

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017



# “UNION OF INFORMED CITIZENS”



## *OUR ORGANIZATION'S MISSION*

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Our mission is to raise public awareness in fields of state and public significance. We consider this an essential and integral component of any democratic society.

We take measures to increase the capacity of the media field in Armenia. Moreover, we ourselves implement media activities through the ArmRusInfo Russian-language news site and SUT.am fact-checking website, which combats disinformation.

UIC, together with its partners, fights to increase the quality of the elections in Armenia, both by participating in observation missions on the election day and through affecting the preceding processes.

We are led by the promotion of democratic values in the course of preparing all the kinds of materials. We will not under any circumstances justify aggressive wars, human rights abuses, as well as crimes against humanity or nature.

We do not represent interests of any political party or other groups.

The teams of “Union of Informed Citizens” and its subdivisions have undertaken a number of public commitments which are not envisaged by Armenian legislation. In particular, we have an environmental policy, the goal of which is minimizing hazardous emissions due to organization’s activity by reducing energy consumption, as well as minimizing use of paper and sending used paper to recycling facilities. We also hold our events and rent out offices only in buildings which are adapted for persons with wheelchairs.

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Staff

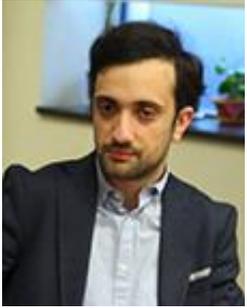
Partners and Coalitions

Areas of activity

Media about us

Finance

# STAFF



**Daniel Ioannisyan**  
*Programs Director*



**Tatevik Kerobyan**  
*Chairperson*



**Ashkhen Musheghyan**  
*Executive Director*



**Piruza Petrosyan**  
*Office Assistant*



**Vahe Ghukasyan**  
*Editor-in-Chief*



**Aren Melikyan**  
*Journalist*



**Artur Harutyunyan**  
*Journalist*



**Rafael Afrikyan**  
*Journalist*



**Amalya Melkonyan**  
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**Edgar Hakobyan**  
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**Shushan Harutyunyan**  
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*Translator*



**Zara Poghosyan**  
*Translator*



**Anna Pambukhchyan**



**Sona Ghazaryan**



**Gevorg Ghahramanyan**



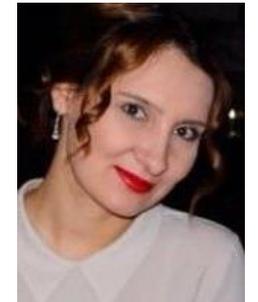
**Vahram Toqmajyan**



**Andranik Manukyan**



**Shushanna Vratsyan**



**Christine Avetisyan**

## ***PARTNERS***

*Monitoring Programs  
Coordinator*

*Media Monitor*

*Social media  
assistant*

*Historian Expert*

*Economic Expert*

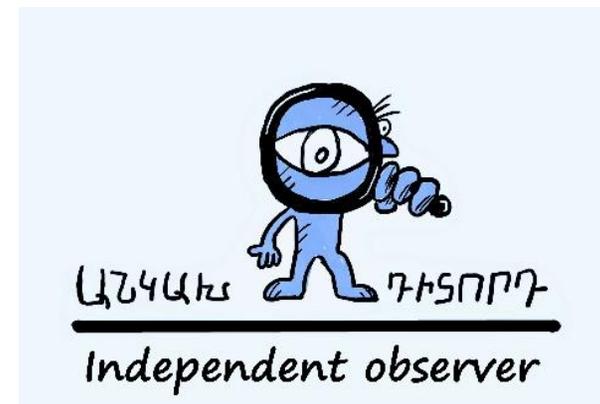
*SMM Manager*

*Translator*



UIC is a member of the EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, the Armenian national platform of which has more than 200 member organizations. The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) aims to strengthen civil society in the Eastern Partnership countries as well as foster cooperation and the exchange of experience between civil society organizations from partner countries and the EU.

We are a member of Independent Observer Civic Alliance, within the framework of which we carry out election observation missions. Other members include Helsinki Citizens' Assembly-Vanadzor Office, Martuni Women's Community Council and Goris Press Club.



## ***AREAS OF ACTIVITY***

- Research and analyses
- Publication of video materials
- Training for journalists
- Advocacy of electoral legislation
- Observation of elections
- Public discussions
- Fact-checking through Sut.am website
- Russian-language news through ArmRusInfo website

## Research and Analyses

During the year, the research conducted by our team was mainly about:

- Issues related to the Armenian-Russian arms deal
- Human rights violations in Armenia
- Decline of democracy level in Armenia
- Pro-Cremlin and other propaganda in Armenia
- Armenia's integration to the Eurasian Economic Union
- Foreign trade and factors affecting it
- Energy sector: electricity and natural gas pricing and influence on politics
- Grants received by Armenian state authorities from other countries
- Karabakh conflict
- Armenia-Iran relations
- EU-Armenia relations
- Activity of Russian security bodies in Armenia
- Citizens' personal data protection in Armenia
- Freedom of assembly in Armenia
- Political discourse in Armenia
- Activities of the Police in some separate sectors
- Election-related public perceptions in Armenia
- Activity of electoral commissions
- History of Armenia's foreign affairs

During the year, we carried out research activities, and on the basis of our findings, we published more than 100 articles. These articles have been republished or mentioned in other online media for at least 2500 times.

