



CENTRE FOR LAW AND DEMOCRACY

21 July 2020 – for immediate release

Regional Report Series on Law and Policy Environment for Civic Space: Europe and Central Asia

Today, CLD released a report on the legal environment for civil society in the Europe and Central Asia region. This report is part of a series evaluating laws which enable or restrict civil society from engaging freely in basic activities, including researching, advocating, fundraising and organising. By highlighting laws which are problematic, we hope to offer guidance for advocates seeking to create a more open civic space and raise awareness about what is needed to create an enabling environment for a vibrant civil society sector.

This series represents the public launch of law and policy reviews commissioned by Transparency International last year covering five regions: Asia Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Asia Pacific report was launched last week and is available [here](#).

The second report in the series covers nine countries in the Europe and Central Asia region. It takes a detailed look at the law and policy environment in each country. Across the nine countries, some trends can be noted:

- Some governments have inappropriately broad powers to interfere in the internal affairs of civil society organisations.
- Four of the countries have significant restrictions on the ability of civil society to fundraise or access foreign funding, while such laws have also been proposed or debated in other countries in the region.
- Stronger legal guarantees for media diversity and independence are needed.
- Criminal content restrictions which do not accord with international human rights standards remain a recurrent concern.
- Some national security laws use definitions which could cover peaceful civil society activity, while three countries give authorities unduly broad powers to declare states of emergency.
- Legal frameworks fail to provide adequate protection against arbitrary surveillance.
- Secrecy laws and overly broad regimes of exceptions undermine the right to information.

The Europe and Central Asia regional report is available at: <https://www.law-democracy.org/live/regional-report-series-on-law-and-policy-environment-for-civic-space-europe-and-central-asia/>.

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