

To:

Mr. Antonin Mokry,

President

The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe ("CCBE")

Rue Joseph II,

40/8 - B 1000 Brussels - Belgium

From:

LEPL Legal Aid Service of Georgia

Dear Mr. Mokry,

We would like to respond to your letter dated September 10, 2018 regarding quality assurance system of Legal Aid Service of Georgia ("the Service", "LAS"). CCBE has not communicated with the Service on the above-mentioned issue. LAS was not among addressees of the letter either. Since the letter concerned Legal Aid Service, we deem it necessary to share our opinions on that. Moreover, the content of the CCBE letter makes us doubt that you might not have comprehensive information about the quality assurance system, namely, we assume you lacked the LAS document regulating quality assurance.

First of all, it is important to note that Georgian Bar Association ("GBA") was fully involved in elaboration of the quality assurance regulatory document which was unanimously approved by Legal Aid Council on March 2, 2016. Georgian Bar Association is represented in the Council by three lawyers nominated by the GBA Executive Board.

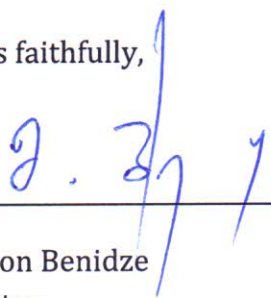
As for the Georgian model of the quality assurance system, it was developed on the basis of so called "Peer Review" methodology, which was created by Mr. Avrom Sherr (Director Emeritus, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies University of London) for England and Wales in 2002. The similar system was elaborated by Alan Patterson (Director, Centre for Professional Legal Studies Strathclyde University, Glasgow) for Scotland in 2005. Great Britain is a prominent member of CCBE which actively supports other countries and cooperates with them on implementation of the quality assurance projects.

Taking into consideration that ensuring ethical norms and principles of legal profession is a fundamental value for Legal Aid Service and Legal Aid Council, "Peer Review" was chosen as a quality assurance model. It implies evaluation of quality of lawyers' performance by their colleagues, where the principle of confidentiality is fully protected and quality assurance and quality improvement are priorities. For Legal Aid Service the quality assurance system is a guarantee to provide qualified legal aid service for its beneficiaries - socially vulnerable group of the Georgian population.

In the end, we would like to inform you about the international platform which will give us the opportunity to discuss the quality assurance issues in depth. Namely, we would like to share with you that on November 13-15, 2018 the Third International Conference on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems will take place in Tbilisi, Georgia. Over 300 representatives of 70 states who are engaged in legal aid provision will attend the conference. Along with other concerning issues, participants will discuss best practices and practical challenges in creating or reforming legal aid systems, barriers and solutions to ensuring early access to legal aid, improvement of legal aid provision and good practice guidelines for improving the quality and effectiveness of legal aid, as well as monitoring and evaluation standards of legal aid systems. We would like to invite you to attend the event. You will receive the official invitation via separate electronic mail.

We hope our further cooperation will be fruitful.

Yours faithfully,



Meliton Benidze
Director
LEPL Legal Aid Service



Sophio Chachava
Chairperson
Legal Aid Council