



**31 October, 2020 Georgian
Parliamentary Elections
Monitoring Mission**

**ELECTIONS MONITORING
FINAL REPORT**

(15 June - 3 December)

**Tbilisi,
February
2021**

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INTRODUCTION

The PMMG was founded in 1999. The Organisation protects the interests of the minority communities and non-governmental organisations, who are involved in defending the rights of the ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities living in Georgia. The Organisation is mainly operating in Tbilisi, as well as in the regions of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli and Adjara, densely populated with ethnic minorities. The PMMG is a partner organization of the Council of Europe. It observes the interests of the international coalition against the hate speech in the South Caucasus. It is also a member of the Federal Union of European Nationalities and of the international organization Minorities of Europe.

Since 2005 the PMMG has been undertaking election monitoring programmes in the regions of Georgia densely populated with ethnic minorities. Election observation programme aims to promote transparent and fair elections, as well as to consolidate the trust of the ethnic minorities in the political and electoral processes.

PMMG has implemented 31 October 2020 Parliamentary Elections monitoring program covering pre- and post-elections periods as well as the Elections Day. The mission covered Tbilisi as well as the following regions of Georgia: Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti.

The monitoring program has revealed electoral shortcomings, needs and challenges based on which the concrete recommendations have been developed for the purpose of improvement of electoral environment.

The monitoring of the pre-electoral environment was implemented with the support of the USAID. The Elections Day monitoring (first round) was carried out with

the financial support provided by USAID as well as embassies of the Kingdom of Sweden, the Kingdom of Norway, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland in Georgia and National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The Runoff Elections was monitored with the financial support provided by NED.

The present report covers the period from 15 June to 3 December, 2020 and captures the main findings as revealed during pre- and post-elections periods as well as on the Elections Day.

CHAPTER I

COVERAGE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE MONITORING

PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

Methodologically, given the objectives of the monitoring mission, PMMG commenced the conduction of pre-election monitoring on 15 June. The pre-election monitoring was carried out in 4 municipalities by 4 Long Term Observers (LTOs):

- Ninotsminda – Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Akhalkalaki - Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Marneuli - Kvemo Kartli region;
- Gardabani – Kvemo Kartli region

From 1 August 2020, organization engaged 17 more LTOs and thus widened the scope of coverage of the monitoring areas. Since that time, totally 21 PMMG's LTOs were carrying out the monitoring of the pre-electoral environment as well as the proceedings of the political campaign in the following geographic areas:

- Isani, Krtsanisi and Samgori – in Tbilisi;
- Kaspi - in the Shida Kartli region;
- Aspindza, Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Borjomi – in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tsalka, Tetritskaro – in the Kvemo Kartli region;
- Lagodekhi, Sagarejo, Kvareli, Akhmeta

–in the Kakheti region;

- Mtskheta – in the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region.

Therefore, organization has observed the electoral and political processes before the official start of the pre-electoral campaigning on 1 September, as well as throughout the period following its official launch.

Consequently, the organisation covered 12 single mandate majoritarian constituencies out of 30 created under the new electoral system.

The constituencies [covered within the programme] include:

- 1) Mtatsminda and Krtsanisi (#1);
- 2) Isani (#4);
- 3) Samgori(#5);
- 4) Telavi, Akhmeta, Kvareli and Lagodekhi (#10);
- 5) Gurjaani, Sagarejo, Dedoplistskaro and Signaghi (#9);
- 6) Rustavi and part of Gardabani (administrative units of Norio, Martkopi, Akhalsopeli, Sartitchala, Gamarjveba, Akhali Samgori, Lemshvenieri, Teleti, Kumisi and Krtsanisi) (#12);
- 7) Marneuli and part of Gardabani (excluding administrative units of Norio, Martkopi, Akhalsopeli, Sartitchala, Gamarjveba, Akhali Samgori, Lemshvenieri, Teleti, Kumisi and Krtsanisi) (#13);
- 8) Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro and Tsalka (#14);
- 9) Mtskheta, Dusheti, Tianeti and Kazbegi (#11);
- 10) Kaspi and Gori (excluding administrative units of Variani, Nikozi, Tirdznisi, Skri and Shindidi) (#15);
- 11) Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Adigeni and Aspindza (#17);

12) Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda (#18).

For the purpose of monitoring of the pre-electoral period, the LTOs observed and studied:

- Political and electoral activities of the political parties and candidates;
- Use of the hate speech in the pre-electoral campaign;
- Use of the social media for disinformation and discreditation in the pre-election period;
- Interference with the political/electoral activities;
- Unlawful participation in the pre-election campaign
- Use of the administrative resources;
- Pressure/intimidation/threat/physical violence;
- Alleged vote buying;
- Activities of the Election Administration;
- Ethnic composition of the electoral lists of the electoral subjects;
- Electoral programs developed by the electoral subjects;
- Voter literacy, including awareness of the ethnic minorities;
- Activities of Inter-Agency Commission for Free and Fair Elections.

For monitoring purposes, the LTOs of the Organization gathered information about the electoral processes and alleged violations from: media (TV, radio, online media); by requesting public information; from local self-government bodies and their web-sites; from parties, candidates and party activists; from NGOs and citizens, as well as public meetings.

ELECTIONS DAY

Elections Day monitoring mission was carried out in 12 majoritarian electoral districts covering the borders of 24 municipalities: Rustavi-Gardabani (# 12), Marneuli (# 13), Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tsalka, Tetrtskaro (# 14) (*Kvemo Kartli region*), Borjomi, Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Aspindza (# 17), Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda (# 18) (*Samtskhe-Javakheti region*), Sagarejo, Gurjaani (# 9), Lagodekhi, Kvareli, Telavi, Akhmeta (# 10) (*Kakheti region*), Kaspi (#

15) (*Shida Kartli region*), Mtskheta (# 11) (*Mtskheta-Mtianeti region*), Krtsanisi (# 1), Isani (# 4) and Samgori (# 5) (*Tbilisi*).

Elections Day monitoring was carried out by 600 Short Term Observers (STOs), including 465 Static, 97 Mobile Group, 22 District Election Commission and 1 Central Election Commission Observers.

RUNOFF ELECTIONS

PMMG conducted the 2020 Parliamentary Run-off Elections monitoring program by 200 Short Term Observers (STOs), including 175 Static, 18 Mobile Group and 7 District Election Commission Observers.

Monitoring program covered 7 majoritarian electoral districts such as: Rustavi-Gardabani (# 12)¹, Lagodekhi, Kvareli, Telavi, Akhmeta (# 10) (*Kakheti region*)², Mtskheta (# 11) (*Mtskheta-Mtianeti region*) as well as Krtsanisi (# 1), Isani (# 4), Samgori (# 5) and Gldani (#8) (*Tbilisi*).

The first round as well as runoff elections were legally supported by the program attracted lawyers.

For both rounds of Elections, the monitoring program was coordinated by the Coordination Center composed by the Incidents Center as well as Media Center. Incidents Center operators were engaged with the STOs to obtain and process the electoral data regarding the proceedings of the election process. Hotline service was functional at the Center, by which any interested party was given the opportunity to report relevant electoral information to the Center.

1 The administrative centers of Rustavi and Gardabani, as well as the villages with the compact settlement of ethnic minorities including in Gardabani (Sartichala, Muganlo).

2 Organization's observers in Kakheti region were present in both administrative centers as well as in the villages with the compact settlement of ethnic minorities including in Akhmeta (the villages in Pankisi gorge: Duisi, Jokolo, Omalo, Kvemo Khalatsani), Kvareli (Akhalsopeli, Shorokhi, Tivi, Chantliskuri, Tsintskanaant Seri), Lagodekhi (Kabali, Ganjala, Uzuntala, Karajala), Telavi (Karajala).

CHAPTER II

MAIN FINDINGS

PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

The parliamentary elections in 2020 were held in accordance with the new electoral system. The constitutional and legislative amendments made the electoral system more proportional: number of members elected to the Parliament through proportional system increased (from 77 to 120), while the number of those elected through majoritarian system decreased (from 73 to 30). Moreover, the electoral threshold for the political unions to enter the parliament was reduced to 1%.

50 electoral subjects (48 parties and 2 electoral blocks) and 11 initiative groups were competing in the parliamentary elections.³ 6 882 party list candidates, 492 majoritarian candidates and 11 candidates of the initiative groups were registered.⁴ If we look at the number of ethnic minority candidates and their positions on the party lists, we may conclude that the political representation and participation of the ethnic minorities remains a problem.

Pre-electoral campaigning proceeded against the pandemic that affected the process. Despite the pandemic the parties still managed to open electoral offices, made preparations for the elections, held meetings with the voters and in some cases, organized big gatherings. The social media became one of the significant means used by the political subjects to transmit electoral messages and different assurances to the voters.

Traditionally, verbal assurances dominated

3 <https://cesko.ge/res/docs/%E1%83%90%E1%83%9C%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%98%E1%83%A8%E1%83%98-2020.pdf>. p.18

4 <https://cesko.ge/res/docs/%E1%83%90%E1%83%9C%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%98%E1%83%A8%E1%83%98-2020.pdf>. p.18

in political campaigns. The parties mainly focused on the integration of the ethnic minorities in the social and political life, on promoting teaching of the state language, on eradication of the discrimination; yet, little focus was made on the long-term vision for resolving the problems that ethnic minorities face.

In general, the pre-election campaigning proceeded in a calm atmosphere. The political parties involved in the parliamentary elections signed a Code of Conduct for Political Parties developed through the facilitation of the CEC and international organizations.⁵ 40 political parties signed the Code.⁶ By doing so, the political subjects confirmed to conduct political campaigns based on ethnical principles and refused to use violence, hate speech and xenophobic attitudes in the pre-election period. Despite that, several incidents of neglect of the rules of conduct, violence and physical confrontation were identified from mid-September. Since then, the electoral environment became tense and more polarized. Signs of polarization were also seen in the media. Incidents of violence towards the journalists and observers, and of meddling with their work were identified. Majority of the violent incidents took place in Kvemo Kartli region.

Since 2017 ruling party appoints 3 members in the election commissions out of 6 party members which promotes its dominance in the election commission⁷.

Administering the parliamentary elections of 2020 was a particular challenge of the election administration, since the elections were held for the first time in Georgia during the global pandemic. The election administration managed to fulfil some of its tasks successfully, yet significant shortcomings were identified, which negatively affect the image of the election

⁵ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120167-gantskhadeba-2020-tslis-parlamentis-archevnebisvis-politikuri-partiebis-qtsevis-kodeqsis-shesakheb->

⁶ <https://cesko.ge/res/docs/Parties-2020Geo29.09.pdf>

⁷ the election commissions are composed by 12 members. 6 members are selected based on their professional qualities by the higher-level election commissions, while the 6 members are appointed by the political parties.

administration and damages the public confidence towards it.

The positive assessment of the work of the election administration can be attributed to the readiness of the CEC to conduct the elections against the pandemic. This includes putting in place, through an inclusive process, the relevant legislative base and regulations for conducting the election in the times of pandemic; organizing high quality trainings for the PEC members in the regions densely populated with ethnic minorities; conducting educational and awareness raising campaigns for voters, including ethnic minorities and young individuals, on elections-related issues. However, challenging aspects include staffing the election commissions as well as their composition with ethical, unbiased and highly qualified members, drawing up summary protocols by the PEC members and correcting the irregular summary protocols, reviewing the electoral complaints within the election administration system. Several incidents were identified in the pre-election period that involved unlawful participation of the election commission members in the pre-election campaigns of the ruling party candidates.⁸

The incidents identified in the pre-election period include: use of administrative resources – 8 incidents; violation of rules of agitation and participation in the pre-election campaign – 8 incidents; interference with the pre-election campaign – 9 incidents, several incidents of damaging the electoral posters and 3 incidents of damaging the election banner, threats – 12 incidents, physical violence – 12 incidents, alleged vote buying – 5 incident, allegedly unlawful collection of the voters' personal data – 2 incidents, interference with the activity of media – 4 incidents. In addition, 2 incidents of hate speech, 5 incidents of disinformation and attempted discreditation, 4 incidents of public statements instigating ethnic strife between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities were observed.

While monitoring the pre-election environment, the Inter-Agency Commission

⁸ Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

on Free and Fair Elections (IACFF) focused its efforts on the examination of the information disseminated in the media, which, according to the Commission, revealed several facts of disinformation. Some political parties and local observer organizations did not attend the Commission meetings.

In August 2020 the Government of Georgia launched the 3rd phase of its anti-crisis plan few weeks prior to the official launch of the pre-election campaign, aimed at addressing the effects of the economic crisis. The plan envisaged large-scale assistance to the citizens of Georgia, including disbursement of certain funds to the voters.⁹ The Government personified the measures provided within the 3rd phase of the anti-crisis plan by affiliating itself with these projects thus blurring the boundaries between the activities of the State and the party. This went against the core international standards, which stipulate that the State authorities should ensure that the political parties distance themselves from the State and that there is a clear margin between the State and the political parties.¹⁰ Besides the mentioned project, the Government initiated several extensive financial measures a few days before the official start of the pre-election period.¹¹ These measures targeted wider electorate and in some cases was part of the electoral campaign serving to win the voters' support to the ruling party "Georgian Dream" in the run up to the parliamentary elections.

Presentation events of the majoritarian candidates of the "Georgian Dream" in the majoritarian constituencies involved the high-ranking officials from the central and local government. Also, very often these events were held at the background of the state funded projects, which increased

9 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

10 The Copenhagen Document developed by OSCE member states on "Human Dimension". 1990, Article 5.4. accessible at <https://www.osce.org/odhr/elections/14304?download=true>. Updated by 31.08.2020.

11 Find the detailed information regarding the projects as provided in the annexes

risks of using the administrative resources in favour of the ruling party. Majoritarian candidates of the united opposition and the initiative groups also used the state funded projects as a background of their election campaigns.¹² People working at the local self-government bodies, staff of the public schools and kindergartens and, in some instances, clergymen were also present at the pre-election events of the majoritarian candidates of the ruling party.¹³ Persons working at the public institutions mainly took leave to participate in the election campaigns of the ruling party.

12 incidents of violence and beating were observed in the pre-election period, 9 of which took place in Kvemo Kartli region, namely: 2 - in Dmanisi, 3 – in Bolnisi, 3 – in Marneuli and 1 – in Gardabani.

The law-enforcement bodies reacted on several incidents of violence identified during the pre-electoral campaigning and launched investigations, however effective response on the facts of violence in the pre-election period mainly concerned those committed against the supporters of the "Georgian Dream.

In the pre-election period, the electoral subjects shared information about the incidents of threat and pressure against their supporters; they also related that representatives of the "Georgian Dream" threatened the voters with the dismissal from the work and terminating their social assistance, because they supported the opposition. In some cases, the candidates stated that they were subject to unlawful surveillance by the law-enforcement bodies.¹⁴

Out of 9 incidents of interference with the pre-electoral campaigning, 5 incidents were related to the pre-electoral meetings and

12 Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoian. Find the detailed information regarding the meetings of the candidates as provided in the annexes.

13 It is not known to PMMG observer whether the attendance of budgetary organizations employees on the presentations of ruling party candidates was against their will.

14 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624250-xatia-dekanoize-ukanonod-sheagcies-chvens->

campaigns of the candidates of the united opposition “Dzala Ertobashia” (Strength is in Unity) and 2 – to the majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in the Marneuli-Gardabani constituency.

Several incidents of damaging or tearing down the electoral posters of the political parties and candidates were identified in the pre-election period. In 3 cases election banners of the opposition candidates were damaged. There were also frequent cases of pasting a poster over another.

In August 2020, personnel reshuffling took place in Ninotsminda municipality that involved over 20 employees, who were subject to changes. The persons dismissed from work were believed to be associated with acting majoritarian deputy Enzel Mkoyan.

