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the European Social Charter

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submitted to

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Abbreviations

Art.	Article
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECSR	European Committee of Social Rights
FARA	Foreign Agents Registration Act
GD	Georgian Dream
GYLA	Georgian Young Lawyers' Association
NGO	Non-governmental organization
MP	Member of Parliament
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSCE/ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE
UN	United Nations

Introduction and Background Information

1. The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) submits the Information on Georgia to The European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR).
2. GYLA is a non-governmental organisation operating in Georgia which protects human rights and promotes good governance in Georgia through strategic litigation, advocacy and awareness-raising on human rights. For about 30 years, GYLA has been implementing a number of projects dedicated specifically to the recognition and protection of social rights, including labour rights.
3. With this alternative report, GYLA submits information about: (1) *Alarming Developments in Georgia Against Human Rights*; (2) *Adoption of Repressive Laws Against Civil Society Organisation*; (3) *Ongoing Repressions in the Public Service, Pressure on Public Servants*; (4) *Legislative Amendments*; (5) *Dismissal of Public Servants on the Basis of Liquidation*; (6) *Dismissal of Public Servants on the Basis of Reorganisation*; (7) *Dismissal of Public Servants Due to the Expiration of Their Contracts*; (8) *Disciplinary Measure Due to Participation in Protests*; (9) *Effects of the 'Reform' of the Public Service Agencies*. By the end of the report, relevant recommendations are presented.

Alarming Developments in Georgia Against Human Rights

4. As of May 2025, the 'Georgian Dream' (GD) government has completely ignored fundamental freedoms, including prohibition of torture, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of association, right to liberty and a fair trial. The rights have been widely violated since 28 November 2024, when the GD government announced the suspension of negotiations with the European Union.¹
5. The GD government has physically abused and systematically tortured hundreds of demonstrators, using force and/or unknown chemical irritants, resulting in long-term health effects, as documented by, among others, organizations such as the IRCT and OMCT (which was later supported by 6 UN Special Rapporteurs). Since the April-May 2024 protests, in the context of the ongoing protests, more than 60 individuals have been arrested under criminal law, who could not/cannot enjoy the right to a fair trial. In addition, the GD government is suppressing dissent by passing repressive laws (86% of recently initiated draft laws have been passed in an accelerated manner) and has also initiated a purge of the public servants with different positions in the public sector.²

Adoption of Repressive Laws Against Civil Society Organisations

6. Instead of ensuring the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes at all levels, as it was prescribed in the European Commission Recommendations, the GD government has

¹ For detailed information about these Human Rights Violations, see: GYLA and 10 CSO organisations, Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary elections, 2025, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20CRISIS%20IN%20GEORGIA%20-%20final.pdf [26.05.2025].

² Ibid, 9.

encouraged stigma and violence against civil society representatives. Moreover, recent legislative developments in Georgia signal a growing crackdown on civil society organizations.

7. Initially, on 28, May 2024, GD passed a **Russian-style law on the ‘Transparency of Foreign Influence’³ that imposes strict sanctions on NGOs and media receiving over 20% of their funding from foreign sources.** Despite mass protests⁴ in Georgia and assessments of the [Venice Commission](#), [OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights](#), [UN Special Rapporteurs](#), [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child](#) and other international entities that involves significant negative consequences for human rights and should be repealed, the law was adopted by GD.
8. In 2025, the GD government has moved toward adopting even more restrictive laws that pose a serious threat to the existence of civil society. On April 1 2025, the GD party passed yet **another ‘foreign agents’ law.⁵ The law on ‘Foreign Agents Registration Act’** is stricter than the one that was adopted in 2024, because it covers not only on legal entities but also on individuals and sets criminal responsibility for non-compliance and improper compliance.⁶
9. The law of Georgia on ‘Foreign Agents Registration Act’ mandates that individuals or organizations register at the Anti-Corruption Bureau under the stigmatizing label of ‘foreign agents’ if they receive funding from or operate under the so-called ‘influence’ of a foreign principal while engaging in ‘political activities’ in its interests.⁷ The broad and vague definitions of key norms and terms, such as ‘influence’ or ‘political activity’ grant the authorities broad discretion to arbitrarily target individuals and organizations. The law imposes extensive reporting requirements, including the obligation for registered individuals and associations to label their public statements as originating from a ‘foreign agent.’ **Non-compliance with these requirements, such as failure to register or provide the necessary information, may result in criminal fines of up to 10,000 GEL (approximately 3,600 USD) or a maximum imprisonment of 5 years.⁸ Therefore, the newly passed law imposes even harsher sanctions, and in the reality of failure to meet quality of the law criteria including in terms of legal certainty, leaves civil society organizations with two options: cease operations or face criminal prosecution.**

³ Law of Georgia ‘On Transparency of Foreign Influence’, <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/6171895?publication=0> [26.05.2025].

