



The Assessment of the Pre-Election Period for the October 26, 2024 Parliamentary Elections

(Mid-term report)

August 27 - October 20, 2024

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Introduction

On October 26, 2024, Georgia will hold scheduled Parliamentary Elections under a fully proportional system for the first time. In accordance Georgia’s applicable legislation, the pre-election campaign officially began on August 27, 60 days before the elections, when President Salome Zurbashvili appointed the Parliamentary Elections through a respective ordinance.

The document covers the reporting period of August 27 to October 20, 2024. The Democracy Research Center (DRC) has been observing the pre-election environment since the first day of the official launch of the pre-election campaign. However, the report also includes significant events that took place before the start of the electoral campaign.

Based on the monitoring objectives, the report analyzes the following:

- the cases of the use of administrative resources during the pre-election period
- the cases of pressure on civil servants for political reasons, instances of dismissal from work and incidents of assault on representatives and supporters of opposition parties
- the facts of interference in the activities of electoral subjects during the pre-election period
- the instances of unauthorized individuals participating in outreach meetings of the ruling party during the pre-election campaign
- programs, initiatives and infrastructure projects that may not involve law violation, but still resulting in an uneven playing field for electoral subjects
- the instances of taking away of identity documents from employees of public sector institutions and family members of socially vulnerable individuals
- cases of dismissal from posts at public educational facilities
- the participation of electoral subjects in events organized with funds from local municipality budgets.

Key findings

- Political polarization intensified during the pre-election period, primarily due to the anti-European statements made by the Georgian Dream party. This was further exacerbated by the passing of the Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence, also known as the Russian Law. Additionally, the ruling party’s pre-election “promise” to ban opposition parties after the elections has also contributed to the overwhelmingly heightened polarization.
- Georgian Dream party utilized the legislative process for pre-election purposes. An analysis of the substance of several legislative acts enacted after the appointment of Election Day shows that these acts were aimed at gaining the favor of the electorate during the pre-election period.

- In 2024, the number of beneficiaries of the subsistence allowance was approximately 47,000 higher compared to 2023. As of September, 2024, the number of beneficiaries receiving allowance reached a record high of 682,739 individuals, which also represents a record share of 18.5% of the Georgian population.
- In 2024, there was a noticeable one-time increase in the number of staff and salary funds in Georgia municipalities. This could be seen as the utilization of administrative resources to benefit the ruling party during the pre-election period. According to existing data, the number of contracted employees in the offices of municipal city councils increased by 8.2% in 2024. As a result, following an overall increase in staff and salaries in city council apparatuses, the overall salary fund country-wide (excluding Tbilisi) increased by 16.5%.
- In 2024, the salary fund of the Tbilisi City council's apparatus was increased by almost 10%, despite a decrease in staff numbers.
- Following the official commencement of the pre-election period, according to government ordinances, non-agricultural land plots, erected buildings and structures were transferred to the Patriarchate of Georgia for one Lari.
- Since August, 2024, there has been a noticeable increase in the initiation and implementation of state and local self-government projects and programs. While this does not explicitly violate any legislation, it does raise concerns about the potential use of administrative resources for electoral purposes.
- The programs and initiatives launched during the reporting period are primarily aimed at youth. Some of these programs and initiatives involve financial benefits, which could be perceived as a form of vote buying.
- Several days before the official launch of the pre-election period, the Government of Georgia transferred savings accumulated over the years in the State Budget to eight municipalities for the implementation of infrastructure projects.
- In most municipalities, the completion of infrastructure projects coincided with the pre-election campaign period. This association between major infrastructure projects and the governing party blurs the line between the state and the ruling political party, creating an uneven playing field for other electoral subjects.
- As the October 26, 2024 Parliamentary Elections approached, instances of violent interference in the election campaigns of opposition parties became more frequent. The report specifically focuses on only nine cases of violence that the DRC was able to verify through multiple sources.
- In several instances, representatives of the parties were able to identify the assailants using their own resources, specifically, through video recordings made on site. It is not publicly known whether an investigation was launched in relation to either of the assault cases.
- During the reporting period, instances of psychological pressure have also been uncovered. According to several unrelated sources, representatives of the ruling party have been taking away identity documents from individuals working in the public sector and socially vulnerable individuals. The use of these methods may be an attempt to instill fear among voters regarding the secrecy of their votes on election day, as well as to influence voting results.
- During the pre-election campaign, opposition electoral subjects faced obstacles when trying to rent office spaces.
- In August, school directors and the head of a resource center were dismissed on alleged political grounds. The report only includes cases that the DRC has confirmed with several sources.

- Similar to previous years, during the period leading up to the 2024 Parliamentary Elections, the ruling party continues to actively utilize the human resources of state budget funded institutions. Based on instructions from their leadership, there were many instances when school and kindergarten teachers, as well as staff from medical institutions were taken to party events. There were also instances during the reporting period when school teachers participated in party events during working hours, which is a breach of the law.
- During the reporting period, delegates from the ruling party participated in events funded by municipalities. This blurs the line between the state and the ruling party, creating an uneven playing field for electoral subjects.

Monitoring methodology

The DRC has been monitoring the pre-election environment since the official appointment of the 2024 Parliamentary Elections. However, due to the importance of the issue, the report also includes events that occurred before August 27, 2024.

In consideration of the goals and objectives of the project, we have utilized the following methodology during the monitoring of the pre-election campaign:

Social media monitoring - During the pre-election period, four monitors from the DRC conducted daily monitoring of the social media accounts of political parties and their leaders to obtain information about the campaigns of electoral subjects. The 2024 Parliamentary Elections will be held completely under the proportional system, but the Georgian Dream party has nominated delegates to electoral districts. Therefore, for the project, we checked the Facebook accounts of the ruling party's delegates on a daily basis.

In addition to the afore-mentioned sources, the Project Team also monitored the social media accounts of the Prime Minister, the Chair of Parliament and other high-ranking political officials on a daily basis. Furthermore, in order to identify instances of misuse of administrative resources during the pre-election campaign period, we conducted daily examination of the content posted on social media accounts belonging to 64 self-governing communities, and Mayor's offices and city assemblies of 5 self-governing cities. Additionally, we monitored the social media activity of mayors and chairs of city assemblies on a daily basis.

We have also been monitoring social media accounts belonging to educational resource centers, the Central Election Commission and local district election commissions.

Media monitoring - Media monitoring was conducted daily to identify instances of the use of administrative resources and violations during the pre-election period. It covered content uploaded on government and opposition media channels, as well as their social media accounts.

The analysis of solicited public information - The DRC requested information from local self-government authorities in all municipalities regarding staffing and their corresponding labor remuneration for the years 2023-2024.

The analysis of the legislative framework - The Project's team of lawyers has examined and analyzed Georgia's current electoral legislation, as well as the standards set by international organizations.

The DRC verified the credibility of information obtained through social media and media monitoring with several sources.

Limitation of the research - Due to limited human resources, the key findings of the research are based on media monitoring results. The organization was unable to monitor the pre-election environment at the municipal level. However, all findings presented in the report have been verified with several sources.

The political context

The 2024 Parliamentary Elections differ from previous parliamentary elections due to several fundamental novelties. For the first time in the history of independent Georgia, parliamentary elections are being held under a fully proportional system. The aforementioned change was preceded by a number of political crises and mass protest rallies. In June, 2019, one of the demands of the participants in protest rallies was the transition from the mixed system to a fully proportional system for parliamentary elections.¹ Despite the promise made by the ruling party, the 2020 Parliamentary Elections were still held under a mixed system. It was decided that in 2024, elections would be held under a fully proportional system.

The use of electronic voting is another significant innovation for the Parliamentary Elections on October 26, 2024. The provision for electronic voting included in the Electoral Code in October, 2022 for the first time. Out of 3,030 election precincts established nationwide for the October 26, 2024 elections, voting at 2,263 precincts will be conducted using the electronic method.

