



HOW DOES "THE GEORGIAN DREAM" PARLIAMENT WORK?

*Assessment of Legislative Processes from
November 2024 to July 2026*



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2026

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Introduction

Following the 2024 parliamentary elections, the work of the Parliament of Georgia underwent substantial changes. Against the backdrop of the political crisis concerning the legitimacy of the elections, mass public protests, a parliamentary boycott by the majority of opposition parties, and the suspension of the EU integration process, the Parliament of the 11th Convocation continued its work with a virtually one-party composition. Taken together, these circumstances significantly altered both the political function of Parliament and the nature of its legislative work.

Between November 2024 and June 2026, Parliament adopted nearly 300 legislative initiatives/packages, most of which were adopted through expedited procedures without substantive consideration and had a negative, and in some cases devastating, impact on various aspects of human rights protection, the democratic functioning and checks and balances of state institutions, and the functioning of the political and legal system in the country more broadly. During the same period, when regressive changes were being pursued with particular intensity, a significant part of the legislative agenda was aimed at postponing previously planned reforms/policies and abolishing existing institutions without providing alternatives.

This document assesses the main directions of the legislative work of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation and identifies the broader trends that emerged from an analysis of the legislation adopted. The document combines a quantitative and substantive assessment of Parliament's work and seeks to demonstrate that legislative changes implemented across various areas form part of a unified political and legal logic that has increasingly less in common with the spirit of the Constitution of Georgia and the country's democratic development instead serving to concentrate power.

Methodology

This document provides an overview of the legislative work of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation of Georgia following the 2024 parliamentary elections, covering the period from 25 November 2024 through 26 June 2026. The end date was selected taking into account that the spring session of 2026 concluded on 26 June, while, at the time of preparation of this report, Parliament had not convened an extraordinary session.

The document is based on both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis assesses key statistical indicators of parliamentary work, including the number of legislative initiatives adopted, the share of initiatives originating from the executive branch, as well as the procedural and qualitative characteristics of the legislative process. The qualitative analysis, in

turn, assesses adopted bills according to their subject matter, the entities affected, their objectives, and their likely outcomes.

To ensure methodological accuracy, the “legislative package” is used as the unit of analysis for the statistical assessment. Since a significant portion of legislative amendments was introduced in the form of packages, each of which comprised several interconnected bills, each package is counted as a single legislative initiative in the statistical data, regardless of the number of bills it contains. The statistical data also include both legislative packages initiated and adopted by the Parliament of the 11th Convocation and packages initiated during the previous convocation but adopted by the current Parliament.

The report does not limit itself to a quantitative description of the laws adopted or an assessment of the quality of the legislative process. Legislative amendments were also assessed according to their substance, regulatory objectives, and their impact on human rights and state institutions. On this basis, legislative changes were grouped into categories, making it possible to assess not only what changed in a particular area, but also what broader trends ultimately emerged from Parliament’s activities. Accordingly, the analysis of legislative activities in this document is presented not chronologically, but according to their political and societal function.

In the concluding section of the document, the findings derived from the quantitative and qualitative analysis of parliamentary activities are examined through the theoretical framework of Autocratic Legalism.

Parliamentary Activities in Figures - Brief Overview of Key Findings

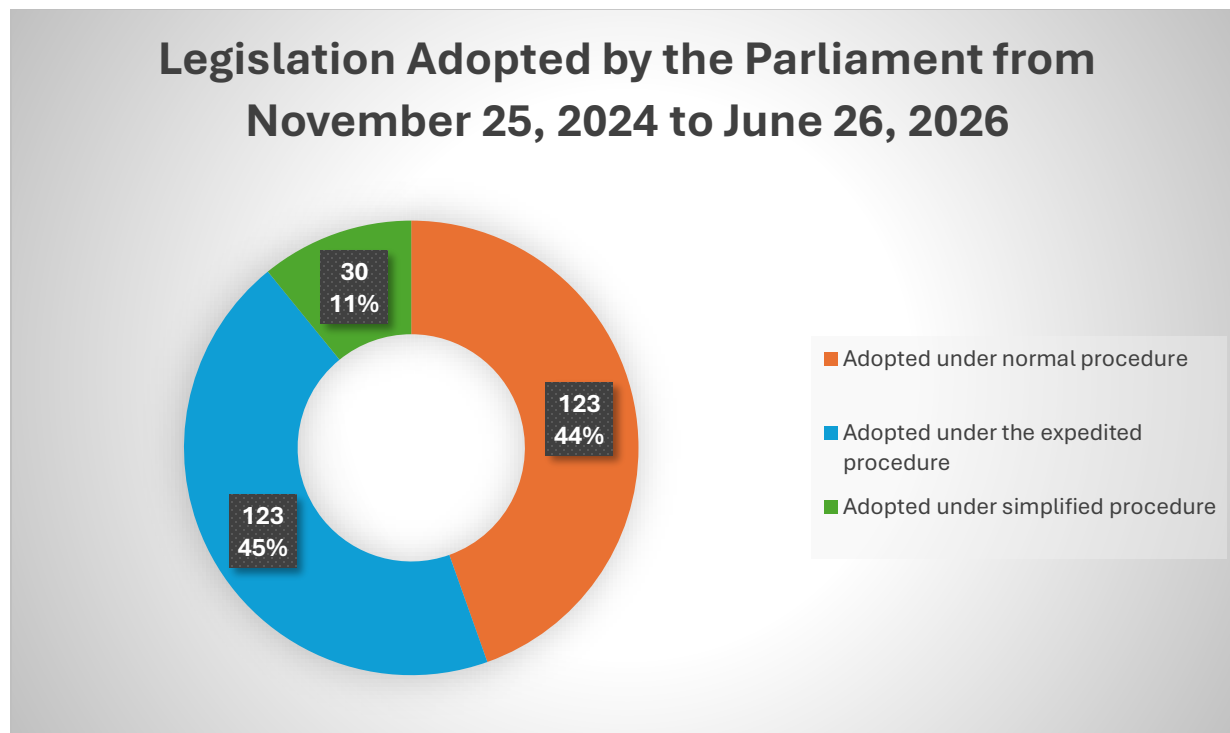
Between 25 November 2024 and 26 June 2026, the Parliament of the 11th Convocation adopted a total of 276 legislative packages/initiatives.

The first alarming trend concerns the adoption of bills under the expedited procedure.¹ The adoption of amendments under the expedited procedure entails their consideration and adoption within shortened timeframes, which, naturally, reduces opportunities for in-depth discussion and deliberation. Nearly half of the legislation adopted during the reporting period was adopted under the expedited procedure, while approximately 10% was adopted under the simplified procedure.² Accordingly, it can be argued that, during the reporting period, the

¹ Pursuant to Article 113 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia, Parliament may consider and adopt a bill under an expedited procedure. A bill may be considered under the expedited procedure if it provides solely for amendments to an existing law. As a rule, consideration and adoption of a bill under the expedited procedure entails its consideration and adoption at all three readings within one week.

² Pursuant to Article 114 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, a bill declaring a law null and void, a bill amending a law that provides solely for a change to a date (time limit) established by law or a terminological change, as well as a bill amending a law that provides for changes to the numbering of legal provisions without

“Georgian Dream” (GD) Parliament performed the function of a so-called “notary,” serving party interests, as the majority of laws were adopted in an assembly-line manner.

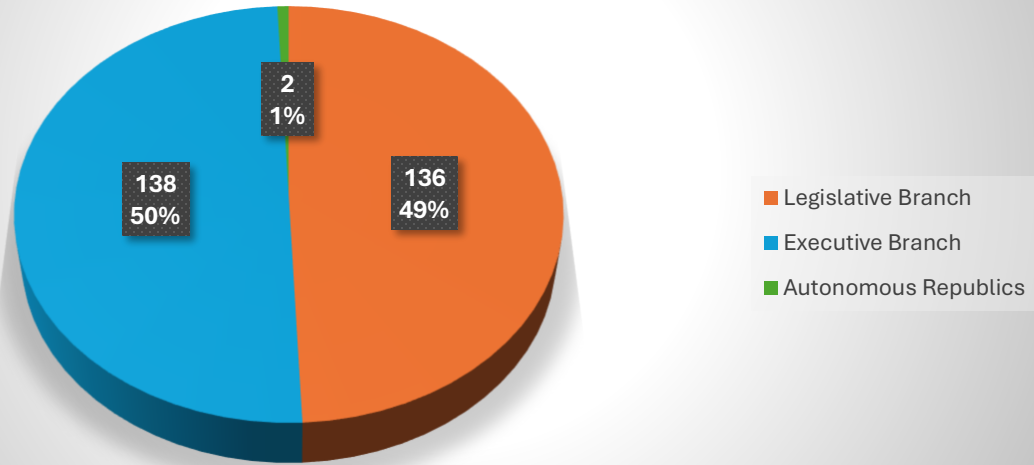


The degree of participation of the executive branch in parliamentary activities is particularly noteworthy, which can be assessed based on the number of legislative initiatives submitted by the executive. At present, the Parliament, which is the country’s highest legislative body and the principal institution responsible for lawmaking, lags behind the executive branch in terms of the number of legislative initiatives. Accordingly, it can be argued that, **during the reporting period, half of the activities of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation was devoted to considering the initiatives of the executive branch, which significantly shaped the parliamentary agenda.**

It should additionally be emphasized that, during the reporting period, the “Georgian Dream” Parliament did not consider or adopt a single amendment initiated by the opposition (whether initiated in the previous convocation of Parliament or submitted in the current convocation by the political party “Gakharia for Georgia”).

