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**YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE AZERBAIJANI REPUBLIC.
ACTIVITIES OF THE INDEPENDENT CONSUMERS UNION AND
CENTER FOR YOUTH STARTING BUSINESS**

(Prepared by Mr. Fuad Huseynov,
Azerbaijani Republic)

Independent Consumers Union (ICU) is a not-for-profit, independent organization, created on 31 January 1997 and registered with the Ministry of Justice of Azerbaijani Republic. The aims of ICU are to defend the rights of consumers and to prevent the goods market from the products and services hazardous to human life and environment. These goals are realized through active public education policies.

Azerbaijan is a newly formed Republic, which is on the way of transition from a centrally-planned to a market economy. That is why, the small and medium businesses and entrepreneurship are the main driving forces of building and developing a market economy.

Taking into consideration the current situation in Azerbaijan, the Center for Youth Starting Business was established on 5 February 2001. The main goal of the Center is to bring together young people and assist them to acquire the basic knowledge of business. Being involved in studying business and, afterwards, working on starting up their own businesses young adults are prevented from risks faced by them, including the risk of poverty, drug-addiction, and criminalization.

The following activities have been carried out by the Center:

- Seminars on business management

The Center has organized 4 seminars on business management. As a result of the seminars, the number of its members increased by 20 per cent.

The following seminars were organized:

- The role of marketing in starting-up a business
- Specific features of transition from planning to market economy
- Basic principles of business management
- Methods of preparing business plans

- Volunteering

The most active members of the Center volunteered for ICU. Participating in different projects of ICU, young men and women enrich their knowledge about consumer rights, gain experience in business sphere and make contacts with national and foreign partners.

The Center plans to establish an independent non-governmental organization ("Union of Youth Starting Business" - UYSB), create regional offices and employment agencies for young adults, interested in business.