference was attended by national media: Euro TV, TVC 21, InfoPrimNeo. To see the press conference, please, follow the link. <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/27627421>
- 4) 2nd TV talk show on regional public TV “Gagauz Televisionu” with the participation of national and regional experts on campaign finances to discuss the results of the survey. The 2nd talk show was not recorded (see the explanation below).
- 5) Regional conference “Campaign finance regulations and practices in Gagauzia”. Regional conference was organized to discuss the results of the survey, and to present the recommendations on how to improve the campaign finance regulations and practices in Gagauzia to the regional authorities of Gagauzia. Regional conference was carried out on December 21, 2012 in Hotel “Altin Palace” in Comrat. To participate in regional conference were invited Representatives of the national and regional authorities, non-governmental organizations, Mass-media, and international institutions present in Moldova. List of invited persons and list of participants are attached. Participants of the conference agreed that there is a strong need to improve the campaign finance regulations in Gagauzia. The member of the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia Mr. Fiodor Gagauz expressed his willingness to cooperate with civil society in process of improvement of the campaign finance regulations in Gagauzia.

3. Reasons why proposed activities cancelled or changed.

The 2nd TV talk show was not recorded, because media partner of the project regional public broadcaster “Gagauz Radio Televisionu” interrupted its activity from the beginning of December 2012 till the beginning of February 2013.

Rest of the activities was implemented within the project timeframe.

The number of participants in the regional conference was lower than we expected. Although representatives of regional authorities (People’s Assembly of Gagauzia and Executive Committee of Gagauzia) confirmed their participation, they were not present in the event. This demonstrates the lack of willingness of regional authorities to cooperate with the civil society organizations and consider their recommendations. It was confirmed by Dr. Svetlana Mironova, Chairwoman of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, who participated in the conference. According to her, on her way to the conference she met the reps of the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia, who confirmed their participation but didn’t appear, and asked them if they are going to come to the conference. Reps of the People’s Assembly asked “What for?”, Dr. Mironova said “To discuss the recommendations of the civil society and consider them when elaborating the amendments to the electoral legislation”, Reps of the People’s Assembly said “We don’t need that, we already elaborated a new Electoral Code of Gagauzia”.

The attitude of the regional authorities towards the civil society and attempts of the civil society to improve the regional electoral legal framework is ignorant. Private talks with different members of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia also demonstrate their ignorance of the international commitments of the Republic of Moldova in field of free and fair elections. Therefore there is a strong need to conduct an advocacy campaign aimed at preventing the adoption of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, elaborated by the People's Assembly of Gagauzia without consultation with the public and international organizations from one side, and at improving the campaign finance regulations of Gagauzia, by elaborating the amendment into the electoral laws of Gagauzia with the engagement in this process different stakeholders from regional and national level, experts, and consulting the elaborated amendments with the international organizations such as OSCE/Odihr and CoE.

4. Have the overall goals been achieved

We consider that the overall goal of the project was achieved. Although one of the activities, 2nd TV talk show, was not implemented it didn't influence the final result of project, because regional internet news portals www.gagauzinfo.md recorded and broadcasted the regional conference and all discussions that took place during the regional conference. See the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNLKuaQP2c>

The results of the survey demonstrated problematic issues and weaknesses of the campaign finance regulations of Gagauz autonomy. Recommendations on improving the campaign finance regulations of Gagauzia were elaborated and can serve as a base for amendments to the electoral legislation of Gagauzia.

Survey itself can serve as a starting point for advocacy campaign aimed at improving the electoral framework of Gagauzia.

Project raised the awareness of different stakeholders about the problematic issues and weak points of the campaign finance regulations of Gagauzia and initiated the discussions about the need of improvement of the electoral legislation of Gagauzia in general and campaign finance regulations in particular.

In order to achieve the overall goal of the project next step should be the implementation of the comprehensive advocacy campaign.