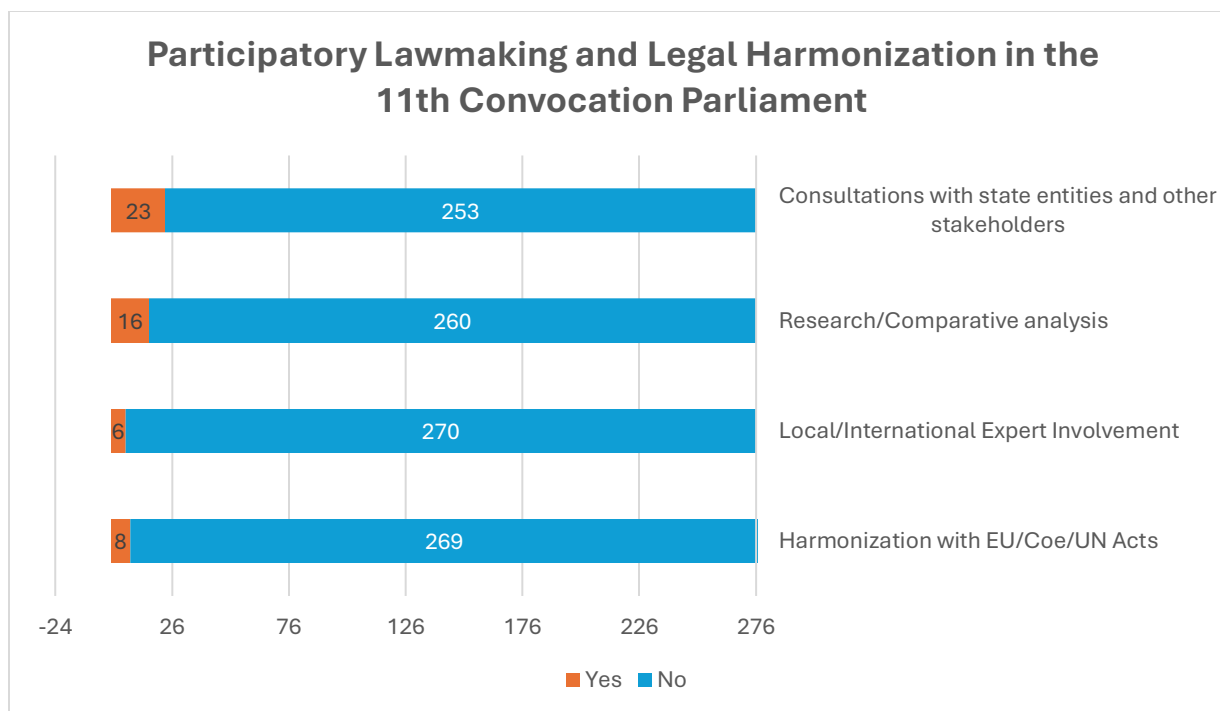
altering their legal substance, may be considered and adopted by Parliament under a simplified procedure, in a single reading.

Initiators of Legislation Adopted by the 11th Convocation Parliament

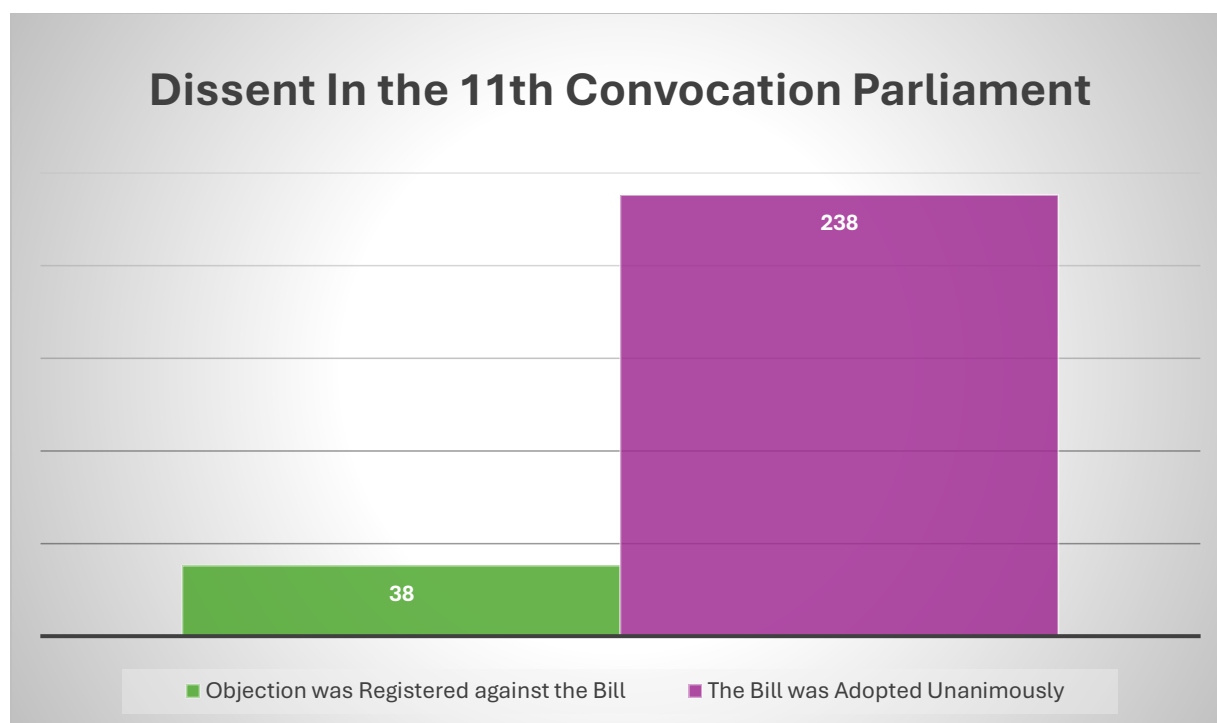


Observation of parliamentary activities during the reporting period revealed significant trends concerning the quality of legislative work. In particular, in the overwhelming majority of cases among the 276 laws/legislative packages adopted during this period, the legislative initiator relied solely on its own justification, which was mostly superficial and technical in nature. Specifically, in most cases, the explanatory notes did not indicate that any type of consultation had been held with public institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), or other interested groups within society. Furthermore, in most cases, no relevant sectoral or comparative legal analysis was conducted on the matters regulated by the bills. In addition, only in 6 cases was a legislative initiative developed with the involvement of local or international experts, while in 8 cases the adoption of legislation aimed at harmonizing it with legal acts of the Council of Europe, the European Union, or the United Nations.³

³ **Note:** The data presented in the chart are not mutually exclusive. The same law may fall into several categories simultaneously (for example, consultations may have been conducted on a bill while comparative legal analysis was also used).

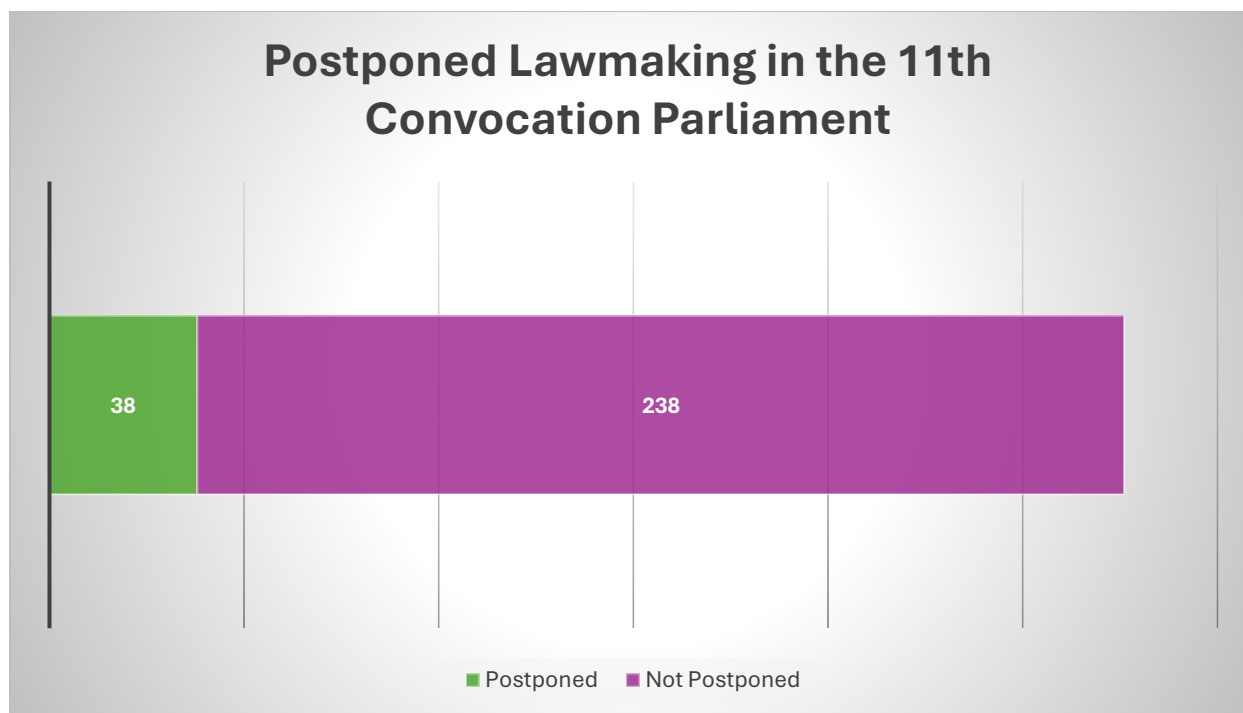


As regards differences of opinion and deliberation within the legislative body, it should first be noted that the opposition parties that had obtained mandates in the 2024 parliamentary elections boycotted the Parliament. Almost one year after this decision, on 28 October 2025, the political party “Gakharia for Georgia” returned to parliamentary activities. It is noteworthy that opposing votes on legislative initiatives have been recorded precisely starting from this date onwards. However, this opposition was not comprehensive: among the 276 laws/packages adopted, opposing votes were recorded in only 38 cases. In all other cases, Parliament adopted the initiated bills unanimously, without any difference of opinion.



