
PROGRESS REPORT OF GEORGIA

On Implementation of
the European Union's
12 Priorities



PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA

Doc 14

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Process

In the beginning of July 2022, soon after the European Council decision to grant European perspective to Georgia, the Parliament of Georgia launched the follow-up process of the 12 priorities.

The Speaker of Parliament started the process by meeting the parliamentary opposition parties, as well as with the Georgian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (GNP EAPCSF) to mobilize the necessary support and facilitate joint work of political players and civil society.

The process has been organized at three levels:

- ▶ Parliamentary Working Groups
- ▶ Parliamentary Committees
- ▶ Plenary

Nine parliamentary working groups (see annex 1) have been created to work on specific priorities, i.e. to assess the state of play in each area and propose initiatives to be adopted by the Parliament and other institutions.

The process matters. The Speaker has ensured an open door policy - all parliamentary political parties are invited to participate constructively in the process of fulfilling the priorities. In addition, civil society organizations (via the GNP EAPCSF), state institutions and experts also participate in the meetings and deliberations.

30% of legislative work of the Parliament of Georgia in 2022 was dedicated to the implementation of the EU's 12 priorities (see annex 2).

The deadline for finalizing the implementation process of 12 priorities is the end of Parliament's Spring session (end of June 2023).

**Progress and Key Achievements of Georgia's Action Plan in Implementing
the European Union Recommendations**

(As of April 2023)

№	Recommendation	Key Achievements of the Action Plan	Status
1	Depolarisation	Monitoring of polarizing language in media	in progress
		Open door principle introduced for all parliamentary political parties to constructively engage in addressing the EU recommendations (all parl. political parties offered to engage in the working process)	fully addressed
2	(a) Guarantee the full functioning of all state institutions	Adoption of 2023-2026 Public Administration Reform Strategy and 2023-2024 PAR Action Plan (2023-2026 PAR Strategy and 2023-2024 PAR Action Plan, adopted by the Government of Georgia in February 2023, envisage the ongoing or planned reforms: Decentralization Strategy 2020-2025; Public Service Development Strategy 2022-2025; Public Finance Management Strategy; Digital Governance Strategy; National Anti-Corruption Strategy; Open Government Georgia Action Plan)	fully addressed
	(b) Strengthening of democratic oversight of state institutions	Open door principle of the Georgian Parliament, strengthening its oversight capabilities (novelties relate to interpellation, minister's hour, committee hearing, MP's question, thematic inquiry, hearings of accountable bodies)	fully addressed
	(c) Improvement of the electoral framework	Electoral Reform based on OSCE/ODIHR, Venice Commission and GRECO recommendations (novelties relate to electronic technologies, party financing, electoral administration, inking, observers, administrative resources, complaints, recounting)	fully addressed
3	Judicial reform	Adoption of Judicial Reform Strategy and Action Plan (The Strategy and Action Plan identify key achievements of earlier judicial reforms and recommends next steps in order to increase independence, credibility, accountability, openness and professionalism of the judiciary)	fully addressed
		Legislative package on judicial reform (After and based on Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR opinions, Parliamentary Judicial Reform Working Group will resume working to reconsider the legislative package and discuss other issues identified in the VC & ODIHR opinions)	in progress
		Constitutional amendments on a new election procedure of Prosecutor General (the new procedure envisages increased threshold (3/5 of MPs) for electing a PG)	advanced
		Election of five non-judge members in the High Council of Justice (3/5 of MPs needed)	in progress