## Publication of video materials

On the basis of the most important research works of our experts, animated video materials are being created. We have also published videos and social ads that raise citizens' awareness about their rights. During the year 2017, 43 video materials were prepared and published.

Our videos have had 500.00 views on YouTube and additional 2 million on Facebook and other social networks. On YouTube only, the videos have been watched for 1,1 million minutes.



## **Training for Journalists**

During the year 2017, we organized two seminar-conferences “Foreign Policy and Its Coverage” in Tsaghkadzor. A total of forty-seven journalists from leading Armenian news media outlets took part in the training.

During the seminars, Ambassador of the United States of America to Armenia H.E. Mr. Richard M. Mills Jr., Ambassador, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Armenia H.E. Mr. Piotr Antoni Świtalski, representative of European Department of the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ara Margaryan, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Armenia Jerzy Marek Nowakowski, Chairman of Yerevan Press Club Boris Navasardyan and Head of the Armenian Institute of International and Security Affairs Styopa Safaryan and other experts delivered speech in “off the record” format and answered the questions of participants.

We also organized an Autumn School on Fact-Checking Journalism in Tsaghkadzor. The lectures were delivered by leading media experts from Armenia and abroad, particularly Alexey Nabozhnyak from the Ukrainian “StopFake” media outlet, Taras Ilkiv from “Internews-Ukraine”, economist Artak Manukyan, Hrant Galstyan from “Hetq” online newspaper and others. The event was aimed at development of professional skills of both experienced and beginner journalists and students in fact-checking journalism.

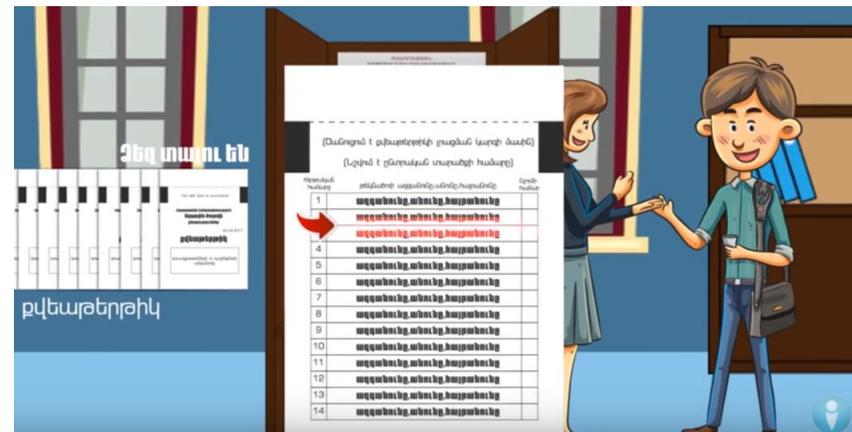
## Advocacy of Electoral Legislation

During the beginning of 2017, the Central Electoral Commission, the Police, and other branches of executive power were preparing for upcoming elections. In that period we managed to promote 12 sub-legislative regulatory acts which were based on the principle of ensuring democratic elections.

Within the framework of the advocacy activities, we participated in the 4+4+4 negotiation format in the Parliament and implemented other advocacy mechanisms. We also advocated for a number of CSOs' demands in the Central Electoral Commission and Police.

## Voter education

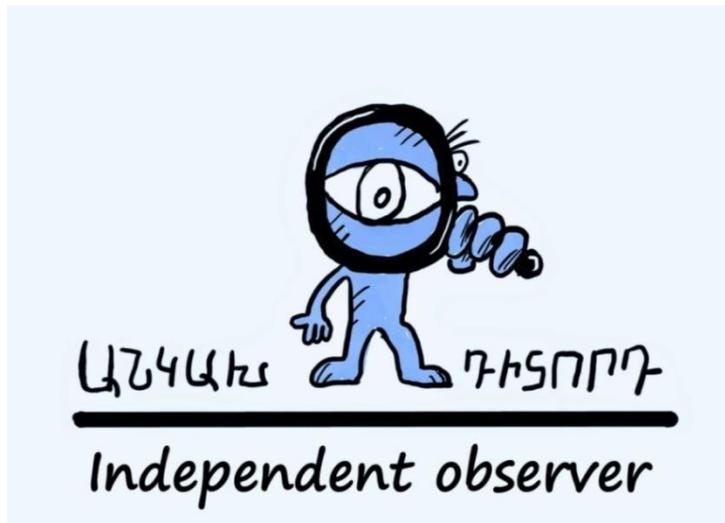
In order to make public attitude towards 2017 parliamentary and local elections more serious, and make them more informed, we have published 12 video materials. Apart from being watched 207 thousand times in social media, they have also been broadcast on TVs and radio. In particular, they have been broadcast 359 times on TV and 180 times on the radio.