Pre-election campaigns proceeded in different ways in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions, densely populated with ethnic minorities, that was caused by the military actions that took place in Nagorno-Karabakh. Public statements were made during the pre-election campaigning in both regions that instigated inter-ethnic strife and confrontation between the two ethnic communities.¹⁵ The ultimate goals of these statements, whether intentionally or not, was to manipulate with the ethno-patriotic feelings, to align it with the narrow party interests and to mobilise voters’ support from the respective ethnic group. Against the backdrop of the military activities in Nagorno-Karabakh, the statement made by the UNM leader Mikheil Saakashvili on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh favouring Azerbaijan seriously affected UNM rating in Samtskhe-Javakheti region, which is densely populated with ethnic Armenian population, and thus gave significant advantage to the ruling party over the opposition. Hence, the pre-election campaigns proceeded in the region virtually in a non-competitive environment.

Pre-election campaigns were also different in Kvemo Kartli region, which is densely

shtabshi-sus-i-apaturis-dasaqeneblad-shevida
15 Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

populated with ethnic Azerbaijanis and where the competition was rather tense among the political forces. Lately, traditionally high support to the ruling party has changed in the region while ceding more interest towards the opposition political parties and candidates. This trend can be explained by several factors, including the sentiments of the local community towards the party leader (Mikheil Saakashvili) and certain scepticism towards the ruling party caused by the shortcomings in the public administration.

ELECTIONS DAY

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, 1 970 540 (56.11%) voters took part in the elections, which can be considered as a high turnout¹⁶.

3 657 polling stations were prepared for the elections,¹⁷ including 348 electoral precincts created in the majoritarian districts populated by ethnic minorities: Georgian-Azerbaijani – 211, Georgian-Armenian – 133 and Georgian-Armenian-Azerbaijani – 4.¹⁸

Voting process in those electoral districts in where the Public Movement Multinational Georgia conducted the monitoring program was mainly held in a calm and competitive environment. Covid-19 pandemic precautionary measures have been respected at the PECs. However, certain electoral violations were identified in some electoral precincts by the observers of the organization. PMMG believes, that the revealed electoral violations did not affect the results of the elections in that geographic area covered by the elections monitoring program.

On the Elections Day, within the frames of elections monitoring program PMMG Sort Term Observers (STOs) identified 45 incidents including: inappropriate setting up of the polling station (4 incidents); restriction of the rights of observers (7 incidents);

16 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/122181-tseskos-tavmdjdomaris-shemadjamebeli-sainformatsio-brifingi>

17 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/122181-tseskos-tavmdjdomaris-shemadjamebeli-sainformatsio-brifingi>

18 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/122302-kenchiskris-protsesi-dasrulda>

verbal assault (1 incident); agitation in the polling station (4 incidents); presence of unauthorized person in the polling station (1 incident); tracking the voters at the polling station (1 incident); violations of voting rules by mobile box (3 incidents); breach of voting secrecy (4 incidents); breach of voting rules (8 incidents); inappropriate fulfillment of duties by the members of PEC (6 incidents); violation of vote counting rules (6 incidents).

On the Elections Day, PMMG observers filed and submitted totally 13 complaints to the election commissions. Moreover 25 objections were registered in the log books of the PECs. In most cases PEC members took into account the remarks made by PMMG observers and consequently used to remove the identified shortcomings. As a result, PMMG observers were not filing the complaints to those PECs.

POST ELECTIONS PERIOD OF THE FIRST ROUND OF ELECTIONS

PMMG filed the complaints to the district elections commissions (DECs) with regard to the shortcomings as identified on the Elections Day. PMMG submitted 6 complaints to the DECs with regard to 9 polling stations¹⁹.

In accordance with the submitted complaints PMMG demanded: annulment of the results of mobile ballot box in 2 cases, annulment of 7 summary protocols, recounting of the results of 5 polling stations as far as the balance could not be attained in the summary protocols of the challenged PECs and there was a surplus of ballots. Therefore, PMMG requested the imposition of responsibility sanctions towards 13 PECs members.

As a result of decisions made by the DECs, 1 complaint was fully and the other partially satisfied. Therefore, 5 PEC members were charged with disciplinary responsibility – remark; 2 complaint was not satisfied; 2 complaints were left without discussion.

¹⁹ Akhalkalaki DEC did not register PMMG complaint regarding the disbalance of Akhalkalaki # 18.40.33 PEC summary protocol

DEC refused to satisfy all those demands, implying the recounting of the voting results. However, DECs mainly satisfied those demands implying the imposition of disciplinary charges on the PEC members.

While discussing the case, DEC recognized the fact that the PEC members made a mistake in a course of development of the challenged summary protocol. However, DEC noted that there were neither legal nor factual grounds to annule the summary protocols and recount the voting results as far as the correction protocol was drafted by PEC members and by doing so they removed the made mistake.

As far as the courts are concerned, they fully shared the arguments put forth by the DEC and thus denied the appeal of PMMG with regard to the revision of voting results. According to the court, the incident challenged by the PMMG could not be considered as a major violation affecting the final result of the elections. This is because the inconsistency as revealed in the summary protocol was corrected and thus removed by drafting the correction protocol.

Higher election commissions as well as courts had to adequately examine the proofs. It was of utmost importance to recount the results of the challenged PECs, in where the substantial imbalances were revealed.

RUNOFF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Runoff Parliamentary Elections were held on 21 November in 17 majoritarian electoral districts²⁰. Runoff elections were not characterized with political competition as far as opposition candidates did not participate. Runoff Parliamentary Elections in those electoral districts in where the PMMG conducted the monitoring program were held in a calm environment. Covid-19 precautionary measures were respected at the polling stations. Mobilization of the voters at the polling stations by the party

²⁰ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/123398-dghes-archevnebis-meore-turi-imarteba>

coordinators as well as in some cases voters' tracking at the polling stations by unidentified people were also reported.

Within the frames of runoff Parliamentary Elections monitoring program PMMG STOs filed two complaints and revealed 10 incidents, including: threat towards the observer (1 incident); tracking the voters at the polling station (1 incident); breach of voting secrecy (3 incident); presence of unauthorized person in the polling station (1 incident); attempt of voting with invalid document (1 incident); attempt of voting on behalf of another person (1 incident); mobilization of the voters at the polling station for the purpose of voting (1 incident); violation of the rules to be applied before opening of the voting box (1 incident).

POST ELECTIONS PERIOD

Voters elected 9 electoral subjects in the 10th convocation of the Parliament of Georgia.²¹ 90 mandates out of 150 were received by the ruling party, while the opposition political parties have received 60 mandates.²²

However, the opposition deputies elected to the Parliament of Georgia did not recognize the election results and refused to participate in the work of the legislative body. The opposition parties declared that the elections were rigged. They declared distrust towards the election administration and demanded the resignation of the CEC Chair, as well as amendments to the Election Code, including the rules of selection of the election commissions, snap elections and release of the "political prisoners".

²¹ According to CEC official data, Parliamentary mandates of 150 deputies were distributed as follows: "Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia" – 90 deputies, block "United National Movement – United Opposition" – 36 deputies, "Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom" – 5 deputies, "Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze" – 4 deputies, electoral block "Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli" – 4 deputies, "David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia" – 4 deputies, "Girchi" – 4 deputies, "Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens" – 2 deputies, "Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia" – 1 deputy.

²² <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/123458-tsentrallurmasaarchevno-komisiyam-saqartvelos-parlamentis-2020-tslis-31-oqtombris-archevnebi-sheadjama>

By the time of publication of the report, four deputies entered the Parliament from the list of the opposition political party "David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia",²³ as well as two deputies from the political party "Citizens".²⁴

On 2 February, 2021 the Parliament of Georgia did not terminate the authority of 51 deputies elected from the opposition who have applied to the legislative organ with the request of termination of deputy mandate.

Moreover, the communication is under way between the state authorities and the opposition political parties for the purpose of discharging the political tension.

CHAPTER III

ACTIVITIES OF THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Administering the parliamentary elections of 2020 was a particular challenge of the election administration, since the elections were held for the first time in Georgia during the global pandemic. The challenges of managing the elections related to the ability to ensure fully staffed election commissions with qualified staff-members and conducting voter-awareness raising campaigns and ensuring secure environment for voting.

Since 2017 ruling party appoints 3 members in the election commissions out of 6 party members which promotes its dominance in the election commission²⁵.

The election administration has successfully handled some activities. Nevertheless, significant shortcomings have also been revealed causing the criticism towards the

²³ Avtandil Erukidze, Gela Mikadze, Fridon Injia and David Zilpimian

²⁴ Aleko Elisashvili and Levan Iosseliani

²⁵ the election commissions are composed by 12 members. 6 members are selected based on their

works of the election administration.

The positive achievements of the election administration include the CEC efforts to put in place, through an inclusive process, the relevant legislative base and regulations for conducting the election in the times of pandemic; organizing high quality trainings for the PEC members in the regions densely populated with ethnic minorities; conducting educational and awareness raising campaigns for voters, including ethnic minorities and youths, on elections-related issues; facilitating the Code of Conduct for Political Parties. However, as it was already mentioned, certain problems and in some cases, systemic shortcomings were identified in the work of the election administration, which affects its image and damages trust in the election administration. The challenges include: staffing the election commissions as well as its composition with unbiased and highly qualified members, drawing up summary protocols by the PEC members and correcting the irregular summary protocols, reviewing the electoral complaints within the election administration system.

In the course of elections, the CEC made several statements saying that certain persons were interfering with the work of election administration and trying to harm its image.²⁶

Critical assessment of the work of the election administration increased after the E-Day, when the CEC announced the preliminary results of the elections. Since then, in parallel to summarizing the election results, the opposition parties and their supporters rallied in front of the CEC administrative office and the DEC buildings. According to the CEC, the DECs had to hold meetings and review the complaints under a pressure.²⁷

professional qualities by the higher-level election commissions, while the 6 members are appointed by the political parties.

26 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120904?fbclid=IwAR222eyQCsxvaVwZYdkPvyO4YrVRGwtZ10hXrgISOnwkhUjtL9GaW3NHv8M>

27 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/627769->

VOTER LITERACY AND AWARENESS RAISING ABOUT THE ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Since the second half of July, 2020 Election Administration actively launched voter literacy activities.

The election administration actively disseminated information to voters, including ethnic minorities and the youth, about the parliamentary elections, the legislative amendments and the regulations developed by the election administration to prevent the spread of the infection, as well as about the voting procedures and the importance of participation in the elections²⁸.

TRAININGS FOR PEC MEMBERS IN MINORITY REGIONS

The PMMG observers assessed positively the theoretical as well as practical aspects of the trainings organized for the PEC members. Trainings were held for the PEC members in Georgian language in the constituencies with ethnic minority population, where the language barrier is not a problem, whereas in other constituencies, which still face the language barrier problem, trainings were held in Georgian and ethnic minority languages. For instance, in Akhmeta, trainings were held for the Kist community in the Georgian language; likewise, trainings were held in Georgian for the Armenian community representatives in Tsalka, whereas trainings were held in Georgian and Azerbaijani languages in Dmanisi and in Georgian and Armenian languages in Ninotsminda. As for the training material, the Kist community received the documents prepared in Georgian language only, while in Dmanisi the documents were disseminated both in Georgian and Azerbaijani languages and likewise, in Ninotsminda - in Georgian and Armenian languages, and in Tsalka – in Georgian/Armenian and Georgian/

cesko-saolko-komisijs-sxdomebis-chatareba-da-sachivrebis-ganxilva-zecolis-ponze-ucevt-rig-shemtxvevebshi-adgili-akvs-arauplebamosili-pirebis-mier-sxdomebze-shechris-mcdelobas

28 Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

Azerbaijani languages.

DEVELOPMENT OF A CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

A Code of Conduct of the political parties was developed with the facilitation of the CEC at the start of the pre-electoral campaigning. 40 political parties signed the Code of Conduct on 12 September, 2020²⁹. It was a complex document and focused on many important issues, especially on the ethical principles and standards, which the parties have voluntarily subscribed to adhere to. PMMG positively evaluates the adoption of a Code of Conduct.

OPENING OF CEC INFORMATION PROTECTION CENTRE

In the period of pre-electoral campaigning the CEC opened an Information Protection Centre aimed at unveiling the spread of the disinformation and fake news and disseminating objective information.³⁰

THE PECS COMPOSING PROCESS

The process of composing the election commissions proceeded, in some cases, against the heated argument and verbal confrontations. The UNM expressed its distrust of the composition of the election commissions. According to the party representatives, the DEC selected the members of the PECs based on professionalism as well as connections and relative ties and mainly used to appoint the activists of the “Georgian Dream”. One incident of physical violence was observed in Marneuli, which involved the DEC member as well.³¹

PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS AMIDST THE COVID-19

The CEC was prepared for the electoral process and employed particular efforts to carry out preparations for holding the

29 <https://cesko.ge/res/docs/Parties-2020Geo29.09.pdf>

30 <https://cesko.ge/>

31 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120582>

elections during the pandemic. The CEC has created a normative base for holding the elections during the pandemic. To that end, in the pre-electoral period, it adopted several important decrees through the wider public discussions establishing the regulations of the election administration in the times of pandemic.

The PMMG welcomed the efforts of the CEC in this direction. The first Decree stipulated the activities of the Election Commission during pre-election period and thus introduced the regulations with regard to the entry to and moving inside the polling stations as well as the obedience of sanitary-hygienic rules amidst the pandemic. The second Decree set the framework for regulation of voting rules as well as the activities of PECs amidst the pandemic³².

There was an exception such as CEC Decree # 48/2020 of 21 October, which was adopted without the involvement and notification of the stakeholders, whereas decrees # 45 and # 46 were adopted on 19 October with wider public involvement.

#48/2020 decree allowed a possibility of transforming the PECs into the special groups on the E-Day, namely, if on the E-Day the number of PEC members happened to be less than 7, the PECs were regarded as the special groups and entitled to conduct voting similarly to the PECs with 12 members.

PMMG believes that the decree # 48 should have set out precise reasons (e.g. infection of the PEC member with the new COVID-19 virus), based on which the PEC would be transformed into the special group and the commission composed of less than 7 members would be entitled to carry out voting as the special group.

Voters in self-isolation or placed in hospitals and quarantine spaces (as well as the medical staff) were allowed to vote by mobile ballot-box. The election administration stated that it conducted an

32 <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4982188?publication=0>

intensive information campaign through the social media and media to inform the voters to the maximum extent. It also sent text messages to 14 431 voters registered in the database of the relevant agency and called to request the mobile ballot-box. The self-isolated voters could call the Information Centre and make such request from 24 October through 27 October until 18:00. However, according to the observers, several incidents were identified, when the self-isolated voters could not vote. Some of them did not know about the possibility of voting by the mobile ballot-box and others, although aware of such a possibility, could not register their request because of the tight deadlines.

REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS IN THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

One of the challenging issues in the work of the PEC members was drafting the summary protocols of the voting. Namely, it relates with filling in the protocols correctly, without mistakes, ensuring balanced data. There were the cases, when the PEC members corrected the mismatches in the summary protocols, drawn up on the E-Day, at the DEC on the next day of the elections. Although this process did not go against the law, the corrections were made to the protocols without verifying the contested data, for instance, this implied opening the sealed documents and recounting the contested data. The PEC members drew up the correction protocols by memory, which was also a problem.

The process proceeded with presenting justified complaints on the contested summary protocols. In most cases the superior election commissions did not satisfy requests on examining the voting results and limited themselves by charging the inferior commission members with disciplinary measures. The DEC explained that the correction protocols adjusted the mismatches found in the summary protocols, which left no legal or factual ground for recounting the votes.

Higher election commissions as well as

courts had to adequately examine the proofs. It was of utmost importance to recount the results of the challenged PECs, in where the substantial imbalances were revealed.