The environment for the 2024 pre-election campaign is highly polarized. Despite the expectation that the acquisition of EU candidate country status would incentivize political subjects to cooperate, the reinitiation of the draft law on The Transparency of Foreign Influence in the spring of 2024 triggered large-scale protest rallies. This resulted in the extreme polarization of the already tense political environment. Despite protest rallies and harsh international criticism, the ruling party passed the draft law following all three hearings. Numerous serious violations of international standards and current legislation by law enforcement officers were observed during the dispersal of protest rallies against the draft law, leading to an escalation of violence. Prior to the adoption of the law, there were attempts to intimidate leaders of NGOs, politicians and participants of protest rallies, but there was no adequate response from the Special Investigation Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.²

Polarization was further exacerbated by the government's statement during the pre-election campaign about Georgian Dream's plans to ban opposition parties (The United National Movement and the coalition formed around it (Strategy Aghmashenebeli; European Georgia); the Coalition for Change (Akhali, Girchi, Droa), the Coalition united around Lelo Strong Georgia (Zlieri Sakartvelo) and Giorgi Gakharia's Party For Georgia).³

¹ bm.ge, Proportional Elections in Georgia, See. <https://bm.ge/news/proportsiuli-archevnebi-saqartveloshi>

² radiotavisupleba.ge, "Elections are approaching, who is in charge of the CEC?", ob. <https://shorturl.at/byH18>

³ netgazeti.ge, Kobakhidze specifies the parties the Georgian Dream intends to ban, see. <https://netgazeti.ge/news/738901/>

With the passing of the Georgian Law on the Transparency of Foreign Influence in June, 2024, authorities have significantly restricted the space in which NGOs and independent media are able to continue their operations. The Ministry of Justice of Georgia has been hesitant to monitor the organizations⁴ that have refused to register as entities carrying out the interests of foreign entities. Instead, the government has attempted to use the Anti-Corruption Bureau to limit the space for NGOs. Under the decision dated September 24, 2024, the Anti-Corruption Bureau designated Transparency International – Georgia, its director, the movement Choose Europe (Airchie Evropa) and the organization’s founders as “persons having declared electoral goals”. Consequently, they became subject to the regulations established for political parties. Later, the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, based on the Prime Minister’s *recommendation*, revoked the decision to assign a special status to civil society organizations.⁵

Another legislative amendment initiated by the ruling party has impacted the political environment during the pre-election period. With this amendment, the ruling party abolished a legislative provision regarding gender quotas. Furthermore, the 30% financial supplement for female representatives on a list was also abolished. On July 1, 2024, OSCE/ODIHR assessed the abolition of the gender quota as a significant setback in gender equality.⁶

1. An unprecedented increase in the number of the employees of local self-governments and socially vulnerable individuals

1.1. Employment at city halls, city council offices and municipal organizations

During the pre-election campaign monitoring, we solicited public information from all municipal bodies across the country regarding staff and their corresponding labor remuneration in municipalities for the years 2023-2024. The processing of the data received from local self-government bodies continued while the report was being drafted. This sub-chapter presents a comprehensive analysis of the data received from the city assemblies of 24 municipalities.

Based on the analysis of the information received, it can be determined that in 2024, there was a significant one-time increase in the number of staff and salary fund in municipal city assemblies. According to the available data, there was an 8.2% increase in contracted employees in the apparatuses of city councils (with the exception of Tbilisi, where a slight decrease was observed). Due to the overall increase in staff and salaries at city council offices, the total salary fund in the country (with the exception of Tbilisi) rose by 16.5%. In contrast, the Tbilisi city council’s apparatus saw a nearly 10% increase in salary fund, despite a reduction in staff.

⁴ As of October 23, 2024

⁵ [transparency.ge](https://transparency.ge/ge/post/antikorupciulma-biurom-gaaukma-saertashoriso-gamchvirvaloba-sakartvelos-cinaagmdeg-migebuli), The Anti-Corruption Bureau has revoked the decision against Transparency International - Georgia, see. <https://transparency.ge/ge/post/antikorupciulma-biurom-gaaukma-saertashoriso-gamchvirvaloba-sakartvelos-cinaagmdeg-migebuli>

⁶ civil.ge, “OSCE/ODIHR: The abolition of quotas for women in party lists does not align with Georgia’s commitments”, Civil Georgia, July 1, 2024, <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/615070>

Overall, in addition to a 10% rise in salaries for the entire budget-funded sector, the remuneration fund of municipalities was increased by approximately 6.5%. This increase was mainly due to the rise in the number of contracted employees.

1.2. The numbers of the beneficiaries receiving subsistence allowance, by municipalities

As of September, 2024, the number of beneficiaries receiving allowance reached a record-high of 682,739, representing 18.5% of Georgia's population. The nationwide recipients of allowance in August 2024 increased by 5%, and in September by 7% compared to the same periods in the previous year). The number of beneficiaries has increased by 5% in September compared to January, 2024. Hence, in comparison to September 2023, 47,000 more individuals received subsistence allowance.

Compared to September, 2023, there was an unnatural increase in the number of beneficiaries of allowance in Kutaisi (+24%) and Marneuli (+27%) municipalities. A significant increase in the number of beneficiaries (10-20%) was also observed in: Sagarejo, Samtredia, Tkibuli, Kazbegi, Poti, Akhalkalaki, Bolnisi and Gardabani municipalities. The amount of disbursed allowances has also risen (by 5-10%) in Tbilisi (9%), Lanchkhuti, Ozurgeti, Akhmeta, Gurjaani, Telavi, Kvareli, Zestaponi, Terjola, Sachkhere, Tskaltubo, Mtskheta, Abasha, Mestia, Khobi, Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Dmanisi, Tetritskaro, Rustavi, Gori, Kaspi, Khashuri and Khelvachauri municipalities.

Among the regions, the highest increase in the number of vulnerable individuals was found in Kvemo Kartli, with an annual increase of 15%. There was also a significant increase in Imereti (8%), Guria (7%), Kakheti (6%), Mtskheta-Mtianeti (6.5%), and Samtskhe-Javakheti (6%). The number of allowance recipients decreased in only four municipalities, with an average reduction of just one percent. In all other municipalities, the number of beneficiaries receiving allowance increased slightly, ranging between 1 and 5%.

The rise in the number of beneficiaries receiving allowance seems unusual when compared to the minimum of 10-12% real economic growth declared by Geostat for this period. Additionally, it is worth noting that not only is the absolute number of subsistence allowance beneficiaries steadily increasing, but also their share as a percentage of the total population. This fact, naturally, does not suggest a positive trend in the country's development.

2. Projects and programs initiated during the pre-election period, as well as other instances of the use of administrative resources

For the 2024 Parliamentary Elections, major challenges persist in areas that do not officially breach legislation but still interfere with the creation of a free and equal electoral environment. According to

electoral laws, new infrastructure projects should not be *planned* from day 60 through election day. However, the *implementation* of infrastructure projects has coincided with the pre-election campaign.

2.1. Legislative initiatives that impact the pre-election environment

Georgian Dream unofficially began their pre-election campaign in the spring by introducing draft laws against LGBT propaganda. The ruling party officially adopted the draft law during the final plenary session of the Fall Session of the Tenth Convocation Parliament. It passed with 84 votes in the third and final reading. A package of homophobic draft laws adopted for the protection of “Family Values” on the Protection of Family Values and Minors,⁷ actually, limits the constitutional rights of LGBT individuals. During the same session, the Parliament passed a draft law on Amnesty⁸ initiated by the Georgian Dream party, receiving the same number of votes.