⁴ The adaptation of the law was accompanied by Human Rights violations. For detailed information, see: GYLA, Georgia: Human Rights Amidst the Russian Law - Human Rights 60 Days Following the Revival of the Foreign Influence Transparency Bill, 2024, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/rusuli%20kanoni.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁵ Law of Georgia on ‘Foreign Agents Registration Act’, <https://www.matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/6461578?publication=0>, [[26.05.2025]. See also: Human Rights Watch, Georgia: Drop Repressive ‘Foreign Agents’ Bill Proposed Law Threatens Civil Society Amid Human Rights Crisis, 26.03.2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/03/26/georgia-drop-repressive-foreign-agents-bill>, [26.05.2025].

⁶ GYIA, Foreign Agents Registration Act in the Absence of the Independent Institutions, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/FOREIGN%20AGENTS%20REGISTRATION%20ACT%20IN%20THE%20ABSENCE%20OF%20THE%20INDEPENDENT%20INSTITUTIONS.pdf, [26.05.2025].

⁷ Law of Georgia on ‘Foreign Agents Registration Act’, Article 1, Article 2.

⁸ Law of Georgia on ‘Foreign Agents Registration Act’, Article 6.

10. **The amendments were also introduced to the Law of Georgia on Grants.**⁹ According to the amendments, issuance of a grant requires the approval of the Government of Georgia or an authorized person/body designated by the Government of Georgia. In order to obtain approval, the grantor must submit the draft agreement, to the Government of Georgia or to an authorized body. Receiving a grant without the aforementioned approval is prohibited.¹⁰ The receipt of a prohibited grant entails legal liability for the recipient, who shall be fined an amount equal to twice the value of the received funds.¹¹
11. **The Anti-Corruption Bureau is the main enforcement body of the ‘Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence’ and is responsible for monitoring the issuance and receipt of grants.**¹² The activities of Anti-Corruption Bureau activities are often perceived as politically biased, a perception that became particularly pronounced after the Bureau began taking active measures against civil society organizations.¹³ GD has increasingly adopted hostile rhetoric toward civil society, with its representatives frequently engaging in hate speech and publicly endorsing or legitimizing incidents of attacks against non-governmental organizations.¹⁴ Furthermore, the party has accused NGOs of posing a threat to the country’s sovereignty. **In a significant institutional shift, GD amended the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia to remove the mandatory participation of NGOs in public decision-making processes, citing their alleged obstruction of effective governance.**¹⁵ Given this context, GD representatives will not approve the issuance of grants for CSOs, which will significantly restrict the financial resources available to non-governmental organizations and jeopardize their existence.
12. The aforementioned laws are in contravention of both domestic and international legal standards and undermine core fundamental rights, including freedom of association and right to work.

⁹ Law of Georgia ‘On Grants’, <https://info.parliament.ge/#law-drafting/30563> [26.05.2025].

¹⁰ Law of Georgia ‘On Grants’, Article 5¹.

¹¹ Law of Georgia ‘On Grants’, Article 6⁴.

¹² Law of Georgia ‘On Grants’, Article 6¹.

¹³ GYLA, Third Interim Report of the Long-Term Observation Mission for the 2024 Parliamentary Elections, ‘Decisions of the Anti-Corruption Bureau Against Civil Society Organizations’, [https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/III%20Interim%20Report%20\(1\).pdf](https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/III%20Interim%20Report%20(1).pdf), [26.05.2025]. See also: GYLA, Foreign Agents Registration Act in the Absence of the Independent Institutions, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/FOREIGN%20AGENTS%20REGISTRATION%20ACT%20IN%20THE%20ABSENCE%20OF%20THE%20INDEPENDENT%20INSTITUTIONS.pdf, [26.05.2025].

¹⁴ GD Deputy Dimitri Samkharadze’s post, <https://www.facebook.com/dito.samkharadze/videos/423357193946251>, [26.05.2025].

Samkharadze writes in the post: ‘The low-quality bullying initiated by neo-fascists, stateless agents was answered yesterday! I won’t tolerate you in the slightest and forgive you, fool each other! What you intend against us, we will return to you a thousand times worse, painful and quality! You won’t want to show up and run into each other, you won’t even want to see each other, we’ll treat you like that! You are very arrogant, we know your identity one by one, your owners cannot save you if you do something bad to any member of the Georgian Dream team! So that I don’t miss you, stop looking back, we’re not sneaking up on anyone, look ahead, don’t step on anything! I am attaching the answer to the status, to the offices of those who want a video revolution!’

¹⁵ Explanatory note on the Law of Georgia on the On Amendments to ‘Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia’, <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/381178>, 19.02.2025, [26.05.2025].

13. The mentioned laws, in the reality of democratic institutional collapse, pose significant obstacles to the effective implementation of the European Social Charter by Georgia, the State party. The legislations directly undermine the peaceful existence of civil society, media and the individuals working at these sectors, within Georgia. Therefore, GYLA urges the European Committee of Social Rights to address this matter within its mandate.