CHAPTER IV

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE ELECTORAL LISTS SUBMITTED BY THE ELECTORAL SUBJECTS

- **Monitoring of the party lists submitted by the political parties**

The PMMG selected 11 electoral subjects to analyse the ethnic composition of the electoral lists, including the number and sequence of the ethnic minority candidates on the party lists submitted to the CEC. These electoral subjects are: “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement”, “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze”, “Girchi”, “Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens”, Electoral Block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli”, “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia”, “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”, ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia”, “David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement”, “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” and “David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”.

The analysis of the sequence of the ethnic minority candidates revealed that mainly the candidates belonging to ethnic minorities are distributed after the 35th candidate on the party list. The candidates belonging to ethnic minorities falling within the first 10 places are encountered in the lists of 4 political parties³³; candidates placed

³³ David Chichinadze: Tribuna CDM; Nino Burjandadze: United Georgia-Democratic Movement, David Tarkhan – Mouravi, Irma Inashvili: Patriots’

between 10-20 places are encountered in the list of 6 political parties³⁴, and the candidates placed between 20-30 places are encountered in the list of 6 political parties³⁵.

Therefore, taken into account the number and sequence of the ethnic minority candidates on the party lists, it can be concluded that political representation as well as participation of ethnic minorities is still problematic.

- **Ethnic composition of majoritarian candidates**

Of all electoral subjects monitored (11), seven subjects have nominated a majoritarian candidate from ethnic minorities.

Two candidates were nominated by: “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”, “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” and “David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia” and “Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia”.

One candidate was nominated by “David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement”, “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia” and “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze”.

As for the initiative groups, of all 11 initiative groups participating in the elections, only one initiative group nominated independent majoritarian candidate Enzel Mkoyan belonging to ethnic minority in Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda majoritarian electoral district.

Alliance of Georgia, Girchi

34 Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze, Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia, United National Movement – United Opposition, electoral block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli”, David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia, David Chichinadze Tribuna CDM

35 Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze, electoral block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli”, David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia, David Chichinadze Tribuna CD, Nono Burjandadze-United Georgia-Democratic Movement, Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom

- **Ethnic composition of the 10th convocation of the Georgian Parliament**

Parliamentary mandates of 150 deputies in the 10th convocation of the Georgian Parliament were distributed to 9 electoral subjects as follows: “Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia” – 90 deputies, block “United National Movement – United Opposition” – 36 deputies, “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” – 5 deputies, “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze” – 4 deputies, electoral block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli” – 4 deputies, “David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia” – 4 deputies, “Girchi” – 4 deputies, “Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens” – 2 deputies, “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia” – 1 deputy.

Out of 150 elected deputies to the Georgian Parliament, 9 come from ethnic minorities (6 %), including: “Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia” – out of 90 elected deputies only 7 come from ethnic minorities (7.77%) – 3 of them were elected by party list and 4 by the majoritarian rule. 2 deputies are elected from the list of the opposition parties – one comes from the electoral block “United National Movement – United Opposition” and the other from “David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”. Only 5 deputies elected in the Parliament affiliates themselves with the two largest ethnic minority groups in Georgia: ethnic Armenian and Azeri.

- **Ethnic composition of elections commissions**

For 31 October, 2020 Parliamentary Elections, the CEC has created 348 electoral precincts in the majoritarian districts populated by ethnic minorities: Georgian-Azerbaijani – 211, Georgian-Armenian – 133 and Georgian-Armenian-Azerbaijani – 4.

The highest number of ethnic minority representatives was appointed by Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda DECs as

commission members. Notably, out of 12 commission members, 8 members represented ethnic minority in Akhalkalaki # 40 DEC and 10 commission members of # 41Ninotsminda DEC represented ethnic minority.

As for the PECs, in 465 PECs observed by the PMMG in the first round of elections:

- 2661 PEC members were ethnic minority representatives (47.7 on average)
- 245 persons belonging to ethnic minorities held the status of high officials (secretary or chairperson) of PEC (52%).

With regard to the gender composition of PECs, in 465 PECs observed by the PMMG

- 2685 PEC members were women (48% on average)
- 201 PEC Chairpersons were women (43 %)

CHAPTER V

ETHNIC DIMENSION OF THE ELECTORAL PROGRAMS DEVELOPED BY THE ELECTORAL SUBJECTS

During the pre-election period PMMG organized the meetings with the engagement of the leaders of the political parties participating in the elections as well as the youths residing in Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda and Akhaltsikhe municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti region. The leaders of the political parties presented their vision to the youth with regard to the mitigation of the problems faced by the ethnic minority communities³⁶.

³⁶ The meetings were conducted within the frames of the project "promotion of wider engagement of ethnic minorities especially the youths residing in Samtskhe-Javakheti region in a process of participative democracy" financially supported by Foundation "Open Society -Georgia"

Findings of the meetings demonstrated that the parties mainly focus on integrating ethnic minorities into the social and political life and advanced teaching of the state language. However, with few exceptions, the political parties provide more general views on the needs of ethnic minorities and mainly describe the challenges without presenting concrete vision on developing a long-term strategy for the resolution of the existing problems.

CHAPTER VI

INTER-AGENCY COMMISSION FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

The ICFE was established by the decree of the Minister of Justice on 30 June 2020. The Commission aims to prevent the use of administrative resources and the violation of the electoral legislation by the civil servants in the period of pre-electoral campaigning and agitation, as well as to react on the identified violations and to ensure in this way a free and fair electoral environment.

Pursuant to its format, the Commission provides a platform to facilitate a dialogue between the Government and all stakeholders involved in the elections, in order to avoid violations of electoral legislation.

The Commission held its first meeting on 14 July 2020. In total, it held up to 15 meetings. The PMMG representative was present at seven meetings. In total, the Commission issued five recommendations.

During the pre-electoral monitoring, the ICFE focused its efforts on analysing the information disseminated through media. According to the ICFE, a number of incidents of disinformation were revealed.

Some political parties and local observer organisations did not attend the Commission meetings.

CHAPTER VII

PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

In August 2020 the Government of Georgia initiated a number of large-scale financial projects to address the effects of the economic crisis, few weeks prior to the official launch of the pre-electoral campaign. The projects targeted wider electorate and implied certain funds to be allocated to voters in the pre-electoral period.³⁷ In some case, these projects formed a part of the electoral campaign and envisaged the outreach of the wider array of voters and allegedly served the elections goal – to secure the support of the voters for the ruling party “Georgian Dream” just before the elections.

For example, in August, 2020 few weeks prior to the official start of the pre-electoral campaign, the Government of Georgia initiated the launch of the third phase of its anti-crisis plan which implied the delivery of large-scale support to the citizens of Georgia amid the persisting economic crisis.³⁸

Within the frames of the third phase of the anti-crisis plan, Government personified the assistance by affiliating itself with these projects thus blurring the boundaries between the activities of the State and the party. This was not in compliance with the significant international standards according to which the states ensure that the political parties are distanced from the state and that there is a clear difference between the state and political parties³⁹.

37 Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

38 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

39 The Copenhagen Document developed by OSCE member states on “Human Dimension”. 1990, Article 5.4. accessible at <https://www.osce.org/>

High-ranking officials from the central and local government were actively involved in the presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream” in the majoritarian constituencies. Moreover, presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream” in the majoritarian constituencies were often held against the background of the projects implemented by the state funds, which raised the risk of using the state funded assets in the ruling party campaign.

Hereby it has to be noted that the political campaign was also conducted against the background of state funded projects by those acting parliamentary deputies who were participating in 2020 Parliamentary Elections on behalf of other electoral subjects.⁴⁰ For example, Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoian, majoritarian deputies of the Parliament.⁴¹

The representatives of the local government were personally present at the meetings of the “Georgian Dream” candidates with the electorate, listened to their concerns, needs, and promised to solve them as soon as possible.⁴² People working at the local self-government bodies, staff of the public schools and kindergartens and, in some instances, clergymen were also present at the presentation ceremonies of the ruling party candidates.⁴³

VIOLETION OF RULES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The changes made to the Election Code prior to the start of the pre-electoral campaign expanded the list of persons, who are not eligible to participate in the

odhr/elections/14304?download=true. Updated by 31.08.2020.

40 Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoian. Find the detailed information regarding the meetings of the candidates as provided in the annexes.

41 Find the detailed information regarding the meetings of opposition deputy candidates as provided in the annexes

42 See detailed information about the meetings of the “Georgian Dream” candidates in annex.

43 It is unknown to the observers of the organization whether the people working in the public institutions were present voluntarily at the presentations of the ruling party candidates.

campaigns and agitate during the working hours or when performing official duties. These changes have to be positively assessed as they prevent in a way the use of state-funded human resources for electoral purposes. For instance, persons, who fall under these limitations, include the staff of the LEPL (except for higher and vocational education establishments, religious organisations and Georgian Bar Association), non-commercial legal entities established by the state or municipality, public school teachers.

It was revealed that persons employed at the local municipality bodies/public sector took a leave to participate in the electoral campaign of the ruling party. As for the unlawful participation in the electoral campaigns, the PMMG observers identified 8 incidents of violation of rules of agitation, which included unlawful participation of 7 electoral commission members in the pre-electoral campaign, namely in the events dedicated to the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream”. In two cases, there were public school teachers present at the pre-electoral meetings of the ruling party candidates during the working hours.

PERSONNEL RESHUFFLING AND CASES OF DISMISSAL FROM THE WORK

During the pre-electoral period, statements were made by the former director of the Kvareli Music Schools Union and two former school directors in Mtskheta about being dismissed from the work, allegedly, on the political grounds.

In August 2020, personnel reshuffling took place in Ninotsminda municipality that involved over 20 employees, who were subject to changes. According to the opposition, the reshuffling served to strengthen the position of the ruling party before the elections and to weaken those of Enzel Mkoyan, a majoritarian member of the Georgian Parliament, as the persons dismissed were believed to be associated with Mr. Mkoyan.⁴⁴ In the beginning of October, two vacancies in the Ninotsminda municipality City Hall – head of the Culture,

44 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=28948>

Sport and Tourism department and head of the Social Service - were filled in by the “Georgian Dream” coordinators.

A new position of a specialist in the Commission of Spatial-territorial Infrastructure and Natural Resources was created at the Lagodekhi municipality Assembly to give a job to a distinguished supporter of the “Georgian Dream”⁴⁵.

INTERFERENCE WITH THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Nine incidents of interference with the pre-electoral campaigns were identified in the reporting period, including 5 incidents related to the pre-electoral meetings and campaigns of the candidates of the united opposition “Dzala Ertobashia” (Strength is in Unity) and 2 – to Zaur Dargali, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in the Marneuli-Gardabani constituency⁴⁶.

DAMAGING THE CAMPAIGN MATERIAL AND OBSTRUCTION IN THEIR DISSEMINATION

Several incidents of damaging or tearing down the electoral posters of the political parties and political subjects were identified in the reporting period. In 3 cases election banners of the opposition candidates were damaged. There were also frequent cases of pasting a poster over another.

According to the PMMG observer, the “Georgian Dream” election posters were pasted over those belonging to the UNM, while the UNM posters were pasted over the election poster of the European Georgia.

INCIDENTS OF THREATS AND PRESSURE

In the reporting period, the PMMG observers identified 9 incidents of alleged threat and pressure mainly against the representatives of opposition parties.

In the pre-electoral period, the electoral

45 Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

46 Find the detailed information as provided in the annexesa

subjects shared information about the incidents of threat and pressure against their supporters; they also stated that representatives of the “Georgian Dream” threatened the voters with the dismissal from the work and terminating their social assistance, because they supported the opposition. The electoral subjects did not reveal the persons, who threatened or those, who were threatened. Only “European Georgia” shared the concrete information to the PMMG representatives about such persons.

INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AND PHYSICAL RETALIATION

12 incidents of violence and physical retaliation were observed in the pre-election period. Since the second half of September the incidents of violence started to grow and the pre-electoral environment became more tense and polarized. Out of 12 incidents 9 took place in the Kvemo Kartli region, namely: 2 - in Dmanisi, 3 – in Bolnisi, 3 – in Marneuli and 1 – in Gardabani.

In four cases violence was used against the supporters of the “United Opposition”, in another two – against the “Georgian Dream” supporter and yet in other two incidents – against the supporters of the “European Georgia”.

In two cases physical confrontation took place between the supporters of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition” and the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Gogi Meshveliani; one case involved supporters of the “Georgian Dream” and the “European Georgia” and the other involved the supporters of the “Georgian Dream”.

Physical violence was used against the journalists and an observer⁴⁷.

The law-enforcement bodies reacted on the incidents as revealed during pre-election period and commenced investigations. However, law-enforcement bodies reacted

⁴⁷ Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

effectively on those incidents of violence, which mainly related to violence against the supporters of the “Georgian Dream”.⁴⁸

ALLEGED VOTE BUYING

Five incidents of alleged vote buying were identified in the reporting period,⁴⁹ including two - in Lagodekhi, 2- in Akhaltsikhe and 1 – in Ninotsminda.

Of these facts, four related to hosting the voters for alleged election purposes: in three cases related to the candidates of the “Georgian Dream” and in one case by Enzel Mkoian, independent majoritarian candidate. One fact was related to the supporters of the “United National Movement” in terms of offering clothes to the voters.⁵⁰

According to the Georgian legislation, criminal liability arises when an advantage is transferred to a voter for electoral purposes and when a voter knowingly accepts such offering. Consequently, revealing and bringing to public knowledge the fact of vote buying became much more difficult. People tend to hide alleged vote buying facts from a fear of being charged, which makes it virtually impossible to inform the relevant services about such facts.

The changes made to the Criminal Code in July 2020 impose stricter liabilities for vote buying by fully criminalizing the act. Notably, vote buying solely became the subject to criminal punishment. Pursuant to the previous version, transferring an advantage to a voter, if the advantage does not exceed 100 GEL, was subject to administrative fine. With the new changes to the law, the act of vote buying became

⁴⁸ Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

⁴⁹ Pursuant to the Criminal Code of Georgia: “For election purposes, offering, promising, transferring or rederring, directly or indirectly, money, securities (including financial instrument), other property, title on property, service or any other advantage or knowingly accepting such offering, or entering into fraudulent, sham or other transactions to avoid statutory restrictions shall be punished by imprisonment for up to three years or with a fine.”

⁵⁰ Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

a subject of criminal liability, if the value of the advantage does not exceed 100 GEL.⁵¹

ALLEGEDLY UNLAWFUL COLLECTION OF VOTERS' PERSONAL DATA

One incident of allegedly unlawful collection of voters' personal data as well as one incident of the attempt of unlawful collection of the data were identified in the reporting period. Incidents involved collection of voters' IDs and the relevant personal information⁵².

INTERFERENCE WITH THE MEDIA ACTIVITY

Four facts of interference with the media activities, attempts of pressure and threats were identified in the reporting period.

On 29 September, in Marneuli, the "Georgian Dream" activists interfered with the professional activity of the crew members of "Mtavari Arkhi" and the GPB operator and assaulted them physically. They damaged the equipment of the TV companies. Calls were made by Kakha Okriashvili on closing down the GPB and Grigol Vashadze on closing down the TV Channel "Imedi".⁵³ "Girchi" proposed to sell the GPB.⁵⁴ In the pre-electoral period, the local government opposed the activity of the Pankisi community Radio⁵⁵.

HATE SPEECH AND DISINFORMATION IN THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The PMMG observers identified public statements in the reporting period, which aimed to discredit the political opponents and served to instigate interethnic strife.

⁵¹ Pursuant to Article 164 of the Criminal Code, the criminal liability arose only if the value of an advantage transferred to a voter for electoral purposes exceeded 100 GEL.