Georgian Law on Protection of Family Values and Minors

The package of draft laws on the Protection of Family Values and the of Juveniles envisages amendments to 18 current laws. These changes will affect various laws, such as the Georgian Laws on Freedom of Speech and Expression, Assemblies and Manifestations, Broadcasting, and others.

The “matter of the protection” of family values is a cornerstone of the Georgian Dream party’s pre-election campaign. Bidzina Ivanishvili, Honorary Chair of the ruling party, emphasizes the significance of winning the 2024 Parliamentary Elections with a constitutional majority justifying the importance of passing the *Constitutional* Bill on the Protection of Family Values and Minors, during his meetings with the public.

Although the adopted law is a clear example of fueling hatred towards the LGBT community, bullying, discrimination, stigmatization and censorship against them, the ruling party claims that the legislation was passed to maintain and safeguard “Georgian dignity” and traditions.

The Georgian Law on Amnesty

On September 17, 2024, Parliament passed the Law on Amnesty during its third reading. As a result of this amnesty, approximately 1,000 convicts will be released immediately during the pre-election period. Additionally, up to 4,800 individuals will see reductions in their sentences by various proportions (by half, a quarter, and one sixth). Furthermore, around 7,000 probationers will have their term reduced by at least one year. The Law on Amnesty covers full or partial release from punishment outlined in over 290 articles of the Criminal Code. It is applicable to crimes committed before July 1, 2024.

With the adoption of the aforementioned law during the pre-election period, Georgian Dream attempted to win the favor of a sizable group of voters.

⁷ parliament.ge, Georgian Law on the Protection of Family Values and Minors, see. <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/363910>

⁸ parliament.ge, Georgian Law on Amnesty, see. <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/366895>

Amendments in the Administrative Offences Code

The initiative by Kakha Kaladze, the Mayor of the capital city, coincided with the pre-election period. This initiative served as the foundation for amending the Administrative Offences Code, which was initiated by the MPs from the Georgian Dream party. **The amendments now allow motorcycles and mopeds to travel in the bus lane.**⁹ Due to the amendments, motorcycle and moped drivers will no longer be fined for traveling in the bus lane.

Current legislation prohibits the initiation of new programs and projects 60 days before elections. Legislative amendments that unquestionably and solely serve the goal of gaining the favor of voters, may effectively entail the very risk that is safeguarded by the mentioned legislative provision.

Advantage for registration “as an organization carrying out the interests of a Foreign force”

According to Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, a grant program will be established for Georgian NGOs that register as “organizations carrying out the interests of a foreign force”. The program will be funded to achieve objectives aligned with the “interests of the Georgian people.”¹⁰

The initiative mentioned above can be seen as an attempt to gain favor with voters during the pre-election period.

2.2. Programs and projects that impact the pre-election environment

During the pre-election period, as the official electoral campaign approaches, there is typically an increase in the initiation of major state programs and projects. It is common for specific projects and programs to begin during this time. Additionally, the results of these projects and programs are often realized during the official pre-election period. The pre-election environment of October 26, 2024 elections is no exception in this regard.

Since August, 2024, there has been an increase in the initiation and/or implementation of state projects and programs. This trend shows the signs of using administrative resources for electoral purposes, ultimately negatively impacting the electoral environment and creating an uneven playing field for other electoral subjects who do not have access to administrative resources. The initiation and/or implementation of significant infrastructure projects, budget-funded programs and other state initiatives (especially at the local level) before elections offering various, often financial benefits to voters is particularly noticeable.

⁹ parliament.ge, “On the Amendments to the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia“, see. <https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/366920>

¹⁰ radiotavisupleba.ge, “The Grants Program for Georgian NGOs“, <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33112760.html>

Programs

During the pre-election period of the October 26, 2024 elections, there was a noticeable increase in the frequency of announcements of various programs by local municipalities. The DRC has observed that these programs are primarily targeted towards youth. Additionally, some of these programs offer financial incentives, which may be seen as attempts to buy votes. For example:

- On August 23, 2024, the Gardabani Municipality City Hall announced a program of material assistance for students. The program involves **co-funding the semestrial tuition of bachelor's and master's students with high academic achievements by GEL 500, and co-funding the semestrial tuition for students with a disability status by GEL 700.**¹¹
- From September 3 to September 5, 2024, the camp “Become an Adventurer” was organized by the Signagi Municipality Youth Council with support from the City Hall. Twenty youngsters participated in the camp.¹²
- On September 4, 2024, the Rustavi City Hall announced admissions for the short-term Vocational Retraining Program in Technical Maintenance and Repair of Elevators, as part of their Program - Vocational Training to Promote Employment. **According to information released by the City Hall, applicants accepted into the program will receive a scholarship from the Rustavi City Hall for the duration of their studies.**¹³
- According to information released on September 4, 2024, two graduates will be taking **paid internship** at Zestaponi Municipality City Hall within the framework of the state program.¹⁴
- According to information released on September 4, 2024, socially vulnerable internally displaced children suffering from bone and joint diseases **were sent to a recreational rehabilitation camp in Ureki.** This initiative was made possible with financial support from the Social Projects department of the Zugdidi Municipality City Hall, **and the children were accompanied by their mothers.** The event dedicated to the departure of children to Ureki was attended by Mamuka Tsotseria, Mayor of the Zugdidi Municipality, representatives of the social office of the City Hall, Avtandil Khazalia, the Head of the Human Rights Division within the Lawmaking and Legal Support Department of the Office of the Minister of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia in Justice and Civil Integration, and Boris Gabunia, Head of the Administrative Department of the apparatus of the same Ministry.¹⁵
- On September 5, 2024, the Abasha Municipality City Hall announced a program. According to the program, the acceptance of documentation for awarding successful students was initiated. The program beneficiaries are individuals registered in the Abasha Municipality who graduated from Abasha Public School, LEPL in the 2023-2024 academic year. They **will receive a one-time payment of GEL 500 (five hundred) from the Youth Support Program of Abasha Municipality City Hall.**¹⁶

¹¹ Gardabani Municipality City Hall, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/fui55niNWYFNmV6Z/>

¹² Signagi Municipality Facebook Page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=899437362217919&set=pcb.899440252217630>

¹³ Rustavi City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=504843118835687&set=a.183638620956140>

¹⁴ Zestaponi Municipality City Hall, See. <https://shorturl.at/PGYZx>

¹⁵ Zugdidi Municipality City Hall, See. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/mXXsjgFHDAAsLTNSX/>

¹⁶ Abasha Municipality Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=898068722376061&set=a.453640346818903>

- With the objective of supporting students, the Ministry of Education, Sciences and Youth of Georgia opened the call for applications on September 6, 2024, within the framework of the social program.¹⁷ Students enrolled in the following programs were able to submit applications to receive state academic grant funding: bachelor's students within the frame of the social program, integrated bachelor's and master's for teacher education, veterinary integrated master's, qualified health care professionals and dentist's accredited educational programs.
- At the initiative of the Government of Georgia, **a 4 month paid internship program was launched** from September, 2024 within state institutions. As part of the program, students and graduates will undergo internships at Kutaisi Municipality City Hall.¹⁸
- According to information released on September 11, 2024, a pre-accelerator program is being implemented in the Kakheti Region. Participants in the program will acquire the necessary information for establishing and developing startups, and will have the opportunity to receive a grant of **GEL 25,000 to realize their ideas**. Participation in the program is free of charge.¹⁹
- According to information released on September 20, 2024, with the support of Poti Municipality, all students in Poti who enroll in the Poti Maritime Academy will receive 50% funding of their tuition fees. Additionally, for those youths selected to participate in an exchange program, their study abroad will be fully covered. Giorgi Khakhubia, an electoral subject from the ruling party attended the event organized by the Municipality.²⁰