Ongoing Repressions in the Public Service

Pressure on Public Servants

14. On November 28, 2024, the GD Prime Minister's statement about suspension of negotiations with the European Union, sparked legitimate protests among citizens, including public servants. Employees from different state bodies have publicly expressed opposition to Georgian Dream's decision through official statements.¹⁶
15. Although the Constitution of Georgia¹⁷ and the European Convention on Human Rights¹⁸ guarantee the right to freedom of expression for all individuals, including public servants, the Law on Public Service requires civil servants to maintain political neutrality. Nonetheless, expressing opinions on matters of foreign policy does not violate this obligation, as such expressions do not contain any political agitation or explicit support for any political party. Rather, they are consistent with Article 78 of the Constitution which guarantees EU-NATO foreign policy aspirations.
16. However, it is noteworthy, that following the publication of statements by public servants, the reactions of the Mayor of Tbilisi, Kakha Kaladze¹⁹, GD deputy Nino Tsilosani²⁰ and GD prime minister Irakli Kobakhidze²¹ reinforce concerns about potential pressure on public servants to terminate their employment.

¹⁶ Public Sector Employees' Statement, https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QqKT1yupZxvZpf68UQG_jakP77bs6BrrFHFgP215DgM/mobilebasic?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR3Vzg-4mcQ5HqviEZmCMCiBn2xRxRPHddFleYzNzKaps5i6bYpSPfF1K3w_aem_9h41GqnTztPfhTLTkV-H5w, [21.05.2025]. See also: Civil Georgia, Georgian Civil Servants' Statement, 01.12.2024, <https://civil.ge/archives/640162>, [26.05.2025].

¹⁷ Constitution of Georgia, Article 17, <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/30346?publication=36> [26.05.2025].

¹⁸ European Convention on Human Rights, Article 10.

¹⁹ Interpressnews, Kakha Kaladze on the statement of the employees of the City Hall: I was expecting this, we have announced a reorganization in the City Hall, relocations are planned, God bless everyone on their way, 01.12.2024, <https://www.interpressnews.ge/en/article/135532-kakha-kaladze-on-the-statement-of-the-employees-of-the-city-hall-i-was-expecting-this-we-have-announced-a-reorganization-in-the-city-hall-relocations-are-planned-god-bless-everyone-on-their-way/>, [26.05.2025].

²⁰ Georgian News, Tsilosani Urges Diplomats Who Abandoned Dream to Resign, 29.11.2024, <https://www.sakartvelosambebi.ge/en/news/tsilosani-urges-diplomats-who-abandoned-dream-to-resign>, [26.05.2025].

²¹ Civil Georgia, Kobakhidze Alludes to Purges, Says Civil Service is "Self-Cleansing", 02.12.2024, <https://civil.ge/archives/640508>, [26.05.2025].

Legislative Amendments

17. Legislative amendments and new laws are used by GD government as a tool of repression. On December 9, 2024, Mamuka Mdinaradze, Executive Secretary of GD party and GD parliamentary majority leader announced that amendments to the 'Law on Public Service' had been initiated.²² These amendments were introduced in several waves.

The First Wave of the Amendments

18. To punish 'disobedient' public servants, the ruling party passed the amendments in the 'Law on Public Service' an accelerated manner on December 13, 2024, just four days later after initiation.²³ Repressive legislative amendments have significantly weakened the protection mechanisms for public servants and, at the same time, increased the risk of politicization within the civil service, namely:

- ***The head of the primary structural unit of the institution and their deputy will not be professional public servants.*** They are employed under a public contract, which gives the head of a public institution the right to dismiss an undesirable employee at any time, subject to one month's prior notice.²⁴ This change significantly weakens the guarantees of protection for the persons employed on managerial positions - the grounds and guarantees for dismissal of the officers no longer apply to them and on the other hand, it disproportionately increases the influence of the head of a public institution and creates the possibility of making unfounded politically motivated decisions.
- ***Organization of a competition will not be mandatory for the appointment of the head of the primary structural unit and their deputy.*** The head of a public institution shall appoint the head of the primary structural unit of this public institution, their deputy, or an officer holding a second-rank position in the same public institution as the chairperson of the competition commission.²⁵ According to the previous regulations, the head of a public institution appointed an officer in a first or second-rank position in this public institution as the chairperson of the competition commission. To the extent that the adopted amendments serve to politicize the positions of the head of the structural unit and his/her deputy and make them vulnerable to improper influences, the leadership of the competition commission by these individuals poses the threat of politicizing the competition itself.

²² Civil Georgia, GD Ostensibly Moves to Simplify Firing Civil Servants, 09.12.2024, <https://civil.ge/archives/643177>, [26.05.2025].

²³ Law of Georgia 'On Amendments to the Law of Georgia 'On Public Service'', <https://info.parliament.ge/#law-drafting/29794>, [26.05.2025].

²⁴ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 82 (2).

²⁵ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 37 (2).

