MEDIA FREEDOM LITERACY IN COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL ASIA
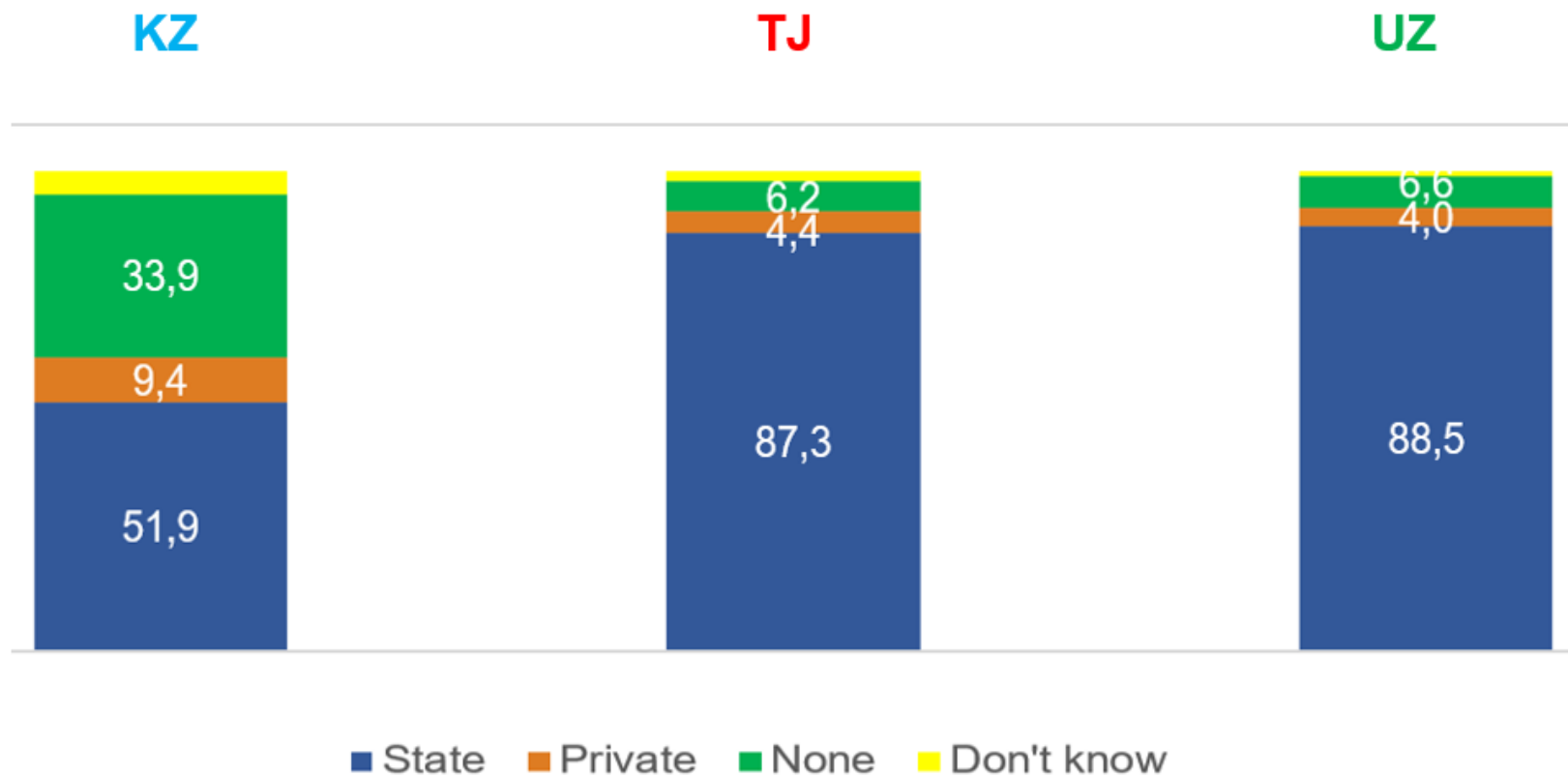
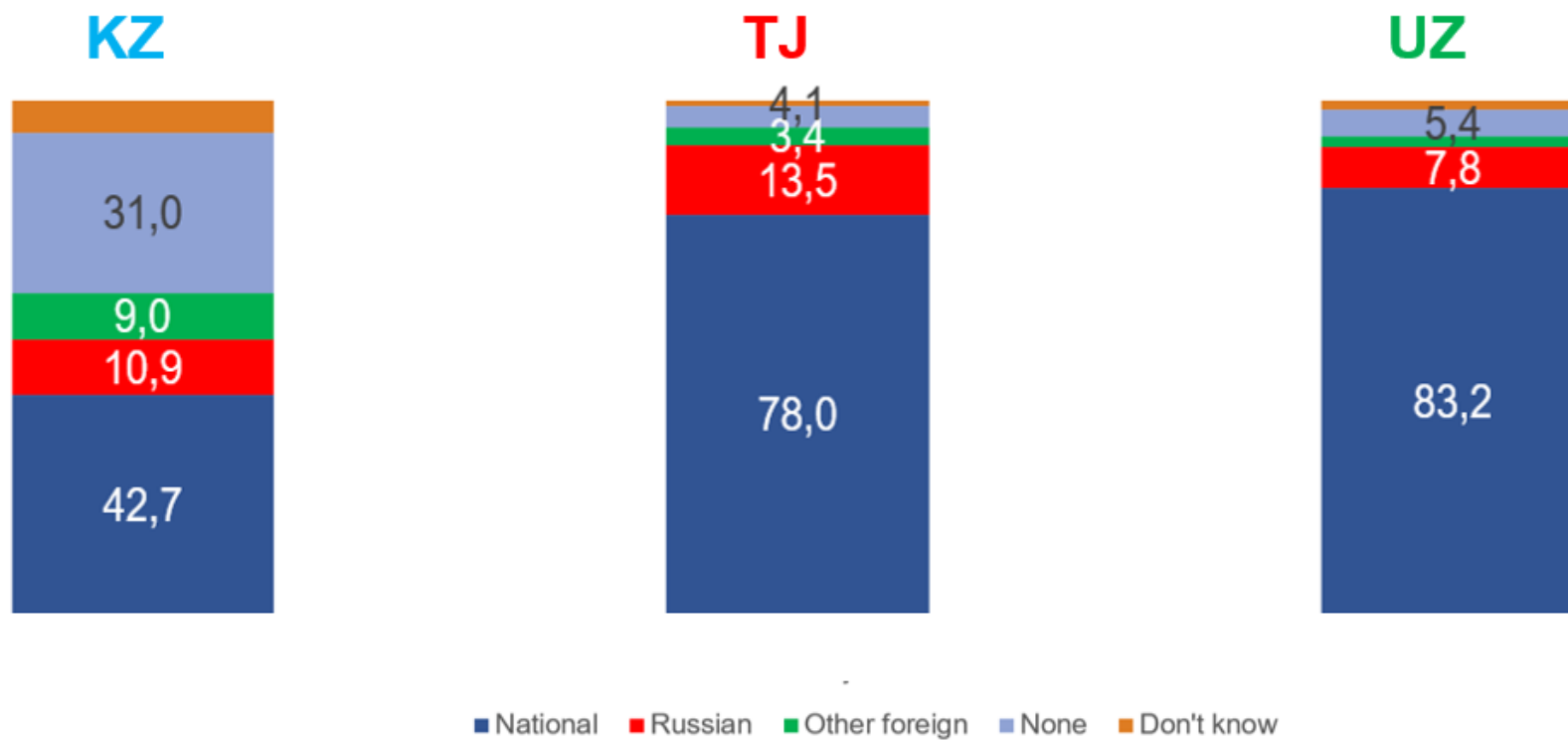Diana Okremova,