Initiatives

- Under Government Ordinance No 1179 dated August 22, 2024, a balance of GEL 57,692 remaining from the funds allocated under the Government's 2022 ordinance was transferred to the Signagi municipality for the implementation of infrastructure projects.²¹
- Under Government Ordinance No 1180 dated August 22, 2024, a total of GEL 60,895 remaining balance from the funds allocated under the Government's 2022 and 2023 ordinances, was transferred to Vani Municipality for the implementation of infrastructure projects.²²
- Under Government Ordinance N 1178 dated August 22, 2024, a total of GEL 526,899 remaining from the funds allocated based on Government Ordinances from 2020, 2021 and 2022 was transferred to Tianeti Municipality for the implementation of infrastructure projects.²³
- Based on the Government Ordinance N1177 dated August 22, 2024, a total of GEL 399,685 remaining from the funds allocated based on the Government ordinances from 2022 was transferred to Rustavi City Municipality for the implementation of infrastructure projects.²⁴

¹⁷ Akhmeta Municipality City Hall, See. <https://rb.gy/7j704f>

¹⁸ Kutaisi Municipality City Hall, See. <https://rb.gy/iavrly>

¹⁹ Dedoplistskaro Municipality City Hall See. <https://shorturl.at/k3drw>

²⁰ Poti Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://shorturl.at/FBf26>

²¹ Government Ordinance N 1179 dated August 22, 2024, See. https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89382_793913_1179.pdf

²² Government Ordinance N 1180 dated August 22, 2024, See. https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89383_694786_1180.pdf

²³ Government Ordinance N 1178 dated August 22, 2024, See. https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89381_437846_1178.pdf

²⁴ Government Ordinance N 1177 dated August 22, 2024, See. https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89380_820296_1177.pdf

- Under Government Ordinance No 1176 dated August 22, 2024, a total of GEL 23,135 remaining from the funds allocated based on the ordinances from 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2022 was transferred to the Zugdidi municipality for the implementation of infrastructure projects.²⁵
- Under the Government Ordinance No 1175 dated August 22, 2024, a total of GEL 14,655 remaining from the funds allocated under ordinances from 2022 was transferred to the Chokhatauri municipality for the implementation of infrastructure projects.²⁶
- In July, 2024, during the Tbilisi City Council session they discussed and approved a GEL 48,456,000 increase to the 2024 budget of the capital city. The chairperson of the City Council stated that the augmented budget will be allocated to municipalities and utilized for various infrastructure projects.²⁷
- In August, 2024, a total of 1,056 beneficiaries in the Borjomi Municipality received assistance totaling GEL 248,983 through various social programs.²⁸
- Under the Government of Georgia Ordinance No 1316 dated September 13, 2024, a 5,670sq.m. nonagricultural land plot in the village of Kevliani, Mtskheta Municipality, was transferred into ownership to the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia for GEL 1.²⁹
- Under Government of Georgia Ordinance No 1319 dated September 13, 2024, a 1,004 sq.m. non-agricultural land plot located at 41a, Leo and Nodar Gubeniebi Street, along with the buildings and structures erected on this plot were transferred into ownership to the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia for GEL 1 through a direct sale method.³⁰
- Under Government of Georgia Ordinance No 1320 dated September 13, 2024, a 215,389 sq.m. agricultural (arable) land plot in the village of Kelktseuli, Gori Municipality was transferred to the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia for 99 years, free of charge, with the usufruct right.³¹
- On August 29, 2024, The ruling party released information stating that 100 new minibuses had been added to the Batumi and Khelvachauri fleet of vehicles.³²
- On September 12, 2024, the Head of the Health and Social Protection office of the Dmanisi Municipality City Hall, representing the local government, donated school supplies to socially vulnerable beneficiaries of the Charity House.³³

²⁵ Government Ordinance N 1176 dated August 22, 2024, See. https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89379_392516_1176.pdf

²⁶ Government Ordinance N 1175 dated August 22, 2024, See. https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89378_584257_1175.pdf

²⁷ tbsakrebulo.gov.ge, the budget of the capital city has increased by GEL 48 million, ix. <https://shorturl.at/jQbel>

²⁸ Borjomi Municipality City Council Facebook page, see.

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02CYtHDhX7Vfa2dSU5A7c7WnpTvXTRvMvrSVHpTEj7ujewZ_F7PqJ7vx2qUvV2uKfEbl&id=100069146921708

²⁹ Government of Georgia Decree N 1319 dated September 13, 2024, See.

https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89616_880497_1316.pdf

³⁰ Government of Georgia Decree N 1319 dated September 13, 2024, See.

https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89619_523961_1319.pdf

³¹ Government of Georgia Decree N 1320 dated September 13, 2024, See.

https://www.gov.ge/files/602_89620_461585_1320.pdf

³² Georgian Dream Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1076735630483901&set=a.488868732603930>

³³ Dmanisi Municipality City Hall, See. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/EkgPJ5aCQ8AqZApa/>

- On September 16, 2024, Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze announced that the government plans to construct 43 new apartment buildings for military personnel. The first stage of the project will provide apartments to 1,200 service members.³⁴
- According to information released on September 27, 2024, the Lanchkhuti Municipality City Hall **provided GEL 500-500** to the families of individuals who died in the War in Abkhazia.³⁵
- On October 20, 2024, the Major of Lanchkhuti, in collaboration with the Minister of Education, awarded high value gifts to outstanding students in the form of **Lenovo computer equipment**.³⁶

Facts involving the signs of vote buying

According to the Election Code, from the promulgation of a relevant legal act on appointing elections through the voting day, the following activities are prohibited: the transfer or release of funds, gifts and other material benefits (irrespective of their value) to citizens of Georgia, by electoral subjects, potential electoral subjects and their representatives, in person or through another person, as well as incentivizing citizens of Georgia with the promise to provide funds, securities and other material valuables.³⁷

During the pre-election period, initiatives that involve signs of vote buying are particularly notable. This is when a specific benefit is provided by an electoral subject or their family member.

- According to information released by the Bolnisi Municipality City Hall on August 30, 2024, David Sherazadishvili, the Mayor of Bolnisi and a delegate of the Georgian Dream electoral list in Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro and Tsalka, along with the first deputy, Buba Gobejishvili, met with Zviad Lomsadze, a prize winner of the Youth World Championship to congratulate him on his victory. The information released indicates that Lomsadze is a recipient of a scholarship from the Bolnisi Municipality City Hall and will receive a **cash award** as an incentive for his achievement.³⁸
- According to information disseminated by the mass media, in October, the spouse of Vasil Chigogidze, a delegate for Ozurgeti, Lanchkhuti and Chokhatauri, and a representative of the electoral list of the ruling party, **transferred GEL 2,000 vouchers to the spouses of clergymen** on behalf of an NGO called Women for Women, where she serves as a director. Additionally, the director of the Ozurgeti Educational Resource Center, representing the above-mentioned organization, has committed to awarding **GEL 1,000 vouchers** to 11 outstanding teachers. This information was verified by the Resource Center director during their discussion with a member of the media. Vasil Chigogidze personally presented certificates of appreciation to the teachers.³⁹

³⁴ Tabula, September 16, 2024, “The Government plans to construct 43 apartment buildings for 1,200 military personnel - Kobakhidze “, See. <https://tabula.ge/ge/news/723010-mtavroba-1-200-samkhedro-mosamsakhuristvis-43>

³⁵ Lanchkhuti Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://shorturl.at/gXLFc>

³⁶ Lanchkhuti Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=559817329767923&set=pcb.559818086434514&locale=ka_GE

³⁷ The Election Code, Article 48, See. <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/1557168?publication=91>

³⁸ Bolnisi Municipality City Hall See. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=957196933114342&set=pcb.957197089780993>