Another noteworthy figure concerns legislative initiatives/packages whose entry into force Parliament postponed by one or several years. As will be discussed in the subsequent chapter of the document, which analyzes the substance of legislative activities, the majority of these initiatives concerned a number of issues of public interest and provided, in specific areas, for bringing the domestic legislative framework into compliance with international standards or for raising qualitative requirements in various fields.⁴

⁴ **Note:** The quantitative data do not include five instances of postponement that extended the period for exercising a right and therefore do not constitute instances of state inaction. There were also cases in which the adoption of amendments included in the same legislative package was postponed multiple times.



Finally, it should be noted that, during the reporting period, the Parliament of the 11th Convocation adopted 8 entirely new laws:

- ◆ New Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia;
- ◆ New Election Code of Georgia;
- ◆ Law on Domestic Animals;
- ◆ Law on the Rehabilitation and Support of Minors in Conflict with the Law;
- ◆ Law on the Registration of Foreign Agents (FARA);
- ◆ Law on International Protection;
- ◆ Law on Factoring;
- ◆ Law on the Establishment and Management of the Egrisi National Park.

The concept of Parliament as the highest legislative institution is not limited to the formal exercise of legislative functions through the drafting and adoption of laws. In a democratic state, Parliament is the principal institution where the regulation of different areas of public life takes place through substantive analysis, the expression and consideration of differing views, the active involvement of various interested groups within society, and prior consultations with relevant public institutions. As the statistical data discussed in this chapter clearly demonstrated, the Parliament of the 11th Convocation adopted legislative initiatives almost unilaterally, mostly under the expedited procedure and without any deliberation, with the necessary sectoral research and analysis or consultations with interested groups taking place only in exceptional cases. Through this course of action, the current Parliament is now openly disregarding not only

substantive but even the minimum formal standards of lawmaking, standards that were among the principal arguments invoked by “Georgian Dream” in the previous convocation of Parliament in response to criticism directed at it. All of this clearly indicates that the objective of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation is not democratic lawmaking based on maximum public participation and the careful and in-depth examination of issues. Even more alarmingly, the ruling political party no longer even attempts to conceal this objective behind compliance with the formal standards of lawmaking.

Lawmaking Without Deliberation or Justification

In analyzing the quality of the work of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation, additional attention should be paid to the extremely low quality and predominantly formal nature of the justification provided for legislative initiatives themselves. This makes it difficult, even where there is a willingness to do so, to engage in an in-depth discussion of the issues, identify the legislature’s actual objectives, and further demonstrates the assembly-line nature of parliamentary activities.

The formally stated objectives are general, insufficient, and unsubstantiated:

- **Effectiveness** (e.g., changes to the procedure for staffing the Legal Aid Service, see [here](#); the new procedure for appointing members of the Board and the Executive Director of National Statistics office (Geostat), see [here](#); the integration of the functions of the National Security Council into the Government, see [here](#); expanded powers of the Government Administration in relation to the entire state apparatus, see [here](#); the integration of the functions of the National Agency of Mineral Resources into the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, see [here](#));
- **Flexibility** (the transfer of decision-making powers from Parliament to its Bureau, see [here](#); the establishment of a central purchasing body for the management of public procurement, see [here](#); granting the licensing authority the power to determine the period between the announcement and holding of an auction for a license for the use of natural resources, see [here](#));
- **Optimization** (simplifying the disposal of movable property owned by the state, see [here](#); abolishing the Business Ombudsman, see [here](#));
- **Resource savings** (postponing the planned reform of the Competition Agency, see [here](#); abolishing the LEPL Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, see [here](#));
- **Improvement of legislation** (amendments to the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, see [here](#));

- **Transfer of the functions of an institution lacking constitutional status to a body established by the Constitution** (integrating the functions of the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Personal Data Protection Service into the State Audit Office, see [here](#) and [here](#)).
- **Professionalism, credibility, and institutional stability of the head of a state institution** (removing the term limit for the head of Geostat, see [here](#));
- **Improving the quality of investigations** (abolishing the Special Investigation Service, see [here](#));
- As regards the **postponement of planned changes**, their stated objectives were to ensure the efficient, comprehensive, and coordinated functioning of the state apparatus, to facilitate the uninterrupted operation of the private sector (in relation to the construction business, see [here](#)), and/or take into account scarce resources/the absence of technical equipment;
- As regards the **abolition of existing institutions without alternatives**, the stated objectives were to correct the “mistakes” of the previous government, address the ineffectiveness of existing institutions, and/or save costs (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

In some cases, the explanatory note does not even identify a formal objective for the legislative package as a whole, but only for one part of it, leaving significant components of the legislative package without justification:

- The creation of a new ground for replacing an unserved sentence imposed on a foreign national convicted of a crime with expulsion (see [here](#)).
- In no case does the legislature examine the specific shortcomings of the previous rules (e.g., why was the accountability of the Legal Aid Service to Parliament (see [here](#)) and/or the Parliament’s election of the Executive Director of Geostat problematic (see [here](#)), intended to be addressed by the amendments);
- When changing the procedure for selecting the Director of the Legal Aid Service and appointing the members of the Legal Aid Council with the general objective of improving efficiency, the legislature does not even mention the existing procedure (see [here](#)), let alone provide justification for the necessity of such a change in order to achieve the stated objective;

The explanatory notes do not substantiate how these objectives are to be achieved or what risks they may entail, namely:

- How the reelection of the head of Geostat for more than two terms ensures the professionalism and credibility of Geostat’s leadership and the institution’s stability, and what risks may arise from the absence of rotation in such an institution;

- How the direct involvement of the Government Administration in public service reform ensures its effectiveness, and what risks may arise from abolishing the specialized institution with the most relevant expertise in this area;
- When abolishing existing institutions, no explanation was provided as to why they could not instead be reformed to address their purported ineffectiveness and/or what risks could arise from abolishing them without establishing alternatives;

The legislature also relies on unreasonable assumptions in its justifications:

- It considers the institutional structure of the Competition Agency irrelevant to its effectiveness (see [here](#));
- It presents limitations on the powers of the branches of government as a problem to be eliminated (in relation to the new procedure for electing the Prosecutor General, see [here](#));
- It considers the abolition of the National Security Council and the integration of its functions into the Government to be dictated by the parliamentary system of government (see [here](#));
- It views planned changes to public procurement regulation in the European Union - which may create the need for a new stage of harmonizing Georgian legislation with EU directives - as a threat to maintaining the unity and continuity of the legislative framework, a threat that is supposedly to be addressed by postponing changes already planned for the purpose of harmonization (see [here](#)). This justification is particularly “hypocritical” against the backdrop of the continuous tightening of legislation restricting civil and political rights (see below).

Finally, **when justifying legislative initiatives restricting rights, initiators frequently resort to populist narratives, pseudo-ideological, anti-Western, and anti-former-government rhetoric.** For example:

- In the explanatory note accompanying the initiative on the “Foreign Agents Registration Act” (FARA), as well as a number of amendments to the Law on Grants, statements by high-ranking US officials are cited as evidence that “foreign assistance has long been used for improper purposes and, among other things, serves to destabilize Georgia, undermine its independence, and support a revolutionary scenario” (see [here](#));
- With regard to amendments removing the term “gender” from legislation, the initiators stated that “for a certain period of time, through the active lobbying of foreign influence and its representatives, there was a deliberate effort to introduce such artificial terms, which represented a kind of reflection of global processes taking place around the world and constituted an insurmountable obstacle for the state to take a principled position in the opposite direction” (see [here](#));

- In introducing a mandatory Georgian language course for students at universities, the initiators of the amendment stated that “the non-national government that came to power through the 2003 revolution abolished the mandatory university subject “Georgian Language”. This was part of the criminal measures undertaken by that government against the state language. The deliberate attack on the Georgian language and Georgian national identity ended in 2012, following “Georgian Dream’s” victory in the parliamentary elections.” According to the legislature’s justification, the initiative was intended to promote the Georgian language and restore national identity (see [here](#));
- When expanding the grounds for banning political parties, the initiators of the amendments referred, selectively and manipulatively, to the concept of “militant democracy,” the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the Constitutional Court of Georgia and justified the necessity of the amendments by citing the need for corresponding procedural clarifications (see [here](#)).
- In justifying the effective abolition of the active voting rights of emigrants, the legislature argued that “voters residing in another state are under the jurisdiction of a foreign country and it is not possible to effectively ensure the free expression of their will.” When announcing the amendments to the public, Shalva Papuashvili additionally explained that “in general, a person receives information from two sources – one is the media, from which a person receives information in a more filtered form, interpreted in accordance with editorial policy, and the so-called unfiltered information that a person receives personally, through interaction with society or the state. In the era of disinformation and false narratives, the information received from these two sources may be radically contradictory. This circumstance increases the risk of an uninformed choice being made by a citizen who is physically detached from the country. Accordingly, establishing voting within the territory of Georgia increases the resilience of elections, reduces the influence of external actors, and ensures a more adequate, informed choice” (see [here](#)).

Entrenching Power as the Legislator’s Primary Objective

During the reporting period, the legislative amendments adopted by the Parliament of the 11th Convocation concerned various areas; however, ultimately, they were guided by a common political and legal logic. Restrictions on human rights, the reorganization of state institutions, the expansion of executive influence, the weakening of Parliament and other democratic institutions, the strengthening of the influential group within the judiciary, and legislative decisions aimed at maintaining political support were not separate initiatives unrelated to one another. As the substantive analysis of the legislative amendments undertaken in this chapter demonstrates, a substantial part of Parliament’s legislative work was directed towards the concentration of power,

the weakening of democratic oversight mechanisms, and the strengthening of the position of the ruling political force.