⁵² Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

⁵³ <https://metronome.ge/story/303824>

⁵⁴ <https://1tv.ge/news/zurab-jafaridze-sazogadoebrivimauwyebeli-tavisi-shinaarsit-aris-nonsensi-dagasauqmebelia/>

⁵⁵ Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

The PMMG called on all parties involved in the elections to respect the Code of Ethics and observe the highest ethical standards as well as to refrain from violent announcements and usage of the conflict issue regarding the developments taken place in the "Mountainous Karabakh" for election purposes during pre-election period.

The organization revealed several Facebook pages promoting the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia and conducting discreditation campaign against the opposition parties, namely the UNM and "European Georgia"⁵⁶.

Four public statements were identified which implied attempt to instigate interethnic strife and confrontation between Armenian and Azerbaijani communities. It can be argued, that intentionally or unintentionally, the final goal of such statements was the manipulation with ethno-patriotic feelings, their usage for purely party interests as well as the attempt of gaining support among the voters belonging to the underlined ethnic minority groups.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST ROUND OF ELECTIONS

Voting process in those electoral districts in where the Public Movement Multinational Georgia conducted the monitoring program was mainly held in calm and competitive environment. Covid-19 pandemic precautionary measures were respected at the PECs. However, electoral violations were identified in some electoral precincts by the observers of the organization. PMMG believes, that the revealed electoral violations did not affect the results of the elections in that geographic area covered by the elections monitoring program.

On the Elections Day, within the frames

⁵⁶ Find the detailed information as provided in the annexes

of elections monitoring program PMMG Sort Term Observers (STOs) identified 45 incidents including:

- Inappropriate setting up of the polling station (4 incidents)
- Restriction of the rights of observers (7 incidents)
- Verbal assault (1 incident)
- Agitation in the polling station (4 incidents)
- Presence of unauthorized person in the polling station (1 incident)
- Tracking the voters at the polling station (1 incident)
- Violations of voting rules by mobile box (3 incidents)
- Breach of voting secrecy (4 incidents)
- Breach of voting rules (8 incidents)
- Inappropriate fulfillment of duties by the members of PEC (6 incidents)
- Violation of vote counting rules (6 incidents)

On the Elections Day, PMMG observers filed and submitted totally 13 complaints to the election commissions. Moreover 25 objections were registered in the log books of the PECs. In most cases PEC members took into account the remarks made by PMMG observers and consequently used to remove the identified shortcomings. As a result, PMMG observers were not filing the complaints to those PECs.

DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THE INCIDENTS IDENTIFIED ON THE ELECTIONS DAY

Inappropriate setting up of the polling station (4)

The first voter was allowed to enter #18.41.34 polling station in Ninotsminda by 8.23 AM as far as the control paper was not present at the electoral precinct. Since the delivery of the control paper to the PEC, the first voter was accepted to the polling

station and the voting process commenced.

The first voter was only allowed to enter the #13.22.65 polling station in Marneuli by 8.22 AM as far as according to PMMG static observer, PEC members did not know how to fill in the control paper as well as how to conduct the special procedures for the purpose of distribution of duties among the PEC members. Followed by the case, with the assistance of CEC representative visiting the PEC, the control paper was prepared and the respective procedures conducted.

The voting booths were not set up appropriately in #13.22.80 polling station in Marneuli. More precisely, voting booth entrance was not open from one side and the opened side of the booth was not facing the wall in a way not to breach the voting secrecy as stipulated by the article 1st of # 38 decision made by the CEC.

04.05.02 polling station in Isani, was not set up appropriately. There was a separate door behind the voting booth by which the voters could enter the polling station without checking for marking. The shortcoming was eradicated after the verbal objection raised by the observer – the booth was relocated.

Restriction of the rights of observers (7)

PMMG observes was expelled from #13.22.73 polling station in Marneuli. According to the observer, he was trying to take a video by phone capturing the joint entrance of three voters' inside the voting booth. The attempt of the observer outraged the PEC members. The case was challenged by the PMMG observer and the respective complaint was filed to the DEC.

PMMG static observer was present at Marneuli #13.22.65 polling station by 7.08 AM, however, PEC members announced that the observer would not be able to enter the polling station until 8 AM. Static observer was only allowed to enter the polling station by 7.14 AM. after the respective phone call was made by the chairperson of DEC to the respective PEC.

PMMG observer was not allowed to enter #13.22.36 polling station in Marneuli on 7

A.M. as far as PEC members did not manage to operate infrared thermometer. PMMG observer was only allowed to enter the polling station after he assisted the PEC members to make the thermometer functional.

PMMG observer was not allowed to enter #18.40.61 polling station in Akhalkalaki due to the fact that according to PEC members the static observer was not assigned to that particular electoral precinct. PMMG observe was allowed to enter the polling station after the arrival of the mobile group of the organization.

PMMG observer was not allowed to enter #01.04.25 polling station in Krtsanisi by 7 A.M. According to PEC statement, the observer could only be allowed to enter the polling station at 8 A.M. PEC closed the door of the polling station. PMMG observer managed to enter the polling station only at 8 A.M.

PMMG observer was not allowed to enter #01.04.19 polling station in Krtsanisi. by 7 A.M. PMMG observer has only managed to enter the polling station after the respective phone call was made from the DEC to the PEC.

#13.22.70 PEC in Marneuli warned the PMMG observer that he had no right to move inside the polling station and hence could only observe the voting process from one particular spot. The shortcoming was removed as a result of indication issued by the DEC to the respective PEC.

Verbal assault (1)

The incident of verbal assault was reported at #13.22.71 PEC in Marneuli between the chair of the PEC and the members of PEC representing United National Movement. The chair of the PEC restricted the right to the PEC members and physically approached them while attempting to shoot the video by the phone capturing the process of distribution of duties among the PEC members.

Agitation in the polling station (4)

The case of agitation was reported from #13.22.74 polling station in Marneuli.

Chairperson of PEC told the voter to circle # 41.

Member of # 18.41.19 PEC in Ninotsminda, hinted the voter twice whom to vote. According to PMMG observer such hinting implied the voting in favor of # 2.

Representative of United National Movement was immediately engaged in agitation activities in # 09.11.47 polling station in Sagarejo. UNM representative was dictating the voter whom to vote. The incident was challenged by PMMG observer. As a result, PEC expelled the UNM representative from the polling station.

Representative of the initiative group (Enzel Mkoian, candidate of the initiative group) was dictating the voter whom to vote. The incident was reported from #18.41.09 polling station in Ninotsminda.

Presence of unauthorized person in the polling station (1)

The unauthorized person was reported to be present in #13.22.70 polling station in Marnuelu having no such right. The shortcoming was removed as a result of verbal objection raised by PMMG observer. As a result, the unauthorized person was expelled from the polling station.

Tracking the voters at the polling station (1)

Unidentified people nearby #14.24.48 polling station in Dmanisi were registering the voters in their own lists. However, by doing so they did not violate the 25-meter restrictions stipulated by law.

Violations of voting rules by mobile box (3)

In #13.22.2 polling station, Marnuli, the number of the mobile voting box did not coincide with the number entered into the log book.

The mobile box was sealed at 7.55 AM in #10.15.21 polling station in Lagodekhi.

The box left the polling station at 09:10 and returned back soon at 10:50. According to the PMMG observer the box did not have the seal. Two unknown individuals entered the polling station soon after the return of the box. They have announced that they were the employees of CEC and sealed the box. PMMG observer filed a complaint and demanded the annulment of the mobile box. The complaint was registered at PEC. The data of 7 voters was entered into the mobile box voters' list and the respective number of signatures were applied.

PMMG observer identified the incident at #18.40.26 polling station in Akhalkalaki according to which by 10:45, 12 voters were registered in the mobile box voters' list. Later on, when the box was about to be taken out of the polling station, the observer noticed 13 voters enrolled in the list instead of 12. According to the secretary of PEC, that person had health problem and were not able to visit the polling station. That is why he was added to the list. PMMG observer challenged the case and filed a complaint.

Breach of voting secrecy (4)

The voter has made the political choice openly in front of the chairperson of #10.16.12 PEC in Kvareli without entering the voting booth. The voter entered the booth after the verbal objection raised by PMMG static observer and hence made the choice on the second ballot inside the booth.

The incident of breach of voting secrecy was observed at #14.23.22 polling station in Bolnisi. The voters were openly displaying the checked ballots. In some cases, voting was carried out outside the voting booth. The PEC was permanently overcrowded hampering the voting process. The incidents of breach of observer' rights were also observed. Observers was denied the right to freely move inside the polling station as well as approach the registrars' table.

Two incidents were reported from #10.15.22 polling station in Lagodekhi, according to which the voter displayed his

checked ballot to the individual present at the polling station. PMMG observer has verbally challenged the case. As a result, the incident was removed.

The voter has taken a photo of the ballot inside the voting booth in # 10.15.35 polling station, Lagodekhi. Representatives of United National Movement and Newpost did not allow the voter to drop the ballot inside the voting box and forced to leave the polling station. The filled in ballot was kept with PEC chairperson. Later on, PEC members asked the voter to visit the polling station once more. The mentioned voter appeared at the polling station and took part in the elections.

Breach of voting rules (8)

Voter has found the pre-made signature next to his surname in #13.22.3 polling station in Marneuli. PMMG observer challenged the cases and filed a complaint.

The same #14.23.55 PEC member in Bolnisi voted three times. The incident was challenged by PMMG observer and the respective complaint was filed.

Observer, representing local observer organization "Youth Center Georgia" voted four times at #13.22.65 polling station in Marneuli. Moreover, two persons were granted the right to enter the polling station two times.

The same individual has attempted to vote second time at # 09.11.41 polling station in Sagarejo. However, he was not allowed to enter the polling station for repeated voting.

Three cases of not applying marking to the voter were observed at #13.22.49 polling station in Marneuli. Moreover, attempt of organized voting (Karusel) was reported from the same polling station. PMMG observer identified those individuals who had already voted and tried to vote again. As a result, those individuals were not allowed to enter the polling station.

The voter dropped the ballot inside the

ballot box without placing into the envelop. The incident occurred at #12.21.46 polling station in Gardabani.

The attempt of voting on the part of a person under the age of full responsibility was reported from #13.22.35 polling station in Marneuli. Registrar gave the voter the ballot who attempted to vote. PMMG observer recognized the mentioned individual and asked him to present the ID. As a result, it turned out that the individual trying to vote was a person under the age of full responsibility. PMMG observer protested the case. As a result, the underaged individual was denied the chance to cast a vote. The fact became the reason of dispute among the PEC members: who and why the underlined individual was allowed into the polling station and why he was given the ballot.

There was an attempt of voting with invalid ID in #18.40.10 polling station in Akhalkalaki. The fact was revealed by PMMG observer as well as members of PEC. As a result, the underlined person was not given the opportunity to cast a vote with invalid ID.

Inappropriate fulfillment of duties by the members of PEC (6)

Secretary of #18.41.28 PEC in Ninotsminda was not entering the data into the demonstration protocol and was not entering the number of voters in the unified voters' list. PEC chairperson announced that the number will be entered at the end of the day. PMMG observer raised the verbal object towards the chairperson of PEC which was not satisfied. The objection was recorded into the log book by the PMMG static observer.

Two persons having the authority to be present at #18.40. 67 polling station in Akhalkalaki were not checked for temperature. The shortcoming was removed as a result of verbal objection raised by PMMG observer and hence both individuals were checked for temperature.

Only 7-8 voters were checked for temperature at #13.22.65 polling station in

Marneuli. The shortcoming was removed as a result of verbal objection raised by PMMG observer.

Registrar of #13.22.69 PEC in Marneuli was writing down the surnames of the voters visiting the polling station and putting the plus sign next to it; approximately 12 voters' surnames. PMMG observer filed a complaint and demanded the substitution of the respective PEC member as well as the imposition of disciplinary penalty. The incident was removed.

Registrar of #12.21.48 PEC in Gardabani, did not apply the marking in four cases. PMMG observer challenged the incident and hence the incident was removed. In one case, the same registrar did not apply the stamp as well as signature on the ballot. PMMG observer challenged the case and made the respective remark in the log book. The observer demanded the substitution of the PEC member. Challenge was satisfied by the chairperson of the PEC. As a result, the mentioned PEC member was substituted by the other member of the precinct election commission.

In #18.40.22 polling station in Ninotsminda, PEC members were applying pre-stamps to the ballots; total 15 ballots. PMMG observers took the video of the incident. After the protest of the incident by PMMG observer, PEC members have announced that they did not know that it was the violation of the law and hence stopped the process.

Violation of vote counting rules (6)

The electricity supply was cut off for half a minute at # 13.22.03 polling station in Marneuli at approximately 21:40. According to the observer, after the resumption of electricity supply, the stack of folded bulletins was placed on the table which has become the subject of verbal dispute among the commission members. The vote counting proceeded after the electricity supply was resumed. PMMG observer did not attend the vote counting procedure at this polling station.

CHAPTER IX

COMPLAINTS ADJUDICATION

The summary protocols of # 13.22.18 Marneuli PEC was submitted to the DEC with the delay. Later, in that night the information was spread according to which the PEC chair had lost the protocols. Also, it was said, that the summary protocols were stolen from the PEC chair. It has to be noted that PMMG observer who monitored the electoral process at this PEC during the whole day was given the PEC summary protocols of # 13. 22.18 PEC of Marneuli apart with the correction protocol as stipulated by the law. These protocols are in full compliance with those summary protocols as uploaded by the CEC on its 2020 elections results depicting special webpage.

PMMG observer reported the multiple cases of entry of unknown individuals without presenting the observer's badge in #18.41.13 polling station in Ninotsminda during vote counting thus hampering the vote counting process. The presence of alcohol was also reported at the polling station possibly brought by the underlined individuals.

Four ballots were found in the special envelope during the vote counting process taken place in #13.22. 72 electoral precinct in Marneuli (two proportional and two majoritarian), considered as valid ballots by the PEC.

34 voters were registered in mobile box list at #13.22.35 polling station in Marneuli. PEC members accompanying the mobile box took 50 ballots while leaving the polling station. However, according to PMMG observers, PEC members accompanying the mobile box have not returned the surplus ballots.

#14.13.39 PEC member from United National Movement in Bolnisi, did not sign the summary protocol of the PEC.

Adjudication of the complaints submitted by the Public Movement Multinational Georgia (PMMG) to the district elections commissions as well as the courts

PMMG submitted 6 complaints to the district elections commissions (DECs) with regard to 9 polling stations⁵⁷. According to the submitted complaints PMMG demanded: annulment of the results of mobile ballot box in 2 cases, annulment of 7 summary protocols, revision of the results of 5 polling stations as well as imposition of responsibility sanctions towards 13 PECs members.

As a result of decisions made by the DECs, 1 complaint was fully and the one partially satisfied. As a result, 5 PEC members were charged with disciplinary responsibility – remark; 2 complaint was not satisfied; 2 complaints were left without discussion.

DECs refused to satisfy all those demands, implying the revision of the results as well as recounting of the ballots. PMMG challenged the decisions of DECs to the first and the second instances of the court. However, the complaints/appeals were not satisfied by the courts too.

Marneuli

After the Elections Day, PMMG submitted 2 complaints to Marneuli and Akhaltsikhe DECs with regard to the disbalance revealed in the summary protocols and challenged 7 summary protocols of 5 PECs. In the summary protocols of the challenged PECs the balance could not be established and there was a surplus in the ballots. Those were Marneuli #13.22.51

⁵⁷ Akhalkalaki DEC did not register PMMG complaint regarding the disbalance of Akhalkalaki # 18.40.33 PEC summary protocol

and #13.22.52 PECs, Gardabani #13.21.11 and #13.21.22 PECs. PMMG applied to Marneuli DEC with the respective appeal and demanded the annulment of the summary protocols as well as recounting of results. Moreover, PMMG demanded the imposition of disciplinary charges towards the chairpersons as well as secretaries of the respective PECs.