4	Anti-corruption	<p>Pooling anti-corruption functions under one institution (Anti-Corruption Bureau established, having the following functions: monitoring of political party financing; improvement of protection of whistleblowers; monitoring of property/asset declarations; designation of a person with excessive powers on public life as an oligarch; regulation and execution of issues related to conflict of interest; overseeing and coordinating the execution of Georgia's anti-corruption policy and national anti-corruption strategy; elaborating the proposals and recommendations related to general policy of fight against corruption)</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Strengthening institutional capabilities of the Special Investigative Service (Novelties include: increased budget, human resources, investigative authority and jurisdiction; increased social benefits and guarantees of SIS staff; strengthened accountability of SIS; etc.)</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Strengthening institutional capabilities of the Personal Data Protection Service (Novelties include: increased budget and human resources; increased social benefits and guarantees of PDPA staff; strengthened accountability of PDPA; etc.)</p>	fully addressed
5	De-oligarchisation	<p>Adoption of a Law on Deoligarchisation (Based on Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR opinions, the revised draft law empowers the Anti-Corruption Bureau to designate a person as an oligarch if he/she meets all the following three criteria: (1) participates in political life; (2) exerts influence on media services; (3) owns significant economic resource. The Parliament is waiting for Venice Commission's second opinion before continuing its legislative consideration)</p>	advanced
6	Fight against organized crime	<p>Adoption of an Action Plan on Fight Against Organized Crime 2022-2024 (Action Plan covers issues such as fight against organized crime, criminal underworld, cyber-crime, human trafficking, money laundering, terrorism financing, drug-related crimes)</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Reform of the Criminal Procedure Code (More balanced separation of powers between criminal prosecution and investigation bodies – prosecutors will supervise [instead of guide] the investigation process; investigators will acquire more functions and powers. The reform is the commitment envisaged in the EU-Georgia Association Agenda 2021-2027)</p>	in progress
		<p>Implementation of MONEYVAL recommendations (amendment to the Law on Money Laundering)</p>	advanced

7	Free, professional, pluralistic and independent media environment	<p>Law on Broadcasting amended, harmonizing EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). The Parliament adopted the amendments to the Law on Broadcasting on 22 December 2022, successfully harmonizing the AVMSD in the Georgian legislation. The Parliament is now considering the Council of Europe opinion and its recommendations on the amendments.</p>	advanced
8	Protection of human rights of vulnerable groups	<p>Human Rights Strategy 2022-2030 Adopted by the Government on 5 September 2022 and approved by the Parliament on 23 March 2023, the new strategy addresses fundamental human rights and freedoms and puts special emphasis on the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups.</p>	fully addressed
		<p>New Law on Personal Data Protection Service The new Law on Personal Data Protection Service has been a long-term commitment with the EU. Its legislative consideration is under way in the Parliament of Georgia.</p>	advanced
		<p>Adoption of selected Action Plans for 2022-2024 October 25, 2022, the Government adopted two separate action plans for 2022-2024: "National Action Plan on the Implementation of the UN Resolutions 1325 on Women, Peace and Security" and the "National Action Plan for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence." In order to ensure efficient implementation of the aforementioned plans, clear cut indicators, baselines and targets and activity-based targeted budget are being determined on the outcome and output levels</p>	fully addressed
9	Gender equality	<p>Introduction of Gender Impact Assessment of draft laws and secondary legislation</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Several legislative amendments both to establish gender equality as an equal opportunity on legislative level and to define the facilitation of actual equality as a goal</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Adoption of a Gender Equality Concept</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Adoption of a Women Economic Empowerment Strategy</p>	fully addressed
		<p>Simple and barrier-free use of support services by victims Abolishing the need to have victim's status to use state services like shelter & crisis center (remaining Istanbul Convention commitment)</p>	fully addressed

9	Gender equality	Compensation to victims of violence against women and/or domestic violence The compensation will be provided to victims by state when the damage stemming from impairment of health caused by violence against women and/or domestic violence is not compensated by a perpetrator (remaining Istanbul Convention commitment)	fully addressed
		Extension of gender quotas to 2032 parliamentary elections	fully addressed
10	Involvement of civil society	Regular meetings with civil society representatives coordinated by the Chairman of the Parliament	fully addressed
		Involvement of the civil society in decision making at all levels	advanced
11	Proactively taking into account the ECHR judgements	Legislative mechanisms adopted, stimulating the reference to European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) decisions by Georgia's courts	fully addressed
12	New Public Defender	New Public Defender elected Opposition Vice-Speaker of Parliament Levan Ioseliani was elected by the Parliament as a new Public Defender on 7 March 2023 by 96 votes and no objections. Reformers, Girchi, Citizens, European Socialists, Georgian Dream and 11 non-attached MPs supported Mr. Ioseliani's candidacy.	fully addressed

Priority 1: Political De-Polarization

The constructive working process of the implementation of the EU recommendations should contribute to political depolarization in Georgia. The Speaker of the Parliament gave an opportunity to all parliamentary political parties to be constructively engaged in the process, i.e. principles of inclusiveness and open door policy have been ensured.

Indeed, the voting results in the Parliament (see Annex 3) on EU priorities-related legislation indicate a constructive, although still polarized, parliamentary work (7 out of 9 political factions/groups plus non-attached MPs systematically participated and voted for the laws). The process continues.

