



PRESS RELEASE

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Yerevan

Training for CSOs on the Nuances of Engaging in Entrepreneurial Activity

For over a year, NGOs have been given the opportunity to engage in entrepreneurial activity. However, as a result of legislative shortcomings and stringent provisions, a number of NGOs avoid using this opportunity.

On January 18, training on new legislative requirements and engaging in entrepreneurial activity was held for NGO representatives in the framework of the EU-funded “Commitment to Constructive Dialogue” project. The training was attended by about 20 NGO representatives, most of them women and young activists.

Trainer, Executive Director of the Project Partner SME Partnership Association of Armenia, Hakob Avagyan, the Business and Related Sectors Coordinator of the project, presented the social entrepreneurship, the types of taxation regime, the problems that may arise in practice, both connected with the legislation and other issues.

According to him, after the adoption of the new law “On Non-Governmental Organizations,” it became rather complicated to distinguish which income is taxed and which is not taxable if the NGO begins to engage in entrepreneurship. The problem initially is solved in the following way: a commission has been set up at the Ministry of Finance, to which it is possible to submit the relevant documents and receive consultations on whether or not they will be taxed for concrete income.

Ms Anna Karapetyan, the Projects Manager of the Union of Information Technology Enterprises, attached importance to the knowledge gained during the training: *“It was interesting for me whether it will be considered illegal if the NGO starts to engage in entrepreneurial activity, but it has not mentioned it in its charter? It turns out it could. And it is important that you know the law and protect your rights.”*

Another participant of the training, Ms Lilit Asatryan, President of the Armenian Young Women's Association, highly appreciated the efficiency of the training and the information she received about the entrepreneurial activities.

Upon completion of the training, Hakob Avagyan provided individual counselling to the participants.

The “*Commitment to Constructive Dialogue*” project is implemented with the financial support of the European Union by a Consortium of civil society organisations, which are the Armenian Lawyers' Association (lead organisation), Agora Central Europe (NGO based in the Czech Republic), the Armenian Centre for Democratic Education-CIVITAS, the International Centre for Human Development, the SME Cooperation Association and the Union of Communities of Armenia.

The project aims to enhance the influence of civil society organisations (CSOs) and CSO coalitions/networks on public policies in Armenia. This will allow organisations that are already working in sectoral coalitions to access additional resources, new groups of civil society experts to come together and encourage place their causes on the local and national policy agenda, to identify common concerns and priorities and approach government bodies with constructive and strategic policy engagement initiatives.

The project will provide sub-grants to CSOs and CSO coalitions for developing public policies and bringing significant changes in the 9 target sectors selected within the project, including those of justice, education and business.



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The **Armenian Lawyers' Association** (ALA) was established in 1995 with a mission to promote to the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and formation of the civil society in Armenia, where the people are aware of their rights and where their rights are protected. Before February 2016, ALA used to be called Armenian Young Lawyers Association.

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