

Georgian Network of People Using Drugs (GeNPUD)

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Legislation Kills! Support Don't Punish!

On June 26th, on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Georgian Network of People Using Drugs (GeNPUD) held protest rally in front of the parliament of Georgia. The protest rally was executed in frames of the advocacy campaign "My Repression-Your Regress". The main message of the rally was as followed: Legislation Kills! Support Don't Punish.

Action was supported by: Georgian Harm Reduction Network - GHRN; NGO – Alternative Georgia; Médecins du Monde – MDM; Open Society Foundation Georgia – OSGF; Open Society Foundation – OSF; Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center – EMC; International Drug Policy Consortium – IDPC;

The demonstration had following major goal: to support the liberalization of drug policy and decriminalize the drug use, through the changes into legislation, so that in the country persecution and penalty of drug users is substituted by provision of treatment, prevention, harm reduction and rehabilitation programs.

In the framework of this action, a petition was delivered at the parliament, addressed to the Chairperson of the Parliament, the petition was signed by 60 000 citizens.

The petition underlines those negative results that occurred due to zero tolerance drug policy, concerning human health factors and human rights as well as state perspectives. The petition also underlined those internationally proven evidence based positive outcomes and benefits that are to be expected from liberal drug policy practice.

The petition signing period took 2 month and it aimed to demonstrate to the government that human and liberal approach in solving the issues concerning the drug use is foremost the public will.

During the preparation phase of the action, GeNPUD actively worked on media mobilization as a means to attract public attention.

In the framework of the campaign social video clip was prepared that highlighted inadequacy of existing drug policy which is resulted into limited access of life important medical services, as well as into inadequate punishments that are legit in the country. The mentioned video clip was broadcast on national broadcaster TV.

GeNPUD and partner organization representatives took active part in leading TV and Radio shows, where they analyzed existed drug policy into various context such as medical, juridical and social.

TV shows and other media sources:

Public Broadcasting (23.06.14) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHWhaFqDPsw>
GDS - (24.06.14) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-Leihlp5L0>
Caucasia (24.06.14) - <https://www.myvideo.ge/?act=dvr&chan=caucasia&seekTime=24-06-2014%2014%2018:48>
TV Imedi (25.06.14) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCTx9QjZJ7c>
TV Imedi (25.06.2014) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRau7WxDmG8>
Radio 1 - (25.06.2014) - <http://radio1.ge/media-view/16810>
Maestro (26.06.2014) - <http://www.myvideo.ge/?act=dvr&chan=maestro&seekTime=26-06-2014%2018:48>
Radio Liberty (27.06.201) - <http://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/media/video/25437498.html>
Radio Liberty (27.06.2014) - <http://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/media/video/25437495.html>
Radio Liberty 26.06.2014) - <http://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/content/interviu-tamar-gegelia/25436026.html>
Palitra TV - (27.06.2014) - <http://www.myvideo.ge/?act=dvr&chan=palitra&seekTime=27-06-2014+16%3A30>
Liberal - 24.06.14) - <http://www.liberali.ge/ge/liberali/articles/119095/.htm>
Public Broadcasting - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzSfQ5Nn-Z>
Rustavi 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wDZ0UTpNjE#t=12>
TV Imedi - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peB2u1PnJt4>
Maestro - http://maestro.ge/menu_id/12/id/3228/lang/1
Tabula - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tbbf3jklpxE>
Radio 1- <http://radio1.ge/media-view/16827>
Radio Liberty - <http://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/audio/Audio/1158920.html>

Also social media resources were actively used.

The action joined international campaign: “Support Don’t Punish”. The international concept of the action ensured its effectiveness and increased impact on decision makers.

Activists and stakeholders were mobilized on national level. The Kutaisi rally saw demonstrators from Tbilisi, Rustavi, Gori, Samtredia, Foti, Zugdidi, Ozurgeti and Adjara.

The action started with a march and its destination point was the parliament of Georgia. The demonstrators held banners; they were chanting the main messages and called the parliament for immediate legislative changes for equal insurance of each person’s human rights.

The action was unprecedented in its context as it was the first case in Georgia when so many amount of people gathered despite the repressive drug policy.