At the same time, the Speaker of the Parliament holds a series of meetings with political players to find ways to reduce political polarization. Polarizing language in media is also being monitored.

Priority 2: Guarantee the Full Functioning of all State Institutions

A) *Strengthening of parliamentary oversight*

Based on the analysis of previous performance, the Parliament reformed its Rules of Procedure to improve parliamentary oversight mechanisms. The reform novelties, adopted on 2 November 2022, include the following:

- ▶ **Increase in number of interpellations** – instead of 4 (in March, May, September and November), there will be interpellation in every plenary month (i.e. number of interpellation is doubled).
- ▶ **Minister's hour** – Minister will have an obligation to present his/her written report 5 days before coming to Parliament so that MPs are properly prepared for the Minister's hour. More than 2 minister's hours per day will be forbidden to allow more thorough deliberations in the Parliament.
- ▶ **Committee hearing** – a Committee chairperson will have an obligation to send the request to a Government official to come before the committee within 3 days from the date of the request from MPs. Proactive quarterly reporting and online publishing are introduced.
- ▶ **MP's question** – Deadline for answering an MP's question will be reduced from 15 to 10 days. If the addressee is unable to answer the question within 10 days, he/she must send a well-reasoned written request for postponement of the response for another 10 days. Proactive quarterly reporting and online publishing are introduced. The report may be discussed on a plenary.
- ▶ **Thematic inquiry** – thematic inquiry can be established with reduced majority - by the majority of MPs present on a committee instead of majority of all MPs; 3 months' deadline can be extended only once by maximum 2 months; Registry of recommendations is introduced with a control mechanism over their implementation.

- ▶ **Hearings of reports of accountable bodies** – a report of State Security Service of Georgia can be presented before the Parliament only by its Head (instead of Deputy Head).

The amendments strengthen accountability of and democratic control on state institutions by providing more rigorous, transparent and flexible instruments and procedures for MPs to provide parliamentary oversight of the executive. They also reflect the Open Parliament Action Plans.

B) Electoral reform

Taking the recommendations of OSCE/ODIHR, Venice Commission and Council of Europe anti-corruption body – GRECO into consideration, the Parliament adopted the amendments to the Election Code on 22 December 2022. The novelties, adopted by multi-party support (almost 2/3 majority), includes the following key novelties:

- ▶ **Electronic voting system** – the Parliament made a historic decision after piloting in last elections to fully move to using technologies in elections, first time in history of Georgia. At least 90% of voters (i.e. all big cities and settlements in Georgia) will vote using electronic technologies. The electronic election system includes electronic voter registration and identification upon arrival at the polling station, voting, vote counting, and creation of a summary protocol of the results. The ballot papers reflecting cast votes at the polling stations where there is no electronic registration and counting equipment (the rest 30%) will be fully digitalized and uploaded to the official online portal of the CEC, where they will be accessible to any interested person.
- ▶ **Party financing** – upper limit of expenditure will be halved. Current 0,1% will be reduced to 0,05% of Georgia's GDP (i.e. current 60mln GEL upper limit of expenditure for each party will be reduced to 30mln GEL). It will provide more level playing field for political parties.
- ▶ **Administrative resources** - current 2,000 GEL fine for the illegal use of administrative resources will be doubled to 4,000 GEL; Limitation for the imposition of liability on a person for the illegal use of administrative resources will be three years.
- ▶ **Election administration** – certification of members of the Precinct Election Commission elected on a professional basis will be established and a database of certified members of the Commission will be created; Specific criteria will be imposed for the members of District and Precinct Electoral Commissions elected on a professional basis in order to improve their neutrality and impartiality; the 30-day period for the imposition of disciplinary liability on PEC members will be 7 days if the case happened before elections or 12 days if the case happened on election day; a respective DEC shall elect not only 8 PEC, but also the leadership of the Commission (according to the current legislation, the leadership are elected by the PEC members).
- ▶ **Complaints** - timeframe for appealing the actions of the Precinct Election Commission chairperson to the District Election Commission will be increased from two to three days.

- ▶ **Recounting** - if the number of ballot papers counted at a given polling station exceeds the number of the voters who actually voted by 5 or more, or if the number is less than the actual voters by 10 or more, votes at this polling station will be subject to a recount.
- ▶ **Inking** - voters using the portable ballot box will be subject to inking.
- ▶ **Observers** - the mandate of local observer organizations will be expanded; they will have the possibility to attend sessions of the Central Election Commission during the non-election period on the basis of registration.