Restricting Rights in Order to Empty the Public Sphere of Criticism

- **Freedom of Assembly and Expression**

In 2024–2026, the most problematic and repressive amendments concerned the freedoms of assembly and expression, and their purpose was to gradually and systematically suppress public protest and clear the space for criticism. During this period, the “Georgian Dream” Parliament adopted legislative amendments restricting these freedoms in several stages, as a result of which protest was effectively criminalized in the country. Specifically:

- **Amendments of 13 December 2024** - financial sanctions were significantly increased for holding a rally in the vicinity of law enforcement buildings, blocking building entrances, traffic lanes where this was not necessitated by the number of participants, and making inscriptions or symbols on various types of façades; covering one’s face with a mask or by any other means was prohibited, as was the use of lasers or pyrotechnics; mechanisms for preventive detention and personal search were introduced into the legislation ([07-3/16/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 6 February 2025** - penalties were increased for the offences of publicly calling for violent acts, as well as resisting, threatening, or using violence against a person protecting public order or another representative of the authorities. A new offence was established, criminalizing threats of violence against and/or attacks on a state-political official, political official, civil servant, person equated to a civil servant, and/or public servant; the maximum term of administrative detention for a number of administrative offences frequently committed in the context of protests was increased from 15 to 60 days. A new administrative offence was established consisting of verbally insulting, abusing, swearing at, and/or otherwise engaging in insulting conduct toward a state-political official, political official, civil servant, person equated to a civil servant, and/or public servant; a requirement was established to give prior notification of an assembly, including a spontaneous assembly; assembly in an enclosed space without the owner’s consent was prohibited, as were assembly/manifestation at certain locations, setting up tents or other structures at a rally, and participation in a rally after it had been dispersed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs; for certain administrative offences, judicial review was abolished altogether ([07-3/22/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 25 June 2025** - the regulation of defamation was changed: harm was removed as a mandatory element for an act to qualify as defamation; it

became possible to regulate the substance of insults generally, rather than only those made “face-to-face”; safeguards protecting sources and against disclosure of professional secrets were abolished, as was qualified privilege; the burden of proof was altered in defamation cases, among other changes ([07-3/73/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));

- **Amendments of 16 October 2025** - imprisonment was established as the sole sanction for a number of protest-related administrative offences (covering one’s face at a rally; possessing firearms, explosives, pyrotechnic devices, or other life-threatening means at a rally; setting up a temporary structure; as well as creating obstacles to the movement of people or vehicles, including blocking them); the repeated commission, by a person previously sanctioned, of a number of protest-related administrative offences (participating in a rally dispersed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, artificially blocking a traffic lane, covering one’s face with a mask, setting up a temporary structure, or carrying a tear gas agent) was made a criminal offence; criminal liability for organizers of assemblies was increased; a new offence was established consisting of repeated disobedience to a lawful instruction of a law enforcement officer or other public official, or insulting such persons, by a previously sanctioned person ([163/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 10 December 2025** - the intentional creation of obstacles to the movement of people was also prohibited; in order to prevent such obstruction, a requirement was introduced for the Ministry of Internal Affairs to be notified five days in advance of the holding of a rally. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was also granted the authority to issue binding instructions to participants of an assembly - either in writing before the rally or orally during the rally - to “change the location and/or time [of the rally], [or] the route” where the demonstration obstructs not only the movement of vehicles but also the “unimpeded movement of people.” A 15-day term of administrative detention was established for violations of these requirements. The same conduct committed by a person previously sanctioned was made a criminal offence punishable by up to one year of imprisonment ([236/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

- **Freedom of Association**

Freedom of association, the functioning of civil society and independent media, and the activities of opposition political parties became one of the main targets of the legislative work of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation. The legislative amendments adopted during the reporting period systematically and progressively restricted the ability of independent civic and political actors to operate, expanded the state’s mechanisms of control and sanctioning, and created additional legal tools for suppressing critical voices.

One of the first and most prominent manifestations of this process was the adoption of the so-called “Russian law” targeting civil society and independent media. Although a similar legislative initiative failed to become law in the spring of 2023 amid mass public protests, “Georgian Dream” reintroduced it the following year and ultimately adopted it in the spring of 2024. It was precisely this law that laid the groundwork for establishing a new repressive legal regime targeting critical civil society and media organizations.

During the same period, the legal environment for the activities of opposition political parties also deteriorated significantly. Alongside the legislative amendments, the ruling team repeatedly announced an initiative to ban opposition political parties on the grounds of their alleged unconstitutional activities. At the same time, criminal proceedings were initiated against leaders and representatives of opposition parties, as a result of which some of them are currently held in detention facilities, while criminal proceedings against others remain ongoing.

Civil Society

Before the reporting period, on 28 May 2024, the Parliament adopted the so-called “Russian law”, which has entered into legal force.

- **Amendments of 20 February 2025** - the State Grant Management Agency was established for the purpose of financing public organizations from the state budget in accordance with the country’s priorities ([07-2/18/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **On 1 April 2025** - Parliament adopted the “Foreign Agents Registration Act” (FARA). At the same time, a new offence was added to the Criminal Code establishing criminal liability for the directors of non-governmental organizations and media organizations, as well as “associated persons,” for refusing to register or otherwise violating the law ([07-3/27/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments adopted on 2 April 2025** - the mandatory participation of non-governmental organizations in public decision-making and in the processes of appointing/electing certain public officials was abolished ([07-3/32/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 16 April 2025** - the Law on Grants established an obligation for donors to obtain government approval before issuing a grant; liability for receiving a prohibited grant was established in the amount of twice the value of the grant in question ([07-3/50/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 12 June 2025** - the list of purposes included in the definition of a grant was expanded to include the areas of defense and security; the list of foreign actors eligible to provide grants was expanded to include “other international organizations”; the list of activities covered by the definition of a grant was also expanded ([07-3/61/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));

- **Amendments of 4 March 2026** - the concept of a grant was substantially expanded and, accordingly, an obligation to coordinate grants with the Government was established; the newly introduced rules were also effectively extended retroactively to existing relationships; a criminal penalty of up to 6 years' imprisonment was established for violations of the requirements of the law; criminal liability was introduced for so-called "external lobbying"; and the Criminal Code offence of "money laundering" was supplemented with an aggravating circumstance - money laundering "for the purpose of carrying out activities on political issues related to Georgia." The penalty for this offence is 9 to 12 years' imprisonment; persons receiving foreign funding were prohibited from engaging in political activities for 8 years; civil society organizations were effectively equated with political parties and subjected to the financial oversight regime applicable to political parties ([252/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 15 April 2026** - an exception was introduced to the tightened legislation with respect to funds provided by diplomatic missions accredited in Georgia, consular offices, and representations of international organizations ([282/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

Media

At the outset, it should be noted that the so-called FARA, the rights-restricting amendments introduced to the Law on Grants, and the so-called "Russian law" also apply to the media. Georgian journalist, and co-founder and director of the online publications Batumelebi and Netgazeti, Mzia Amaglobeli, is currently detained pursuant to a politically motivated conviction.

- **Amendments of 1 April 2025** - amendments to the Law on Broadcasting substantially deteriorated the standard of media freedom: direct or indirect funding of media outlets by a "foreign power" was prohibited. In addition, "a broadcaster may not, in a news programme, cover information reflecting political or other forms of confrontation or current public policy issues on the basis of the broadcaster's personal attitude or opinion. It is inadmissible to express in a programme a position supporting or opposing any political party, public or religious association, or other interest group" ([07-3/24/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Further amendments of 1 April 2025** - television and radio broadcasters were prohibited from receiving direct or indirect funding from a foreign power, including monetary funds or other benefits of property value. Exceptions include commercial advertising, teleshopping, and sponsorship. At the same time, a foreign power was prohibited from purchasing services from broadcasters (except for commercial

advertising and product placement) and/or directly or indirectly financing or co-financing the preparation and/or broadcasting of a programme ([07-3/30/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));

- **Further amendments of 1 April 2025** - the Law on Broadcasting was supplemented with ambiguous regulations concerning television and radio broadcasting standards, including due accuracy of facts and the right of reply, fairness and impartiality, protection of privacy, the obtaining and transmission of information through covert methods, coverage of armed conflicts, accidents, and other emergencies, and certain aspects of the protection of minors. Accordingly, the scope of substantive regulation by the Communications Commission was expanded, posing a threat to broadcasters' editorial independence and freedom of expression ([07-3/29/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 12 June 2025** - for the purpose of controlling foreign funding, the Communications Commission was authorized to apply to a court and request confidential information concerning broadcasters from commercial banks/microbanks ([07-3/63/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 24 June 2025** - the media's ability to cover court proceedings was restricted ([07-3/74/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 23 June 2026** - the prohibition on foreign funding was lifted for specialized broadcasters (those that primarily broadcast programmes on a single subject, other than news and public-political topics). Where a broadcaster receives prohibited funding, the Commission is authorized, in addition to imposing liability, to require the broadcaster to transfer the received funding to the state budget of Georgia. This was one of the instances in which the initial version of rights-restricting legislation underwent some modification. However, when establishing exceptions, additional qualifications - "exceptions to the exceptions" - were introduced so as to prevent them from being interpreted in favor of civil society ([320/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

Political Parties

Beyond the legislative amendments, the leaders of the majority of opposition parties have been subject to persistent political persecution, and a number of criminal cases have been initiated against them. In addition, "Georgian Dream" has filed constitutional claims before the Constitutional Court of Georgia seeking the banning of specific opposition political parties; no final decisions have yet been issued in these cases.