- ***The reorganization process has been simplified and becomes easier to use it as a tool for political cleansing.*** In the event of a reduction in staff as a result of reorganization, an officer, with his/her consent, could be transferred to a position equal to his/her position in the same or another public institution, and in the absence of such - to a lower position. During the reorganization, due to a reduction in staff, an officer would be dismissed only if such mobility was impossible. However, this guarantee will no longer apply to the officers and it will be possible to dismiss them from their positions, regardless of whether mobility is possible or not.²⁶Appealing a decision on the reorganization, liquidation and/or merger of a public institution with another public institution, or any decision taken during and/or in connection with this process, does not suspend its validity.²⁷A person dismissed from office as a result of reorganization will not be reinstated to his/her position even in the case of the court completely or partially granting his/her complaint/claim. He/she shall only be given his/her lost official salary, also, 3 months of this amount as compensation and shall be put on the reserve list of officers with his/her consent.²⁸
- ***The periodicity of the obligation to evaluate an officer is reduced and instead of a year is determined to be 6 months.***²⁹ Also, the head of a public institution is granted the authority to change the results of the evaluation of an officer within a month from their evaluation. Moreover, in the event of an unsatisfactory evaluation as provided for in Article 53, paragraph 3, subparagraph 'd' of the Law, 20% of the officer's salary will be withheld from the officer until the beginning of his/her next period to be evaluated. This regulation creates a threat that the evaluation of an officer will be used unjustifiably and abusively as a mechanism for their punishment.³⁰

The Second Wave of the Amendments

19. In February 2025, the GD Parliament initiated a new wave of amendments to the 'Law on Public Service'. Similar to previous amendments, the ruling party adopted the changes in accelerated manner, within three days of their introduction, on February 6, 2025.³¹ According to the changed the power of Civil Service Bureau was transferred to the Government of Georgia, which led to the liquidation of the Bureau as of 1 April 2025.³² The goal of the change was stated to be management rationalization and cost optimization,³³ while the functions

²⁶ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 52, Article 110 (1).

²⁷ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 118 (2).

²⁸ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 118 (6).

²⁹ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 53 (1).

³⁰ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 53 (9).

³¹ Parliament of Georgia, Parliament Endorsing Amendments to Law on Public Service in III Reading, 06.02.2025, <https://www.parliament.ge/en/print/news/parlamentma-sajaro-samsakhuris-shesakheb-kanonshi-tsvlileba-mesame-mosmenit-miigho-2>, [26.05.2025].

³² Law of Georgia on Amendments to the Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/381239> [26.05.2025].

³³ Explanatory note on the draft law of Georgia 'On Amendments to the Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/380369> [26.05.2025].

remaining within the authority of the Bureau will be carried out by the relevant departments of the Administration of the Government.³⁴ The evaluation document, which presented the problem of rationalizing the Bureau's management or the need for cost optimization, had been made available neither for the public nor for the Bureau employees.³⁵

Illegal and Repressive Changes to the Rules for Diplomatic Service

20. By Order №01-74 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 27 January 2025 amendments were made to the Rules for Conducting Diplomatic Service. These amendments have been adopted in gross violation of the principle of formal legality. The order, as a subordinate act, unlawfully worsened the legal status of the diplomatic service employees, established by the superior act, the Law on Diplomatic Service, violating the hierarchy set by the Organic Law of Georgia on Normative Acts.³⁶
21. According to the amendments, individuals can be appointed on these positions based on an agreement under public law.³⁷ As a result, **the Director General of the Ministry's General Directorate, the Director of a Department, the Deputy Director of a Department, and the Head of the Minister's Secretariat will be appointed by agreement under public law,³⁸ despite the fact that under the Law 'On Diplomatic Service' they are not considered as the persons employed under an agreement under public law.³⁹** The Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service' is more special and clarifies the concept of a person employed under an agreement under public law and directly establishes that a person employed under an agreement under public law is a person who does not hold a position provided for by this Law for a diplomatic official, administrative personnel, or technical personnel.⁴⁰
22. As a result of the amendments, **the termination of a minister's authority will automatically result in the termination of the agreement with the senior and highest diplomatic officials.⁴¹** With the amendments, a danger appears of politicizing the diplomatic service, weakening the guarantees of those employed here, and instrumentalizing political discrimination against them. In the diplomatic service, beside the legal grounds, it becomes possible to terminate the agreement of these officials on the initiative of one of the parties.

³⁴ Press Service of the Administration of the Government, Under the Government's Decision, the Civil Service Bureau will no longer exist as a legal entity under public law, 3 February 2025, https://www.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=GEO&sec_id=288&info_id=91160 [26.05.2025].

³⁵ GYLA, Statement of the Civil Society Organizations, Civil Service Bureau liquidation is a continuation of repression in Public Service, 5 February 2025, <https://gyla.ge/post/sajarosamsaxurisbiuro-likvidacia> [26.05.2025].

³⁶ GYLA, The Devastating Effects of the Public Service 'Reform', 2025, 11, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/THE%20DEVASTATING%20EFFECTS%20OF%20THE%20PUBLIC%20SERVICE%20REFORM.pdf [26.05.2025].

³⁷ Order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia of 27 January 2025 'On Approval of the Rules for Conducting Diplomatic Service', Article 11¹.

³⁸ Ibid, Article 11¹(2).