C) 2023-2026 Public Administration Reform Strategy and 2023-2024 Action Plan

The Government of Georgia adopted the 2023-2026 Public Administration Reform and the 2023-2024 Action Plan in February 2023. They envisage the ongoing or planned reforms:

- ▶ Decentralization Strategy 2020-2025.
- ▶ Public Service Development Strategy 2022-2025.
- ▶ Public Finance Management Strategy.
- ▶ Digital Governance Strategy.
- ▶ National Anti-Corruption Strategy.
- ▶ Open Government Georgia Action Plan.

Priority 3: Judicial Reform

Judicial reform envisages the following activities in the framework of the EU Priority 3:

- ▶ The Working Group on Judicial Reform with the Legal Affairs Committee worked to prepare a Judicial Reform Strategy and an Action Plan. It includes the achievements of earlier judicial reforms as well as the remaining challenges in the judiciary. The document was adopted on 1 October 2022.
- ▶ Based on the judicial reform strategy, legislative amendments on judicial reform were submitted to the Parliament on 4 November 2022. It included issues such as revised procedure of election of Supreme Court judges as recommended by Venice Commission; appointment procedure and requirements of lower instance court judges similar to those of Supreme Court judges; release of full texts of judicial acts of Constitutional Court as public information; Increased accountability for candidates of High Council of Justice, etc. The Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR positively assessed the amendments, however, they provided additional recommendations on other aspects of the judiciary. Based on this, the Parliamentary Judicial Reform Working Group will resume working to reconsider the legislative package and discuss other issues identified in the VC/ODIHR opinions.

- ▶ Georgian Dream faction in the Parliament initiated a draft constitutional amendment on the procedure for electing the Prosecutor General on 31 August 2022. The draft constitutional amendment aims to increase the threshold for electing the Prosecutor General in the Parliament to 3/5 of MPs. Parliament adopted the draft constitutional amendment on its first reading on October 18 with multiparty support (126 votes out of 150). Political consultations continue on further legislative and political steps in this regard.
- ▶ Parliament has to elect 5 non-judge members of the High Council of Justice (HCoJ), the body overseeing the judiciary (qualified majority of 3/5 of all MPs needed). Parliamentary political parties continue dialogue in 2023 Spring plenary session to garner necessary support for the candidates.

Priority 4: Strengthening the Anti-Corruption Agency

A) Establishment of Anti-Corruption Bureau

Based on the legislative changes of 30 November 2022, a new, independent Anti-Corruption Bureau was established, pooling many anti-corruption functions scattered across different institutions until one institutional umbrella. The Bureau is responsible for the following functions:

- ▶ Regulation and execution of issues related to conflict of interest.
- ▶ Monitoring of property/asset declarations of high public officials.
- ▶ Improvement of protection of whistleblowers.
- ▶ Designation of a person with excessive powers on public life as an oligarch.
- ▶ Monitoring of political party financing, and ensuring relevant activities related to this field.
- ▶ Overseeing and coordinating the execution of Georgia's overall anti-corruption policy and national anti-corruption strategy.
- ▶ Elaboration of proposals regarding the general policy of fighting against corruption and submitting them to the Parliament of Georgia; development of relevant recommendations for the Georgian Parliament in this regard.

Three candidates for the Bureau head were selected in an open competition with transparent procedures by the commission with the participants of Public Defender's Office, state agencies and civil society. Prime Minister of Georgia appointed the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau from the selected candidates for a term of six years in February 2023.

B) Strengthening of institutional capabilities of the Special Investigation Service and the Personal Data Protection Service

The 30 November 2022 legislative changes also provided the improved institutional capabilities, strengthened efficiency and independence of the Special Investigation Service and the Personal Data Protection Service. In particular, the following changes were adopted:

- ▶ Budget and human resources have almost doubled.
- ▶ Investigative authority and jurisdiction of the Special Investigation Service has increased.
- ▶ Social protection benefits for Personal Data Protection Service personnel have strengthened.
- ▶ Accountability of both agencies increased.

See Annex 4 for anti-corruption institutional architecture of Georgia.

Priority 5: De-oligarchisation

A) Individual approach

The Parliament initiated a draft law on de-oligarchisation and sent it to Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR for their legal opinion in 2022. Taking their recommendations into account, the Parliament revised the draft law on de-oligarchisation and sent the document to the Venice Commission for another opinion in March 2023.