As for the legislative amendments:

- **On 5 February 2024** - Parliament established an investigative commission concerning the period of governance of the United National Movement, which was subsequently followed by the imprisonment of a number of opposition leaders;
- **Amendments of 16 April 2025** (which also concerned the civil sector and media) - political parties and persons with a declared electoral objective were prohibited from organizing lectures, seminars, or other similar public events with donations from a legal entity registered in Georgia or abroad and/or another form of association of persons ([07-3/50/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 16 May 2025** - contrary to the Constitution, the grounds for banning a political party were expanded through ordinary legislation. The time limits for the Constitutional Court to issue a decision on this matter were also significantly shortened ([07-3/48/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 16 October 2025** - the grounds for banning political parties were expanded; natural persons associated with a banned party were prohibited from membership in a political party and from engaging in party activities, as well as from making donations in favor of another party; criminal liability was established for a party in the event of non-compliance with a decision of the Constitutional Court ([162/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

- **Repression in the Civil Service**

Civil servants also actively participated in the mass public protests of 2024. Their protests followed the government's suspension of the EU integration process. Georgia's Prime Minister, Irakli Kobakhidze, characterized the protests as a "self-cleansing process" within the civil service and announced that the government would respond accordingly, in compliance with the "Constitution and legislation." This response was implemented shortly thereafter. The chronology of events clearly indicates that the purpose of the legislative amendments introduced in several stages was to punish critical civil servants, facilitate their dismissal from civil service, and establish full party control at all levels of the public sector. However, the data also show that, following the hastily planned and implemented "reform," the ruling team was forced to make certain concessions and introduce several changes to the repressive legislation it had already adopted. Specifically:

- **Amendments of 13 December 2024** - the status of heads and deputy heads of primary structural units of public institutions was politicized (they were transformed from civil servants into persons employed under administrative contracts, whose appointment became possible without competition and whose term of office was linked to that of the head of the institution), thereby weakening their legal safeguards; the risks of politicizing recruitment competitions for civil

servants and the frequency of their periodic performance evaluations was increased, and a new mechanism for sanctioning them was introduced; the statutory safeguards established for civil servants in the event of a reorganization of the public service were effectively abolished; these rules governing reorganization were also extended to legal entities under public law ([07-3/17/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));

- **Amendments of 6 February 2025** - following the initial reform, the rules concerning the termination of administrative contracts of heads and deputy heads of primary structural units, including the applicable time limits and the issue of compensation, were further clarified ([07-3/21/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 20 February 2025** - the Civil Service Bureau, which had been the principal coordinating body for public service reforms, was abolished (see [here](#));
- **Amendments of 1 April 2025** - the concept of a person equated to a civil servant was introduced (heads and deputy heads of certain legal entities under public law), and the obligation to provide compensation was also extended to civil servants dismissed due to staff reductions resulting from reorganization ([07-3/33/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Further amendments of 1 April 2025** - civil servants were permitted to engage in scientific and pedagogical activities or receive any other benefit only with the consent of their superior (see [here](#));
- **Amendments of 14 May 2025** - the values and principles of the diplomatic service were supplemented by the principles of conscientious performance of official duties and compliance with ethical standards; the Minister was authorized to approve, by an individual act, general rules of ethics and conduct, violation of which, where it damages the country's image or contradicts the foreign policy course, constitutes grounds for early recall from a diplomatic assignment and placement in the reserve; the maximum duration of assignments under the rotation system was extended from 6 months to 1 year, and the restriction prohibiting a person from returning to the same position for one year following the expiration of an assignment was removed; the frequency of annual performance evaluations of diplomatic officials and administrative staff was doubled ([07-2/37/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 10 December 2025** - persons employed by the Ministry of Defense were permitted, with the consent of their superior, to engage in various forms of paid activity (see [here](#));
- **Amendments of 23 June 2026** - the permitted number of persons employed under administrative contracts in public institutions was increased; deputy ministers, deputy members of the governments of the Autonomous Republics of Abkhazia

and Adjara, deputy State Representatives, and deputy mayors of municipalities were made eligible to receive salary supplements and monetary bonuses ([303/2-XI03](#), see [here](#)).

- **Academic Freedom**

The legislative activities of the Parliament of the 11th Convocation affected not only political and civil rights but also the field of education.

In October 2025, based on the concept of higher education reform presented by the Government, Parliament adopted, within a short period, a series of interconnected legislative amendments that substantially changed the governance model of both the higher and general education systems. The reform was prepared without broad participation from the academic community and was justified by the authorities on the grounds of better aligning the education system with labor market needs. However, the substance of the adopted amendments significantly expanded the influence of the executive branch over the education system: the Government was granted broad powers to determine university funding, student numbers, educational programmes, institutional profiles, and reorganization processes, while the state's role in managing the substantive components of general education also increased. As a result, important aspects of the education system shifted from the self-governance of universities and the academic community into the sphere of centralized executive control, which runs counter to the constitutionally guaranteed principles of university autonomy and academic freedom. Specifically:

- **Amendments of 10 December 2025** - a new funding model was established, and grant-based funding was abolished; tuition at state universities will be fully funded by the state, while students admitted to private universities will no longer receive grants. A 3+1 system was introduced, under which three years will be allocated to bachelor's studies and one year to master's studies. The Government will determine annually how many students may be admitted to private universities. The "one faculty - one city" principle was introduced. The Government will determine the list of programmes that universities will be authorized to offer ([234/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 4 February 2026 – in general education:** full general education in Georgia will last no fewer than 11 and no more than 12 years; the age for starting primary education will be 6, provided that the child turns 6 by 15 September; wearing a school uniform will become mandatory for students at the primary level of general education; the procedure for granting textbook approval status will be abolished, and the Ministry will develop school textbooks for general educational institutions, arrange for their publication, and provide them to students free of charge for

temporary use ([254/2-XI03](#)). **In higher education:** the integrated bachelor's–master's educational programme for teacher training will be removed from the Law of Georgia on Higher Education; the legal framework governing the reorganization of state-founded universities will be amended; the list of academic positions will be expanded to include the position of leading professor, along with related matters; additionally, it was established that state universities whose list of curricula is determined by the Government will be entitled, on a phase-out basis and for a specified period, to continue offering programmes that existed as of 1 January 2026 but were not included in the prescribed list ([255/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));

- **Amendments of 1 April 2026** - children who turn 6 between September and December, inclusive, were again granted the opportunity to enroll in the first grade ([273/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 14 May 2026** - students enrolled by 17 December 2025 were granted, during the transitional period (through the 2030–2031 academic year), the right not only to retain funding they had already obtained, but also to obtain and improve such funding ([307/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **Amendments of 10 June 2026** - until the process of updating school textbooks is completed, i.e. until the beginning of the 2028–2029 academic year, general educational institutions will be permitted to use both textbooks developed by the Ministry and textbooks that have been granted approval status and/or comply with the standards established by the National Curriculum, subject to agreement with the Ministry ([334/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

Restriction of Rights for Propagandistic Purposes

During the reporting period, the Parliament's legislative activity was not limited to restricting civil and political rights. Some of the amendments concerned various fields and followed a common political-ideological logic, aiming to strengthen the role of the state in different areas of public life under the guise of protecting “traditional values,” “public order,” and “national interests.”

In this regard, on the one hand, Parliament adopted legislative amendments of a symbolic and propagandistic nature, whose practical legal significance was limited, but which conveyed clear political messages. On the other hand, it significantly tightened drug policy and regulation in the field of migration, expanded mechanisms of state control and sanctions, and, in certain cases, entirely disregarded the human rights standards established by the Constitutional Court of Georgia. The amendments discussed below demonstrate that the “Georgian Dream” uses lawmaking not only to regulate specific legal relations, but also to legally entrench its own pseudo-ideological and political agenda.

- **The amendments of 1 April 2025** - introduced a new criminal offence into the Criminal Code - “treason against the homeland” ([07-3/34/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **The sweeping amendments of 2 April 2025** - removed the term “gender” entirely from Georgian legislation. According to the rationale provided by the initiators, the term had been imposed on Georgian lawmakers by foreign forces over the years ([07-3/31/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **The amendments of 16 April** ([07-3/40/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)) and **2 July 2025** ([07-3/76/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)) - in disregard of Constitutional Court decisions, made drug policy, including with regard to cannabis/marijuana, even more punitive by tightening administrative and criminal liability, expanding the grounds and scope for compulsory drug testing, and reducing access to treatment programmes;
- **The amendments of 10 June 2025** - made completion of a special two-semester Georgian language course mandatory for students admitted to Georgian-language bachelor’s, integrated bachelor’s and master’s teacher-training, integrated master’s veterinary, and medical/dental degree programmes at higher education institutions ([07-3/54/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **The amendments of 26 June 2025** - prohibited employment and self-employment without obtaining the right to engage in labour activities and established the prerequisites and procedures for obtaining such a right and employing foreign nationals, as well as the rules for terminating such labour rights. Amendments were also introduced to the mechanisms for exercising labour rights and for registering, monitoring and controlling the employment of foreign nationals. Administrative fines were increased for both employers and employed migrants in cases involving the employment of foreign nationals without the right to work, as well as failure to notify the relevant authorities of the termination and/or modification of an employment contract, among other matters ([07-3/69/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **The amendments of 2 July 2025** - authorized the Ministry of Internal Affairs, for the purpose of identifying a foreign national staying in Georgia without a legal basis and/or verifying their place of residence or locating their documents, to inspect the foreign national’s place of residence or employment or enter other private property or premises on the basis of a court order issued by a judge ([07-3/78/11](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **The amendments of 25 June 2026** - further tightened the legislation applicable to foreign nationals in Georgia. A new visa category was introduced for minors studying at an authorized higher, vocational or general education institution in Georgia; the grounds for issuing and terminating study residence permits were clarified and tightened; the rules governing expulsion from the country and appeals against such decisions were tightened; and a mechanism was established to counter fictitious

marriages between foreign nationals and Georgian citizens. Under the new rules, residence based on marriage to a Georgian citizen is granted for one year and may be extended annually for a maximum of five years, after which permanent residence may be granted. An inter-agency commission is established to determine the authenticity of a marriage through interviews and verification procedures. Where circumstances raise suspicion, the case is referred to investigative authorities. The grounds for refusing a residence permit were expanded, and applicants may be required to submit proof of lawful stay in order to receive services ([333/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