³⁹ Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service', Article 2(i.c), 12, 13.

⁴⁰ Ibid, Article 2 (i.c).

⁴¹ Order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia of 27 January 2025 'On Approval of the Rules for Conducting Diplomatic Service', Article 11¹ (7, h).

With the amendments, it has become possible to terminate an agreement under public law on the initiative of one of the parties, with the obligation to notify the other party 1 month in advance. If an agreement under public law is terminated on the initiative of the Minister, the employed person is given compensation in the amount of 1 month's official salary. And if an agreement under public law is terminated on the initiative of the Minister with a later notification to the other party than a month, the employed person is given compensation in the amount of 2 months' official salary.⁴²

23. On May 14, the GD Parliament adopted further amendments to the Law of Georgia on Diplomatic Service. According to the changes:

- *Article 4 that defines the principles of the diplomatic service, is supplemented with a new principle requiring the 'strict observance of general rules of ethics and conduct.'*⁴³
- *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will adopt these general ethical and conduct rules through an administrative legal act.*⁴⁴
- *Early termination of diplomatic postings is possible if a person violates these rules in a way that may damage the country's interests or image, or contradicts key foreign policy directions set by Parliament.*⁴⁵
- *Performance evaluations for diplomatic and administrative staff will be conducted at least twice a year, instead of once. The maximum rotation period for heads of missions and other staff will be extended from six months to up to one year.*⁴⁶

24. According to the explanatory note, the amendments are necessary as the current legislation no longer reflects institutional realities or addresses ongoing challenges. The changes reveal a concerning Ministry's intention to diplomatic service staff.

Repressive Changes to the Ministry of Defence of Georgia

25. On 24 January 2025, amendments were made to Order №582 of the Minister of Defence of Georgia of 21 July 2011 'On the Rules for the Service of Military Police Officers', with which the age limit for the employees with special ranks was determined. According to the amendments, reaching the age limit established for the relevant rank is the basis for the dismissal from office. A number of persons have been dismissed from office precisely on the basis of this amendment.⁴⁷

⁴² Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service', Article 11¹ (9).

⁴³ Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service', Article 4.1 (i)

⁴⁴ Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service', Article 4.4.

⁴⁵ Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service', Article 24.

⁴⁶ Law of Georgia 'On Diplomatic Service', Article 29.

⁴⁷ GYLA, GYLA's assessment of the dismissal of employees from the Ministry of Defence, 19.03.2025, <https://gyla.ge/post/gyla-shepaseba-tavdacvis-tanamshromeli> [26.05.2025].

Dismissal of Public Servants on the Basis of Liquidation and Reorganization

Liquidation of the Civil Service Bureau

26. According to the decision of the ‘Georgian Dream’, the Civil Service Bureau⁴⁸ is abolished from 1 April 2024. According to the information released by the Administration of the Georgian Government, the aforementioned decision was justified in order to rationalize the management and optimize the expenses, after the control of the declarations of the officials and the ethics and integrity of the persons employed in the public service was transferred to the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and a third of the functions of the Civil Service Bureau were eliminated.⁴⁹ It is unknown how many public servants transferred from the Civil Service Bureau on the basis of mobility.
27. Against the backdrop of the ongoing repressive policies and the large-scale dismissals in the public service, the abolition of the Bureau, as one of the key agencies in the process of establishing an effective, accountable and values-based environment in the public service, will contribute to the strengthening of party interests in the public service system. This decision contradicts the fundamental principles of the public service reform and threatens the prospects for the development of a professional public service in Georgia. The abolition of the Bureau will also significantly harm the process of depoliticization of the public service and increase the risks of political influence in the public institutions.⁵⁰

Liquidation of the Research Center of the Parliament

28. On 10 March 2025, the legal entity under public law - the Parliament Research Center - was declared liquidated. The Chairperson of the Parliament of Georgia named as the reason for the liquidation the fact that the original goal, that the Parliament Research Center had been based on, had not been achieved.⁵¹ As a result, 21 people have been left without a job.⁵²

⁴⁸ The main functions of the Civil Service Bureau were study and analysis of the current situation in the public service sector, monitoring the implementation of unified state policy in the public service sector, including the execution of related normative acts, policy documents, and recommendations issued by the Bureau, and preparing relevant reports. Also, its functions included Development of action standards, instructions, other methodological documents, normative acts, and legislative proposals in the public service sector and providing methodological assistance to public institutions to ensure uniform implementation of standards, instructions, and normative acts in the public service sector, and etc. See, Ordinance of the government N 290, On Approval of the Statute of the Public Service Bureau, a Legal Entity of Public Law, August 7, 2023, <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5890103?publication=1> [26.05.2025].

⁴⁹ Radio Tavisupleba, The ‘Civil Service Bureau’ will be abolished from 1 April, 03.03.2025, <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33301653.html> [26.05.2025].

⁵⁰ Ordinance №295 of the Government of Georgia of 10 September 2024, ‘On Approval of the Statute of the Legal Entity under Public Law – Civil Service Bureau’ amending Resolution No. 290 of the Government of Georgia of August 7, 2023.