³⁹ TV 1 YouTube Channel, See. <https://rb.gy/p7tc68>

- At the initiative of the Prime Minister, Merab Dvalishvili and Ilia Topuria, holders of the UFC Champion's title, received a cash award of **one million GEL each**, on September 30, 2024, for their achievements in sports.⁴⁰ Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze is number 2 on the Georgian Dream electoral list.
- On October 1, 2024, sports contests were held in conjunction with Bidzinaoba Day in Akhmeta, Alaverdi Metropolitan Archbishop David and government representatives, including an electoral subject – **Shalva Papuashvili, awarded honorary Akhmeta residents at an event organized with financial support from the Municipality.**⁴¹

Infrastructure projects

Since the official launch of the pre-election period, numerous infrastructure projects have been completed in all municipalities of Georgia. For instance,

- on September 2, 2024, another stage of an ongoing water supply system rehabilitation project was completed in Rustavi.⁴²
- On September 3, 2024, rehabilitation of a 21km road to Gomismta (Gomi mountain) was completed in Ozurgeti municipality. It is worth noting that the entire road to Gomi mountain is 33 kilometers long. However, the ruling party chose to present the newly rehabilitated portion of the road during the pre-election period.⁴³
- On September 3, 2024, the construction of a public school with a capacity of 450 students was completed in Ureki.⁴⁴
- On September 3, 2024, a boulevard was opened in David Guramishvili Street in Gori.⁴⁵
- According to information released on September 5, 2024, the asphalt and concrete pavement arrangement on the approximately 7 kilometer long road connecting the Village of Tsilkani and Tserovani has been completed.⁴⁶
- On September 9, 2024, construction of a transportation point at the intersection of Mikheil Tamarashvili Avenue and Chabua Amirejibi Highway was completed.⁴⁷
- On September 9, 2024, the rehabilitation of a school with a capacity of 350 students was completed in Tkibuli, in the village of Khresili.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ The Government of Georgia Facebook page, see. <https://shorturl.at/NRV1L>

⁴¹ Akhmeta Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/akhmetamunicipality/posts/pfbid02Dsn4rKHZhJgi7PDe1Dww6dR3PKgv6n3LDQgMgmmQbmzeR25djbV4fACo1NiciHkKI?rdid=BivCZQLxVyCan4PW>

⁴² Rustavi City Hall Facebook Page, See. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=503521825634483&set=pcb.503526485634017>

⁴³ Itv.ge, the rehabilitation of a 21 km road to Gomismta completed, See. <https://1tv.ge/news/irakli-qarseladze-gomismtamde-misavleli-21-km-iani-gzis-reabilitacia-dasrulda/>

⁴⁴ news.ge, a public school for 450 students was constructed in Ureki, See. <https://shorturl.at/NCPQK>

⁴⁵ Gori Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/fztaw8p8Mn113Pjd/>

⁴⁶ Mtskheta Municipality City Hall website, See. <http://mtskheta.gov.ge/ka/projects/finished-projects/857>

⁴⁷ Vake District Administration Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=938259048343063&set=pcb.938266031675698>

⁴⁸ Georgian Dream Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1083789086445222&set=a.488868739270596>

- On September 10, 2024, a newly rehabilitated sports and dancing hall was opened in Adigeni.⁴⁹
- According to Adigeni Municipality City Hall, more than half of the infrastructure construction and rehabilitation works have been completed, in the villages and small towns of Adigeni municipality in 2024. Among other projects, the first stage of access road rehabilitation works was completed in the village of Ude.⁵⁰
- On September 9, 2024, road arrangement works were finished on Ilia Chavchavadze Street in Bolnisi City.⁵¹
- According to information released on September 9, 2024, infrastructure projects were completed in Borjomi, Tabatskhuri, Moliti, Balanta and Chikhrula.⁵²
- On September 11, 2024, a youth center called “Creative Room” was opened in Village Tsilkani.⁵³
- On September 12, 2024, the construction of a new, multifunctional sports playground was completed on Japaridze Street in Sagarejo city.⁵⁴
- On September 12, 2024, the mayor of the capital city, opened newly rehabilitated mini-parks in the Digomi Massive.⁵⁵
- According to information released on September 13, 2024, a portion of infrastructure projects were completed in the Tsagveri administrative unit of the Borjomi Municipality.⁵⁶
- According to information disseminated on September 15, 2024, the rehabilitation of an internal district road was completed in Village Arashenda.⁵⁷
- According to information released on September 15, 2024, construction works for 42 linear meters were completed on a bridge that was damaged due to the elements in the Tsalenjikha municipality Sachino administrative unit, Lesherozie district.⁵⁸
- According to information released on September 16, 2024, the fully rehabilitated building of Samtredia N 2 music school was opened.⁵⁹
- According to information released on September 16, 2024, two public schools – N 5 and the Tskalshavi schools had been fully rehabilitated in the Chiatura Municipality.⁶⁰

⁴⁹ Adigeni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=914924114014132&set=pcb.914928750680335>

⁵⁰ Adigeni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=906444891528721&set=pcb.906445791528631>

⁵¹ Bolnisi Municipality City Hall Facebook page, See.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=964576255709743&set=pcb.964577599042942>

⁵² Borjomi Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://shorturl.at/kUR2B>

⁵³ Mtskheta Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=915913150577799&set=a.915913687244412>

⁵⁴ Sagarejo Municipality City Hall Facebook page, See.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=918451996975427&set=pcb.918452336975393>

⁵⁵ Tbilisi City Hall Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=925297072976074&set=pcb.925298602975921>

⁵⁶ Borjomi Municipality City Council Facebook page, see.

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid03dEKdWceHtd8hqM7JJEgwCYSS5fjoonXQKji3fYQtX6UwHRJLfbdJHeGMQYPY6s4l&id=100069146921708&rdid=qr0xQxvessx2qvmC

⁵⁷ Mtskheta Municipality website, See. <http://mtskheta.gov.ge/ka/projects/finished-projects/856>

⁵⁸ Tsalenjikha Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see:

<https://www.facebook.com/TsalenjikhaMunicipality/videos/1692299454956777>

⁵⁹ Samtredia Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/dZHJzYCrWFiHXApi/>

⁶⁰ Chiatura Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/NsmCes5Egvs2u3NZ/>

- On September 16, 2024, a kindergarten was opened in Village Makhalakaridzeebi in the Shuakhevi Municipality.⁶¹
- On September 17, 2024, the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Gori Central Park was completed.⁶²
- According to information released on September 18, 2024, road infrastructure projects had been implemented in 3 villages in the Dzirula administrative unit.⁶³
- According to information released on September 19, 2024, Khoni Municipality Mayor, Lado Jurkhadze, and Zaza Pataridze, the Head of the Center had festively opened the Center for Autism and Children Rehabilitation in Khoni.⁶⁴
- According to information released on September 23, 2024, concrete pavement was laid on the roads of the Jaghira Naishmaru district in the Obuji Administrative unit of the Tsalenjikha Municipality. Street light were installed in the Obuji-Galuri district, grids were installed in the Chachakhi district, and a potable water reservoir was also set up in Obuja Center to provide potable water for the residents.⁶⁵
- According to information released on September 24, 2024, the rehabilitation of the Central Park in the resort of Abastumani had been completed.⁶⁶
- According to information released on September 24, 2024, the houses dating back to the 19-th and 20th centuries had been rehabilitated on the central street in Abastumani.⁶⁷
- On October 1, 2024, the newly rehabilitated Aza Adamia Public School N 2 was opened in the Martvili municipality.⁶⁸
- According to information released on October 2, 2024, a modern sports facility had been opened in the Akhalkalaki Municipality.⁶⁹
- According to information released on October 3, 2024, the complete rehabilitation of a mini stadium was finished in the Akhalsopeli Administrative unit of the Khobi Municipality.⁷⁰

⁶¹ Shuakhevi Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0WtVkkKUFYeLJMnr5WkCktYyoGHsaEbcGZnAUjiXu4YJtNqKDgfEmiWPbreFnZgvSl&id=100064367335003