## Observation of Elections

During the parliamentary elections on April 2, 2017, and Yerevan City Council elections, we conducted long-term and short-term observation missions within the framework of “Independent Observer” alliance. Our alliance partner is Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Vanadzor Office.

During parliamentary elections, we had 450 short-term and 34 long-term observers. During Yerevan City Council elections, we had 140 short-term observers.



Besides, we have accredited the observers of European Platform for Democratic Elections, with whom we had joint mobile groups.

Reports have been published based on the election observation results.

## Public discussions

In 2017, Union of Informed Citizens organized a public discussion related to Armenia's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union. Representatives of three of a total of four parliamentary factions (including the vice-speaker of the Parliament) participated in the discussion. About 90 experts and young people, as well as more than a dozen journalists participated in the discussion.



Besides, the representatives of the organization have had two speeches



on foreign policy during different parliamentary discussions. In particular, programs coordinator Daniel Ioannisyian made speech on Armenia's membership in the EAEU as an invited expert during the parliamentary hearings.

And the head of the monitoring department Anna Pambukhchyan made a speech during the parliamentary hearings on the EU-Armenia framework agreement.



## Fact checking through Sut.am

The SUT.am fact-checking website founded by our organization gained wide popularity in 2017. During 2017, there were 205 publications in the website. Moreover, the website not only refutes the direct propaganda, but also fights the indirect expressions of that propaganda.

SUT.am conducted not only fact-checking, but also numerous journalistic investigations. Numerous statements by authorities and parties' election promises have been checked. Massive abuse of administrative power by principles of schools and kindergartens was revealed.

SUT.am became a famous and influential media outlet, with publications having up to 9800 views each in average. The total number of views during the year is about 2 million.



## Russian-Language News in ArmRusInfo

During the year 2016 we promoted our newly-founded Russian-language ArmRus.info news website. It has already become a fully-functioning media website. During the aforementioned period, more than 3000 materials were published on the website. The website has objectively covered current news for Russian-speaking readers in Armenia, as well as important developments taking place in Armenia for foreigners.



# MEDIA ABOUT US

Daniel Ioannisyian, Andranik Manukyan and Anna Pambukhchyan have given hundreds of interviews to local and foreign leading media outlets on issues regarding elections, politics, economy, and etc.

## 'Some district leaders supported the activities of the "helpers":' Daniel Ioannisyian



During the interview with Aravot.am the spokesmen of "Independent Observer" public initiative Daniel Ioannisyian mentioned that in many polling stations there are fake observers, who have fake certificates, but are not signed in Central Election Commission: "It's quite a gross violation when the candidate is at the polling station. I think so. And

## Беларусь всегда выбирает Азербайджан: специалист по международным отношениям (video)

21:41 | January 25, 2017 | Интервью

Share 10



Жалобу задержанного в Беларуси Александра Лапшина городской суд Минска рассмотрит уже завтра – 26 января. Интересы Лапшина представят российские и израильские адвокаты. Если суд не удовлетворит апелляцию Лапшина, последний может обратиться в Верховный суд Беларуси. Для более подробной беседы на эту тему "A1+" пригласил эксперт

по Международным отношениям Анну Памбухчян.



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Искать текст ...

НОВОСТИ  
Сентябрь 14, 2017

## НПО раскритиковало власти Армении за закрытие выставки о жертвах репрессий

## Expert: No political will, no debates (video)

19:36 | May 5, 2017 | Interview

Share 0



Political forces competing with each other do not hold debates. Many spoke about it during the April parliamentary elections saying that we lack the culture of televised debates.

A1+ Company has talked on the theme to an international relations expert Anna Pambukhchyan.



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Поиск

ГЛАВНАЯ НОВОСТИ ПОЛИТИКА ОБЩЕСТВО ЭКОНОМИКА РЕГИОН КАРАБАХ КУЛЬТУРА СПОРТ АРХИВ

АРМЕНИЯ  
Февраль 28, 2017  
Наши Сказки

## В соглашении Армения-ЕС либерализация визового режима «сформулирована как долгосрочная цель»

Поделиться



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# ***FINANCE***

## ***2017 REVENUE BY DONORS***

European Endowment for Democracy, Brussels	€ 26,100
Open Society Foundations-Armenia, Yerevan	20,281,237 AMD
National Endowment for Democracy, Washington	\$ 64,989
Prague Civil Society Center, Prague	€ 10,468
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 148,327 (approx.)</b>

## ***2017 EXPENDITURES BY IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS***

Raising Public Awareness about Citizens' Rights	11,888,658 AMD
Monitoring of the Activities of the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia	6,504,152 AMD
Building a Better Understanding about Propaganda and Disinformation in Armenia and Diminishing Their Impact	13,258,811 AMD
Public Debate on Foreign Policy	29,921,880 AMD
Building Fact-Checking Journalism in Armenia	5,750,451 AMD
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>67,323,952 AMD or \$ 139,474 (approx.)</b>