⁵¹ Public Broadcaster – First Channel, The Legislative Body Supported the Amendments to the ‘Rules of Procedure of the Parliamentary’ prepared by Shalva Papuashvili on the First Reading, 05.02.2025, <https://1tv.ge/news/sakanonmdeblo-organom-shalva-papuashvilis-mier-momzadebul-parlamentis-reglamentshi-cvilebebs-pirveli-mosmenit-mkhari-dauchira/> [26.05.2025].

⁵² Radio Tavisupleba, 21 more dismissed: Date announced for the abolition of the Parliament Research Center, 06.02.2025,

29. It is noteworthy that on 21 January 2025, the head of the Research Center stated in the presence of the employees that the decision to liquidate the center was made due to the public activism of the five employees who had signed an open statement of public servants in support of the country's European integration process. The dismissed employees note that the decision is a clear example of the political discrimination and indicates a disregard for the professional standards and human rights in the public service.⁵³

Abolition of the Special Investigation Service

30. GD initiated a bill proposing the abolition of the Special Investigation Service and the transfer of its investigative powers to the Prosecutor's Office.⁵⁴ The creation of an independent agency to investigate crimes and ill-treatment committed by law enforcement officials was prompted by both Georgia's obligations under the Association Agenda between Georgia and the European Union for 2017–2020⁵⁵ and the need to implement the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in the Tsintsabadze Group of cases⁵⁶.

31. However, in its current form, The Special Investigation Service, is one of the institutions hijacked by GD and has failed to fulfill its mandate.⁵⁷ A significant concern has been the lack of independence of the Special Investigation Service from the Prosecutor's Office. In 2024, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in the context of monitoring the implementation of the Tsintsabadze judgments, called on Georgia to enhance the independence of the Special Investigation Service from the prosecution.⁵⁸ Moreover, strengthening the effectiveness, institutional independence, and impartiality of the Service was among the 9 key recommendations issued by the European Commission in 2023 as conditions for granting

<https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/%E1%83%99%E1%83%98%E1%83%93%E1%83%94%E1%83%95-21-%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%97%E1%83%90%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A4%E1%83%9A%E1%83%94%E1%83%91%E1%83%A3%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98/33305429.html> [26.05.2025].

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Draft Law on Amendments to the Organic Law of Georgia 'On the Prosecutor's Office', <https://info.parliament.ge/#law-drafting/30773> [26.05.2025].

⁵⁵ Recommendation No 1/2017 of the EU-Georgia Association Council of 20 November 2017 on the EU-Georgia Association Agenda [2017/2445], <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1525315497163&uri=CELEX:22017D2445> [26.05.2025].

⁵⁶ *Tsintsabadze's group brings together 18 judgements of the European Court of Human Rights concerning violations of the right to life and the prohibition of torture, which were caused by the actions of police and prison officials and their ineffective investigations.*

⁵⁷ *Documentation prepared by 11 civil society organizations, as well as the Public Defender's Parliamentary Report, highlight the Service's ineffectiveness in investigating police violence, systematic torture, and ill-treatment committed during April–May 2024 and since November 2024—thus contributing to impunity at both the institutional and individual levels. See, GYLA and 10 CSO organisations, Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary elections,* 2025, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20CRISIS%20IN%20GEORGIA%20-%20final.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁵⁸ Committee of Ministers, 1492nd meeting (12-14 March 2024) (DH) - H46-14 Tsintsabadze group v. Georgia (Application No. 35403/06), <https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng#%7B%22execidentifier%22%3A%22CM/Del/Dec%282024%29H46-14E%22%7D> [26.05.2025].

Georgia candidate status.⁵⁹ The Venice Commission also recommended to increase the Special Investigation Service's independence from the prosecution.

32. Beyond the significant human rights concerns and the clear case of dismantling an independent institution, Georgian Dream has manipulatively attempted to justify the Service's abolition in the explanatory note to the draft law. Specifically, party representatives claim that "based on the principles of constitutional law, the model of state governance should be exclusively regulated by the Constitution. The legal status of an independent state body should be provided for in the supreme law of the country. It is also worth noting that the Constitution of Georgia establishes the competencies assigned to the special administration of the highest state bodies of Georgia, which can only be implemented by the central government of Georgia."⁶⁰ Article 7 of the Constitution of Georgia enshrines the foundations of the country's territorial organization and delineates the powers of central and local governance. Investigative authority clearly falls within the competence of the central government. The Special Investigation Service, like the Prosecutor's Office, was established as a central government agency. The fact that it is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution cannot serve as a legitimate basis for its abolition. Accordingly, the party's legal justification is unfounded.
33. Through the abolition of the Service, Georgian Dream once again demonstrates its unwillingness to effectively investigate police violence and ill-treatment, to fulfill its obligations under the EU Association process, to implement the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, and to heed the recommendations of the Venice Commission.⁶¹

Reorganization of the Central Election Commission

34. On 16 December 2024, the reorganization of the Central Election Commission began based on the order of the CEC Chairman.⁶² The day after the issuance of the order, at its session on 17 December 2024, the Central Election Commission adopted a decree⁶³, based on which it determined the staff list, the amount of remuneration and the cost estimate of the heads,

⁵⁹ 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy (extract about Georgia), https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/2023-communication-eu-enlargement-policy-extract-about-georgia_en [26.05.2025].