⁶² Municipal Development Fund of Georgia Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=mdf.org&set=a.917844617049260>

⁶³ Zestaponi Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/3EGpNF63PYcNWA46/>

⁶⁴ Khoni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://shorturl.at/uhFfH>

⁶⁵ Tsalenjikha Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see:

<https://www.facebook.com/TsalenjikhaMunicipality/posts/pfbid0UJLExei938EuaSfAaZh8UYVCWB2WdSDrc1me7JMm1F2PMrmJqD3MmXGu8Qu3WRnRl>

⁶⁶ Adigeni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02unhjn2mEWLcZjdwLqNG6Pva2Aq66NBfSSQzkjGsg2uGS7yPw6bnNdnyn8izzr6AMl&id=100064896541033&rdid=ZxUUHvotwFGcg1A1

⁶⁷ Adigeni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0xETd5KJrxiVTNRormMq2w5mHj8WlRCSF7QQVKWQgFGngudA7sdD1wUxEbmKii3d1l&id=100064896541033

⁶⁸ Martvili Municipality City Hall website, See:

<https://martvili.gov.ge/?p=15031>

⁶⁹ Akhalkalaki Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/Y4kQtGBZXJh29Ckm/>

⁷⁰ Khobi Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/KhobiMunicipality/posts/pfbid02Tv41Q5qxDYu7THsCqAyFXLm3jT7YARm42shNcKTJWB3A8dJvmyuSpBKuc7UpusNyl>

- On October 4, 2024, a square was opened in the Shindari settlement in Khashuri.⁷¹
- On September 28, 2024, a new sports hall was opened in Village Ghorjo in the Khulo Municipality.⁷²
- According to information released on October 4, 2024, a 35 kilometer section of the four-lane highway had been opened in Kakheti.⁷³
- According to information released on October 5, 2024, the construction of a sports complex had been completed in Village Arkhiloskalo of Dedoplistskaro Municipality.⁷⁴
- On October 5, 2024, asphalt pavement was laid on a road approximately 3 kilometers long in Village Kanobi in Kazbegi.⁷⁵
- According to information released on October 8, 2024, a sports playground and a mini-park had been arranged in Village Tadzrisi of Borjomi Municipality.⁷⁶
- On October 9, 2024, the design of the Borjomi Sports school and library building was finalized.⁷⁷
- According to information released on October 10, 2024, bridge rehabilitation works had been completed in village Nabakhtevi of Khashuri municipality.⁷⁸
- On October 11, 2024, a 14 kilometer Batumi bypass highway construction was completed.⁷⁹
- On October 16, 2024, a new building of Georgia's Broadcaster Channel One was opened. The Prime Minister of Georgia, the Chair of the Parliament and other members of the party attended the opening ceremony.⁸⁰
- On October 18, 2024, a cable way connecting Rustaveli Avenue and the Mtatsminda Park was opened.⁸¹
- On October 20, 2024, the opening of the park in Zgvisubani was celebrated with a festive event.⁸²

In addition to the completed infrastructure projects, numerous infrastructure projects are currently underway in all municipalities throughout Georgia. This is a common practice during the pre-election

⁷¹ Khashuri Municipality Facebook page See:

<https://www.facebook.com/KhashuriCityHall/posts/pfbid0C7zUU2YV3hcq96snHrLhpzhPxL8MbPpxZrMgFVSTa2gWD1TBnpLEgfuUGx3SeKml>

⁷² Khulo Municipality City Hall Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=893198956208161>

⁷³ rustavi2.ge, in Kakheti, a 35 kilometer section of a four-lane highway was opened – how long will it take to travel from Tbilisi to Telavi, October 4, rustavi2.ge, See. <https://shorturl.at/9gEHO>

⁷⁴ Municipal Development Fund of Georgia Facebook page, see.

<https://www.facebook.com/mdf.org/posts/pfbid035tx2HLMW7MJpyt8aCqwUYAXYc57qXP9c1YynC2NDyHXhXtNWSx2AC1KmyPi2sPsgl>

⁷⁵ Kazbegi Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=343184985483013>

⁷⁶ Borjomi Municipality City Council Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/JmWqiHvjPcoXE8fQ/>

⁷⁷ Borjomi Municipality City Council Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/nBouhAKDaHGNNoak7/>

⁷⁸ Khashuri Municipality Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/KhashuriCityHall/posts/pfbid025kydwHsv6PttVCT64ETpd1uVLccPX7GU2VUDnmbXEgH7F93q4RYbndxc8bM6cvfol>

⁷⁹ The Roads Department Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/8iBENaE6ZWrfCVuN/>

⁸⁰ 1tv.ge, A new building of Georgia's Channel One, See. <https://shorturl.at/iwRQQ>

⁸¹ radiotavisupleba.ge, See. <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33163521.html>

⁸² Tbilisi City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/bQTcvM5UL7qVgcWA/>

period. To support the start and implementation of such infrastructure projects, additional funds are transferred to municipal budgets several days before the official launch of a pre-election campaign.

2.3. The instances of assaulting electoral subjects during the pre-election period, interference into electoral campaigns and pressure

As the October 26, 2024 Parliamentary Elections approached, instances of abusive interference in the electoral campaign of opposition parties became more frequent.

Predominantly, abuse and violence are directed towards opposition parties during pre-election campaigns, with the aim of disrupting their meetings with voters. On several occasions, representatives of parties were able to identify the assailants through video recordings made on site. However, it is not publicly known whether investigations have been initiated into any of the assault instances. The lack of action by law enforcement authorities in response to the assaults they witnessed is particularly concerning. The evident bias shown by these authorities towards government supporters, along with their failure to address acts of violence, makes it impossible to hold elections in a fair and equal environment.

During the reporting period, several instances of assaults on electoral subjects or their representatives have been identified:

- **On August 3, in Batumi**, a group of individuals attempted to disrupt a meeting organized as part of the pre-election campaign for the Party Gakharia for Georgia. Natia Mezvrishvili, one of the leaders of the Party, reported that among them were Manuchar Rizhvadze, an employee of the Ajara Environmental Protection Division and a relative of Tornike Rizhvadze, the Chair of the Government of Ajara, Nugzar Inaishvili, an employee of the Landscaping Office of the Batumi City Hall (coordinator of Georgian Dream), Zurab Malazonia, an employee of the Association of Kindergartens of the Batumi City Hall (Georgian Dream coordinator) and Gabi Kamaev (a specialist of the Georgian Dream faction of Batumi City Council).⁸³
- **On September 8, in Kareli**, during the meeting with the public, the wife of Vladimer Sulakvelidze, Deputy Mayor of Kareli, along with other accompanying individuals, confronted members of Coalition Strong Georgia. The statements made by the Coalition representatives, as well as footage that was shared, confirm that the patrol police were present in the nearby area but it did not respond to the incident.⁸⁴
- **On September 14**, Lekso Valiauri, a member of the Coalition for Change, was beaten during the party's electoral meeting by supporters of Georgian Dream in Gori. Valiauri reported that the assault began after he referred to the Prime Minister as a “slave” and a “traitor”. In an interview with Netgazeti, Valiauri stated that during the attack, the Prime Minister's security detail was nearby, and Irakli Kobakhidze would have been able to witness the physical assault on him.