Other Restrictions on Rights

During the reporting period, “the Georgian Dream” Parliament also adopted several amendments that do not fall within the principal areas discussed above but nevertheless have a significant impact on society and democratic governance in terms of individual rights and legal safeguards. These amendments concerned the exercise of electoral rights, the juvenile justice system, and the legal status of public officials. Although they regulate different areas, each significantly alters the legal balance between the individual and the state and, in certain cases, directly disregards existing human rights standards. In particular:

- **On 17 December 2025** - Parliament adopted a new Election Code, one of the most concerning amendments effectively deprived Georgian citizens residing abroad of the right to participate in elections ([200/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));
- **On 17 December 2025** - Parliament adopted a new Law on the Rehabilitation and Support of Minors in Conflict with the Law, which provides for the development of special measures for children under the age of 14 who have committed unlawful acts. The law applies to a minor where, according to the standard of reasonable suspicion, the commission of an unlawful act provided for by the Criminal Code is established and the minor had not yet reached the age of 14 at the time the act was committed. The Rehabilitation and Support Centre for Minors in Conflict with the Law was established under the Ministry of Justice. Children in respect of whom the commission of an unlawful act under the Criminal Code is established by a prosecutor’s final decision will be referred to the Centre. The rehabilitation and support process for a minor includes referral to the Centre, assessment of the minor’s condition and individual needs, enrolment in relevant services or programmes, and monitoring of their participation in such programmes and subsequent condition. Where necessary, a minor may be transferred to a rehabilitation and support home ([196/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#));

- **The amendment of 11 November 2025** - established a 30-year obligation to submit a declaration of assets for an official who has committed an offence related to abuse of office or obtaining financial benefit ([152/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

In light of all of the above, it can be concluded that one of the most principal and extensive directions of the 11th Parliament's activities was a systematic attack on civil and political rights in the country. Through the de facto criminalization of freedom of assembly and expression, the persecution and weakening of independent critical organizations and the political opposition, the political subordination of academia, and other restrictions on rights, the state has progressively expanded mechanisms of control and intervention while significantly narrowing, in certain areas, the space for independent action available to critical-minded individuals and other independent actors. This constitutes one of the clearest indicators of the country's authoritarian turn.

Concentration of Power in the Executive Branch

During the reporting period, parliament further increased the executive powers, including at the expense of Parliament's own constitutional competences. The legislative amendments adopted during this period rendered the judiciary, investigative bodies, independent oversight institutions, the civil service more broadly, and even professional and technocratic bodies such as the Legal Aid Service and the National Statistics Office increasingly politicized and dependent on the executive.

The impartiality of the electoral system also deteriorated further. Alongside the substantial restriction of the voting rights of Georgian citizens residing abroad, the legislature rolled back the already limited safeguards introduced in previous years to ensure the independence and transparency of elections, restricted the participation of election observers and the media, and further strengthened GD's control over the electoral administration.

Expansion of Executive Power at the Expense of the Legislature

- The new Rules of Procedure adopted on **13 May 2025**, purportedly to address shortcomings identified in practice and to comprehensively restructure the parliamentary rules, abolished several key parliamentary oversight mechanisms. These include the Minister's Hour, the thematic inquiry mechanism, and the standing parliamentary councils (e.g., the Standing Parliamentary Councils on Gender Equality, Open Governance, and Children's Rights). The new Rules of Procedure also removed the requirement for the mandatory involvement of CSOs in public decision-making processes ([07-3/49/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **12 December 2024**, purportedly to increase flexibility, parliamentary delegations and parliamentary friendship groups will, no longer be established by a parliament's resolution. Instead, their chairs and membership will be

approved by the Parliamentary Bureau upon the nomination of the Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee ([07-3/2/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

- Under the amendments adopted on **28 April 2026**, and without any justification provided in the explanatory materials, the Legal Aid Council was made accountable to the Prime Minister instead of Parliament ([265/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **1 April 2026**, purportedly to improve legislation and enhance the effectiveness of institutional governance, the power to appoint the Executive Director and members of the Board of the National Statistics Office of Georgia was transferred from Parliament to the Prime Minister ([277/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- The Parliament was used for propaganda against opposition (see the work of the temporary [investigative committee](#)).

Strengthening the Clan in the Judiciary

The lack of judicial independence in Georgia has remained the subject of both domestic and international criticism for years. Despite institutional reforms implemented at various stages, these measures have failed to reduce informal influences within the judiciary and to strengthen the independence of individual judges. Alongside the consolidation of autocracy in Georgia, with the judiciary assuming an increasingly important role in implementing the ruling party's repressive policies, in 2025 Parliament further amended the legal framework governing the judiciary. The legislative changes adopted during this period strengthened the position of the influential group within the judiciary, further weakened safeguards for the independence of individual judges, lowered standards of judicial transparency, and demonstrably reversed even the already limited reforms introduced in previous years to address the recommendations of the European Union.

- Through the large-scale legislative reform of **17 December 2025**, the already limited legislative changes introduced to implement the EU recommendations were demonstrably reversed (the time restrictions established for the simultaneous election of members of the High Council of Justice (HCJ), refined definitions of disciplinary misconduct, etc.). In addition, the ratio between non-judicial and judicial members of the HCJ was substantially changed (in favour of the latter); the procedure for the election of non-judicial members by Parliament was changed; the possibility of duplicating persons in various administrative positions was restored; the powers and terms of court/chamber/panel chairpersons and their deputies were increased; the Office of the Independent Inspector and the Court Management Department were abolished; the rules for the selection and secondment of judges and the provisions regulating their promotion opportunities were changed; the grounds for judges' disciplinary liability were expanded and the entire process became strictly confidential; the thresholds and duration for reducing a judge's salary as a disciplinary sanction were increased. Judges' salaries were significantly increased, however, at the same time, the possibility of communication between judges and external persons was restricted, as was judges' ability to engage in academic/teaching activities, which became dependent on the consent of the HCJ. Finally,

transparency and publicity standards in the judiciary significantly deteriorated: a significant part of the HCJ decisions is no longer accessible, court decisions become accessible only after final decisions enter into legal force ([201/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)); additionally, as noted above, court proceedings became closed for the media, with media access dependent on the permission of the HCJ.

Centralisation of Power within the Executive

Prosecutor's Office

- Under the amendment adopted on **6 December 2024**, purportedly to eliminate restrictions on the powers of constitutional bodies, the Parliament will elect the candidate nominated by the Prosecutorial Council as Prosecutor General without an open competition ([07-3/66/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendment adopted on **24 June 2025**, purportedly to improve the quality of investigations, the Special Investigation Service was abolished and the authority to investigate crimes committed by law enforcement officials was returned to the competence of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia ([07-3/60/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)). The Special Investigation Service was established in 2022 replacing the State Inspector's Service together with its head, through an expedited procedure and without consultations, which, in turn, was established in 2019. The successive abolition of the State Inspector's Service and the Special Investigation Service, both of which enjoyed relative degrees of institutional autonomy, will further complicate the objective investigation of crimes committed by law enforcement officials.

Legal Aid Service

- Under the amendment adopted on **4 March 2026**, purportedly to improve the effectiveness of the Legal Service's activities and oversight, the proportion of independent members on the Legal Aid Service Council was reduced; instead of the Council, the Prime Minister appoints the Director of the Legal Aid Service; and the Service is accountable to the Prime Minister ([250/3-XI0](#), expl. note [here](#)).

National Statistics Office

- Alongside the subordination of to the executive branch, the amendment adopted on **4 March 2026**, purportedly to ensure professionalism, trust, and institutional stability, introduced the possibility of appointing the head of the National Statistics office for more than two terms ([251/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Indendent Oversight Bodies

- Under the amendment adopted on **13 December 2026**, purportedly to optimize resources while claiming the irrelevance of the agency's institutional setup for effectiveness, the postponed reform of the Competition Agency was abolished ([07-3/4/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **24 June 2025**, purportedly to transfer the functions to a body designated by the Constitution, the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Personal Data Protection Service were abolished, and their functions were integrated into the State Audit Office ([198/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **17 December 2025**, purportedly to eliminate functional duplication, the Business Ombudsman was abolished ([199/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Civil Service

- Beyond rights, the abolition of the Civil Service Bureau, the increase in the number of employees hired under administrative contracts, and the restriction of other rights of civil servants (see above) served the politicisation of the civil service and the concentration of power within the government. This was also indicated by the absurdity of the official justification, which explained the abolition of the Bureau by the need for the direct involvement of the Government Administration and more effective coordination in the 2025–2028 Civil Service Reform, without considering the potential harm caused by eliminating a specialised body with experience gained through previous civil service reform cycles ([07-2/20/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- The objective of politicising the civil service was also evident in the additional powers granted to the Government Administration under the amendments adopted on **13 May 2025**, purportedly to increase effectiveness, including the authority to oversee the implementation not only of government decisions but also, in a broader sense, all decisions of the executive branch ([07-2/30/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Integration/Transfer of other Functions to the Government/Ministries

- Under the amendments adopted on **25 June 2025**, the National Security Council was abolished, and its functions were integrated into the Government with reference to the parliamentary model of governance and the need to enhance effective coordination ([07-2/58/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **13 May 2025**, purportedly to effectively manage mineral resources, the functions of the LEPL National Agency of Mineral Resources were integrated into the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development ([07-3/44/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **17 March 2026**, purportedly for effective governance and resource optimisation, the LEPL Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was abolished ([07-2/56/11](#), expl. note [here](#)), and

the authority to conduct special training programmes and issue relevant certificates was integrated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Electoral System

During the reporting period, Parliament also substantially amended electoral legislation. The changes introduced went beyond the regulation of individual technical matters and affected important aspects of the composition and decision-making procedures of the electoral administration, as well as election observation, the review of complaints, and the exercise of voters' electoral rights. As a result of these amendments, a number of safeguards introduced in previous years to ensure the independence and transparency of elections were gradually dismantled, the ability of observers and the media to participate was restricted, thereby amplifying the risks of increased influence by the ruling party over the operation of the electoral administration. The adoption of the new Electoral Code was accompanied by a substantial restriction of the electoral rights of Georgian citizens residing abroad, further weakening the existing constitutional standards for the protection of electoral rights.

- Under the amendments adopted on **13 December 2024**, all initiatives introduced into the Electoral Code in 2021 within the framework of the **“Charles Michel Agreement”** that restricted the government's ability to obtain total control over the electoral process were abolished ([07-3/15/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **4 March 2025**, purportedly “to eliminate shortcomings identified during the 2024 parliamentary elections,” among other changes, the criteria for the selection/appointment of members of district and precinct election commissions were amended; new criteria were established for appointing local observers, representatives of the press and other mass media, and representatives of electoral subjects; electoral subjects, similarly to local observer organisations, were allowed to have no more than one representative simultaneously present at a polling station on an election day; and the head of an observer organisation and observers were restricted from participating in pre-election campaigning ([07-3/19/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the new Electoral Code adopted on **17 December 2025**, alongside the de facto deprivation of the right to vote for emigrants, 20 substantive amendments were introduced. Among others, decisions on the admissibility of submitted complaints, instead of being taken by the Central and District Election Commissions, are now made individually by the chairs of these commissions; Precinct Election Commissions are no longer required to distribute voter cards (which, in the context of changes to polling district boundaries, complicates voter mobilisation); party lists may include only members of the respective party; the legislative consequences of banning political parties were incorporated into the new Code; additionally, on election day, a person removed from a polling station is prohibited from entering any other polling station, while the Georgian election administration maintains an electronic database of removed persons for the purpose of verifying information about those removed (which, in an already hostile

environment for observers, may hinder their activities). The rules on photo and video recording at polling stations were also clarified, with the Code specifying that such recording does not include audio monitoring. This restriction applies to all authorised persons present at the polling station and may constitute a significant obstacle for observers and the media. It should also be noted that, by Resolution No. 22/2025 of the Central Election Commission of **3 April 2025**, the free movement of observers within polling stations, inspection of voters' identity documents, and documentation of identified violations were restricted on the grounds of personal data protection ([200/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Personal Benefits and Clientelism

During the reporting period, legislative activity intensified in two additional areas: benefits for public officials and civil servants were increased, in some cases becoming dependent on the superior's "goodwill"; at the same time, opportunities for preferential treatment (i.e., clientelism) in exchange for support/political loyalty were expanded, for example, for persons engaged in the construction business.

Salary/Income Increases

- Under the amendments adopted on **23 June 2026**, with the approval of a superior, the possibility of receiving salary supplements and monetary rewards was extended to deputy members of the Government of Georgia, deputy members of the governments of the Autonomous Republics of Abkhazia and Adjara, deputy governors, and deputy mayors of municipalities ([303/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)). The dependence on a superior's consent for engaging in other remunerated activities (see above) also contributes to the politicisation of the civil service.
- Under the amendments adopted on **13 May 2025**, remuneration was increased for members and scholarship holders of the National Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Agricultural Sciences ([07-3/45/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **17 December 2025**, the amount of one-time financial assistance for police officers who sustain health injuries while performing official duties was significantly increased (for serious injuries — from 7,000 to 20,000 GEL; for less serious injuries — from 4,000 to 15,000 GEL; and for minor injuries — from 2,000 to 10,000 GEL). In addition, the state assumed responsibility for fully covering costs related to relevant medical services, including rehabilitation and other necessary expenses ([191/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

It should also be noted that, through the amendments adopted in **2023**, prior to the reporting period of the study, salaries of Members of Parliament were increased from 2025 onwards (depending on the position held, monthly salaries were set at 11,680–14,600 GEL).

potential preferential treatment of pro-government businesses

- Alongside the concentration of power in the executive branch, the postponement of the Competition Agency reform and the abolition of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (see above) contributed to preferential treatment of government supporters.
- Under the amendment adopted on **10 June 2026**, the planned amendments to the Public Procurement Law aimed at harmonisation with EU directives were postponed until **2030**, “in order to preserve the unity and continuity of the legislative framework” referring to planned changes in this area within the European Union. According to the legislature’s own description, these amendments were intended to “define effective mechanisms to ensure the rational, transparent, and lawful expenditure of funds allocated for public procurement” ([335/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- The LEPL Central Purchasing Body established by the amendment adopted on **14 November 2025** additionally created the possibility for centralized management of clientelist networks. Purportedly, to ensure flexibility, the Central Purchasing Body itself was exempted from the obligation to comply with procurement-related requirements when conducting procurements within the scope of its activities; it also became possible to separately procure within a single budget year homogeneous procurement objects from a single source of funding, if done electronically (which had previously been considered an artificial splitting of public procurement) ([184/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **11 November 2025**, purportedly, motivated by optimization interests, the differentiation between various categories of state-owned movable property with regard to the methods of disposal (auction, direct sale, sale through a third party, distribution, destruction, and leasing) was removed, and any method became applicable to all categories of property. An additional legal basis was introduced for mortgaging acquired state property ([07-2/57/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **13 December 2024**, purportedly aimed at facilitating construction processes, the deadline for paying the fee was extended for construction companies that had neither completed the procedures required for commissioning buildings nor paid the fee for issuing a special (zonal) agreement (10 companies in total) - initially until 2028 ([07-3/10/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)), and subsequently, under the amendments adopted on **16 October 2025**, until 2029 ([158/3-xi](#), expl. note [here](#)). At the same time, financial liability for construction companies for failure to complete specified stages of construction was postponed ([231/3-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **18 March 2025**, the deadline for tobacco manufacturers to obtain licences was extended, taking into account the time required for equipping relevant laboratories ([07-3/36/11](#), see expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **13 May 2025**, purportedly to ensure flexibility, the requirement to set a specific time period between the announcement and the holding of an auction for licenses concerning mineral resources and mineral water resources (similarly to other minerals) was removed, and the authority to determine the timeframe was granted to a license-giver ([07-2/408/10](#), see expl. note [here](#)).
- Under the amendments adopted on **12 November 2025**, purportedly, to promote economic activity, tax exemptions were extended, including exemptions concerning

income derived from securities by local and foreign investors and the taxation of the supply of immovable property. In addition, the supply and import of investment gold were exempted from VAT ([180/2-XI03](#), see expl. note [here](#)).

Abandonment of the Positive Agenda

In addition to regressive changes affecting democracy and the rule of law, the ruling party has abandoned a positive legislative agenda. It has even postponed already planned measures - including regulations and reforms, such as the adoption of policy-regulating legislation and the implementation of third-party obligations in such important areas as children's and prisoners' rights, public procurement and anti-corruption, environment and public safety, healthcare, spatial planning/construction, education, regional policy, agriculture, and tourism. As a rule, official justifications for these postponements referred to the need to ensure effective, comprehensive, and coordinated government work, as well as the uninterrupted operation of third parties; in some cases, reference was additionally made to limited resources or the absence of technical equipment. These justifications were manifestly disproportionate to the interests affected. For example, the replacement of short-term visits for prisoners with video visits was postponed due to the lack of technical equipment (see [here](#)). Moreover, these measures were postponed for unreasonable periods of time. For instance, the development of spatial planning and urban development plans was delayed for 8 years (see [here](#)), while the adoption of regulatory acts governing public safety policy was postponed for 3 years (see [here](#)). Furthermore, citing ineffectiveness and cost-saving considerations, the Parliament abolished a number of state institutions without proposing any alternative arrangements.

Postponement of Regulations/Reforms

Procurement and Corruption

- As described above, significant reforms in the field of **public procurement**, which were intended to reduce risks of corruption and clientelism, were postponed until 2030. Meanwhile, the implementation of the new structural and governance model of the Competition Agency was initially postponed until 2027 and was ultimately abandoned altogether (see above).

Environment and Public Safety

- By the amendments of **16 December 2025**, the adoption of normative acts intended to define public safety policy, including the measures to be implemented in this area and the responsible authorities, was postponed for 3 years ([239/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **25 November 2025**, due to lack of resources, the introduction of restrictions on timber cutting for social purposes was postponed. The timber cutting for social purposes was intended to be replaced by a service through which forest

management authorities supply timber resources to the population ([214/2-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

- By the amendments of **10 December 2025**, the deadlines for the adoption of subordinate legislation on radiation protection, nuclear safety and security, as well as for the registration of persons carrying out activities in these fields, were postponed ([338/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **9 June 2026**, the preparation of a draft law regulating tariffs for drainage services related to excess water management (including removal through drainage and dewatering networks, transportation, and discharge into the environment) was postponed ([338/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **24 June 2026**, the deadlines for the entry into force of certain provisions of the law regulating the protection and sustainable use of surface and groundwater resources, as well as for the adoption of several subordinate legal acts, were postponed ([306/2-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the entry into force of regulatory provisions governing transport noise was postponed ([07-2/7/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, persons whose activities generate a specified quantity of non-hazardous, inert waste or any quantity of hazardous waste were granted an extension for complying with obligations to appoint an environmental manager, prepare a waste management plan, and maintain records and reporting ([07-2/10/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Healthcare

- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the entry into force of regulatory provisions governing the professional activities of nurses and midwives was postponed ([07-3/7/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the entry into force of the legislative framework regulating organ transplantation was postponed ([07-3/8/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the deadlines for the registration of blood transfusion banks as non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entities were extended ([07-3/3/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **16 December 2025**, the prohibition of independent nursing practice without certification was postponed, citing the need to retain non-certified nurses in the system due to limited human resources ([232/2-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- As discussed above in the context of the risks of clientelism, tobacco producers were granted an extension of the licensing deadlines.