On 3 November, Marneuli DEC conducted the hearing of PMMG complaint regarding Marneuli #13.22.51 and #13.22.52 PECs, Gardabani #13.21.11 and #13.21.22 PECs and partially satisfied the demand of the organization. DEC imposed disciplinary charges (remark) over the chairpersons as well as secretaries⁵⁸ of Marneuli #13.22.52 and Gardabani #13.21.22 PECs. However, DEC refused the demand to annule the summary protocols and recount the results of Marneuli #13.22.51 and #13.22.52 PECs, Gardabani #13.21.11 and #13.21.22 PECs.

According to Marneuli DEC, there was a mistake while developing the challenged summary protocol of the respective PEC. However, correction protocols were developed by the PEC members, according to which PEC members introduced subsequent amendments to the summery protocols. As a result, the mistake was removed. Therefore, DEC noted that there was neither legal nor factual ground for the annulment of summary protocols as well as recounting of the ballots.

As for the imposition of disciplinary sanctions over the chairpersons and the secretaries of two PECs (Marneuli #13.22.52 and Gardabani #13.21.22), DEC has made a statement according to which the legally established procedures were not followed while developing the summary protocols at these PECs. Notable, in Marneuli # 13.22.52 polling station, the timing was not referred to in the summary protocol and the summary protocols were not affirmed

⁵⁸ According to DEC, timing was not referred to while developing the summary protocol of Marneuli # 13.22.52 PEC, the summary protocols were not affirmed according to the standing rules, the votes received by the political subjects were mistakenly filled

according to the established rules. In Gardabani # 13.21.22 polling station, the numbers received by the electoral subjects were mistakenly put into the summary protocols.

As for the courts, Bolnisi district and Tbilisi appeal courts fully shared the arguments put forth by Marneuli DEC. According the courts, no violations have been revealed while discussing the case, which would have substantial or any other type of impact over the final results of the elections. According to the courts, the concrete case cannot be considered as a major violation as far as some irregularities revealed in the summary protocols have been removed as a result of made amendments through correction protocols.

Detailed information with regard to the imbalance revealed in the summary protocols

Marneuli#13.22.51 PEC summary protocols were not balanced: both, proportional and majoritarian summary protocols. There were 30 ballot surpluses in the proportional summary protocol. Notably, according the proportional summary protocol, the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots exceeded the number of voters participated in the elections. Thus, the number of signatures of the voters amounted to 432, while sum of the votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 462.

As for the majoritarian summary protocol, there were 15 ballots surpluses in # 13.22.51 PEC majoritarian summary protocol. That is, according to majoritarian summary protocol, the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots exceeded by 15 the number of voters participated in the elections. According to the summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures

in the summary protocol of # 13.21.22 Marneuli PEC. More precisely, at this polling station electoral subject # 11 "Workers Socialist Party" received 56 votes instead of 0, while electoral subject # 56 "Lelo-Mamuka-Khazaradze" received 0 votes instead of 11.

participated in the elections amounted to 447 and the sum of votes received by the political subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 462.

No balance was established in the summary protocol of Marneuli #13.22.52 PEC: both majoritarian and proportional summary protocols. There were 27 ballot surpluses in the proportional summary protocol. According to the proportional summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures participated in the elections amounted to 515, while the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 542.

Moreover, there were 22 ballots surpluses in Marneuli # 13.22.52 PEC majoritarian summary protocol. Notably, according to the summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures participated in the elections amounted to 515, while the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 537.

The balance was not established in the proportional summary protocol of Gardabani # 13.21.11 PEC. There were 6 ballot surpluses in the proportional summary protocol. According to proportional summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures participated in the elections amounted for 415, while the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 421.

No balance was established in the proportional summary protocol of Gardabani # 13.21.22 PEC. Notably, there were 45 ballot surpluses in the proportional summary protocol. According to proportional summary protocol, the number of voters' signature participated in the elections amounted to 388 while the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 433.

On the Elections Day, PMMG observer filed a complaint regarding Marneuli # 13.22.69 polling station. Marneuli DEC satisfied

the complaint. Notably, DEC affirmed the violation committed by the registrar of Marneuli # 13.22.69 and consequently imposed disciplinary charge – remark. Registrar in the polling station was jotting down the surnames of the voters appeared in the polling station on a plain paper and was putting the “+ “ mark next to it.

According to the information as provided by PMMG observers, in total 12 data of the voters was collected by the registrar on the Elections Day. PMMG observer challenged the cases and filed a complaint demanding the substitution of the registrar and the imposition of disciplinary charges. As a result, violation was removed. As for the imposition of disciplinary measures towards the registrar, eventually DEC considered this case.

PMMG observer filed a complaint regarding Marneuli # 13.22.73 PEC on the Elections Day. DEC did not satisfy the complaint. PMMG observer demanded the imposition of disciplinary charges against the chairperson of the PEC on the ground of expelling the observer from the polling station without any legal ground.

PMMG observer tried to shoot the video of simultaneous presence of 3 voters inside the voting booth which was followed by the verbal assault/objection from the side of PEC members. According to DEC, one of the voters at the polling station requested the assistance from another voter due to the limited vision capabilities. PMMG observer loudly objected the incident on the ground of breach of voting secrecy and tried to shoot the video by the phone. According to the chairperson, PMMG observer was shooting the table list of the voters due to which the observer was expelled from the polling station.

Marneuli DEC recounted the results of Marneuli #13.22.65 PEC based on the court decision. The complaint was filed to the DEC by the “Transparency International” regarding the incident taken place at the underlined polling station. The observer took the video depicting the fact of multiple

voting by the same voter. The video was submitted to the court as an evidence.

Hereby it has to be noted that Marneuli # 13.22.65 polling station was problematic during the voting process. On the Elections Day, PMMG observer has informed the public several times with regard to the shortcomings revealed at Marneuli # 13.22.65 polling station including the incident of multiple voting by the same person. According to PMMG observer, observer representing local observer organization "Youth Center Georgia" voted four times. Moreover, two people were allowed to repeatedly vote in the same polling station on the Elections Day.

AKHALTSIKHE

#17.37.04 PEC proportional summary protocol was not balanced in Akhaltsikhe. There were 4 ballots surpluses in the proportional summary protocol. According to the proportional summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures participated in the elections amounted for 824; the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 828.

On 2 November, PMMG applied to Akhaltsikhe DEC with the complaint and demanded the annulment of #17.37.04 PEC proportional summary protocol as well as recounting of the results. Moreover, PMMG demanded the imposition of respective responsibility charges against the chairperson as well as secretary of the PEC.

On 4 November, Akhaltsikhe DEC left PMMG complaint without any consideration on the ground of violation of timing of submission of the complaint/appeal as well as the respective rules. According to the DEC, the complaint was submitted by the observer but not the organization itself. Moreover, DEC noted that the commission has already discussed the case challenged by the organization; the disbalance was removed in the summary protocol as a result of made amendments through the correction protocol. Therefore, DEC did

not question the validity of the summary protocol of the PEC.

PMMG challenged Akhaltsikhe DEC decision to the district court. In this case, the appellant was PMMG itself not the observer. PMMG has only challenged Akhaltsikhe # 17.37.04 PEC proportional summary protocol and demanded the recounting of the voting results but not the results of the majoritarian summary protocol as was pointed out in the DEC # 18/2020 decision made on 4 November. Later on, it has become known to the organization via the court, that Akhaltsikhe district court already considered the case with regard to the same incident challenged by the other observer organization. Therefore, PMMG withdrew the appeal.

AKHALKALAKI

The balance was not established in both summary protocols of Akhalkalaki # 18.40.33 PEC: proportional as well as majoritarian summary protocols. Notably, there were 10 ballots surpluses in the proportional summary protocol. According to proportional summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures participated in the elections amounted to 55, while the sum of votes received by the electoral subjects and the number annulled ballots accounted for 65.

There were 3 ballots surpluses in majoritarian summary protocol of Akhalkalaki # 18.40.33 PEC. Notably, according to the summary protocol, the number of voters' signatures participated in the elections amounted to 55, while the sum of the votes received by the electoral subjects and the number of annulled ballots accounted for 58.

PMMG challenged the case to Akhalkalaki DEC and demanded the annulment of proportional and majoritarian summary protocols as well as the recounting of the results. Moreover, PMMG demanded the imposition of responsibility charges against the chairperson and the secretary of the PEC.

DEC did not accept the complaint.

Chairperson of the DEC has provided explanation to PMMG observer attempting the registration of the complaint that the violation was already removed at the polling station.

Akhalkalaki DEC did not satisfy the complaint submitted by PMMG observer regarding # 18.40.26 polling station. On the Elections Day, PMMG observer demanded the annulment of mobile box voting results as well as the imposition of disciplinary charges against the chairperson of the PEC. According to PMMG observer, one voter was included into the mobile voting box list on the Elections Day. Notably, on 10:45 PMMG observer identified 12 voters registered in the mobile box voting list.

Later on, the same observer revealed 13 voters in the mobile box voting list when the box was ready to depart. According to the observer, PEC secretary provided the explanation that 13th voter experienced some health problem and could not visit the polling station. Therefore, that person was included into the mobile box voting list. DEC made a statement according to which the challenged incident was not confirmed and due to the inexistence of the proof it could not be satisfied.

LAGODEKHI

Telavi DEC did not consider the complaint filed by PMMG observer on the Elections Day demanding the annulment of Lagodekhi # 10.15.21 PEC mobile voting box results.

The mobile voting box was returned to the polling station in unsealed condition. According to DEC, the complaint was submitted by the observer to the DEC with delay. DEC did not pay an attention to the fact that the complaint was immediately submitted to the respective PEC.

CHAPTER X

POST ELECTIONS DEVELOPMENTS

The political parties, including those, which according to the preliminary results of the CEC, crossed the threshold of 1% in the parliamentary elections, rejected the election results.⁵⁹

The opposition political parties declared that the preliminary results provided by the CEC were inaccurate as the elections were rigged. The opposition parties declared distrust towards the election administration. They demanded resignation of the CEC Chair, amendments to the Election Code, including changes in the selection rules of the administration commissions, and holding the new elections, as well as releasing the “political prisoners”. The political parties, which participated in the 1st round, refused to run in the 2nd round of elections.

The protests continued along with the tabulation of the results in the election commissions. According to the CEC, the DEC had to hold meetings and review the complaints under a pressure.⁶⁰ Several incidents of confrontation took place between the police and the protesters during the rallies.⁶¹

To de-escalate the political crisis, on 9 November, the PMMG called on the political parties to start negotiations to find a way out of the political situation that developed after the elections.⁶² According

59 <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/30924457.html>

60 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/627769-cesko-saolko-komisiyebis-sxdomebis-chatareba-da-sachivrebis-ganxilva-zecolis-ponze-ucevt-rig-shemtxvevebshi-adgili-akvs-arauplebamosili-pirebismier-sxdomebze-shechris-mcdelobas>

61 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/627755-sakalako-sasamartloshi-saolko-saarchevno-komisiyebis-shenobebtan-akciaze-dakavebuli-7-piris-sasamartlo-procesi-mimdinareobs/>

62 <https://www.facebook.com/PMMG.ORG/>

to the Organisation, it was necessary to recalculate, in a transparent manner and with the involvement of all sides, the results of those contested election presincts, which issued the summary protocols showing significant disbalance.⁶³

To de-escalate the political crisis, negotiations between the ruling and the opposition political parties started with the facilitation of the US and EU ambassadors to Georgia.

CHAPTER XI

RUNOFF ELECTIONS

Runoff Parliamentary Elections in those electoral districts in where the Public Movement Multinational Georgian conducted the monitoring program were held in calm environment. Moreover, the runoff elections were not characterized with political competition as far as opposition candidates refused to participate. Mobilization of the voters at the polling stations by the party coordinators as well as in some cases voters' tracking at the polling stations by unidentified people were also reported.

According to PMMG observers, mainly, the process of opening of the polling stations were attended by 10 PEC members. Hereby it has to be noted that COVID-19 precautionary measures were followed in the monitored polling stations.

Within the frames of runoff Parliamentary Elections monitoring program PMMG STOs filed 2 complaints and revealed 10 incidents, including:

- threat towards the observer (1 incident)
- tracking the voters at the polling station (1 incident)
- breach of voting secrecy (3 incident)
- presence of unauthorized person in the

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63 <https://www.facebook.com/PMMG.ORG/posts/3811668662217020>

- polling station (1 incident)
- attempt of voting with invalid document (1 incident)
- attempt of voting on behalf of another person (1 incident)
- mobilization of the voters at the polling station for the purpose of voting (1 incident)
- violation of the rules to be applied before opening of the voting box (1 incident)

PMMG observers were raising verbal objections and demanding the removal of the identified shortcomings from the chairpersons of the PECs. Generally, PEC members used to take into account the remarks made by PMMG observers and consequently were removing the identified shortcomings.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE INCIDENTS IDENTIFIED ON RUNOFF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Treat towards PMMG observer (1)

The fact of threat and intimidation towards PMMG observer was reported from Kvareli # 10.16.12 polling station. The incident occurred after the PMMG observer identified the presence and partying of unauthorized people in the polling station. PEC members as well as unauthorized people verbally assaulted PMMG observer. Situation was discharged after the appearance of the mobile group into the polling station and thus the incident was removed. Unauthorized people left the polling station and the observer was allowed to continue the observation of the process.

Tracking the voters at the polling station (1)

PMMG observer reported the case from # 12.20.82 polling station in Rustavi according to which the observer Nino Jibladze, representing "International Observatory of Advocates and lawyers" wearing red color badge was checking the voters inside the

premise of the polling station in her own list as well as dictating the numbers through the phone. PMMG observer challenged the case and approached the chairperson of the PEC with the respective objection.

PEC secretary requested the unidentified person to move into one of the rooms of the premise from where the underlined person continued the tracking of the voters. After the repeated verbal objection raised by PMMG observer, the unidentified person was expelled from the polling station. Later on, Nino Jibladze returned to the polling station, underwent the registration and left the polling station.

Breach of voting secrecy (3)

The voter took the photo inside the voting booth at # 10.18.25 polling station in Akhmeta which is the breach of the electoral law.

The voter breached the voting secrecy at # 10.15.22 polling station in Lagodekhi. The voter did not enter the voting booth. The voter marked the ballot on the table of the registrar despite the objection raised by the chairperson as well as the secretary of the PEC not to do so.

Representative of Georgian Dream at Akhmeta #10.18.03 polling station breached voting secrecy rule. Representative took a look inside the voting booth to obtain information whom the voter voted for.

Presence of unauthorized person in the polling station (1)

The PEC member responsible for regulating the queue allowed 5 voters to enter # 10.15.22 polling station in Lagodekhi without presenting the ID. PEC did not allow the underlined voters to cast votes and expelled from the polling station.

The attempt of voting with invalid document (1 fact)

The voter attempted to vote by presenting the copy of the ID at # 10.18.01 polling station in Akhmeta.

Attempt of voting on behalf of another person (1 fact)

The voter attempted to vote by the ID of another person at Lagodekhi # 10.15.36 polling station. Since the disclosure of the fact the mentioned voter was denied the right to vote.

Mobilization of the voters at the polling station for the purpose of voting (1)

Observers representing “Poty Youth Alliance”, “Youth Initiative for Democracy” and “International Observatory of Advocates and lawyers” were making phone calls from inside Isani #04.05.39, #04.05.40, #04.05.42, #04.05.44 and #04.05.45 polling stations (in the hall of # 103 Public School) for the purpose of mobilization of the voters to the polling station.

Violation of the rules to be applied before opening of the voting box (1)

The voters’ lists were not sealed after counting the number of voters in the voting list participating in the elections. The fact was revealed at Rustavi # 12.20.22 polling station. The underlined procedural inconsistency is the violation of paragraph 3 of the article 67 of the Election Code of Georgia. The incident was removed as a result of objection raised by PMMG observer.