Legal Media Center, 2022

Main points:

- The governments of all countries have an understanding of the need to develop media information literacy, but there are no clear strategies on how to do this

- Our observations showed noted the low awareness of government agencies about media information literacy, the lack of skills and competencies in this area

- Access to official information is often difficult, which is why journalists and civil society have to turn to alternative, not always reliable and objective sources, and often to fake broadcasters.

- There is virtually no intersectoral partnerships, which could give good results both in terms of capacity development and in terms of well-coordinated actions

- Specialized fact-checking platforms only exist in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

- The academia members were noted as the most educated in the field of media literacy, mainly due to regular training and teaching of specific courses at journalism schools

- Civil society has been found to be a major player and driver of media literacy. Social media are the most vulnerable field for the spread of disinformation today

Trust in state/ private sources of information (%)
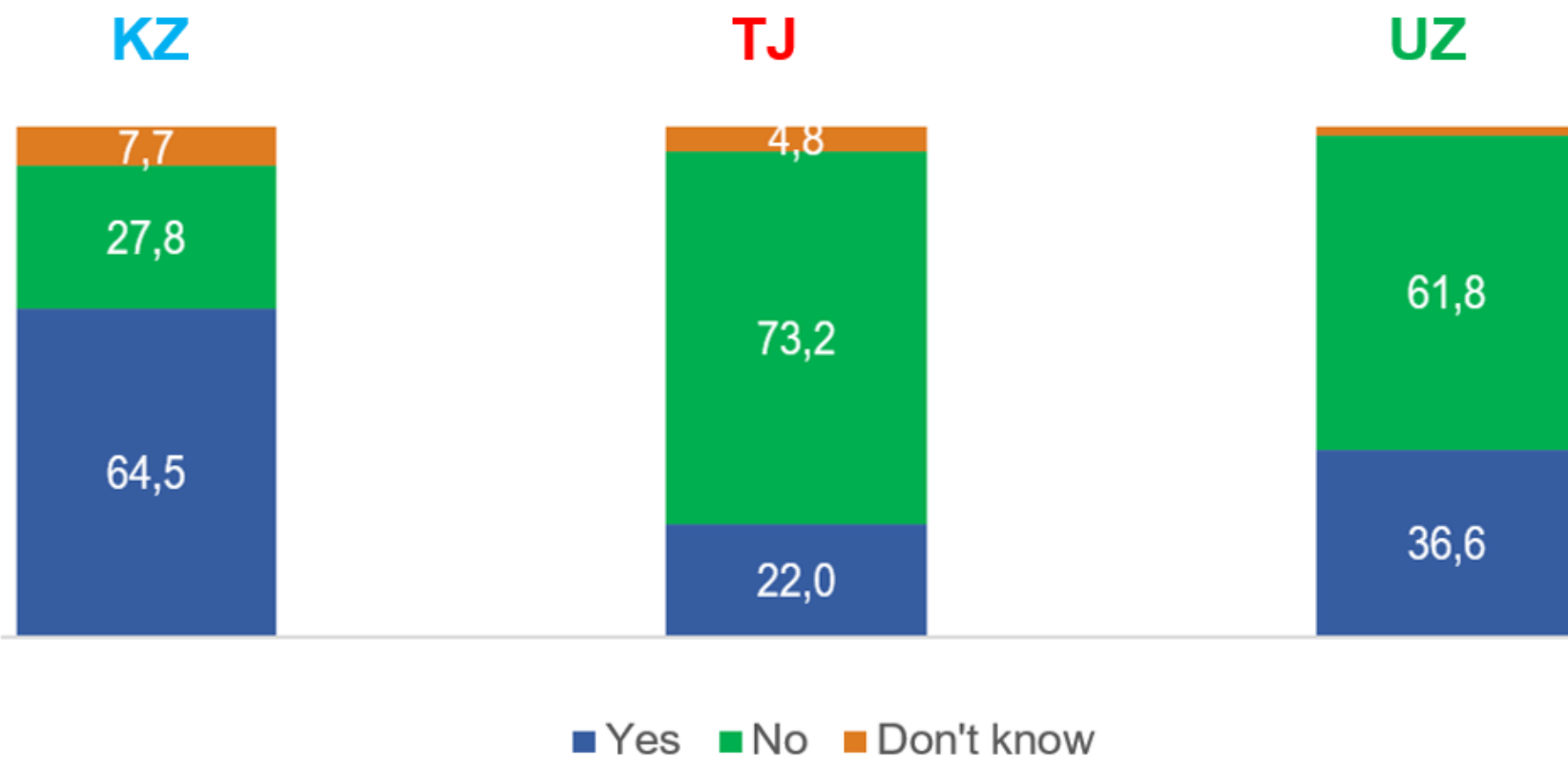