Spatial Planning/Construction

- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the obligation of the LEPL Spatial and Urban Development Agency to prepare spatial planning and urban development plan projects for municipalities was first postponed until 2028 ([07-2/12/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Subsequently, by the amendments of 3 September 2025, the municipalities' own obligation to prepare such plans was postponed until 2036 ([07-2/67/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

- By the amendments of **15 October 2025**, the certification regulations for architects and civil engineers were first postponed until September 2026 ([156/3-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)), and by the amendments of 9 June 2026, further postponed until December 2026 ([331/3-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- As described above in the discussion of the risks of clientelism, construction companies were granted extensions for financial liabilities arising from non-compliance with various requirements.

Education

- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the deadline for the certification of inclusive education specialist teachers was postponed, citing the need to retain practicing specialists in the system due to limited human resources ([07-2/11/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Regional Politics

- By the amendments of **11 November 2025**, the deadline for municipalities to complete infrastructure projects was extended until 2031 ([175/2-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **10 December 2025**, the adoption of several subordinate legal acts necessary for the introduction of the “Unified Electronic System for Integrated Administration and Control” at the LEPL Agricultural and Rural Development Agency was postponed ([219/2-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Agriculture

- By the amendments of **18 March 2025**, the completion of the inventory of windbreak (field-protection) belts was postponed, which, in turn, delayed the identification of the needs for protecting agricultural land plots from erosion and the planning of corresponding measures ([07-2/19/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Tourism

- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the deadlines for submitting the draft Law of Georgia on “Resort Activities” to the Parliament, as well as for developing a number of subordinate legal acts, were extended until 2026. In addition, certain obligations of entities engaged in tourism activities were postponed, including the obligation to register in the Register of Economic Activities ([07-3/6/11](#), expl. note [here](#)). By the amendments of **19 December 2025**, the deadline for submitting the draft Law of Georgia on “Resort Activities” to the Parliament was postponed once again, this time until 2027 ([225/2-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Children's Rights

- By the amendments of **6 February 2025**, the establishment of the coordination mechanism, as well as the regulation of data analysis and collection mechanisms provided for under the Code on the Rights of the Child, was postponed ([07-3/18/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Prisoners' Rights

- By the amendments of **13 December 2024**, the entry into force of the right to replace short-term visits in penitentiary institutions with video visits was postponed due to the lack of technical equipment ([07-2/9/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

Abolition of State Institutions without Alternatives

- By the amendments of **17 December 2025**, the South Ossetia Administration was abolished, with the stated rationale of preventing harm to the non-recognition policy resulting from the use of the term "South Ossetia" and correcting a mistake attributed to the United National Movement. The Administration had implemented social and educational projects, provided social and medical assistance to internally displaced persons, and participated in the Geneva International Discussions ([203/3-XI03](#), expl. note [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **6 February 2025**, the Parliamentary Research Center was abolished on the grounds of ineffectiveness and the need to reduce costs ([07-3/20/11](#), expl. note [here](#)).

New "forms" of Law

The concentration of the legislator's purpose on the consolidation of power was accompanied by a degradation of the very form of law itself. In particular, laws have increasingly lost their generality and instead have come to target specific individuals, groups, and organisations. Examples of such degrading forms include:

- The amendments were introduced into the Law on "State Protection Service" on **13 December 2025**, according to which officials in respect of whom the Constitutional Court has established a violation of the Constitution are excluded from the right to state protection. The adoption of this law could only have affected ex-President Salome Zourabichvili's entitlement to state protection, and its purpose was precisely to deprive her of this right (see [here](#)).
- By the amendments of **16 October 2025**, the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia prohibited convicted persons from leaving Georgia even without an explicit restriction being included in the court's guilty verdict ([161/3-xi03](#), expl. note [here](#)). The adoption of this amendment coincided with the criminal case against Giorgi Bachashvili and, particularly in light of the circumstances surrounding his transfer from the United Arab

[Emirates to Tbilisi](#), raises reasonable doubts that, behind the neutral justifications invoked by the legislator - such as improving regulation and ensuring the prompt and effective compensation of property damage suffered by victims - the actual purpose was to prevent his departure from the country.

- By the amendments of **3 September 2025**, the mechanism for compensating property damage suffered by victims of property crimes was simplified. For this purpose, the legislation introduced the possibility of imposing a seizure on the property of a convicted person, as well as recovering damages from both the convicted person and their close relatives/associated persons. In addition, in such cases, a prohibition on leaving the country was introduced as a form of social protection measure, with the duration of the travel ban set at 6 years for less serious crimes, 12 years for serious crimes, and 16 years for particularly serious crimes ([07-3/67/11](#), see expl. note [here](#))

Theoretical Framework

During the reporting period, attacks on rights and democratic institutions aimed at concentrating power within the executive branch have placed Georgia among those countries that recognise only the formalistic and technical conception of rule of law while disregarding its function as a constraint on power. Similarly, accelerated law-making processes devoid of substantive deliberation and insulated from disagreement reveal the GD Parliament's narrow understanding of democracy, in which dissent and pluralism are perceived as threats rather than prerequisites of democratic governance. These processes have ultimately been reflected in Georgia's categorisation as an electoral autocracy ([V-Dem Institute 2025](#); [TI Georgia 2026](#)).

The legal and political reality, in which the Georgian society finds itself, reflects a broader phenomenon theorised in academic literature through the frameworks of "autocratic legalism" and "legal cheating", which are no longer concerned with tempering power ([Krygier, 2017](#)), but with preserving and entrenching it.

A fundamental feature of autocratic legalism/legal cheating is the reconceptualisation of the relationship between democracy, constitutionalism, and liberalism, and the reduction of democracy to simple majoritarianism (rule by the majority). Democracy is a political system in which the governing political class is accountable to the people; constitutional order, in turn, requires both political leaders and citizens to be additionally constrained by constitutional principles, civil and political rights, and decision-making procedures. Without these constraints - particularly independent and free media, civil society, political parties, an independent judiciary, and a free and fair electoral system - simple majoritarianism poses a threat to democracy itself. As the Georgian experience demonstrates, such illiberal democracies can easily evolve into autocratic forms of governance, where rotation of power through elections becomes extraordinarily difficult.

Autocratic legalism, or in other words, legal cheating, precisely transforms this paradigm by reducing the requirements of law to compliance with technical criteria (for example, the adoption of a law by the required number of votes). Such law is detached both from the purpose of law — to constrain power - and from its formal characteristics, namely, to be general and not to target a specific circle of persons (so-called *ad hominem* or discriminatory laws); to be foreseeable, not to create risks of arbitrariness, and not to be subject to constant change (Fuller, 1969). In such systems, laws stripped of the principles of the rule of law are used for improper purposes, including, for undermining the independence of the judiciary and various state institutions, dismantling free civil society, the media, academia, and the opposition, securing personal benefits, and/or consolidating clientelist and corrupt networks. Autocrats pursue these objectives both through constitutional and legislative amendments and through the neutralisation, circumvention, and/or arbitrary/unreasonable reinterpretation of the existing legal order, relying on grounds and conclusions detached from logic and facts (both in law-making and in law's application) (Scheppele, 2013, 2018, Sajó, 2021).

In such regimes, the institutional form of the state is preserved, but its purposes are altered and reoriented: law becomes an instrument rather than a constraint, while ideology is often flexible and adaptable. Changes in the purpose and form of law are accompanied by the degradation of the legislative process itself and the erosion of its democratic features (Navot 2006; Bar-Siman-Tov 2010; Ittai Bar-Siman-Tov 2011, Bar-Siman-Tov 2016; Gardbaum 2020; Roznai 2018; Kazai 2020; Kazai 2021; Kazai 2025; Drinóczi 2024; Drinóczi 2025; OSCE ODIHR, 2024; IDEA 2026; Venice Commission 2026, pp. 11-12).

The law-making practices of the GD fit squarely within this category of autocratic legalism, where behind the official justifications for laws adopted unilaterally and through accelerated procedures lie specific improper purposes that ultimately, in various forms, serve the concentration and/or entrenchment of power.

Conclusion

During the reporting period, the activities of the Georgian Parliament were entirely negative in substance and, broadly speaking, encompassed two main directions. **On the one hand**, it has targeted democratic institutions and individual freedoms in order to empty both the public sphere and state institutions of criticism. The consequences of this process include a civil society that has been weakened and pushed out of political life, a deteriorating media environment, protesters and critical-minded individuals intimidated through the threat of criminal liability, political parties facing the risk of dissolution, and state institutions brought under party control, including investigative and judicial bodies, the Prosecutor's Office, the electoral administration, the Legal Aid Council, and even the National Statistics Office of Georgia. **On the other hand**, GD parliament has offered preferential treatment to its supporters, increased benefits, made them more

dependent on the goodwill of those in power, and/or introduced exceptions and extensions for the fulfilment of certain obligations.

Against this background, the legislature has abandoned a positive agenda, failing to implement already planned policies in important areas such as children's and prisoners' rights, public procurement and anti-corruption policies, the environment and public safety, healthcare, spatial planning/construction, education, regional policy, agriculture, and tourism.

These trends in law-making represent manifestations of autocratic legalism in Georgia, where behind official objectives and often absurd justifications lies the goal of concentrating and entrenching power, which, in turn, leaves no space for a positive legislative agenda.