CHAPTER XII

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the monitoring of the parliamentary elections of 2020 in Georgia, we may conclude that there is still work to be done to improve the electoral environment. This process should be open, transparent and involve wider public. It is advisable that the work on the electoral reform starts immediately.

ENSURING FREE ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

The Government should put more efforts in ensuring free and fair environment for the pre-election campaigning by protecting rights and freedoms of the persons involved in the electoral process and reducing polarization between the political forces.

The law-enforcement bodies should investigate the violations identified in the electoral period timely, fully and impartially.

Persons involved in the electoral process should respect the will of voters and avoid unlawful processing of voters' personal data, as well as influencing or coercing their will in any form. The parties and their representatives should refrain from vote buying.

CONDUCTING PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

The political parties should conduct their pre-election campaigns in compliance with the highest moral and ethical principles, which excludes physical violence and retributions against the opponents. Also, the political parties and their supporters should refrain from interfering with the pre-election meetings and events of their rivals, conducting counter actions, tearing down and damaging the election posters. The parties should put more focus on the election programmes and visions rather than on making statements damaging the image of their opponents, discreditation and dissemination of the disinformation. Moreover, the parties and candidates should avoid making statements that instigate inter-ethnic strife and fuel the confrontation among voters. Some kind of liability can be introduced (e.g. revoking candidate's registration) for instigating the inter-ethnic confrontation and strife.

PROMOTING POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

The political parties should translate

their political programmes into the native languages of the ethnic minorities and make them accessible for the voters. In addition, the political parties should reflect the problems that ethnic minorities face in their election programs and present a long-term vision for solving these problems.

To facilitate the political representation of ethnic minorities the political parties should put more efforts in integrating the ethnic minority candidates into the party structures, putting them higher on their electoral lists and naming them as candidates to run for majoritarian seats and Mayors in the regions populated with ethnic minorities.

Moreover, it seems expedient to consider the issue of adoption of financial remuneration mechanisms for political parties in case of proper positioning of ethnic minority candidates as well as the increasing of their quantity in the party lists.

In addition, new regulation can also be considered to be adopted according to which certain number of required Parliamentary seats will be appropriated for ethnic minority candidates in order to promote the political representation of minority groups. Conduction of the proportional elections with the open list will promote the political representation of ethnic minority candidates.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

To prevent the use of administrative resources for the electoral purposes, the work of the State should be distinctly separated from the work of the ruling party in order to avoid mixing one into another and associating the state funded projects and programmes with the ruling party or any of its political leaders. The state funded projects should not be used for electoral purposes.

The civil servants should refrain from using their positions for party purposes as well as engaging subordinated individuals in the pre-election campaign against their will. Persons working in the state funded institutions should refrain from

interfering with the pre-election meetings of the opposition political parties and their candidates and from taking part in the physical confrontation.

The local self-government bodies should assign more public space for election posters and timely notify the electoral subjects about this possibility.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The election administration should continue the best practice of teaching and training of the members of the election commissions especially in ethnic minority regions.

The composition rules of the election commissions should be amended, which will rule out the dominance of any political party in the election administration. The selection process should become more transparent and more focus should be made on qualification and impartiality of the candidates. The election commission members should refrain from participation in the candidates' pre-election campaigns.

The deadlines for submitting and reviewing the complaints within the election commissions, as well as in courts should be extended. Respectively the deadline of 1-2 days should be altered to 3-5 days. When reviewing the complaints more focus should be made on the proper examination of the evidence and the justification of the decisions. As a result, the superior commission members will no longer consider explanations of the inferior commission members as the sole and unconditional evidence. Additional legislative mechanisms could be elaborated to make the examination of the election results (recount of the ballots) mandatory.

The practice of drawing up the correction protocols should be changed also. The factual and legal basis of drawing up the correction protocols should be defined by the law. These protocols should not be drafted on the basis of explanations provided by the commission members. Also, the deadlines for drawing up of the correction protocols should be reviewed.

The summary protocols should be corrected in the presence of all persons, who were present at the respective precinct.

It might be reasonable to conduct the electronic vote tabulation by means of modern technologies that will allow counting the votes within the shorter timeframe and increase the trust in the elections.

The election administration should ensure that the information about the regulations introduced against the pandemic is provided timely to the voters, including those belonging to ethnic minorities, in respective languages. To facilitate participation of the self-isolated voters in the elections, the deadlines for registering a request for the mobile ballot box could be extended.

Any individual engaged / interested in the electoral process should refrain from interference in the works of election administration.

VOTE BUYING

The vote buying regulating legal norms should be revised in a way to ensure that information about the alleged vote buying is not left outside the response framework. The existing liabilities for vote buying should be removed against the voter in case of reception of the benefit.

CHAPTER XIII

ANNEX

Activities of the Election Commissions

Preparations for the Elections amidst the Covid-19 pandemic

The CEC adopted, through wider public involvement, two decrees, which regulate activities of the election administration amidst the pandemic. The CEC held discussions on both draft decrees with the

CSOs within the CEC-initiated platform “Discuss Together”.

One of the decrees relates with the activities of the election commissions in the pre-electoral period, namely the rules regulating the sanitary and hygienic requirements, entrance and movements in the election administration premises to prevent the spread of infection. The other decree relates with the rules of voting process and the activities of the PECs amidst the pandemic.⁶⁴

The CEC incorporated the recommendations of the PMMG in the former decree with regard to the 1st, 2nd and 6th articles concerning the observance of the sanitary-hygienic requirements in the election administration buildings, including the rules of reviewing the complaints, the work of election commissions, etc.

On 18 September, the CEC adopted a decree,⁶⁵ establishing certain election measures and sanitary and hygienic requirements for the persons authorized to enter/exit and to stay/move in the polling stations on the polling day. The decree aims to prevent spread of the infection when voting.

PMMG regards positively the adoption of the mentioned decree, although certain regulations may pose problems. For instance, open cabins carry a risk of violation of secrecy of vote on purpose. Furthermore, refusing an authorized person enter the polling station without a facemask can be a cause for provocations. Therefore, it is important that the PECs, DEC and the CEC be extremely vigilant to ensure that the elections are held in sound environment.

CODE OF CONDUCT OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ITS SIGNATURE

The CEC of Georgia, with the support of Switzerland, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and

⁶⁴ <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4982188?publication=0>

⁶⁵ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120330-dadgenileba-38/2020-18092020>

the International Republican Institute (IRI), developed a Code of Conduct of the political parties in the parliamentary elections of 2020, which reflects the recommendations found in the reports by the international election observation missions, international stakeholders and the Public Defender of Georgia. The Code of Conduct is a compilation of voluntary norms of ethics, which aims at observing the democratic values and fundamental rights, conducting meaningful, programme-oriented and inclusive election campaign, which ensures equal opportunities for all involved parties in the elections.⁶⁶

The Code of Conduct, signed by 40 political parties, entered into force on 12 September 2020.⁶⁷

PMMG regards the development of the Code as a positive act. However, we regret that a number of political parties and their supporters do not observe the rules established by the Code and in some cases, resort to violence.

VOTER LITERACY AND AWARENESS RAISING ABOUT THE ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Voters literacy campaigns:

- The Adigeni DEC conducted an educational campaign “A Voter’s Voice” in Adigeni. The DEC representatives informed the voters about the rules of voting and regulations to be observed at the precinct on the E-Day. During the meeting, voters received pens and election booklets.
- Representatives of the Adigeni DEC held meeting with the voters in Adigeni. They disseminated information booklets about the rules of participation in the elections and explained them the meaning of a mixed election model.
- The Dmanisi election administration held trainings and educational projects.

⁶⁶ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120167-gantskhadeba-2020-tslis-parlamentis-archevnebis-tvis-politikuri-partiebis-qtsevis-kodeqsis-shesakheb->

⁶⁷ <https://cesko.ge/res/docs/Parties-2020Geo29.09.pdf>

An information banner with hygiene measures during the pandemic was posted in the election district.

- On 3-4 September, Tetrtskaro DEC held meetings with voters in the village Tsintsikaro and town Tetrtskaro within the project “Talk to Voters”, where the DEC members, while observing the regulations established by the Ministry of Health, shared the information with the voters about the upcoming elections and electoral procedures.
- On 14 August 2020, the Gori DEC finalized the CEC educational project “Electoral Development School”. The aim of the project was to facilitate civic engagement of the youth and promoting the elections.⁶⁸

SETTING UP ELECTION COMMISSIONS

The process, in some cases, proceeded against the heated argument and verbal confrontations, while, in few cases, it grew into physical confrontation.

MARNEULI

On 29 September, in Marneuli, the UNM held rally near the DEC protesting the selection of “Georgian Dream” supporters as the PEC members. Lasha Kveladze, DEC member on behalf of the UNM declared that the DEC did not notify the PEC members appointed by the UNM about holding the first meeting. Later, the rally continued into verbal confrontation during which several persons attempted to enter the DEC. At that moment, a contracted employee of the DEC, who was enquiring with the persons present there the reason why they were video recording him without permission, was beaten in response. There was also an instance of unauthorized persons attempting to break in the DEC.⁶⁹

The CEC released a statement regarding the fact, whereby it clarified that allegations as if

68 <https://www.facebook.com/SAOLQO/posts/2835115023385664/>

69 <https://www.facebook.com/aktualge/videos/1210192749365235>

the DEC did not notify the UNM-appointed PEC members about the first meeting, was ungrounded and false, because all members were notified through the contacts (telephone numbers) provided by them. Some of them did not appear at the meeting and there were problems in contacting some others, including due to wrong telephone numbers indicated. At the same time, UNM-appointed 26 members took part in the relevant PEC meetings, while some of them, as elder members, presided over the meetings. The CEC also underlined that, upon convening the first meetings, the DEC Chairman’s Act was made public by posting it in a visible place in the DEC building.⁷⁰

On October 4, Marneuli DEC member Lasha Kvelidze was charged on the fact of beating a contracted employee of the Marneuli DEC under the 1st part of the Article 162 of the Criminal Code of Georgia (violence committed at the location of the election commission from the moment of declaration of the election date up to the summarizing the final results of the elections).⁷¹

ADIGENI

On 5 September, the CEC elected Ketevan Obolashvili as a temporary member of the Adigeni DEC. Head of the UNM Adigeni office David Oganessian expressed concern over the fact and questioned Ketevan Obolashvili’s impartiality. According to David Oganessian, Ketevan Obolashvili is a cousin of the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate in Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Borjomi and Aspindza – Anton Obolashvili, and therefore cannot be an unbiased member of the commission.⁷² Based on the information collected by the PMMG longterm observer, Ketevan Obolashvili is indeed a cousin of the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Anton Obolashvili. Ketevan Obolashvili was a member of the DEC during 2012 and 2016 elections as well.

70 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120582>

71 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621812-marneulshi-momxdar-zaladobis-paktebze-sam-pirs-braldeba-caredgina>

72 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29202>

MTATSMINDA

On 13 September, UNM member Levan Merebashvili left the Mtatsminda DEC meeting in protest, saying that the members of the commission were being elected on the grounds of profession, friendship and kinship, which he did not want to be part of. MPs from the UNM: Tina Bokuchava and Levan Kharatishvili came to the Mtatsminda DEC meeting at 13:20 wishing to attend the meeting. TV channels (Mtavari Arkhi, Rustavi 2, Formula and GPB) also attempted to screen the meeting. Since the MPs and media representatives had not the necessary accreditation and therefore were not authorized to be in the Mtatsminda DEC building, the DEC Chair Giorgi Zirakishvili stopped the meeting and called for patrol police. The commission meeting stopped at 13:30 and resumed at 14:22. The commission members were elected after the meeting resumed. The composition of the PECs at the four precincts in Mtatsminda (#9, #10, #22, #30) and one in Krtsanisi (#26) was not complete and therefore, a new competition was announced for these precincts.

BORJOMI

On 8 October, Vakhtang Kvatadze, head of the UNM Borjomi Office, accused the Borjomi DEC Chair of pursuing the interests of the ruling party. It refers to the case of the election banner of Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, which was erected close to #1 precinct in Borjomi within 25-meter range, which goes against the rules, however, according to the political party, the DEC did not react on the violation.⁷³

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE ELECTORAL LISTS SUBMITTED BY THE ELECTORAL SUBJECTS

1. Electoral block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli” has 151 candidates on its electoral list, including

12 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 17, 25, 36, 48, 51, 60, 92, 96, 117, 118, 129, 140.

2. “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia” has 169 candidates on its electoral list, including 8 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 19, 42, 68, 83, 114, 115, 116, 136.
3. “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” has 150 candidates on its electoral list, including 5 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 28, 29, 57, 71 and 100.
4. “Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia” has 150 candidates on its electoral list, including 7 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 35, 37, 50, 115, 119, 127 and 134.
5. “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” has 177 candidates on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 17, 38, 50, 51, 80 and 102.
6. “David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia” has 132 candidates on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 8, 14, 21, 22, 56, 123.
7. “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze” has 139 candidates on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 19, 26, 74, 82, 115, 127.
8. “Aleko Elisashvili – Citizens” has 138 candidates on its electoral list. On candidate belongs to ethnic minorities.

⁷³ https://borjomi.tv/axali-ambebi/article/11831-sadavo-baneri-ras-ithkhovs-nacionaluri-modzraoba?fbclid=IwAR3HGIlcMxbtp_d1b-gHGiffLfDEecwDh-BQVCV2Senn3_WMPQg1dtkLm9l

9. “Girchi” has 129 candidates on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 6, 35, 60, 73, 84, 100.
10. “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement” has 142 candidates on its electoral list, including 8 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 7, 28, 37, 40, 71, 91, 114, 135.
11. “David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement” has 167 candidates on its electoral list, including 13 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear in the party list according to the following sequence: 7, 13, 22, 27, 32, 68, 83, 103, 112, 132, 152, 154, 163.

ANNEX

Use of the administrative resources

Implementation of the 3rd phase of the Anti-crisis Plan

On 6 August 2020, during the Cabinet meeting, the Prime-Minister of Georgia announced the start of the 3rd phase of the comprehensive social assistance package for the Georgian citizens to help counter the economic crisis.⁷⁴ The 3rd phase of the Government’s anti-crisis plan foresees mainly provision of the social assistance to the youth.⁷⁵ The ruling party ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia” created a political advertisement about the 3rd phase of the anti-crisis plan and placed it in social media, on the party’s Facebook page.⁷⁶ The political advertisement was shared via Facebook by the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream”.⁷⁷

74 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

75 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

76 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

77 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

The political advertisement of the ruling party uses the state coat of arms of Georgia, while it presents and explains every element of the wide-scale social assistance package under the 3rd phase of the Government’s anti-crisis plan against the party symbolic colours (blue and yellow), including the information about the assistance provided to concrete beneficiaries, the number of beneficiaries and the amounts allocated.⁷⁸

The political advertisement shared through the Facebook is accompanied with a small text, which reads: “The social assistance package developed under the 3rd phase of the Government’s anti-crisis plan is another proof of the commitment of the “Georgian Dream” as a united team to ensure the health and economic prosperity of the population of Georgia. This was achieved thanks to the Government, unity of the citizens and the financial contributions from Bidzina Ivanishvili”.⁷⁹

PMMG believes that by creating such political advertisement and sharing it by persons, who are associated with the leadership of the ruling party and the party itself, the measures implemented under the Government’s anti-crisis plan are used solely to the benefit of this party and serves the electoral goals of gaining voters’ support to the “Georgian Dream” in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Apart from this, the activities of the State and the political party are mixed and the boundary between them is blurred, which is incompatible with the international standard: according to the Copenhagen document on “Human Dimension” elaborated by the OSCE member states in 1990, the participating states ensure that the political parties are not merged with the State and that there is a clear separation between the State and political parties (Article 5.4).⁸⁰

78 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

79 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

80 The Copenhagen Document on Human Dimension, elaborated by the OSCE member states, 1990, accessible at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304?download=true>, renewed: 31.08.2020.

