

## Project Factsheet

**Project** « Increasing government capacity and preventing the outbreak of conflict through government press service reform»

**Partners:** Government of KR, Parliament and Government of KR, civil society organization “Civil Initiatives for Internet Policy” (CIIP)

**Beneficiaries:** the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, regional and local government authorities, members of the mass media and civil society

**Project Aim:** To prevent the spread of rumours and the potential outbreak of conflict as well as improving the overall level of trust and cooperation between the government and general public by improving the ability of the government press service to provide information to the general public.

### Project activities and expected results:

2013 marks the beginning of a multi-year and comprehensive approach that the OSCE Centre in Bishkek will be conducting in partnership with the government and civil society. 2013 will be spent studying the legislative causes and practical obstacles that hamper the work of the government press service, which will be accompanied by legal expert recommendations. Subsequent years will be spent first promoting any legislative reforms proposed that will result from such discussions, as well as subsequently providing assistance to government counterparts in implementing any ratified legislation or government decrees related to the structural reform of the government press service.

This project holds the concept of freedom of information as one of its core tenants, and transparency and accountability of the state institutions before the people, which is also consistent with Kyrgyzstan’s international commitments. Within the framework of the mandate of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek as well as the National Security Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic, this project is viewed as crucial in helping to ensure all relevant government agencies to provide information in a timely fashion to the general public, including during crisis situations, in order to prevent the spread of additional panic and rumors that could lead to further destabilization of the security environment. .

Within the framework of this project, the following activities are foreseen for 2013:

1. A **Working Group** will be created to identify and determine the core directions of the reform, based on the needs assessment report of 2012. It will be facilitated by a local implementing partner of OSCE, civil society organization “Civil Initiatives for Internet Policy” (Further as CIIP), and will consist of high ranking government officials from several ministries, the Office of the Prime Minister, and representatives from Parliament.

Although the reform’s effects will impact the work of the government press services across all state institutions, there will be a focus in the working group on addressing information policy during crisis situations and how these issues should be addressed by relevant security structures, since such issues are the most acute and pose the biggest threat to Kyrgyzstan’s national security.

2. **International experts** familiar with various aspects of government press service reform will be selected to come to Kyrgyzstan and provide the Working Group with legal recommendations and analysis with respect to various aspects of government press service reform that need to be addressed. All activities planned will also be coordinated very closely with the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM).
3. Broader discussions in the form of **regional round tables** will be held in all the provinces as well as Bishkek, during which members of the working group will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with challenges that government officials and members of civil society and regional media outlets are facing with respect to government information policies in the regions. Working group members will take into consideration such regional issues with respect to government information policy when drafting any subsequent recommendations with respect to overall proposed reforms of the government press service.
4. **A concluding conference** will be organized at the end of 2013, in which all project activities, observations, and recommendations will be summarized, and all pieces of proposed draft legislation will be presented to key government officials. Several international experts will also be invited to attend this conference, as well as representatives from RFOM. The concluding conference will be seen as both the end of project activities taking place in 2013 as well as the transition activities that are tentatively planned in 2014, when relevant legal recommendations proposed will be followed up by technical assistance being provided to relevant government bodies in drafting any relevant legislation, and CiB will sponsor a series of public hearings, which is required by Kyrgyz law as a part of the overall legislative review process before any proposed bills can be signed into law.