According to the revised draft bill, an oligarch is a natural person who meets all three criteria:

- ▶ Participates in political life.
- ▶ Exerts influence on media services.
- ▶ Owns significant economic resource.

Taking the Venice Commission recommendations into account, the draft bill envisages detailed definitions of these three criteria as well as the prohibitions that are imposed on a designated oligarch (less prohibitions envisaged comparing to the first draft). Based on the VC and OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, the revised draft law also includes an improved system of protection of rights and procedures of/for the designated person throughout the designation process.

The independent Anti-Corruption Bureau (established in the frameworks of implementing EU's priority 4 on strengthening the anti-corruption agency) is empowered to take decisions on the recognition of a person as an oligarch. According to the draft bill, oligarchs will be included in a special register managed also by the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

The Parliament is waiting for Venice Commission's second opinion before continuing its legislative consideration.

B) Systemic approach

Georgia generally performs well in international reports and indexes on anti-corruption, anti-money laundering, fight against organized crime, openness and transparency, government integrity and bribery risks, effective and corruption-free public administration and public services. It has been a leader in the wider Black Sea area, the Eastern Partnership, the Balkans, even ahead of 10 EU and NATO member states.

Nevertheless, Georgia continues its efforts in this regard. In the frameworks of the EU priorities and the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, Georgia has only recently implemented (or is in a process of) new reforms related to elections, political party financing, public procurements, fight against organized crime, judiciary, anti-corruption, etc. Georgia is also in a process of harmonising the EU directive on trade-restricting practices that will further address monopolistic and other fair trade-restricting market behaviors.

These all indeed are components of the systemic approach.

Priority 6: Fight Against Organised Crime

A) Parliamentary Action Plan on Fight Against Organised Crime

The Parliament adopted an 2022-2024 Action Plan for the Fight against Organised Crime on 28 October 2022. The proposals, developed in the Action Plan for relevant agencies to implement, include 76 activities in the following areas:

- ▶ Fight against Organised Crime (including against criminal authorities, members of criminal underworld and its supporters).
- ▶ Fight against cyber-crime.
- ▶ Fight against human trafficking.
- ▶ Fight against money laundering and terrorism financing.
- ▶ Fight against Drug-related crimes.

B) Reform of Criminal Procedure Code

As part of strengthening the fight against organised crime, the Parliament started a reform of Criminal Procedure Code by adopting the amendments to the Code on first reading on 4 April 2023.

The Criminal Procedure Code reform provides a more ballanced seperation of powers between criminal prosecution and investigation bodies – prosecutors will supervise (instead of guide) the investigation process; investigators will acquire more functions and powers.

The reform is the commitment envisaged in the EU-Georgia Association Agenda 2021-2027 – it is one of its short-term priorities of the justice sector.

The Parliament plans to finalize the reform in its 2023 Spring session.

C) MONEYVAL Recommendations

The Ministry of Finance initiated the amendments to the Law on Money Laundering to implement MONEYVAL recommendations. The Parliament plans to finalize the adoption in its 2023 Spring session.

Priority 7: Independent Media Environment

The Parliament adopted amendments to the Law on Broadcasting on 22 December 2022, successfully harmonizing with the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD), a long-standing commitment enshrined in the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. It will further promote professional, pluralistic and independent media environment in Georgia, in line with the best European standards.

The Parliament is now considering the Council of Europe opinion and its recommendations on the amendments.

Priority 8: Human Rights Protection for Vulnerable Groups

The Parliament adopted amendments to the Law on Broadcasting on 22 December 2022, successfully harmonizing with the Audiovi

A) Human Rights Strategy 2022-20230

The Government of Georgia adopted a new Human Rights Strategy 2022-2030 on 5 September 2022, and the Parliament approved it on 23 March 2023.

The new strategy addresses fundamental human rights and freedoms and puts special emphasis on the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups.

B) New Law on Personal Data Protection

The Parliament also started the adoption of a new Law on Personal Data Protection. It has been a long-term commitment with the EU.

C) Action Plans for 2022-2024

On October 25, 2022, the Government adopted two separate action plans for 2022-2024: "National Action Plan on the Implementation of the UN Resolutions 1325 on Women, Peace and Security" and the "National Action Plan for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence." In order to ensure efficient implementation of the aforementioned plans, clear cut indicators, baselines and targets and activity-based targeted budget are being determined on the outcome and output levels.

