Kyrgyzstan

Capital: Bishkek
Population: 5.8 million
GNI/capita, PPP: US$3,220

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Democratic Governance</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Process</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Media</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Democratic Governance</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial Framework and Independence</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democracy Score</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.93</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.04</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.21</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.96</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.89</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.93</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.89</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: The ratings reflect the consensus of Freedom House, its academic advisers, and the author(s) of this report. If consensus cannot be reached, Freedom House is responsible for the final ratings. The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest level of democratic progress and 7 the lowest. The Democracy Score is an average of ratings for the categories tracked in a given year. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the author(s).
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kyrgyzstan adopted a new constitution in 2010 after the revolution that deposed President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. The interim government at that time agreed to postpone further constitutional amendments until at least 2020 to give the new parliamentary system a decade to consolidate. Although shortcomings in the new constitution, such as a vague distribution of powers regarding foreign policy, soon became obvious, they were manageable through minor revisions by the parliament and president. Nevertheless, in June 2016, contrary to his earlier pledge as a member of the interim government, President Almazbek Atambayev proposed a package of constitutional amendments to, among other things, expand the powers of the prime minister, ban same-sex marriage, reduce judicial independence, and allow Kyrgyzstan to legally disregard international rulings on alleged violations of individual rights within its borders. The president’s administration insisted that an amended constitution would prevent the emergence of clan-based rule.

In October, the Constitutional Chamber approved the constitutional amendments. Although members of the Chamber had spoken out against any amendments, they eventually caved to pressure from politicians, demonstrating the judiciary’s lack of independence despite ongoing judicial reform. The parliament voted on 2 November to put the amendments to referendum. This left just over a month for the public to understand and debate the amendments before voting day on 11 December. The 26 amendments were presented with one “Yes/No” option for the entire package. The referendum passed with roughly 80 percent support in a vote with 42 percent turnout.

Under the new amendments, the parliament will decide whether international agreements on human rights are applicable and valid under national law. Therefore, Kyrgyzstan would not be obliged to follow any international ruling about alleged violations of individual rights within its borders. This particular amendment is linked to the case of Azimjon Askarov, an ethnic Uzbek human rights activist jailed for life in the aftermath of the June 2010 ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan and, according to the UN, denied a fair trial. In April, the OHCHR urged the Kyrgyz government to drop all charges against Askarov, “quash his conviction,” and release him from jail. In response, the Supreme Court conducted a perfunctory review in July of allegations that Askarov was tortured, but it ignored the OHCHR’s recommendations and sent the case to a lower-level court for appeal while Askarov remains in prison. Civil society activists say that, unlike Atambayev, when former presidents Kurmanbek Bakiyev and Askar Akayev attempted to reinvent the constitution, neither tried to change the section on human rights.

Similar to his predecessors, President Atambayev has managed to alienate the very political leaders who were vital to his ascent to power. These include former president Roza Otunbayeva, whom Atambayev now accuses of “covering up looting” in the aftermath of the regime change in April 2010. Other former members of the interim government were some of the loudest critics of Atambayev’s calls for constitutional amendments. Throughout 2016, the president regularly blasted journalists and activists for criticizing him, sometimes using profane language.

The role of the State Committee for National Security (GKNB) in the political process expanded in 2016. The agency has acted as an arm of the Atambayev regime to silence its critics in politics and civil society. Leaders of the opposition People’s Parliament movement were arrested for attempting to organize antigovernment protests, while political critics said they were threatened with possible arrest. GKNB also acted locally, for instance, pressuring members of the Jalal-Abad Central Election Commission to register the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK) despite its failing to meet registration requirements.

Score Changes:

- **Electoral Process rating declined from 5.25 to 5.50** due to the conduct of the December constitutional referendum. The controversial referendum was held with inadequate time to debate its sweeping changes, members of the Central Election Commission sided with the political
leadership in the lead-up to the vote, and multiple violations were reported before and on the day of voting.

- **Judicial Framework and Independence rating declined from 6.25 to 6.50** due to the judiciary’s failure to follow through on OHCHR recommendations in the Azimjon Askarov case and its support for constitutional amendments that exposed the judiciary’s bias toward the political regime.

- **Civil Society rating declined from 4.75 to 5.00** due to increasing reports of intimidation of civic activists for the last three years, including pressure on international organizations, defamation campaigns against human rights defenders, and surveillance of human rights activists related to the constitutional referendum.

As a result, Kyrgyzstan’s Democracy Score declined to 6.00, and its classification changes to a Consolidated Authoritarian Regime.

**Outlook for 2017:** Following the controversial constitutional referendum, Kyrgyzstan is faced with an uncertain year. Although the prime minister’s role was expanded in the changes, the center of political power is still likely to be the president’s office. Presidential elections in 2017 will renew political competition between the main political factions of the presidential SDPK, Respublika-Ata Jurt, and Ata Meken. Atambayev’s successor will probably be a member or strong supporter of SDPK. The leader of Respublika-Ata Jurt in parliament, Omurbek Babanov, sided with SDPK on the most vital political decisions in the past year and is the likeliest front-runner for president. With opposition candidates from smaller parties overshadowed by SDPK and Respublika-Ata Jurt, organized public protests might once again become an instrument of choice. The cycle of incumbent leaders singlehandedly amending the constitution according to their own visions is likely to continue.
Since the ouster of the Bakiyev regime in 2010, citizens and outside observers have expressed hopes that Kyrgyzstan could break its history of rule by autocrats who manipulate the constitution to prolong their hold on power. But in 2016, President Almazbek Atambayev, elected in 2011 in a generally free and competitive vote, pushed to amend the constitution in ways that consolidated the dominance of the current political regime and undermined human rights and civil liberties. The 26 amendments to the constitution were presented in a referendum in December with one “Yes/No” response for the entire package. The referendum passed with roughly 80 percent support and 42 percent turnout in a weakly monitored vote marred by use of administrative resources and some reports of fraud (see Electoral Process).1