Use of the registration web-page - daxmareba.moh.gov.ge - for the pre-election campaign

A special registration system was set up at the web-page “daxmareba.moh.gov.ge” to avail distribution of the social assistance of GEL 200 to the children up to 18 years of age. Through this web-page a parent can register the child in the system of the Social Service Agency before December 1, 2020. It must be noted that the registration page includes the Facebook page of Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia showing his picture, which, in some way, is an invitation to a parent to like Giorgi Gakharia’s Facebook page.

We believe that the mentioned fact represents the use of administrative resources for the campaign purposes. In particular, the communication means – a registration page of the Social Service Agency, which is financed from the state budget, is used for the campaign of the ruling party – “Georgian Dream”.

Large-scale projects and initiatives launched by the Government of Georgia

Besides the above-mentioned projects, few days prior to the official start of the pre-electoral campaign, the Government of Georgia initiated several other large-scale projects, which target wider range of voters. The projects aim to improve their social and economic conditions and presumably serve to enhance voters’ satisfaction with the Government’s activities just before the elections.

Large-scale projects announced few days prior to the official start of the pre-electoral campaign:

- All self-employed citizens, who were unable to present all necessary documents at the first stage, would receive, before September, assistance of GEL 300 without any delay. It makes 80 000 citizens in total.⁸¹
- Utilities expenses support programme

⁸¹ http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

was extended to another four months (November, December, January and February). Consequently, the Government will cover the expenses for up to 200 kilowatts of electricity and 200 cubic meters of gas consumed by households per month.

- The Georgian citizens 17 years of age and under would receive a one-off assistance of GEL 200 at the start of the academic year.⁸² Parents could register their children before 1 December 2020, while the assistance would be delivered from September.⁸³
- The Government will cover fully a semester tuition fee in 2020-2021 for all socially vulnerable students (having up to 150 000 social points).
- The Government will cover the education fee for 2020-2021 – GEL 2250 for all socially vulnerable students (having up to 150 000 social points), who had their student status suspended due to unpaid education fees. By the decision of the Georgian Government, in total, more than 33 000 students will be eligible to benefit from these measures.
- On 20 August 2020, the Prime Minister of Georgia announced during the Cabinet meeting about the start of a new programme “State as your Partner”⁸⁴. The presentation of the programme was held in Ambrolauri. As the Prime Minister stated, the new programme will give each citizen a possibility to get involved in the state-funded programmes and launch their own businesses.
- On 20 August 2020, by the Governmental decision, a new farmer-support

⁸² The Georgian Government together with the banking sector decided that the social assistance transferred to beneficiaries’ accounts shall not be used to cover their liabilities. In case of a bank debt, these amounts shall not be used to cover the debt and the bank cannot automatically take the amount away from the parents’ accounts. Similarly, no other enforcement mechanism or measure will be applicable to the social assistance.

⁸³ On August 20, the Prime Minister of Georgia stated at the Cabinet meeting that some individuals are trying to collect financial and sometimes political gains by helping children and their parents to receive the Government’s assistance. http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

⁸⁴ http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

component was added to the state programme – “Plant your Future”. The programme will primarily help peasants, who suffered damage after 15 July 2020.⁸⁵ The programme aims at assisting Georgian farmers, who suffered damage from natural disasters or whose seedlings were destroyed, by getting new and quality seedlings with the help of the State.

- On 20 August 2020, the Government decided to expand the list of medicines for cancer eligible for financing under the Universal Healthcare Programme and to increase the annual limit on medicines by 8 000 GEL. The programme will avail the oncology patients to undergo full treatment with the state support. 1972 Georgian citizens are beneficiaries of the programme. In total, the new programme will cover about 40 thousand Georgian citizens in need of oncological treatment.⁸⁶
- On 13 August 2020, the Georgian Government decided to subsidize the purchase of non-standard apples until December 2020. Amount of the subsidy was set at 10 tetri, after which the minimal price for farmers on non-standard apples was set at 22 tetri.⁸⁷ Based on the Government’s decision, all companies, which will be engaged in the procurement headquarters, will receive a subsidy of additional 10 tetri.

Involvement of high-ranking officials in the pre-electoral campaign and the use of the state funded projects

High-ranking officials from the central and local government, including Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze and other members of the political union “Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia”, were involved in the presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream” in the

85 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

86 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

87 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77026

majoritarian constituencies.

People working at the local self-government bodies, staff of the public schools and kindergartens and, in some instances, clergymen were also present at the presentation/electoral ceremonies of the ruling party candidates.⁸⁸ According to the PMMG observers, not all willing could attend the presentation ceremonies of the majoritarian candidates. Attendance was managed by the lists prepared in advance.

After the presentations of majoritarian candidates were over, the pre-electoral campaigns continues with visiting the state funded projects and places. Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze together with the majoritarian candidate visited the infrastructure projects in the relevant electoral constituency to examine the implementation of the state funded facilities.⁸⁹

Besides the high-ranking officials of the central government, the representatives of the local government were actively engaged in the electoral campaign of the ruling party and their majoritarian candidates. They were personally present at the meetings of the “Georgian Dream” candidates with the electorate, listened to their concerns, needs, and promised to solve them as soon as possible. The social networks offer plenty of information about the participation of the local self-government officials in the electoral campaign.⁹⁰ The PMMG observers were also present at these meetings.

Meetings held by the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream” with the electorate and the use of the state-funded projects in the campaign:

88 It is unknown to the observers of the organization whether the people working in the public institutions were present voluntarily at the presentations of the ruling party candidates.

89 Upon nomination as the majoritarian candidates by the “Georgian Dream”, Governors Giorgi Khojvanishvili - in Shida Kartli, Shalva Kereselidze – in Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Irakli Kadagishvili – in Kakheti left their posts on the same day - on 1 August 2020, and started the pre-electoral campaign.

90 See detailed information about the meetings of the “Georgian Dream” candidates in annex #2.

On 21 September, in the village Khanchala, in Ninotsminda municipality, member of the Georgian Parliament and the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Samvel Manukyan participated in the opening of the newly rehabilitated road together with the authorities of the Ninotsminda municipality.⁹¹

On 9 October in Mtskheta, Acting Mayor of Mtskheta-Mtianeti Givi Berberashvili gave bonus of 1000 GEL and Certificates of Excellence to 7 gold medalist graduates of municipality public schools of 2019-2020.⁹² The PMMG long term observer inquired whether it was a usual practice and found out that the monetary reward was given for the first time and did not have a precedent in previous years.

On 13 October in Aspindza, according to the information circulated by the “Georgian Dream” press office, Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, “Georgian Dream” Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, “Georgian Dream” Executive Secretary Irakli Kobakhidze and majoritarian candidate in Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Borjomi and Aspindza Anton Obolashvili visited a rugby base in Aspindza. According to the press office, the construction of the base was financed by the Cartu Fund, which spent more than 4 million GEL on the construction and technical equipment of the base.⁹³

In Lagodekhi municipality, on 11 August, when presenting majoritarian candidate of the ruling party – Irakli Kadagishvili Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Party Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze together with the candidate visited Hereti Football Academy, where they met with young sportsmen and wished them success.⁹⁴

91 http://nor.ge/?p=154654&fbclid=IwAR2nJXteJJ7tgF4MWhafpaozbq7n1rn5TePqMco_ZAOp28oRp9ZDgTTxqDc

92 <https://www.facebook.com/TianetisMeria/photos/a.3521657271234628/3521658617901160/>

93 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/623406-kartuli-ocnebis-liderebma-aspinzashi-pond-kartus-dapinansebit-shekmnili-saragbo-baza-daatvalieres>

94 <http://frontnews.eu/news/ge/69304/?fbclid=IwAR0YN3DiDiOIG7USRGtUuyzhxODOXJfgZ3nUBLrj1uzDLnX09k0KeSuMJQ8>

Also, in the village Kabal, in the Lagodekhi municipality, they checked the ongoing construction of the public school that will house 300 pupils.⁹⁵

In Marneuli municipality, on 22 August, Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Party Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze and majoritarian candidate of the ruling party in Marneuli and Gardabani – Zaur Dargali visited the ongoing construction site of the Marneuli vocational school, which is being constructed with the state funds and with the involvement of the local self-government.⁹⁶

In Samgori municipality, on 17 August, majoritarian candidate of the Georgia Dream Sozar Subari visited the new rehabilitated sports complex in Varketili together with the Chairman of the Tbilisi City Assembly Giorgi Tkemaladze.⁹⁷ The project was implemented with the financial assistance of the Tbilisi City Hall.⁹⁸

On August 17, in Akhmeta municipality, Irakli Kadagishvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, together with Majoritarian deputy of Akhmeta-Telavi Gela Samkharauli and geologists, travelled to the Tusheti road for a preliminary study on the construction of a road.⁹⁹

On 5 September, in Lagodekhi municipality, the ruling party majoritarian candidate Irakli Kadagishvili met with the population of the villages: Matsimi, Shroma, Gurgeniani and Ninigori. Kakha Jamburia - head of the Lagodekhi municipality Assembly, Mayor Jondo Mdivnishvili and his deputy Zurab Japaridze, Lika Samkurashvili – representatives of the Public Relations Division were also present at the meeting.

95 <https://knews.ge/?p=52635>

96 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/photos/pcb.3295325347194054/3295323923860863/?type=3&theater>

97 <https://www.facebook.com/SubariOfficial/photos/pcb.10157230435645248/10157230432895248/?type=3&theater>

98 <https://www.facebook.com/SubariOfficial/photos/pcb.10157230435645248/10157230432895248/?type=3&theater>

99 <https://www.facebook.com/GDIrakliKadagishvili/posts/127171542417668> , <https://www.facebook.com/GDIrakliKadagishvili/posts/127257199075769>

On 13 September, in Aspindza municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, together with Mayor of Aspindza municipality visited ongoing construction site of the dispensary and a boiler room, as well as the rehabilitation works of the water supply system and old mud huts in the Aspindza municipality villages: Saro, Khizabavra and Nijgori. The majoritarian candidate together with Mayor of Aspindza met with school and kindergarten teachers in the Aspindza municipality.¹⁰⁰

On August 10, residents of the village Eshtia, Ninotsminda municipality, appealed to the Mayor of Ninotsminda with a request to solve a problem with pastures. Mayor Anivar Mosoyan advised them to turn to Samvel Manukyan, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, with the same request, who resides in Akhalkalaki. According to the observer, the residents of the village Eshtia went to see Samvel Manukyan.

Meetings held by the majoritarian candidates of the ruling party with the support provided by the officials of local self-government:

On August 30, Anton Obolashvili, a candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, was accompanied by Mayor of Adigeni Zakaria Endeladze and Head of the Assembly Imeda Mghebrishvili, when meeting with the electorate in Adigeni.

On August 21, in Borjomi municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the electorate in the Borjomi municipality villages: Akhaldaba, Kortaneti and Zanavi, together with Governor of Samtskhe-Javakheti Besik Amiranashvili, acting Mayor of Borjomi Davit Zaalishvili, Deputy Mayor Buba Beridze, acting head of the Borjomi municipality Assembly Otari Arbolishvili and Irakli Kvirkvelia, member of the Borjomi municipality Assembly on behalf of the “Georgian Dream”.¹⁰¹

On September 6, Anton Obolashvili,

¹⁰⁰ https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/posts/142492667555077?__tn__=-R

¹⁰¹ <https://www.facebook.com/101409224996755/>

majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” held meetings in the villages Sadgeri, Tsemi and Tba in the Borjomi municipality. Deputy Mayor of the municipality Buba Beridze and acting Mayor of Borjomi Davit Zaalishvili¹⁰², as well as members of the Borjomi municipality Assembly from the “Georgian Dream” were present at the meeting.

On September 4, in the Dmanisi municipality, Gogi Meshveliani visited the villages: Mashavera, Didi Dmanisi and Vardisubani, during his pre-electoral campaign. Muraz Abramishvili - a member of the municipality Assembly, Arif Suleimanov – deputy Mayor of Dmanisi, Paata Kuliashvili – Head of the Administrative Service, Kakha Petriashvili – chair of the Commission of Mandate, Procedure and Ethics of the Dmanisi municipality Assembly were accompanying him.¹⁰³

On 19 August, in Aspindza municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the electorate of the Aspindza municipality villages together with Aspindza Mayor Rostom Magrakvelidze.¹⁰⁴

On 23 August, in Mtskheta municipality, Shalva Kereselidze, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the internally displaced persons living in Prezeti, together with Nugzar Tinikashvili, Governor of Akhalkalaki.¹⁰⁵

On 19 August, in Adigeni municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, together with Adigeni Mayor Zakaria Endeladze and Imeda Mghebrishvili, Head of the Adigeni municipality

[posts/131677455303265/](https://www.facebook.com/GDShalvaKereselidze/?__cft__[0]=AZXh52q5Pt9Y4ZnX0P8FeX4mAHAS_WnPLNHVR0rxKLQTPDBbywUeKz3hcyRiF4SHOQZ4dU2s8em4B7xB71VSqK-AkyFuMc5jMfePjWjoBOKZdGJsRnsWe8m38ZSU1HnROLGBa8G8euu7LotQ2p8hFQ_125CZ6chyqCFBIY8bP16A&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R)

¹⁰² <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/pcb.139599667844377/139596954511315/>

¹⁰³ <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/photos/pcb.4866101246746802/4866056220084638/>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/pcb.131159875355023/131159302021747/?type=3&theater>

¹⁰⁵ [https://www.facebook.com/GDShalvaKereselidze/?__cft__\[0\]=AZXh52q5Pt9Y4ZnX0P8FeX4mAHAS_WnPLNHVR0rxKLQTPDBbywUeKz3hcyRiF4SHOQZ4dU2s8em4B7xB71VSqK-AkyFuMc5jMfePjWjoBOKZdGJsRnsWe8m38ZSU1HnROLGBa8G8euu7LotQ2p8hFQ_125CZ6chyqCFBIY8bP16A&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/GDShalvaKereselidze/?__cft__[0]=AZXh52q5Pt9Y4ZnX0P8FeX4mAHAS_WnPLNHVR0rxKLQTPDBbywUeKz3hcyRiF4SHOQZ4dU2s8em4B7xB71VSqK-AkyFuMc5jMfePjWjoBOKZdGJsRnsWe8m38ZSU1HnROLGBa8G8euu7LotQ2p8hFQ_125CZ6chyqCFBIY8bP16A&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R)

Assembly, met with the population of the villages in Adigeni municipality – Mlashe, Gorguli, Ijareti and Imertubani.¹⁰⁶

Meetings held by majoritarian candidates Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoyan and the use of the state-funded projects in political campaign

On July 26, during the public festival Dmanisoba, majoritarian member of the Parliament Kakha Okriashvili together with the Mayor of Dmanisi Giorgi Tatuashvili opened a newly-rehabilitated park and a sports square in the village Vardisubani.¹⁰⁷ On 3 August 2020, he posted an address to the electorate in the social network assessing the work done by him and noting a large-scale project of elevators in Kazreti, implemented, as he said, with his significant involvement.¹⁰⁸

On 10 September, in the Dmanisi municipality, the Dmanisi Mayor opened a new park together with the majoritarian member of the Georgian Parliament and the majoritarian candidate of the opposition political block Kakha Okriashvili.¹⁰⁹

On 15 June, in the Akhalkali municipality, Enzel Mkoyan together with Nairi Iritsiyan – head of the Akhalkalaki municipality Assembly, Mayor Iurik Unanyan and his deputy Shalva Balakhadze was visiting territorial unit of Kama to see ongoing rehabilitation of the Vachiani-Okami road.