⁶⁰ Explanatory note on Draft Law on Amendments to the Organic Law of Georgia 'On the Prosecutor's Office', <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/389501> [26.05.2025].

⁶¹ GYLA, The abolition of the Special Investigation Service confirms that the Georgian Dream does not even formally intend to investigate torture and police violence, 23.05.2025 <https://www.gyla.ge/en/post/specialuri-sagamodziebos-gauqmeba> [26.05.2025].

⁶² Order №01-148 of the Chairman of the Central Election Commission of 16 December 2024; See, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QdTz8DZePO_0dPoYJQ7SxAjRJxorkSh0/view [26.05.2025].

⁶³ Decree №359/2024 of the Central Election Commission of Georgia of 17 December 2024 on determining the staff list, amount of remuneration and cost estimate of the heads, members and employees of the Central Election Commission of Georgia; See, <https://cesko.ge/ge/kanonmdebloba/tseskos-samartlebrivi-aqtebi/gankargulebebi/singleviwev/11035329-gankarguleba-3592024-17122024> [26.05.2025].

members and employees of the Central Election Commission of Georgia and the CEC staff. According to the new staff list, 118 staff positions in the CEC staff were reduced to 103.⁶⁴

35. Although the official reason for the reorganization was to ensure systemic and effective governance, the dismissed employees indicate political motives and the connection of their dismissal with the position supporting European integration. Some of those dismissed believe that their dismissal is related to the political activities of their family members, while some of them still do not know the real reason for their dismissal. Among those dismissed as a result of the reorganization were those who openly supported Georgia's integration into the European Union and publicly condemned the state's unconstitutional statements.
36. As a result of the reorganization, were also dismissed: 4 members of the Training Monitoring Group; 1 member of the Labor Safety Group of the Human Resources Management and Labor Safety Department; 2 advisors to the Chairman.⁶⁵

Dismissal of Public Servants Due to the Expiration of Their Contracts

37. A person employed under a labour contract is considered a person who is granted the authority to perform auxiliary or non-permanent tasks of a public institution in order to ensure the implementation of public service. Persons employed under an administrative contract include those who assist a public-political official in the exercise of their powers by providing field/sectoral advice, providing intellectual and technical assistance, and/or performing organizational and managerial functions.⁶⁶ Since December 2024, the dismissal of public servants has actively continued, including on the grounds of contract expiration. Although the formal basis for dismissal was the expiration of the contract, the real reason is related to public statements made by the public servants in support of the EU accession process.
38. The contracts concluded with some of the dismissed employees were considered to be permanent employment contracts, therefore, their dismissal due to the expiration of the contract was not only discriminatory, but also unlawful. Under the current legislation, if the duration of an employment agreement is more than 30 months, or if labour relations have continued on the basis of concluding fixed-term employment agreements on two or more consecutive times and the duration of said labour relations exceeds 30 months, an open-ended labour agreement shall be deemed to have been concluded.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ GYLA and 10 CSO organisations, Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary elections, 2025, 105, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20CRISIS%20IN%20GEORGIA%20-%20final.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁶⁵ GYLA and 10 CSO organisations, Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary elections, 2025, 105, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20CRISIS%20IN%20GEORGIA%20-%20final.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁶⁶ Law of Georgia 'On Public Service', Article 3.

⁶⁷ Organic Law of Georgia 'Labour Code of Georgia', Article 12, paragraph 4, <https://www.matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/1155567?publication=28> [26.05.2025].

Disciplinary Measure Due to Participation in Protests

39. An employee of the Revenue Service was fined by the Ministry of Internal Affairs for participating in a pro-European protest. The fine receipt, marked as ‘confidential’ and addressed to the employee, was opened by a Chancellery staff member and additionally forwarded to the Head of Service Monitoring.
40. Based on the receipt, an official enquiry was launched. The employee declined to submit a written explanation but verbally stated that they had participated in a peaceful protest without committing any offences. However, this statement was misrepresented in the enquiry materials, indicating that the employee **‘systematically participates in anti-government protests’** and had confirmed involvement in the 7 February 2025 demonstration. As a result, a disciplinary measure in the form of a warning was issued against the employee.⁶⁸
41. This case highlights a practice that undermines not only public servants’ freedom of expression for participating in peaceful protests, but also reveals yet another method by which the state seeks to suppress public servants’ expression of opinion regarding constitutionally guaranteed European integration.