Despite Atambayev’s argument for the changes as a move from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary system,2 the amendments exclusively reflected the interests of incumbent political leaders and strengthened the powers of the existing regime. The Council of Europe’s Venice Commission, reviewing the proposed changes in late August, found that they actually increased the powers of the executive and weakened the parliament and judiciary.3 The only amendment that could potentially expand the powers of the parliament increased the number of votes (from 40 to 60) needed to confirm the president’s dismissal of a prosecutor general. The prime minister also gained the right to appoint and dismiss cabinet members, except those heading security structures, should the president fail to do so within three days.4

The amendments notably weakened the judicial branch, increasing the powers of the parliament and president to influence the dismissal of judges and lowering the threshold for the legislative branch to dismiss a Supreme Court judge from a two-thirds majority, or 80 members of parliament (MPs), to an absolute majority of MPs present or 50 MPs, whichever is greater.5

The president stated that the amendments rejecting the supremacy of international over domestic law were designed to prevent the UN’s Human Rights Committee (OHCHR) from intervening in Kyrgyzstan’s internal affairs. Specifically, he said these measures responded to an April call from the OHCHR to release Azimjon Askarov.6 Askarov is an ethnic Uzbek human rights activist jailed for life in the aftermath of the June 2010 ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan. OHCHR found that Askarov had been denied a fair trial due to attacks on his lawyers and referred to evidence that he had been tortured in detention.7 The head of Atambayev’s administration, Farid Niyazov, called the OHCHR’s request on behalf of Askarov “an issue of national security” threatening Kyrgyzstan’s sovereignty.8

Under the new amendments, the parliament could decide whether international agreements on human rights would be applicable and valid under national law. Therefore, Kyrgyzstan would not be obliged to follow any international ruling about alleged violations of individual rights within its borders. While this amendment was spurred by the Askarov case, it will affect many other individuals whose rights are violated as well.

One amendment defines a family as being formed by the union between “a man and a woman,” thus constitutionally banning same-sex marriage even though they were not legal before. Other changes would allow the government to strip citizenship from individuals, presumably those posing a terrorist threat.9 As civic leader Dinara Oshurakhunova remarked, even when former presidents Kurmanbek Bakiyev and Askar Akayev attempted to reinvent the constitution, neither tried to change the section on human rights.10
• When the proposed constitutional changes were first introduced in parliament in July, their origins were not clear. One of the youngest Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK) MPs, Dastan Bekeshev, wrote that “no one has robbed the people of the right to a referendum,” denying opposition accusations that the referendum had been put forward in parliament without popular support.\(^{11}\) Opposition MPs, however, claimed the amendments were written by the head of the legal department in the president’s administration, Anarbek Ismailov.\(^{12}\) Earlier versions of the amendments had called for defending the nation’s language and culture, possibly by granting special status to the Kyrgyz language and culture.\(^{13}\)

• Changes to the balance of powers were made with an eye to the 2017 presidential elections, when Atambayev must step down. Atambayev has denied that he will serve as prime minister or violate the constitution by seeking a second term as president.\(^{14}\) However, the way Atambayev imposed the referendum within the span of a few months suggests he will be able to promote a successor, thus retaining a degree of political influence. A strong prime minister will lead to more influence for Atambayev’s SDPK, which has already emerged as the most powerful political bloc.

• In promoting the constitutional changes, Atambayev and his allies adopted the rhetoric of democracy and stressed that stability had only been achieved in spite of the 2010 constitution and the interim government.\(^ {15}\) The vast majority of the parliament, including young MPs who previously opposed any constitutional changes, supported the initiative. The most vocal opposition came from members of Ata Meken and Bir Bol who had consistently opposed the president and his supporters. Kanybek Imanaliey (Ata Meken) argued that, similar to past ballots, this referendum would create conditions leading to the dismissal of the current parliament.\(^ {16}\) Former NGO activist Cholpon Jakupova (Bir Bol) harshly criticized the referendum.\(^ {17}\) Yet, these parties combined held only 23 of the 120 seats in parliament, hardly a formidable opposition.

• Throughout the year, the administration sought to discredit any opposition to the changes. Head of the presidential administration Niyazov attributed successful implementation of the constitution to the president’s personal qualities.\(^ {18}\) Atambayev’s October sacking of Minister of Social Development Kudaibergen Bazarbayev (Ata Meken) was widely interpreted as the president’s retaliation against Ata Meken leader Omurbek Tekebayev’s criticism of the constitutional referendum.\(^ {19}\) Also in October, the SDPK withdrew from the four-party coalition in parliament that included Ata Meken, bringing about a new government in favor of the constitution, in a move widely understood as designed to circumvent opposition to the constitutional changes.\(^ {20}\)

• Although some MPs openly oppose Atambayev, many more are agreed that he hopes to retain political influence after the 2017 elections. As one of the main writers of the current constitution, Tekebayev has reminded lawmakers that it is up to the parliament to hold the president accountable and not the other way around.\(^ {21}\) Former prosecutor general Aida Salyanova, now an Ata Meken MP, has said that the amendments would reduce the powers of the parliament.\(^ {22}\)

• Opposition forces experienced more direct suppression, too. A group of southern activists from the National Opposition Movement were arrested in March on fuzzy charges of plotting to overthrow the government.\(^ {23}\) In May, police arrested three leaders of the People’s Parliament movement who had tried to convene thousands in central Bishkek to rally against the president.\(^ {24}\) According to the State Committee for National Security (GKNB), Bekbolot Talgarbekov was detained on suspicions of violent overthrow of government and “use of firearms.”\(^ {25}\) The Ministry of Interior later reported that the organization offered protesters money to rally against Atambayev.\(^ {26}\) Several other members of the People’s Parliament movement were arrested after May, suggesting the government is trying to suppress large-scale demonstrations.\(^ {27}\)