	KZ	TJ	UZ
State	51,9	87,3	88,5
Private	9,4	4,4	4,0
None	33,9	6,2	6,6
Don't know			

Legend: ■ State ■ Private ■ None ■ Don't know

- data source: Internews Kazakhstan

Trust in national/foreign sources of information (%)

KZ
- 31,0
- 9,0
- 10,9
- 42,7

TJ
- 4,1
- 3,4
- 13,5
- 78,0

UZ
- 5,4
- 7,8
- 83,2

Legend: ■ National ■ Russian ■ Other foreign ■ None ■ Don't know

Internews Kazakhstan

Have you noticed cases of conflicting coverage of the same political event? (%)

KZ

TJ

UZ

	KZ	TJ	UZ
Don't know	7,7	4,8	
No	27,8	73,2	61,8
Yes	64,5	22,0	36,6

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

What do you do when faced with conflicting media coverage of an event (%)?

| | KZ | TJ | UZ |

- I share my observations on social media
- I trust only one source of information
- I ask the opinion of friends, relatives, acquaintances
- I compare the information with what is written/posted in other media sources
- I do nothing
- Don't know
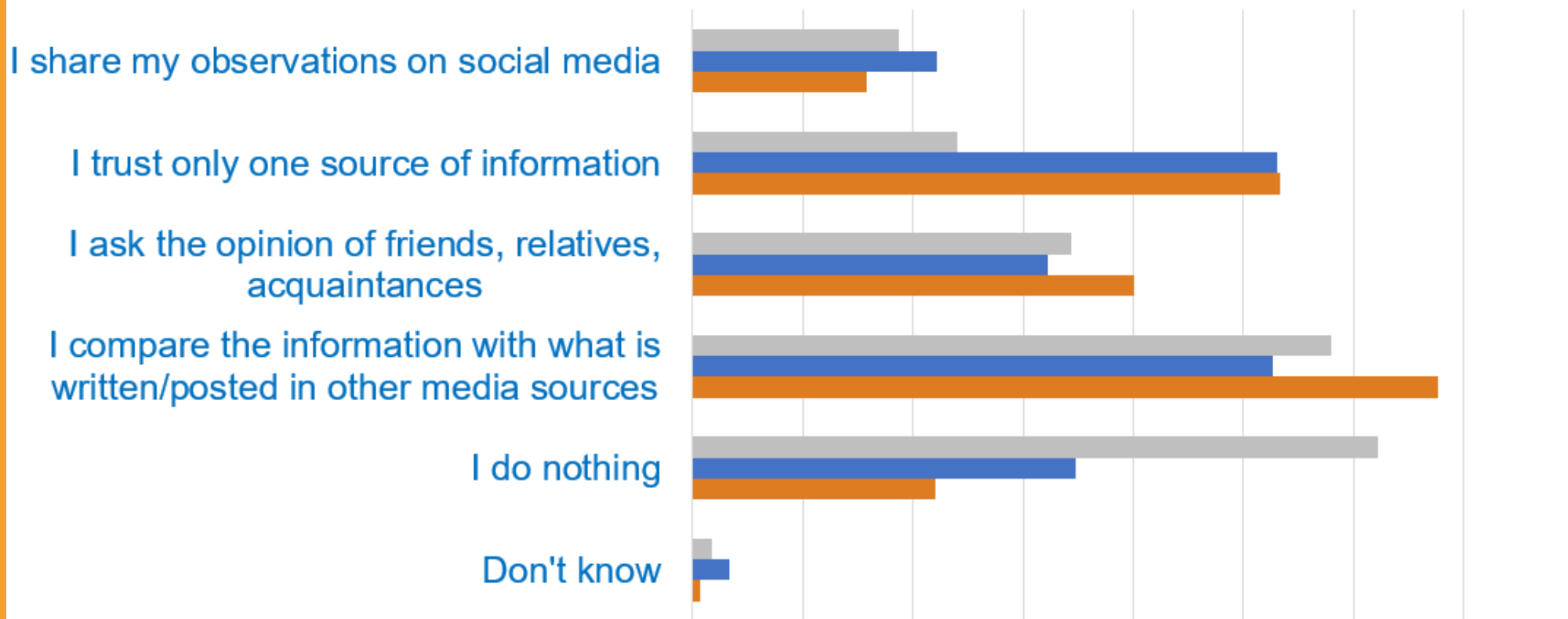
Distribution of the MIL level by country in 2019 (%)