Priority 9: Gender equality, Countering Violence Against Women

The Parliament and the Government of Georgia introduced the following novelties to implement the Priority 9:

- ▶ Introduction of Gender Impact Assessment for draft laws and secondary legislation.
- ▶ Easier access to state services (such as shelter, crisis center), including by abolishing the need to have victim's status to use the state services; etc. (Istanbul Convention commitment).
- ▶ Compensation to victims of violence against women and/or domestic violence (Istanbul Convention commitment - Article 30 on Compensation) - on November 9, 2022 the Government of Georgia adopted the Rule on determining the amount and procedure of providing compensation to victims of violence against women and/or domestic violence. The compensation is provided to the victims by the state when the damage stemming from the impairment of health caused by violence against women and/or domestic violence is not compensated by the perpetrator or is partially compensated in accordance with this Rule. The victim with physical or psychological damage caused by violence shall have a right to claim compensation along with under-age children of a woman victim of femicide.
- ▶ Amendments to several legislative acts – both to establish gender equality as an equal opportunity on legislative level and to define the facilitation of actual equality as a goal.
- ▶ Adoption of Gender Equality Concept.
- ▶ Adoption of Women Economic Empowerment Strategy.
- ▶ Extension of gender quotas until 2032 parliamentary elections.

Priority 10: Involvement of Civil Society in Decision-making

The Speaker of the Parliament coordinates the effective involvement of CSOs in all processes related to fulfilling the 12 priorities in partnership with the Georgian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (GNP EaPCSF).

Based on the agreement with the GNP EaPCSF, two representatives of the Georgian National Platform participated in all parliamentary working groups, representing a wide range of civil society community (inclusive geographically and topic-wise) and their voices.

Once the discussions moved to parliamentary committees, the committee hearings have been open (as a parliamentary rule) and all interested civil society organisations have an opportunity to attend and engage in committee deliberations.

The Speaker will ensure the CSOs engagement in legislative work beyond the ongoing work on 12 priorities. In this regard, the Speaker also decided to chair himself a well-established Permanent Parliamentary Council on Open Governance to demon-

strate the importance of cooperation with CSOs as well as to increase the prominence and impact of the Council on parliamentary decision making.

Priority 11: Georgian Courts to Proactively Consider ECH Judgments

The Parliament adopted a package on 18 October 2022 to implement the Priority 11. It contains the following novelties:

- ▶ Legislative mechanisms stimulating the reference to ECHR decisions by Georgia's courts.
- ▶ Supporting professional development of judges, prosecutors and defense lawyers and raising the quality of reference to ECHR decisions in their work.
- ▶ Establishing new organizational units in the courts' system for analyzing ECHR decisions and increasing access to them for judges.
- ▶ Effective mechanism of translation and publishing of ECHR decisions on Georgia.

Priority 12: Nomination of the Public Defender

Public Defender's Office is an institution closely associated with the Parliament to scrutinize the executives in the field of human rights protection in the country. The position of Public Defender has been vacant since December 2022.

Parliament has to elect a new Public Defender of Georgia. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, a parliamentary faction, political group or 7 non-attached MPs can nominate a candidate followed by thorough committee hearing of each candidate. Qualified majority of 3/5 of all MPs is needed on the plenary for the election of a public defender.

There were several rounds of political consultations among parliamentary political parties in 2022 Autumn plenary session in order to build necessary support (at least, 90 votes) for a new PD. Ultimately, parliamentary political parties could not agree on a consensual candidate in 2022.

After several attempts, the parliamentary political parties successfully achieved consensus:

- ▶ The parliamentary opposition political group „Citizens“ nominated Mr. Levan Ioseliani, Vice-Speaker of the Georgian Parliament for the position.
- ▶ Parliamentary Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee hold a hearing on 6 March 2023, scrutinizing Mr. Ioseliani's views on strengthening the capacity and independence of Ombudsman's Office, as well as pressing issues in the field of human rights protection in Georgia.
- ▶ Mr. Ioseliani was elected by the Parliament on 7 March 2023 by 96 votes (almost 2/3 of MPs), without objection. Reformers, Girchi, Citizens, European Socialists, Georgian Dream and 11 non-attached MPs supported Mr. Ioseliani's candidacy.