LEPL National Agency of the Public Registry

42. At the end of December 2024, the process of dismissing employees began at the LEPL National Agency of the Public Registry. Notices of dismissal were sent to the employees of the Public Registry. According to the Public Registry, more than 90% of the work planned within the framework of the reform had already been completed and the organization was dismissing employees due to the small volume of the work remaining. The dismissed employees believe that the process is directly related to the petition created on 30 November 2024, which was joined by more than 350 employees of the Public Registry and in which they condemned the statements made by the GD against the European integration process.⁶⁹
43. It is noteworthy that the decisions made by the National Agency of the Public Registry before the petition was distributed confirm completely the opposite circumstances. According to the statement of the Public Registry of 9 November 2024, the project of systematic land registration, which was supposed to be completed on 31 December 2024, was extended until

‘Fixed-term employment agreements shall be considered to have been consecutively concluded if the current fixed-term labour agreement is prolonged upon the expiry thereof or the next fixed-term labour agreement is concluded within 60 days after the initial agreement expires.’

⁶⁸ GYLA, The Devastating Effects of the Public Service ‘Reform’, 2025, 21, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/THE%20DEVASTATING%20EFFECTS%20OF%20THE%20PUBLIC%20SERVICE%20REFORM.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁶⁹ GYLA and 10 CSO organisations, Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary elections, 2025, 106, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20CRISIS%20IN%20GEORGIA%20-%20final.pdf [26.05.2025].

31 December 2025.⁷⁰ At the same time, in November, employees were notified that the existing human resources would be maintained in 2025 as well.⁷¹

LEPL Public Service Hall

44. According to the information provided by the LEPL Public Service Hall, from December 1, 2024, to April 1, 2025:⁷²

- *4 individuals had their agreements under public law terminated.*
- *Stemming from the termination of the authority of the Chairperson of the Public Service Hall, 3 individuals had their agreements under public law terminated.*
- *The heads of the primary structural unit and their deputies, a total of 52 people, for the term of office of the chairperson, have been considered persons employed under an agreement under public law.*
- *After the expiration of their fixed-term labor relations, 11 individuals have not had their employment agreements extended.*⁷³

Ministry of Defence of Georgia

45. According to the information provided by the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, from December 1, 2024, to April 1, 2025⁷⁴:

- *99 individuals have been dismissed from the agency, including professional public servants, persons employed under employment agreements and agreements under public law.*
- *The legal status of the heads of the primary structural units and their deputies, a total of 48 individuals, have been changed and they have been considered persons employed under an agreement under public law.*⁷⁵

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

46. Georgian media outlets reported on an internal letter that was sent by GD Foreign Minister Maka Bochorishvili to the ministry staff. The letter indicates information regarding comprehensive reorganization, involving structural changes to both the central office and diplomatic missions abroad. It also details plans to establish new diplomatic and consular posts,

⁷⁰ National Agency of Public Registry, Land registration reform to continue until the end of 2025, 11.11.2024, <https://www.napr.gov.ge/ka/news/70> [26.05.2025].

⁷¹ GYLA and 10 CSO organisations, Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary elections, 2025, 106, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20CRISIS%20IN%20GEORGIA%20-%20final.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁷² Letter №2337 of the LEPL Public Service Hall of 4 April 2025.

⁷³ GYLA, The Devastating Effects of the Public Service ‘Reform’, 2025, 16-17, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/THE%20DEVASTATING%20EFFECTS%20OF%20THE%20PUBLIC%20SERVICE%20“REFORM”_.pdf [26.05.2025].

⁷⁴ Letter №MOD 9 25 00544104 of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia of 29 April 2025.

⁷⁵ GYLA, The Devastating Effects of the Public Service ‘Reform’, 2025, 17, https://admin.gyla.ge/uploads_script/publications/pdf/THE%20DEVASTATING%20EFFECTS%20OF%20THE%20PUBLIC%20SERVICE%20“REFORM”_.pdf [26.05.2025].

along with the creation of four political directorates comprising 10 departments and 25 divisions. The newly proposed structure of the Ministry is set to take effect on July 1 of this year.⁷⁶ Furthermore, information has recently been disseminated about a large-scale reorganization underway at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is expected to result in the dismissal of up to 250 employees.⁷⁷

Effects of the ‘Reform’ of the Public Service Agencies

More than 800 employees have been dismissed from dozens of public structures on political grounds.⁷⁸

RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account the above presented information, GYLA submits, that Georgia should:

- Abandon all initiatives aimed at labeling civil society organizations and media as foreign agents or entities representing foreign powers.
- Revoke the adopted laws and repressive measures affecting civil servants.

⁷⁶ Civil Georgia, Opposition Claims MFA Reorganization Targets Pro-EU Diplomats, 01.05.2025, <https://civil.ge/archives/679192> [26.05.2025].

⁷⁷ Radio Tavisupleba, Reorganization Begins at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 01.05.2025, <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33402213.html> [26.05.2025].

⁷⁸ Formula, Article 78 of the Constitution: More than 800 people have already been dismissed from public services”, 24.04.2025, <https://formulanews.ge/News/კონსტიტუციის_78-ე_მუხლი:_საჯარო_სამსახურებიდან_უკვე_800-ზე_მეტი_ადამიანი_გაათავისუფლეს/125348> [26.05.2025].