	KZ		TJ		UZ
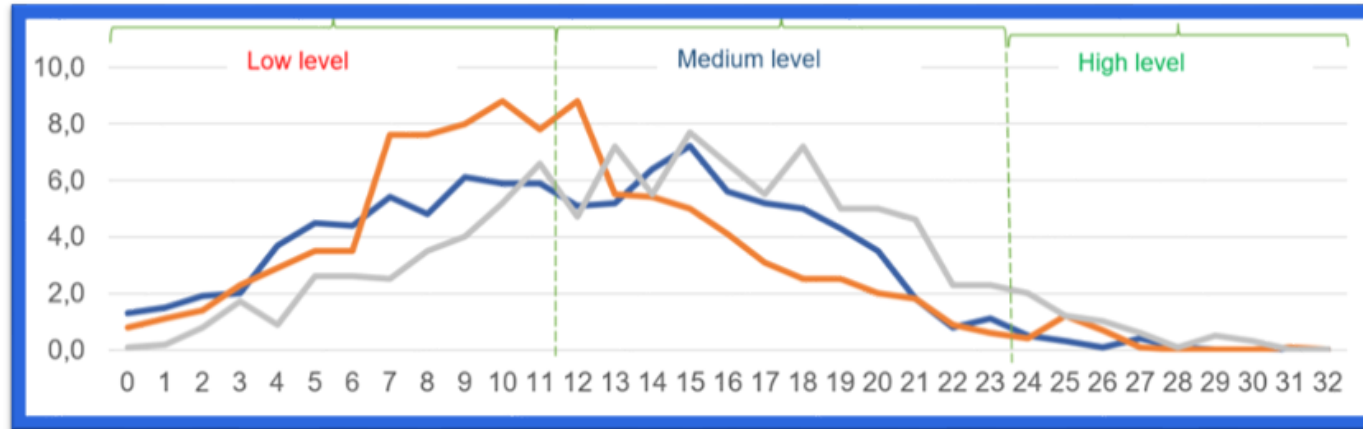
and in 2021 (%)
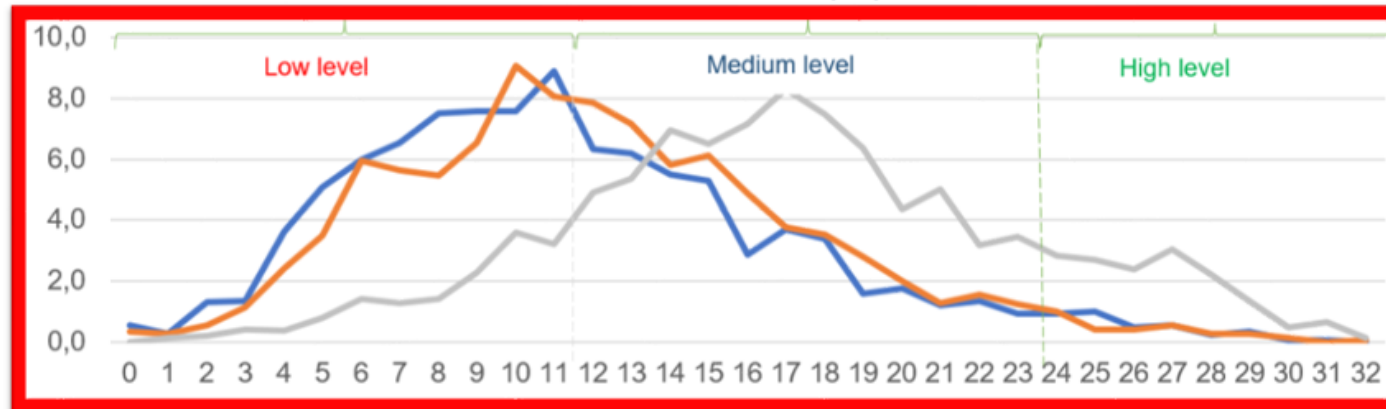
Recommendations to state bodies:

- Develop a unified National Strategy for MIL and the Development of Critical Thinking with the involvement of all stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society, academia, media, and Internet resources

- Humanize national legislation in the sphere of freedom of speech, minimize state interference in civil society, bring legislation into maximum compliance with international norms and OSCE commitments

- Encourage the development of a free and competitive media market

- Introduce a system of state order for the production of national content with an emphasis on media literacy

- Increase judicial and law enforcement skills on freedom of expression, safety of journalists, offline and online harassment and abuse, using a gender-sensitive approach

- Introduce comprehensive training for public officials on MIL and free speech, with a focus on decision makers

Recommendations to mass-media:

- Promote the creation of quality journalistic content that shapes a media-literate citizenry, including in national languages,

- Develop investigative, analytical and data journalism,

- Promote the creation and development of professional ethical standards and media self-regulation bodies,

- Introduce intra-editorial fact-checking tools, creation of fact-checking departments in the media, and a format for involving readers in the process of fact-checking and news creation,

- Initiate projects to increase media transparency by publishing sources of funding and media owners.

Recommendations to academia and civil society:

- Develop and implement special courses at institutions of higher education, in cooperation with opinion leaders, media, teachers, educators, and employers, including in national languages,

- To use modern interactive methods of teaching MIL in the field of freedom of speech

- Develop interdisciplinary programs in universities

- Initiate research aimed at exploring new types of literacy and soft skills, creating, clarifying and unifying terminology in this area.

- Popularize MIL and conduct outreach and awareness activities in the regions

- Use interactive methods to involve all parties in the learning process for all population groups

- Implement projects to ensure access to information in accordance with international standards

Recommendations to online platforms:

- Publishers and accounts to educate on fakes and misinformation, helping readers evaluate sources,

- Produce and distribute content on the effective use of MIL tools, in accordance with the guidelines of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Artificial Intelligence and Freedom of Expression

- Promote the e-citizen code of ethics on social media

- Verify the ownership of online media, platforms and Internet communities.

- Provide access to information about the algorithms used in moderating and curating, prioritizing and recommending content.

- Ensure transparency of information about advertising sponsorship, especially political advertising, given the impact of such information on public perception of advertising.

Questions?

- **dianaokremova@gmail.com**
- **www.lmc.kz**
- **Legal Media Centre**