Annex 1

Working Groups of the Parliament of Georgia Established for Initial Deliberations

Parliamentary Working Group on:	Nº of Priority.	Responsible Parliamentary Committee
Amending the Rules of Procedure (for strengthening parliamentary oversight)	2	Procedures Issues and Rules
Amending the Electoral Code	2	Legal Affairs
Judicial reform	3	Legal Affairs
Strengthening the fight against corruption	4	Legal Affairs
Further institutional strengthening of the Special Investigation Service and the Personal Data Protection Service	4	Legal Affairs
De-Oligarchisation	5	Legal Affairs
Strengthening the fight against organised crime	6	Defence and Security
Enhancing gender equality and fight violence against women	9	Gender Equality Council & Human Rights and Civil Integration
Georgian courts proactively taking into account the ECHR's judgements into their deliberations	11	Human Rights and Civil Integration

Annex 2

Key Laws, Amendments or Legislative Packages Adopted by the Parliament of Georgia to Implement the EU's 12 Priorities

Key Laws / Legislative Packages	EU Priority	Status	Source
Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia	2: Guarantee the Full Functioning of all State Institutions	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/5602657?publication=0
Election Code of Georgia	2: Guarantee the Full Functioning of all State Institutions	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1557168?publication=79
Organic Law of Georgia on Common Courts	3: Judicial Reform	Committee hearing	https://info.parliament.ge/#law-drafting/25094
Law of Georgia on Fight Against Corruption	4: Strengthening the Anti-Corruption Agency	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/33550?publication=81
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Law of Georgia on Special Investigation Service and ▶ Law of Georgia on Personal Data Protection Service 	4: Strengthening the Anti-Corruption Agency	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/33550?publication=81
Law on De-Oligarchisation	5: De-Oligarchisation	Adopted on first reading; re-sent to Venice commission	https://info.parliament.ge/#law-drafting/24794
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia ▶ Law of Georgia on Facilitating the Prevention of Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism 	6: Fight Against Organized Crime	First reading	https://parliament.ge/legislation/23071 https://parliament.ge/legislation/25851
Amendments to the Law on Broadcasting	7: Media	Adopted	
Human Rights Strategy 2022-2030	8: Protection of Human Rights of Vulnerable Groups	Adopted	
New Law on Personal Data Protection Service	8: Protection of Human Rights of Vulnerable Groups	First reading	

Law of Georgia on Normative Acts	9: Gender equality, Countering Violence Against Women	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/90052?publication=37
Law of Georgia on Gender Equality	9: Gender equality, Countering Violence Against Women	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/91624?publication=9
Resolution of the Parliament of Georgia On Gender Equality	9: Gender equality, Countering Violence Against Women	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5664358?publication=0
Law of Georgia on Violence Against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence	9: Gender equality, Countering Violence Against Women	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/26422?publication=22
Resolution of the Parliament of Georgia On Gender Equality	11: Georgian Courts to Proactively Consider ECHR Judgments	Adopted	https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/90676?publication=34