• Throughout 2016, public discussions took place around the severe challenges women face in Kyrgyzstan. In May, the parliament de facto approved religious leaders performing marriages involving underage girls when it rejected a bill that would have criminalized the practice.\(^ {28}\) The bill’s defeat sparked some of the harshest criticism to date from civil society activists and some lawmakers, who claimed there had been technical problems with the voting machines in the hall. Others who
voted against the bill said the Kyrgyz and Russian versions differed in important ways. Some legal experts criticized Aida Salyanova, one of the coauthors of the bill, for failing to secure enough public support before bringing it to the floor of the parliament. Following revisions of the bill, the parliament finally voted to criminalize religious marriages of underage girls in October.

- Intense discussions on another subject emerged at the end of August, following the shocking deaths of 14 Kyrgyz women and girls, along with 3 Russian women, in a fire at the Moscow warehouse where they worked. In the wake of the tragedy, mourners criticized the government and President Atambayev for failing to create jobs at home, forcing vulnerable members of society to seek work abroad. In a written statement, the president expressed his condolences, announced awards for volunteer rescuers, and offered “material help” to the victims’ families. Kyrgyzstan commemorated the tragedy with a day of mourning for the victims.

Atambayev’s public grief was short-lived—he made no effort to scale back the celebration of the World Nomad Games, held a week after the fire at a new 10,000-seat hippodrome in the resort town of Cholpon-Ata. The president’s failure to elaborate on how he intends to protect Kyrgyz labor migrants abroad and create more labor opportunities at home following the tragedy revealed his disinterest in the safety of citizens and his inability to design effective economic and social policies.

Electoral Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Although the 2015 parliamentary elections appeared to mark a milestone for Kyrgyzstan as a competitive vote with an uncertain outcome, a closer look suggests that they were a poor indicator of the country’s overall democratic development. Flaws in the electoral process were manifested in the conduct of local elections and the constitutional referendum in 2016.

- The constitutional referendum was scheduled in a rush. Two months before the December local elections, MPs from SDPK suggested holding the constitutional referendum on the same day. They received a formal confirmation from the representative of the Central Election Commission (CEC), Aibolot Aidosov, that it would be possible to combine local elections and the referendum. On 2 November, the parliament voted to schedule the referendum on 11 December, leaving just over a month for public debate. Observers and participants from across the political spectrum admitted that even they had a limited understanding of the nature of the proposed constitutional amendments and their potential influence on the political course of the country.

- In the run-up to the local elections, members of the CEC in Jalal-Abad were pressured by the local government and GKNB to register candidates for the SDPK list, even though it failed to meet requirements for gender representation. On election day, there were reports of ballot stuffing, students bussed to precincts in Bishkek, and public employees forced to keep tabs on voters. The OSCE declined to send its observers to the referendum, saying, according to the CEC, that the date of the vote was too soon and that previously scheduled elections in December in Uzbekistan, Macedonia, and Romania took priority. The Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society, a local observer organization, noted serious technical problems with voting machines, a number of procedural violations, and heavy use of administrative resources in support of the constitutional changes, especially involving students.

- The local elections on 11 December comprised 22 city councils and 385 village councils across the country. Campaigns for local government posts, especially city councils, began months in advance, highlighting the growing importance of the elections. Over 20,000 candidates competed for the 7,233 open seats, with Chui, Osh, and Jalal-Abad oblasts featuring the most competitive races. Local parties regard winning representation in city councils as an important step in their strategy to continue
expanding to the national level. SDPK enjoyed a clear advantage, winning a plurality in 16 city councils, including Bishkek.

- Although presidential elections are scheduled to take place in 2017, there was still speculation about the candidates at the end of 2016. At one point, observers predicted a two-person race: an SDPK candidate versus Omurbek Babanov, head of Respublika-Ata Jurt. By the end of the year, however, Babanov had sided with Atambayev, perhaps hoping to have Atambayev and SDPK support his candidacy for president under Respublika-Ata Jurt’s banner.

### Civil Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- On a number of occasions in 2016, the Kyrgyz parliament voted for legislation undermining democracy and basic human rights protections. Although the “foreign agents” bill was abandoned in 2016, intimidation of civil society increased during the year, particularly targeting civil society activists who criticized the president or the constitutional referendum.

- Among the proposed laws discussed since 2014 is one that would label NGOs that receive foreign funding (nearly all) as “foreign agents,” mimicking a law passed in Russia in 2013. Under strong pressure from domestic civil society groups, the parliament abandoned the controversial legislation in 2016. NGOs and various activists, as well as international human rights organizations, publicly and in private warned both the president and parliament to avoid copying Russia’s law. The parliament’s decision to abandon the bill proved a victory for civil society and highlighted the limits of the Kremlin’s influence on domestic developments in Kyrgyzstan. Another bill modeled on Russia’s law banning “gay propaganda” may still be passed despite strong resistance from both domestic and international civil society. It has been two years since the parliament first considered the bill.

- Although NGOs and civil society activists were outspoken on the constitutional referendum and other governance issues, they consistently faced intimidation from law enforcement. In one major incident, MPs accused prominent human rights activist Tolekan Ismailova of supporting separatist messages when she was seen “grinning,” “smiling,” and “agreeing” during a talk by political exile Kadyrjan Batyrov at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw in September. In response, the Interior Ministry announced that it had initiated an investigation of Kyrgyzstani citizens sitting near Batyrov at the event.

- An entrepreneur and ethnic Uzbek, Batyrov fled Kyrgyzstan following the June 2010 ethnic violence after being accused of separatism by Kyrgyz authorities. Another prominent activist who was present at the OSCE event, Aziza Abdurasulova, pointed out that members of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also seen talking with Batyrov during the event, which Interior Ministry representatives observed. In June, the GKNB had questioned Ismailova about her professional activities. Following the September event in Warsaw, the Kyrgyz government indicated that it plans to downgrade the status of the OSCE Center in Bishkek because its mandate of building democracy in the country has been completed. However, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs specifically cited Batyrov’s presence at the OSCE event in Warsaw, which is open to all registered participants, as grounds for the reduced status.

- In September, Fergana.ru reported that a political activist and former member of Roza Otunbayeva’s government, Edil Baisalov, might also face arrest by the GKNB. According to Baisalov, the Atambayev regime wanted to force him to implicate Otunbayeva and Omurbek Tekebayev ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. The GKNB quickly denied Baisalov’s allegations, but former members of the interim government reported increasing pressure. Opposition leader Tekebayev, for instance, said he feared assassination by regime backers. At least one human rights
activist currently resides abroad out of fear of intimidation by Kyrgyz law enforcement for his political activism.

• Vigilante groups also threatened the personal safety of civil society activists. Marina Kim, an entrepreneur and well-known public figure, feared for her life and the safety of her young child. She received threats from vigilante groups for her statements on social media claiming that Kyrgyzstan is in a hopeless state. Some newspapers called for her to leave Kyrgyzstan and go to Korea.\(^\text{53}\) She believed that she could not rely on the protection of law enforcement agencies because she is not an ethnic Kyrgyz.

• In July, the spiritual development group Yiman, which President Atambayev created in 2014, hung large banners depicting women wearing traditional Kyrgyz clothing on one side and white hijabs on the other.\(^\text{54}\) The banners, located in central Bishkek, posed a question: “Oh poor nation, where are we headed?” The message was widely interpreted as “Muslim women threaten Kyrgyz society.” Atambayev said that he would order similar banners to be displayed around the country as a way to resist the “imposition of foreign culture.”\(^\text{55}\) However, after widespread denunciation of the banners as being divisive, including criticism from the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan,\(^\text{56}\) they were replaced with a different version showing women in traditional Kyrgyz clothing and modern fashion posted with the same message.\(^\text{57}\) Such attempts to control women’s choice of clothing, skewing it toward conservative traditional attire, continued to attract public criticism from NGOs and individual activists, and finally led to the posters’ removal.\(^\text{58}\)

### Independent Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kyrgyzstan’s mass media outlets continue to voice a range of views on political and social issues. Online outlets, in particular, report diverse views from civil society and opposition parties. The most popular online media include Kloop, Zanoza, and the local RFE/RL outlet Azattyk, which feature a variety of opinions and innovative news coverage. AKIpress and 24 are also leading online news providers, though they rarely publish analytical or investigative pieces. Heated discussions among Atambayev’s proponents and critics regularly occur on Twitter, Facebook, Diesel, and other social media outlets. The debates take place in both Russian and Kyrgyz. In 2016, the parliament discussed several measures that would negatively affect media freedom.

• Amid preparations for the constitutional referendum in December, SDPK and Respublika–Ata Jurt MPs advanced a bill imposing new regulations on TV and online media outlets. The bill, framed as “informational security,” would limit foreign ownership and administration of individual media outlets to 20 percent, and would also limit the total foreign ownership in the overall market to 20 percent.\(^\text{59}\) According to media analysts, although there are 59 accredited foreign mass media outlets within the territory of Kyrgyzstan, such as Perviy Kanal (Russia), CCTV (China), FarsNews (Iran), and KazTAG (Kazakhstan), it is not clear which of them would be affected by the bill, because most are not local companies with foreign ownership but operate as local branches of foreign companies.\(^\text{60}\) However, Azattyk, the local branch of the U.S.-government-funded RFE/RL, was considered the target of the bill, presumably because of its critical reporting.\(^\text{61}\) The draft was approved in its first reading in June. In late December, the bill was amended to narrow its scope to cover only TV stations (thus excluding Azattyk) and to limit foreign ownership to 35 percent of shares.\(^\text{62}\)

• Another initiative under discussion was censorship of online media. MP Dastan Bekeshev of SDPK has claimed that it is time to review the law on mass media and strengthen the regulation of online outlets to improve the objectivity of reporting.\(^\text{63}\) Bekeshev’s statement preceded the government’s adoption of new regulations in the run-up to the local elections and referendum. Among them, the
CEC required memorandums of understanding with online media outlets covering the local elections and referendum. The outlets also had to submit contact information for all journalists covering the elections. Such monitoring helps the CEC control access to election data and limits media oversight during voting.

- Kyrgyzstan lacks its own connection to the global internet and depends on Kazakhstan for around 90 percent of its service. When Kazakhstani service providers imposed higher tariffs in September, rates in Kyrgyzstan jumped overnight from $13.85 per Mbps to $30. According to communications experts, Kyrgyzstan could obtain internet access from China, but the connection quality is inferior. After negotiations between antimonopoly agencies and internet service providers in both countries, the sides agreed to return to the old rates for Kyrgyz internet service while negotiations continue. But in the long-term, the prices will likely increase. The number of active internet users in Kyrgyzstan continued to grow in 2016, reaching 79% of the total population. The low internet tariffs contributed to the rapid growth of connectivity in recent years.

Local Democratic Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The degree of autonomy among local government structures varies across the country. Like national political parties, local parties are often formed around prominent individuals rather than political ideologies. The elections in December showed that parties enjoying local popularity but lacking national reach can still challenge the largest parties, i.e., SDPK and Respublika–Ata Jurt. At the same time, both parties tend to agree on most political issues, and most other smaller parties follow their lead. In this way, even where it lacks majority or plurality representation in most city councils, SDPK is able to maintain political dominance through proxies.

- In parts of southern Kyrgyzstan, law enforcement agencies and local governments openly tolerate and, in some cases, encourage Islamic and Christian religious fundamentalism that violates the dignity of religious minorities. In October, representatives of the local clergy in a village in Jalal-Abad oblast insisted that a local woman who had converted to Christianity be reburied in a different cemetery where other Christians are interred. The local government in the village sided with the imams, who also demanded that the woman’s Christian relatives convert to Islam. The head of the local government, Sonunbek Akparaliyev, expressed concern that more people might want to convert to other religions. After the woman’s body was reburied in a Christian cemetery, another group of local residents, this time Orthodox Christians, demanded that she be exhumed yet again because of her Baptist denomination. The woman was finally reburied in a secret location to prevent any further controversy. A criminal case was opened concerning interference with the woman’s burial, but the woman’s daughter said that the accused were young men and not the officials responsible.

- As of the end of 2015, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan had delimited 520 out of 970 kilometers of disputed border between the two countries, but the border remains a source of tension and occasional violence. A serious skirmish in January left two Tajik border guards, five Kyrgyz border guards, and one Kyrgyz policeman dead. After another deadly clash in August, high-level negotiations restarted in September. While Tajikistan insists that the borders should be delimited according to maps from 1924, Kyrgyzstan refers to maps from 1989.

- In September, the death of Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan’s longtime president, opened up long-closed opportunities for collaboration across the border at the local level. Under Karimov, the border was tightly controlled and often sealed by the Uzbek side. In October, a large delegation from Uzbekistan received a warm welcome in Kyrgyzstan’s largest southern city, Osh. The Uzbek side was represented by local government members from bordering Namangan, Fergana, and Andijan oblasts.
who were greeted by the mayor of Osh, Aitmamat Kadyrbayev. In addition, representatives of business, arts, and farming communities celebrated a new beginning to bilateral relations at the local level. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have since agreed to resolve 324 km of disputed border between the two states.74

Judicial Framework and Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• The judicial sector reform initiated in the aftermath of the 2010 regime change has failed to increase the independence of the judicial system or to decrease corruption. Certain reforms initiated in the first two years—creation of the Constitutional Chamber to replace a corrupt Supreme Court and new procedures for the selection of judges—have been implemented, but further improvements have been stalled for the past three years. The Constitutional Chamber’s unanimous support of the 2016 constitutional changes initiated by the president and a majority of the parliament confirmed that the newly created judicial body is just as politicized as its predecessor, even though its judges are selected by a special committee composed of MPs and NGO representatives. After the chamber’s support for the changes, Rita Karasartova, a renowned legal expert, argued that the chamber betrayed the principle of independence of the judiciary.75

• The Supreme Court’s response to further developments in the Azimjon Askarov case also demonstrated its lack of independence. In April, the UN Human Rights Committee (OHCHR) urged the government to drop all charges against Askarov, “quash his conviction,” and release him from jail after finding in his case that Kyrgyzstan had violated several articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Kyrgyzstan has signed.76 During his detention, interrogation, and trial in 2010, Askarov was kept in inhumane conditions, deprived of medical treatment, and denied private meetings with his lawyer. Askarov was convicted of the murder of a police officer during the June 2010 ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan, and his case has been the subject of years of campaigning by domestic and international human rights organizations that claim he was not afforded a fair trial and was tortured while in detention.

• In response to the OHCHR, the Supreme Court in July reviewed allegations that Askarov was tortured. The court, however, ignored the recommendations of the OHCHR and instead sent the case for a fresh appeal hearing before the Chui Regional Court in Bishkek. The move left the original conviction intact, and Askarov remains imprisoned. According to a legal expert from the Moscow-based human rights organization Memorial, a new appeal is unlikely to hear fresh evidence, as Askarov’s lawyers have requested.77 During the Supreme Court hearing, relatives of the murdered police officer again violently attacked Askarov’s defense team, as they had in 2010. Nurbek Toktakunov, one of Askarov’s attorneys, noted that the Supreme Court, as well as the general prosecutor who represented the government’s positions in the hearing, had failed to respond to the OHCHR’s ruling, which did not request that allegations of torture be reviewed but that Askarov be freed and his conviction quashed.78

• In September, the Supreme Court reviewed an appeal from Rashod Kamalov, a popular ethnic Uzbek imam.79 Based on shaky evidence, Kamalov was sentenced in November 2015 to 10 years in prison on charges of supporting extremism and distributing extremist religious material. According to Kamalov’s lawyer, the imam was forced to shave off his beard while in detention.80 The prosecution of Kamalov is part of a larger trend in Kyrgyzstan whereby security services are quick to play the “radicalism” card.
Corruption

|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|

• The involvement of several high-ranking officials in corruption came to light in 2016. In April, Prime Minister Temir Sariyev resigned after Minister of Transportation and Roads Argynbek Malabayev accused Sariev of awarding a $100-million road construction tender to a Chinese company. Malabayev was also forced to resign. In October, the next minister of transportation, Zamirbek Aidarov, was reported to be driving a Lexus LX570 provided by the China Road and Bridge Corporation, a Chinese firm with $1.1 billion KGS ($16 million) in contracts with the Kyrgyz government. The ministry claimed that the temporary use of the luxury SUV was due to “operational needs.” While the case attracted public attention as a clear conflict of interest inside the ministry, policy observers said that most government contractors provide luxury cars when dealing with the Kyrgyz government. MP and head of the Onuguu-Progress party Bakytor Aydarov called for Aidarov to resign, also alleging that $100 million KGS ($1.5 million) had disappeared during the construction of a road to Manas International Airport, just north of Bishkek. Aidarov was removed in November.

• Taalaibek Kulanbayev, a member of the local government in Issyk-Kul region, reportedly illegally distributed 440 hectares of state land to family members. MPs from the local village council also received land plots. According to the 2009 law on pasture lands, state-owned lands cannot be privatized. Kulanbayev was dismissed from his position, but the legal process of returning the land plots to the government has stalled because the properties were subsequently resold to other parties. In another scandal, a driver for the Chairman of the Defense Committee was arrested for attempting to sell weapons to members of an organized criminal group.

• According to Kyrgyz media, President Atambayev has built a lavish mansion on the outskirts of Bishkek. Unlike his predecessors, Atambayev’s family is not known to monopolize economic resources, but photos of the president’s new house suggest it required funding that clearly exceeds his salary. According to the president’s declaration for 2015, his annual income amounted to roughly $1.3 million KGS ($19,000), whereas he spent $34 million KGS ($491,000). The mansion has a private road connecting to the main arteries in the area and boasts high-security surveillance.

• In April, the Kyrgyz government sued Maksim Bakiyev, son of the former president, for stealing at least £20 million in government funds following his father’s ouster in 2010. However, in October, the London-based law firm Hickman & Rose reported that the Kyrgyz government had withdrawn its claim “in the face of Mr. Bakiyev’s readiness to seek summary judgment.” The amount of money potentially in dispute is enormous. On the very day that President Bakiyev’s regime was ousted, his family reportedly transferred US$170 million—nearly 10 percent of the country’s reserves—to offshore accounts.

• Corruption is rife among law enforcement agencies. Videos of predatory law enforcement officials extorting bribes regularly surface online. In October, NTS TV broadcast a video of a police officer taking his colleagues to task for arresting prostitutes under his protection. The video came during a Bishkek police campaign to take all sex workers off the streets ahead of the tourist season and the month of Ramadan. When the video surfaced, the officer was demoted but not fired. This incident highlighted the widespread corruption among police officers, who prey on the most vulnerable groups in the society.

• In 2016, Kyrgyzstan ranked 136th out of 171 countries on Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index, with the same absolute score as in 2015. Kyrgyzstan is 75th in the World Bank’s Doing Business 2017 report, down two places due to improvements in other countries’ scores. Kyrgyzstan continues to be a major trade route for drug trafficking enabled by high-level corruption.
AUTHOR: ERICA MARAT

Erica Marat is an assistant professor and director of the Homeland Defense Fellowship Program at the College of International Security Affairs, National Defense University.

1 Kyrgyz Republic's Constitutional Amendments: Let's figure them out, Zanoza.kg, 13
6 Anna Kapushenko, “Атамбаев раскритиковал Отунбаеву и экс-министров за недовольство поправками в Конституцию” [Atambayev criticized Otunbayeva and former ministers for their disagreement with constitutional amendments], Kloop.kg, 31 August 2016, http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/08/31/atambaev-raskritikoval-otunbaevu-i-eksmintirovoz-izaza-popravok-v-konstitutsiiyuglavnoe/
8 Eldiyar Arykbayev, “Что стало известно из интервью главы администрации Атамбаева по поправкам в Конституцию?” [What has become clear about constitutional amendments from the interview with head of Atambayev administration], Kloop.kg, 8 November 2016, http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/08/11/chtostalo-izvestno-iz-zayavlenij-glav-administratsii-atambaeva-po-popravкам-v-konstitutsiyu/
10 Nargiza Osmonova, “Динара Ошурахунова: Даже Акаев и Бакиев не замахивались на раздел Конституции о правах человека” [Dinara Oshurakhunova: Even Akayev and Bakiyev didn’t touch the Constitution’s section on human rights], 24, August 24, 2016, http://24.kg/vlast/36090_dinara_oshurahunova_daje_akaev_i_bakiyev_ne_zamahilis_na razdel konstitutsii o pravakh cheloveka/
12 Nargiza Osmonova, “В ЖК признали, что после принятия поправок в Конституцию будут предпосылки к роспуску парламента” [Some MPs admitted that after the constitutional amendments are implemented there will be reasons to disperse the parliament], 24, September 29, 2016, http://24.kg/vlast/37532_v_jk_priznali_ichto_postre_popravok_v_konstitutsiyu_budet_predposyliki_k_rospusku_parlamenta/
13 “Есть две версии изменений в Конституцию: давайте разбираться” [There are two versions of the constitutional amendments: Let’s figure them out], Zanoza.kg, http://zanoza.kg/doc/344421_est_dve_versii_izmeneniy_v_konstituciyu_davayte razbiratsia.html
Some MPs admitted that after the constitutional amendments are implemented there will be reasons to disperse the parliament, [24.kg, September 29, 2016, http://24.kg/vlast/37532_v_jk_priznali_chto_posle_prinyatiya_popravok_v_konstitutsiyu_budut_predposyilki_k_ros_pusku_parlamenta/]

Deputies choose not to ban religious marriages with adolescents [Zanoza.kg, 26 May 2016, http://zanoza.kg/doc/338959_deputaty_reshili_ne_zapreshat_religiozny_brak_s_nesovershennoletnimi.html]

Some MPs admitted that after the constitutional amendments are implemented there will be reasons to disperse the parliament, [24.kg, September 29, 2016, http://24.kg/vlast/37532_v_jk_priznali_chto_posle_prinyatiya_popravok_v_konstitutsiyu_budut_predposyilki_k_ros_pusku_parlamenta/]

Deputies choose not to ban religious marriages with adolescents [Zanoza.kg, 26 May 2016, http://zanoza.kg/doc/338959_deputaty_reshili_ne_zapreshat_religiozny_brak_s_nesovershennoletnimi.html]

47 "View on One Problem", Sputnik.kg, 26 August 2016, https://ru.sputnik.kg/opinion/20160826/1028789164.html


в направлении,

67 uslugi http://kyrtag.kg/society/kyrgyzstan

66 http://24.kg/tehnoblog/36499_internet

24.kg, September 5, 2016,


assessments of the bill on mass media], Vesti.kg, 4 October 2016,

59 https://ru.sputnik.kg/society/20160713/1027634490.html

58 poor nation, where are we headed?’ to be hung throughout

57 http://rus.azattyk.org/a/27872844.html

56 http://rado.azattyk.org/a/27872844.html

55 http://24.kg/vlast/38107_omurbek_tekebaev_podozrevaet_chno_ego_mogut_ubit/


53 Марина Мирошник, “Милиция ныч хулиганов, сорвавших баннер ‘Кайран элим, кайда баратабы?’” [Police is looking for hooligans who destroyed ‘Oh poor nation, where are we headed?’ banner], Zanoza.kg, 14 July 2016,

http://zanoza.kg/doc/341553_miliciia_ishet_hyliganov_sorvavshih_banner_kayan_elim_kayda_baratabyz.html

52 “Люди говорят: А, может, Марина Ким, давай уже, до свидания!” [People are saying: ‘Is it time for Marina Kim to leave?’], Vesti.kg, 21 July 2016,


51 Eleonora Beishembek kyzy, “ГКНБ ищет след Временного правительства в июнских событиях?” [Is the GKNB looking for evidence of the Interim Government’s involvement in the June events?], Azattyk.org, 20 September 2016,

http://rus.azattyk.org/a/28001624.html

50 “А батарыбыз, орталык?” [“Where are we headed?”] could damage unity], Sputnik.kg, 13 July 2016,

ezitter.org/society/52240_novaya_versiya_kayran_elim_kayda_baratabyiz_snyata/

49 “Омурбек Текебаев подозревает, что его могут убить” [Omurbek Tekebayev suspects he might be killed], 24.kg, 11 October 2016,

http://24.kg/vlast/38107_omurbek_tekebaev_podozrevaet_chno_ego_mogut_ubit/

48 “Интернет подорожал” [Prices for the Internet tripled in Kyrgyzstan], vb.kg, 8

втрое для Интернет Кыргызстана и о

47 “…и освещения выборов и референдума заключат меморандум” [During elections a memorandum will concluded with online media], RFE/RL, 20 December 2016,

http://rado.azattyk.org/a/28186047.html

46 “Кожобек Рыспаев: Разные ограничительные поправки в законе о СМИ удалены” [Kozhobek Ryspaev: Various constraining amendments in law on mass media removed], RFE/RL, 20 December 2016,

http://rus.azattyk.org/a/28186047.html

45 Dilya Yusupova, “С онлайн-СМИ на время освещения выборов и референдума заключат меморандум” [Police are looking for evidence of the Interim Government’s involvement in the June events?], Kyrtag, 17 October 2016,

http://kyrtag.kg/society/kyrgyzstan-agree-to-lower-current-tariffs-on-internet-services, Kyrgystan and Kazakhstan agree to lower current tariffs on internet services], Kyrtag, 17 October 2016,

http://kyrtag.kg/society/kyrgyzstan-agree-to-lower-current-tariffs-on-internet-services-

44 “Кыргызстан и Казахстан договорились о снижении действующих тарифов на интернет-услуги” [Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan agree to lower current tariffs on internet services], Kyrtag, 17 October 2016,

http://kyrtag.kg/society/kyrgyzstan-agree-to-lower-current-tariffs-on-internet-services-

43 “Давайте уже начнём” [“Let’s begin already”] said the Bishkek city administration when asking for months to remove banners [“Kairan elim, kayda baratabyz”], RFE/RL, 22 July 2016,

http://rus.azattyk.org/a/27872844.html

42 “СМИ: Мнения: поправки в закон о СМИ – это иллюзия законотворческой деятельности” [Opinions: amendments to the law on mass media – this is an imitation of legislative activity], Zanoza.kg, 16 June 2016,

http://zanoza.kg/doc/340179_mnenia:_popravki_v_zakon_o_smi_eto_imitaciia_zakonotvorcheskoj_dejatelnosti.html

41 Ibid.

40 “Кожобек Рыспаев: Ряд ограничительных поправок в законе о СМИ удалены” [Kozhobek Ryspaev: Various constraining amendments in law on mass media removed], RFE/RL, 20 December 2016,

http://rus.azattyk.org/a/28186047.html

39 Dastan Bekeshev, Twitter post, 30 September 2016, https://twitter.com/bekeshev/status/781777522921005056

38 Dilya Yusupova, “С онлайн-СМИ на время освещения выборов и референдума заключат меморандум” [During elections a memorandum will concluded with online media], Zanoza.kg, 11 October 2016,

http://zanoza.kg/doc/345696_s_onlayn_smi_na_vremia_osvesheniya_vyborov_i REFERENDUMA_zakluchat_memorandum.html

37 People are saying: ‘Is it time for Marina Kim to leave?’], Vesti.kg, 21 July 2016,


36 “Думак: баннер «Кайран элим, кайда баратабы?» может навредить единству” [Muftiie: Banner “Oh poor nation, where are we headed?” could damage unity], Sputnik.kg, 13 July 2016,

https://ru.sputnik.kg/society/20160713/1027634490.html

35 В Бишкеке появились другие баннеры “Кайран элим, кайда баратабы?” [Different banners with “Oh poor nation, where are we headed?” appeared in Bishkek], vb.kg, 28 July 2016,

http://www.vb.kg/doc/344183_v_bishkeke_poiavilis_drygie_bannery_kayran_elim_kayda_baratabyz.html

34 “Новая версия “Кайран элим, кайда баратабы” снята” [New version of “Oh poor nation, where are we headed” removed], Gezitter/Kaganat, 29 July 2016,

http://www.gezitter.org/society/52240_novaya_versiya_kayran_elim_kayda_baratabyiz_snyata/

33 “Институт Медиа Полиси дал свою оценку проекту закона о СМИ” [Media Policy Institute gave its assessment of the bill on mass media], Vesti.kg, 4 October 2016,


32 Марина Мирошник, “Милиция ныч хулиганов, сорвавших баннер ‘Кайран элим, кайда баратабы?’” [Police is looking for hooligans who destroyed ‘Oh poor nation, where are we headed?’ banner], Zanoza.kg, 14 July 2016,

http://zanoza.kg/doc/341553_miliciia_ishet_hyliganov_sorvavshih_banner_kayan_elim_kayda_baratabyz.html
administration excavated the body of the Baptist woman and took to an unknown location], Akipress.kg, October
69 Aleksandra Titova, “Милиция решает, возбудить ли дело по перезахоронению женщины из-за веры” [Police
deciding whether to investigate the case of a woman’s reburial due to her religious beliefs], Kloop.kg, October
17, 2016, http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/10/17/militsiya-reshaet-vozbuzdat-li-delо-po-perezahoroneniyu-
zhenshchiny-iz-za-veru/
70 Aleksandra Titova, “Суд по делу о перезахоронении баптистки перенесли на неизвестный срок” [Trial in
71 “Кыргызстан и Таджикистан делимитировали 520 км границы” [Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan delimited 520
72 “Таджикистан и Кыргызстан возобновили переговоры по границе” [Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan restart
73 Akylai Karimova, “Сегодня большой праздник: Как Кыргызстан встречал гостей из Узбекистана” ['Today
is a big celebration': How Kyrgyzstan greeted guests from Uzbekistan], Kloop.kg, 28 October 2016, http://kloop.
kg/blog/2016/10/28/segodnya-bolshej-prazdnik-kak-kyrgyzstan-vstrechal-gostei-iz-uzbekistana/
74 Argynbek Malabaev relieved of duties as minister of transport and roads of the Kyrgyz Republic, President of
the Kyrgyz Republic, 13 April 2016, http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/10/11/mintrans_remontovk-odobrila-
konstitutsiyu/
75 The Constitutional Chamber approved amendments to the constitution], Kloop.kg, 11 October 2016,
http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/10/11/konstitutsionnaya-palata-odobriлa-popravki-v-konstitutsiyu/
76 “Release Azimjon Askarov and quash his conviction, UN human rights experts urge Kyrgyzstan,” OHCHR, 21
351&type=3&theater
79 “Кыргызстан: Верховный суд оставил в силе притвор и имаму Рашоду Камалову” [Kyrgyzstan: Supreme
court left imam Rashod Kamalov's sentence unchanged], Fergananews.com, 23 September 2016,
http://www.fergananews.com/news:25372
80 “Кыргызстан: Осуждённому имаму Рашоду Камалову в следственном изоляторе насилием сбрели бороду” [Kyrgyzstan: Convicted imam Rashod Kamalov forced to shave beard in investigative detention], Ferganane
81 Katherine Putz, “Кыргыз Премьер-министр Ресиенд Амрид Роад Конструкшн Скандал”, The Diplomat, April 11,
82 Argynbek Malabaev nominated for firing over road construction scandal”, The Diplomat, April 11, 2016,
http://www.fergananews.com/news:25372
83 Argynbek Malabaev relieved of duties as minister of transport and roads of the Kyrgyz Republic, President of the
h_obyazannostey_ministra_transporta_i_kommunikatsiy_kyrgyzskoy_respubliki/
84 Ayklai Karimova, “Минтранс: «Чайна Роад» сама забрала «Лексус» у министра” [Ministry of Transport:
China Road took Lexus from the minister], Kloop.kg, 11 October 2016, http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/10/11/mintrans-
chajna-road-sama-zabrala-leksus-u-ministra/
85 “Министра транспорта и дорог предлагают отстранить от должности” [Suggestion to fire the Minister of
Transport and Roads], 24.kg, 10 October 2016, http://24.kg/vlast/38027_ministra_transporta_i_dorog_predlagayut_otstranit_ot_doljnosti/
86 “Замырбек Айдаров освобождён от исполнения ранее возложенных обязанностей министра транспорта и
dорог Кыргызской Республики” [Zamirbek Aidarov relieved of duties as minister of transport and roads of the
80 Bulat Satarkulov, “Как чиновник раздал 440 гектаров пастбищ родным и близким” [How a government employee gave away 440 acres of pasture land to relatives and close friends], Kloop.kg, October 12, 2016, http://kloop.kg/blog/2016/10/12/kak-chinovnik-razdal-440-gektarov-pastbishh-rodnym-i-blizkim/
87 Ibid.
88 Marat Uraliev, “Водителя главы Комитета по делам обороны задержали за оружие и боеприпасы” [The driver of the head of the Committee on Defense Affairs was captured with weapons and armament], Zanoza.kg, 7 October 2016, http://zanoza.kg/doc/345526_voditelia_glavy_komiteta_po_delam_oborony_zaderjali_za_oryjie_i_boepripasy.html
89 Toktosun Shambetov, “Дом, который строит президент” [The house the president is building], RFE/RL, 18 August 2016, http://rus.azattyk.org/a/27930138.html
93 “В Бишкеке милиционер просит коллегу ’не трогать его проституток.’ Видео” [In Bishkek police officer asks colleague “not to touch his prostitutes.” Video], Zanoza.kg, 11 October 2016, http://zanoza.kg/doc/345702_v_bishkeke_militsioner_prosivshego_ne_trogat_ego_prostitytok__video.html