⁸³ netgazeti.ge, Gakharia's Party: the identities of the individuals who interfered in our campaigning in Batumi has been established, See. <https://netgazeti.ge/news/734816/>

⁸⁴ Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/lana.galdava.1/videos/2295589207441495>

The opposition member also mentioned that the criminal police were present during the assault, but they did not intervene to stop the beating.⁸⁵

- According to representatives of the Regional Staff of the Akhlebi Party, **on September 18, in Kutaisi**, while they were distributing campaign materials, several individuals in a car approached members of the Coalition for Change. They verbally abused them and after an altercation, physically attacked them with a baseball bat. A Party representative has stated that one of the young individuals sustained severe head injuries. The person’s father, who was present, also sustained injuries during the incident. Both injured individuals had to be hospitalized. The DRC is currently verifying this information with other sources.
- **On September 19**, around 50 individuals assaulted members of the National Movement during a public meeting **in Zugdidi**. Some of the assailants were wearing Georgian Dream T-shirts. Photos shared by party representatives show that Patrol Police officers were present at the crime scene, but they did not intervene to stop the attack.⁸⁶ Ana Tsitlidze, one of the leaders of the National Movement, identified individuals involved in the assault⁸⁷: Shota Bajaladze (an employee of the General Inspectorate of the MIA); Goga Mosia (Deputy Director of the Center for Arts and Culture of Zugdidi, NCLE); Dima Gogokhia, Ramaz Baghbaia, Data Darsania (activists of the Georgian Dream); Zviad Malazonia (an employee of the City Hall of the Zugdidi Municipality); Teona Kardava (an employee of the Office of the Abkhazia Autonomous Republic in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti).
- Natia Mezvrishvili, one of the leaders of the party For Georgia, has reported that **On October 3**, representatives of the ruling party verbally abused Shorena Shamatava, a representative of the party For Georgia in village Nokalakevi in **Senaki**, necessitating her transfer to the hospital.⁸⁸
- **On October 9**, approximately 20 supporters of the Georgian Dream party attacked members of the Party For Georgia while they were putting up placards on **Amagleba Street**. Footage that was shared shows them ripping down the campaign materials that had been posted. According to Party for Georgia members, even though all the assailants could be identified and they have approached the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the latter has not taken any effective measures yet.⁸⁹
- **On October 12** according to the information from Shalva Kereselidze, a deputy from the party For Georgia, in village Ksani, there was an attempt to collide a vehicle with their party supporters. Kereselidze stated that Giorgi Murjikneli, a member of Georgian Dream MP Dimitri Khundadze’s “grouping”, was at fault.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ netgazeti.ge, a citizen states that they were beaten for calling Kobakhidze “a Traitor” in Gori, See. <https://netgazeti.ge/news/742023/>

⁸⁶ netgazeti.ge, members of the National Movement attacked in Zugdidi – Ana Tsitlidze, ix. <https://netgazeti.ge/news/742868/>

⁸⁷ Facebook page, see. <https://shorturl.at/hEMtD>

⁸⁸ publika.ge, October 3, available at <https://www.facebook.com/publika.ge/posts/pfbid0p4hvU9GXhF6Mz9orRtTUkN61mLRRPJvZBrmVfhoWXwpEj8ZB9gIS t8pvvAaqkH69l?rdid=DjpiYI56pjVfdXHC>

⁸⁹ radiotavisupleba.ge, according to Gakharia’s party, their representatives were assaulted in the street, See. <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33152700.html>

⁹⁰ formulanews.ge, See. <https://formulanews.ge/News/118353>

- According to reports, members of the National Movement **were assaulted in Village Gurianta on October 14, in Ozurgeti.**

The instances of psychological pressure on voters

The Constitution of Georgia guarantees the right of an individual to make choice based solely on one's own views, in a free and equal environment. The Constitution also guarantees the secrecy of votes. Additionally, taking away an identity document against one's will and without any legal basis is a clear violation of the current legislation, including the Georgian Law on the Protection of Personal Data. Moreover, obtaining, storing, using, disseminating or otherwise ensuring the availability of personal data in an unlawful manner is a criminal offense,

- According to reports from several unrelated sources, representatives of the ruling party are taking away identity documents from public sector employees and socially vulnerable individuals against their will. The reports suggest that these actions are presumably widespread and not limited to a specific administrative unit and/or public sector entity. Reports have mentioned similar instances **in Zugdidi, Kvareli, Kutaisi, Senaki and Tbilisi.** The government's use of such methods may be intended to instill fear among voters that their vote secrecy will not be protected on election day, as well as to influence voting results.
- According to public information released on October 15, 2024, Georgina Dream is conducting detailed processing of special category personal data on scores of thousands of individuals at its party offices before elections. The report also states that the ruling party has obtained personal data of citizens from the Ministries of Justice, Health, Education, Internal Affairs, Agriculture and Finance. These ministries are responsible for collecting, retaining and processing of the type of data used by the ruling party offices are using for individual and extensive profiling of voters.⁹¹ The DRC was unable to obtain additional information about this matter.
- In a village in the Khobi district, a majoritarian elected officer from the village threatened a member of a precinct electoral commission from the National Movement. The official threatened to have the person's child, who is employed in the public service, fired from their job. As a result of this threat, this individual decided to resign from their position on the commission.

The cases of dismissal from public educational facilities

Several directors were dismissed from public schools during the reporting period. Their dismissal, was presumably due to discrimination on political grounds.

According to the current legislation, public school directors are appointed through a competitive process that includes an interview with a special commission. The final decision is made by the supervisory board. The Minister of Education, Sciences and Youth is authorized to appoint a director

⁹¹ batumelebi.netgazeti.ge, See. <https://shorturl.at/A1lbd>

only if a supervisory board is unable to select one.⁹² In all cases, the individuals who were dismissed were performing the duties of a director. In August, 2024, the Minister of Education, Sciences and Youth appointed new directors at their discretionary powers, to replace the dismissed directors.

- In August, 2024, in village Nokalakevi in Senaki, the public school director was dismissed presumably on political grounds. The individual had been performing the duties of director since 2014. Reports suggest that the director was an outspoken supporter of the Party Gakharia for Georgia and links their dismissal from the position to their political views.
- In August, 2024, the director of Village Namashevi Public School was dismissed. This individual had been serving as director since 2004 and was also a vocal supporter of the Party Gakharia for Georgia.
- In August, 2024, the director of # 21 Tbilisi Public School was also dismissed. In this case, like the above instances, the Minister used their discretionary powers and appointed a new individual to this position. The former director of the school attributes the dismissal to their political views, stating that they consistently rejected the “instructions” from the ruling party, and refused to engage in the political process.
- In August, 2024, the director of N 1 Public School in Khobi was also dismissed. In this case, dismissal was presumably on political grounds as well. The former director of N 1 Khobi Public School was not known for making statements in support of the ruling party.
- In August, 2024, the head of the Khobi Resource Center was dismissed while undergoing a medical treatment course at a clinic in Tbilisi due to a deteriorating health condition. A representative of the National Movement in Khobi stated that a friend of the mayor’s wife was appointed as the new head of the resource center.

Difficulties created in the rental of office spaces

During the reporting period, representatives of opposition parties have repeatedly emphasized the challenges they face in renting spaces for their campaign offices in the regions. According to party representatives, the difficulty in this regard is a result of the ruling party’s pressure on the public. For instance,

- Representatives of the Coalition for Change have stated that they encountered difficulties in finding office space **in Rustavi, Tsalka and Sagarejo**. Space owners refused to rent out their spaces after learning that the Coalition intended to use them for electoral campaign purposes. In Sagarejo, the Coalition was denied rental space just as they were finalizing arrangements to move in furniture.
- representatives of the Coalition Strong Georgia have also encountered challenges while trying to rent space. According to the Coalition representatives, negotiations about rental of real estate were disrupted several times **in Signagi, Lagodekhi, Dedoplistskaro and Kvareli**.

⁹² Georgian Law on General Education, Article 42, See. <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/29248?publication=106>

2.4. Participation of public servants in party events

The Election Code of Georgia prohibits public servants, employees of legal entities of public law, staff of non-commercial legal entities established by the state, or municipality employees, and individuals employed at preschool care and education institutions and public schools founded by the state from participating in the pre-election campaign during work hours and/or while performing official duties.

Participation in pre-election campaign, including attending party events during non-working hours and/or during periods when individuals employed in the public sector are not performing official powers is not prohibited.

During the reporting period, the ruling party utilized individuals employed at administrative institutions to create the impression of significant attendance at electoral events. In many cases, this attendance was achieved against the will of employees, following official instruction. These party events have caused delays in the work processes on several occasions, which constitutes a violation of the Election Code.

- On August 21, 2024, the ruling party organized an event in Mtskheta as part of the electoral campaign. Teachers from public kindergartens and schools, as well as public servants were mobilized to attend the event. Footage that is publicly available shows that teachers from public schools and kindergartens, as well as employees of LEPLs and NCLE's had been instructed to attend the event organized by the Georgian Dream party.⁹³
- The DRC has been informed that in early September, David Songhulashvili, a majoritarian MP and delegate of Gurjaani, Sagarejo, Signagi and Dedoplistskaro, held meeting in the villages of Sagarejo and Dedoplistskaro. The meetings involved active mobilization of school teachers.
- In August, in village Patara Poti in Khobi Municipality, Giorgi Khakhubia, a delegate from Poti, Khobi and Senaki, held a meeting with the public. According to a local staff representative from the United National Movement party, school and kindergarten teachers had been mobilized at the meeting.
- On September 20, 2024, the ruling party held a pre-election regional event in Rustavi. The DRC has learned that representatives from schools, kindergartens and local medical centers from other municipalities in the region attended the meeting, among others. According to sources, the leadership of state budget-funded institutions instructed their employees to attend the ruling party's regional event.
- On September 28, 2024, the ruling party held a pre-election even in Telavi. The DRC has learned that among the attendees were individuals working at state budget-funded institutions from other municipalities of the region (school and kindergarten teachers, representatives of local medical institutions). They had received instruction to attend the event from their leadership.
- In September, 2024, during the ruling party's meeting with village population of Village Paravani, the academic process was suspended at the public school at around 1:00 pm. This was so that school teachers and children could attend the meeting, which constitutes a breach of current legislation.

⁹³ tvpirveli.ge, Mobilization of public servants in Mtskheta – Exposing Georgian Dream in the misuse of administrative resources, See. <https://shorturl.at/xY16o>

- On October 15, 2024, during the regional event of the ruling party in Zugdidi city, teachers from public schools and kindergartens, along with medical staff from Abasha, Senaki, Khobi, Mestia, Zugdidi and Tsalenjikha municipalities attended the event as per the leadership's instructions.

2.5. Participation of electoral subjects in events organized with state or local budget funding

During the reporting period delegates of the ruling party participated in the events funded by municipalities. This constitutes the use of administrative resources, resulting in an uneven playing field for other electoral subjects.

- On September 10, 2024, Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian MP from the ruling party and a delegate in Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza, Borjomi and Adigeni districts, attended the opening of the newly rehabilitated sports and dance hall in Adigeni.⁹⁴
- On September 10, 2024, Archbishop Theodore, Metropolitan of Akhaltsikhe and Tao Klarjeti, Anton Obolashvili, Majoritarian MP of Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Adigeni and Aspindza, Gocha Kimadze, Mayor of Adigeni Municipality, and Shmagi Bidzishvili, Chair of the City Council, congratulated local residents on People's Day in Adigeni.⁹⁵
- On September 14, 2024, a modern air quality monitoring station was opened in Poti. According to the City Hall, "Nino Tandilashvili, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Vasil Gedevanishvili, Head of the National Environmental Agency, Giorgi Kakhubia, Majoritarian MP of Poti, Khobi and Senaki, and Beka Vacharadze, Poti Mayor, attended the opening event."⁹⁶
- On September 16, 2024, in conjunction with the start of the academic year, a concert by the band Ursa was held in Rustavi **with the support of Rustavi City Hall**. According to information released on the City Hall's Facebook page, "Nino Latsabidze, the Mayor of Rustavi, Irakli Shatakishvili, a delegate from Rustavi and Gardabani historic villages representing Georgian Dream Party and Aleksandre Dalakishvili, a Member of the Parliament, attended the celebratory concert".⁹⁷
- On September 16, 2024, a new kindergarten with a capacity of 130 children was opened on Baratashvili Street in Poti. The opening was attended by Giorgi Kakhubia, a delegate representing the Georgian Dream and a majoritarian MP, along with the Mayor of the city.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Adigeni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=914923624014181&set=pcb.914928750680335>

⁹⁵ Adigeni Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=914923624014181&set=pcb.914928750680335>

⁹⁶ Poti City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/poti.gov.ge>

⁹⁷ Rustavi City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/RustaviCityHall>

⁹⁸ Poti City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/poti.gov.ge/videos/836403665245340>

- On September 16, 2024, a newly rehabilitated kindergarten was opened in Village Ozhio in Akhmeta Municipality. Irakli Kadagishvili, an MP and a delegate from Telavi-Akhmeta-Kvareli-Lagodekhi, attended the opening ceremony.⁹⁹
- On September 17, 2024, Giorgi Khakhubia, a majoritarian MP representing Poti, Khobi and Senaki and a member of an electoral list of the ruling party attended the opening of a new kindergarten with a capacity of 130 children on Baratashvili Street in Poti City.¹⁰⁰
- On September 20, 2024, Kenan Omaron, the Mayor of the Municipality, Lia Gigauri, the First Deputy Minister for Reconciliation and Civil Equality, Zaur Dargali, a Member of the Parliament of Georgia, and Amiran Giorgadze, the Chair of Marneuli City Council congratulated the residents on “Marneuloba” in Marneuli.¹⁰¹
- On September 20, 2024, the Ministry of Sports transferred sports supplies and equipment to sports facilities and clubs in the municipalities of Ambrolauri, Oni, Tsageri and Lentekhi. Gocha Enukidze, a majoritarian MP representing Ambrolauri, Oni, Tsageri, Lentekhi and Mestia, as well as a current delegate, was present during the event.¹⁰²
- On September 26, 2024, Otar Shamugia, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, visited Ambrolauri Municipality in Racha. During his visit, the Minister met with local vine-growers to learn about the grape harvest (known as “Rtveli”) process. Also present during the visit were Papuna Margvelidze, the State Trustee in Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Gocha Enukidze, a Majoritarian MP, Iuri Nozadze, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, as well as representatives from local authorities and the Ministry.¹⁰³
- On September 27, 2024, in conjunction with the Fall of Sokhumi day, Varlam Liparteliani, a delegate of Georgian Dream from Samgori District held a meeting with the veterans. Koba Kobaladze, the head of the State Service of Veteran Affairs, also participated in the meeting.¹⁰⁴
- On October 7, 2024, Aleksandre Tsuladze, the Minister of Education, Sciences and Youth of Georgia, visited # 211 and # 215 Public Schools in Tbilisi. Beka Odisharia and David Kacharava, members of the Parliament of Georgia, joined the guests at School # 211. David Kacharava is in an electoral list of the ruling party.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=908563087960685&set=pcb.908565141293813>

¹⁰⁰ Poti City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/4NMT8VxV1YcwFB4P/>

¹⁰¹ Marneuli Municipality City Hall Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1080034936976306&rdid=q7cguJs4Ao13HWeg>

¹⁰² Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=947317230764575&set=pcb.947321907430774>

¹⁰³ Ambrolauri Municipality Facebook page, see. <https://www.facebook.com/ambrolaurimunicipality/posts/pfbid02ZD38fsWZRf3xWXUeeckPzgNrAxCfHMcTbi5cSpkz4qxnuu4vMLB5xmEuNwa8nTCrI?rdid=EBH1I6rosxa6sj6z>

¹⁰⁴ rustavi2.ge, See. <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/293020>

¹⁰⁵ interpressnews.ge, See. <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/815338-ganatlebis-ministri-aleksandre-culaze-tbilisis-211-e-da-215-e-sajaro-skolebs-ecvia/>