Annex 3

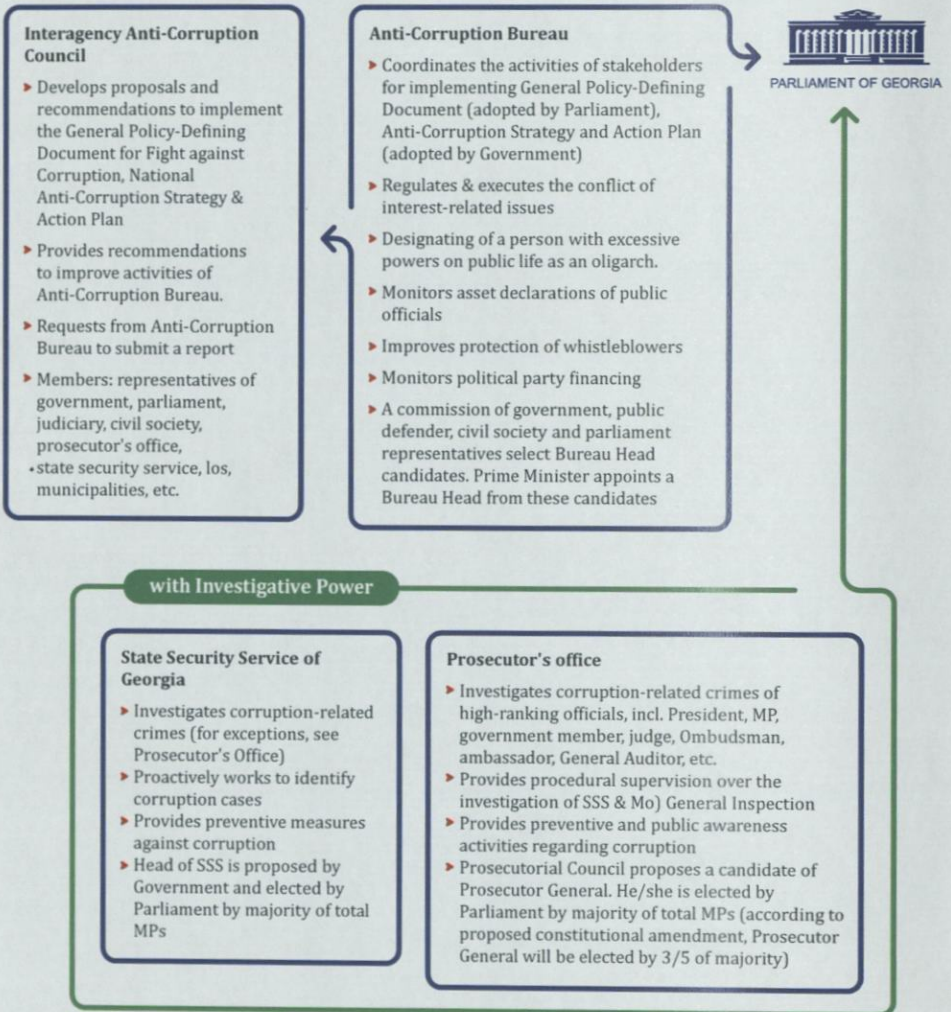
Voting Results on Activities/Legislation related to the EU Priorities in the Georgian Parliament (As of April 2023)

EU Priority	Action	Status			Voting Results								In total
			GD (75)	UNM (30)	Citizens (2)	Girchi (4)	European Socialists (4)	Reformers (5)		Lelo (2)	For Georgia (5)	Non-Attached MPs	
								Strategy (2)	others (3)				
2.	Parliamentary Oversight (Amendment to the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Georgia)	Adopted	73	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	9	88
	Electoral Reform (Amendment to the Organic Law on Election Code of Georgia)	Adopted	73	0	2	2	3	0	2	2	0	12	96
3.	Amendments to the Organic Law on Common Courts	Initiated											
	Constitutional amendment on election of Prosecutor General	1st reading	75	23	2	3	4	2	2	2	5	8	126
	Election of non-judge members of High Council of Justice												
4.	Establishment of Anti-corruption Bureau (Amendment to the Law on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public Service)	Adopted	66	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	8	77
	Strengthening institutional capabilities of Special Investigation Service (Amendment to the Law on Special Investigation Service)	Adopted	67	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	9	80
	Strengthening institutional capabilities of Personal Data Protection Service (Amendment to the Law on Personal Data Protection Service)	Adopted	67	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	8	78
5.	Law on De-oligarchisation	1st reading	71	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	80
6.	Separation of powers between criminal prosecution and investigation bodies (Amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia)	Initiated											
	Implementation of MONEYVAL recommendations (Amendment to the Law on Money Laundering)	Initiated											
7.	Amendments to Law on Broadcasting (harmonizing EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive)	Adopted	73	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	81

8.	Human Rights Strategy 2022-2030	Adopted	61	0	1	0	2	0	1	2	0	11	78
9.	Amendment to Organic Law on Normative Acts	Adopted	72	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	7	83
	Amendment to Law on Gender Equality	Adopted	71	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8	80
	State Concept on Gender Equality	Adopted	74	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	9	88
	State Concept on Economic Empowerment of Women	Adopted	60	0	1	0	2	0	1	2	0	12	78
	Amendment to the Law on Violence Against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Victims of Violence	Adopted	71	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	12	88
	Amendment to the Election Code of Georgia (on extending gender quotas)	Adopted	68	0	0	0	4	0	3	2	1	10	88
11.	Amendment to Organic Law on Common Courts (stimulating the reference of ECHR judgements)	Adopted	70	5	0	2	4	0	0	2	5	13	101
12.	Election of a new Public Defender	Elected	73	0	2	4	4	0	2	0	0	11	96

Annex 4

Institutional Architecture of Anti-Corruption Bodies in Georgia





PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA