

INITIATIVE TO RAISE LEGAL AWARENESS OF KYRGYZ PUPILS GOES NATIONAL



About 20 volunteer lawyers members of the Kyrgyz Bar have joined the Initiative on a pro bono basis

The Initiative “Introduction to law for pupils of Kyrgyz schools” was launched in October 2015 and aims at training Kyrgyz lawyers in the development of legal awareness-raising modules targeting pupils from age 9-17 in Kyrgyz schools. The approach used in this Initiative, funded by the EU, was developed by the Paris Bar and is currently being implemented in France. To date, it has been successfully applied in 18 European Union Member States.

The Initiative started with a kick-off week in October 2015: nine lawyers received training from a French trainer, Member of the Board of the Paris Bar, and designed six modules. During an initial six-month phase, the training modules have been tested and applied to pilot schools in Bishkek and the Chuy district. Approximately 1.000 pupils benefited from the Initiative during the Pilot Phase, in the course of 29 sessions delivered by 20 volunteer lawyers belonging to the Kyrgyz Bar, under the coordination of Ms Nazira Sopubekova.



Ms Nazira Sopubekova, Member of the Kyrgyz Bar and Professor of Criminology at the Kyrgyz State Law Academy, Coordinator of the Initiative

In June 2016, the “National Deployment Phase” of the Initiative took place in Bishkek, including an assessment of the results of the “Pilot Phase” and further training of trainers, led by a representative of the Paris Bar. A synthesis of the Pilot Phase trainers was made and conclusions were drawn. Bar members from the nine Kyrgyz regions were further associated and trained with the objective to deploy the Initiative nationally, with financing from the European Union. The methodology was transferred to these new trainers who developed additional modules on the basis of cases met in their legal practice. The experience of the Pilot Phase enabled to



Ms Emmanuelle Beaumes, London-based member of the Paris Bar, conducting the training of trainers for the National Deployment Phase of the Initiative

refocus the themes of the awareness-raising modules to address the interests and concerns of Kyrgyz pupils from the 5th to the 11th grade. A conference on the national deployment of the Initiative was organized in Bishkek on 3 June 2016, attended by

representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and Sciences, the intergovernmental commission coordinating social policy issues, [the Chairperson and Board members of the Kyrgyz Bar](#), EU diplomats and the French Ambassador, directors and professors of schools and representatives of other rule of law initiatives. Cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the Kyrgyz Bar will be key to ensure the success of the National Deployment Phase, and generally, the sustainability of the Initiative.



Mr Johannes Stenbaek Madsen from the Delegation of the European Union and H.E. French Ambassador Stéphane Catta



Mr Aibek Chotonov from the Ministry of Justice, Ms Gulniza Kozhomova, Chairperson of the Kyrgyz Bar, and Ms Aynura Kusenova, from the Ministry of Education and Sciences

The Initiative was included in the Inter-ministerial action plan “on prevention of suicides, offences and crimes committed by children and youth in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2016-2018” which was approved on 22 March 2016, by Government Order. It was placed under the high patronage of Gulmira Kudaiberdieva, Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the State Programme on Juvenile Justice, who referred to it as “*one of the most important initiatives undertaken to improve education and enhance the legal culture of the population*”.

Johannes Stenbaek Madsen, Head of Operations of the EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic, evoked “*the rich traditions of access to law, justice, methods of awareness-raising about citizen’s rights of the 28 EU Member States systems*” and said that, along with the Ministry of Justice, the EU was implementing “*a legal awareness campaign with media and civil society organisations to disseminate information about new developments on legal education*”.