ANNEX

Allegedly unlawful participation in the pre-election campaign

ADIGENI

On 5 October, Anton Obolashvili, a

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/101409224996755/posts/128215088982835/>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/kakhaberokriashvili/videos/615460092737727/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=321064642636418>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.3304332273015600&type=3>

majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the public-school directors in the Adigeni municipality, congratulated them with the professional day and talked about future plans in the education system.¹¹⁰ According to the PMMG long term observer, the mentioned meeting was held during the working hours, although the resource centre explained that working hours of the teachers present at the meeting were already terminated.

ADIGENI

On 4 October, Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the electorate in Adigeni. Rusudan Khobiashvili, chair of the Varkhani PEC was also present at the meeting. Photos from the meeting were placed on the Facebook page of the majoritarian candidate, but were deleted afterwards. The PEC chair declared that she was not attending the meeting, but was there on a business for a couple of minutes. Rusudan Khobiashvili was also present at the meeting of Anton Obolashvili with the public-school directors in Adigeni. But Khobiashvili denied it as well. “I was not there for the official meeting. I just went there to see my relative and left soon.” – Chair of the Varkhani PEC said.¹¹¹

DMANISI

On 5 October, Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the public-school teachers in Bolnisi on the occasion of Teachers’ Day.¹¹² According to the PMMG long term observer, the mentioned meeting was held during the working hours, although the local resource centre explained that working hours of all teachers present at the meeting were already terminated.

Involvement of the third President of Georgia in the pre-election campaign

During pre-election period, numerous

¹¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/a.103047158166295/150063523464658/>

¹¹¹ <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29667>

¹¹² <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/photos/pcb.4964863940203865/4964862406870685/>

instances were observed when the 3rd President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili got actively involved in the pre-electoral campaign supporting the political union United National Movement.¹¹³

Mikheil Saakashvili is a citizen of Ukraine. Pursuant to sub-paragraph f) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia, a foreign citizen cannot conduct or participate in the pre-electoral campaign.

MARNEULI

On 20 September, Zaur Dargali, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Gardabani and Marneuli, held a meeting with the local population in the village Saimerlo, in the Marneuli municipality. Initially, he wanted to meet with the people in the yard of the St. Nino Monastery, although Father Giorgi Chikovani and other clergymen did allow the meeting to take place. Representatives of the local self-government and 5 members of the Marneuli #22 election commission were present at the meeting.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 5 September, Naira Samsonidze, a member of the Akhaltsikhe DEC attended a meeting of Anton Obolashvili with electorate of the villages in the Akhaltsikhe municipality. Photos from these meeting were published on the Facebook page of the candidate and removed later. Naira Samsonidze is a member of the Akhaltsikhe DEC from the “Georgian Dream”¹¹⁴ and pursuant to sub-paragraph a) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia, a member of the election commission is not entitled to participate in the pre-electoral agitation.¹¹⁵

ASPINDZA

On 14 September, news was published on the Facebook page of the “Georgian

¹¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/SaakashviliMikheil/videos/370897357372627>

¹¹⁴ <https://tv9news.ge/ka/akhali-ambebi/archevnebi/article/21280-saolqo-komisiis-tsevri-ocnebis-sarchevno-agitaciashi-monatsileobs>

¹¹⁵ Sub-paragraph a) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia.

Dream” candidate – Anton Obolashvili, saying that he met with the electorate from several villages in the Aspindza municipality, including teachers of the public and nursery schools. Information about the meetings was published on the Facebook page of the candidate, which was shared through the Facebook page by Aspindza V. Maghradze Music School in the Aspindza municipality¹¹⁶ which does not comply with the provisions of the Electoral Code. Pursuant to sub-paragraph j) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia, a person can participate in the pre-electoral campaign and agitation during non-working hours or performing non-official duties only.

ANNEX

Personnel reshuffling and cases of dismissal from the work

NINOTSMINDA

In the beginning of October, changes were made to the personnel in the Ninotsminda municipality. Levon Vartania was appointed as the head of the Culture, Sport and Tourism Department, Armen Darbinyan – as the head of the Social Service of the City Hall and Edgar Stamboltsyan – as the head of the newly created Division for the Rights of Child. According to the PMMG observer, Levon Vartania and Armen Darbinyan had been working as coordinators in the “Georgian Dream” office, before they were appointed to the mentioned positions.

MTSKHETA

In the beginning of October, 6 public school directors were dismissed from work in Mtskheta. Only two directors out of the six said that they were dismissed on political grounds.

On 12 October, media wrote about dismissal of Dodo Tchotorlishvili from the post of

¹¹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/a.103047158166295/14248911088766/>

public school Director in the village Ksani, Mtskheta municipality. D. Tchotorlishvili believes that she was sacked on political grounds, because her family member Beka Liluashvili is in the team of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition “Dzala Ertobashia”. She said that she was an unwanted director, as she did not agitate for the ruling party majoritarian candidate.¹¹⁷

On 14 October, majoritarian candidate Kakha Okriashvili also confirmed that Beka Liluashvili was part of his team and spoke about political grounds of dismissal of Dodo Tchotorlishvili.¹¹⁸ Statement was also made by Ramin Chitishvili on alleged political grounds of his dismissal from the post of public school director in Tserovani, who said that he was pressurized into making a list of ruling party supporters, which was unacceptable for him as he supported an opposition candidate - Tsezar Chocheli.¹¹⁹

The Ministry of Education denied any political grounds behind the dismissal of the directors and declared that the 6-year term of the working contracts signed with the public-school directors elected by the respective Boards of Trustees gradually expire from September 2020. According to the Ministry, it is well known to all public-school directors, as they are elected on a 6-year term.

The dismissed directors did not deny that their contract terms have expired, but they note that the contracts were not extended with the directors, who support opposition candidates and most probably, will not be extended in future. Another dismissed director – Nana Taveluri, a former director of the Tsilkani public School, publicly declared that she is a support of the “Georgian Dream” and expects that her contract will be extended.¹²⁰

117 <https://droa.ge/?p=86815>

118 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=422075338779527>

119 <https://mtavari.tv/news/19051-unda-gameketebina-siebi-vin-iqo-mkhardamcheri-vin>

120 <https://droa.ge/?p=86873&fbclid=IwAR1nBhCy8cwSyyBYaUx8x1r6uNrAcOYTW1O1ZhpM0hps-h7KpVzuvX1q5l4>

Tsalka

TV channel “Mtavari” circulated a feature story showing a UNM activist – Samvel Sarkisyan, who spoke about dismissal of his relative Nona Kurgenyanyan from her job in the kindergarten on political grounds. According to the PMMG observer, on 24 September, Nona Kurgenyanyan was called by Melsida Mezirova, Director of the municipality Kindergarten Centre, and asked to sign a notification, which said that from 1st of October she was dismissed as the kindergarten might not receive children under 3 years of age. On the next day, she filed a complaint to the Police declaring that she was sacked on political grounds. Based on her statement, the Police questioned Mesida Mezirova, who stated that Nona Kurgenyanyan was not dismissed on political grounds.

According to Malkaz Mgeladze, head of the UNM Tsalka office, after the incident, they found out that due to the pandemic the personnel of the public schools and kindergartens was undergoing some changes. Hence, he could not confirm whether Nona Kurgenyanyan was dismissed on political grounds.

The local government denied any political grounds behind the dismissal of Nona Kurgenyanyan and noted that she received a salary for September. They also explained that from 1 October, due to the pandemic, 6 staff members (teachers and nurses) from kindergartens in three villages of the Tsalka municipality, including Nona Kuragyan, were given an unpaid leave.

NINOTSMINDA

In August 2020, personnel reshuffling took place in Ninotsminda municipality. Persons at managerial positions in different services of the Ninotsminda municipality left the work, Mayor’s representatives and specialists in the municipality villages – over 20 employees in total, were also subject to changes. Deputy Governor of the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Ninotsminda Mayor Anivard Mosoyan were involved in

the reshuffling process.¹²¹

According to the opposition, the reshuffling served to strengthen the position of the ruling party and to weaken those of Anzel Mkoyan, a majoritarian member of the Georgian Parliament, as the persons dismissed were believed to be associated with Mr. Mkoyan.¹²²

To clarify the issue, we approached to the interagency commission on 28 September and requested to inquire into the case. According to the response received, 7 persons were dismissed based on their personal request. These persons included pensioners, who revealed to the media that they were asked to write resignation letters. Resignation letters were written by the employees of the Ninotsminda City Hall:¹²³ Zhora Snkhchyan, Head of the Division for Culture, Sport, Education and Tourism; Aragekhetsik Sanosyan, Head of the Social Service; Laura Varzhapetyan, Head of the Division for Culture, Education and Monument Protection; Mels Mnatsakanyan, Head of the Utilities Division; Sayat Gulasaryan, specialist of the Supervision Service; Andarik Tevanyan, Head of the Agriculture Division; Manuk Karakhanyan, Chief Editor of the newspaper “Arshalui”. Vacancies were announced for these positions.¹²⁴

Deadlines of the work contracts of 10 representatives of the Ninotsminda Mayor in the villages expired, however only 3 representatives fell under the changes in the villages: Sakhta, Khanchali and Gorelovka. The representatives of the Mayor in these villages were not offered new contracts. Consequently, other persons took their positions.¹²⁵ As for the

121 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=28948>

122 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=28948>

123 http://nor.ge/?p=152120&fbclid=IwAR2Qnk-Ov-58r1H3WnuxCk84NSiNBZlAMt-Ini6zX1LhRUyWpeD_4eLpRx4

124 <http://nor.ge/?p=153357>

125 In Sakhta – a work contract was terminated with Gapust Paloyan and Andarik Tsarukyan was appointed instead; in Khanchali – a work contract was terminated with Armenik Avakyan and Sedrak Shakhpazyan was appointed instead; in Gorelovka – a work contract was terminated with Levon Arakelyan and Mnatsakan Babajanyan was appointed instead.

specialists, work contracts were terminated with several of them.¹²⁶ According to media, 18 new specialists were recruited¹²⁷ on work contracts extended for the next 6 months.¹²⁸

KVARELI

On 7 September, Kvareli Mayor Rostom Sesiashvili dismissed Tamar Gigiashvili, a director of the Music School Union and a mother with many children from work. Tamar Gigiashvili's husband Tornike Molashvili is a supporter of UNM majoritarian candidate Giorgi Botkoveli. Gigiashvili believes that this fact and a banner of Giorgi Botkoveli posted on the wall of her house became the reason of her dismissal.¹²⁹

Tornike Molashvili regards this fact as a politically motivated persecution and says that in 2017 Rostom Sesiashvili dismissed him from a post of director of the Cultural Centre without any grounds.

Giorgi Botkoveli, a majoritarian candidate in Akhmeta, Telavi, Kvareli and Lagodekhi, publicised a decree on dismissal of Tamar Gigiashvili from work when meeting with the media on 12 September. He called it a politically motivated persecution of his supporters.

Politically motivated persecution was dismissed as unserious at the “Georgian Dream” headquarters. Regarding firing Tamar Gigiashvili from work, Kvareli Mayor Rostom Sesiashvili clarified that he was entitled to dismiss the director of a non-commercial legal entity and he did so.¹³⁰

LAGODEKHI

A new position of a specialist in special-territorial infrastructure and natural

126 <http://nor.ge/?p=152909&fbclid=IwAR2ZPg1ZFeT-VXOSVQkM2VR5Es3eGL1n0pbTs7sZVfsFpfSqQrCJEifK93I>

127 4 persons - in Khanchali; 1 – in Gorelovka; 4 – in Gondurini; 1 – in Eshkini; 2 – in Gandzini; 3 – in Poka; 3 – in the town Ninotsminda.

128 <http://nor.ge/?p=152909&fbclid=IwAR2ZPg1ZFeT-VXOSVQkM2VR5Es3eGL1n0pbTs7sZVfsFpfSqQrCJEifK93I>

129 https://heretifm.com/?p=136959&fbclid=IwAR3Zqdw0cSMI4gUaBLcK6ZtZ8bpNLRXtGzWkBV_MJizvuNLJ99I13MsvMvQ

130 <https://heretifm.com/?p=136959>

resources was created at the Lagodekhi municipality Assembly. Nutsa Papava was appointed to the new position. Before that, she was Mayor's trustee in the administrative unit of the town, where she completed her contract term. On 1 September, her position was taken over by Vano Managadze, who was a head of the Supervision Division before. The latter position went to Valeri Khutsishvili, serving as a specialist in the same division. According to the PMMG long term observer, Nutsa Papava is a distinguished activist of the "Georgian Dream" and the new position was created especially for her, after her work contract for Mayor's trustee expired.

ANNEX

Interference with the pre-election campaign

KASPI

On 11 November 2020, there was an incident of verbal confrontation in the village Khovle, Kaspi municipality, during the meeting of Nugzar Noniashvili, UNM mayoral candidate in Kaspi and Badri Basishvili, majoritarian candidate of the "United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia" in Gori and Kaspi, with the electorate. According to Nugzar Noniashvili, UNM mayoral candidate in Kaspi, the incident took place between a UNM representative, Marina Kurashvili, and Bacho Khutsishvili, representative of the Mayor of Kaspi.

Before the confrontation happened, they held a telephone conversation, during which Bachana Khutsishvili verbally abused Marina Kurashvili. As Bacho Kurashvili explained, there are witnesses, who saw Marina Kurashvili, together with two young individuals, tearing down electoral posters of Giorgi Khojevanishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the "Georgian Dream". At the afore mentioned meeting, Marina Kurashvili demanded from Bacho Khutsishvili to produce a proof to justify his accusations, to which Bacho Khutsishvili

responded that there were witnesses, who saw her in the act.

According to Noniashvili, the presence of Khutsishvili at the opposition meeting implied psychological pressure over the local population, as he watched all who came to the meeting. Noniashvili also noted that the process was observed from a nearby car.

According to Bacho Khutsishvili, he was not there to disrupt the meeting, he just drove his car on the road, where the meeting was taking place, because the school road was being rehabilitated and there was no other way to drive through.

SAGAREJO

On 29 September, there was an incident of interference with the meeting of Ekaterine Kvlividze, a majoritarian candidate of "Lelo" with the electorate in the village Sabatlo, Sagarejo municipality; her activists were also obstructed when they were pasting up electoral posters. "Lelo" majoritarian candidate told the PMMG long term observer that the disruption of her meeting was organized by the brother of the Sabatlo village trustee and his friend. According to her, later on they found out that there was a misunderstanding: the local population, who were ethnic Armenians, thought they came from the UNM party and protested against their arrival in the village Sabatlo, due to the public statement made by the third President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili regarding the Nagorno Karabach conflict.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 20 October, Goderdzi Kublashvili, a majoritarian candidate of "Free Georgia" in Akhaltsikhe district, held a press briefing at the Akhaltsikhe Democracy Involvement Centre, where he stated that on 25 September, the "Georgian Dream" supporter abused him verbally when he was meeting with the local population in the village Bolajuri. He lodged a complaint with the Police on the fact. According to Kublashvili, the Ministry of Internal affairs is still pending an inquiry into the incident.

At the briefing, he also noted massive tearing down of his electoral posters, which obstructs his pre-electoral campaign.¹³¹

BOLNISI

On 14 October, an election office of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” was broken into late at night in Bolnisi. Offenders took computers, which contained information on the pre-electoral campaigns of the party.¹³²

According to Lali Tsikhelashvili, head of Okriashvili’s electoral office in Bolnisi, the back door with a high-resolution camera and the window were broken, two laptops were taken away and office cabinets were broken. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched investigation into the incident under Article 117 about theft.

MARNEULI

Giorgi Jamdeliani, Bishop of Marneuli and Hujabi preached against Zaur Dargali, Marneuli Mayor and “Georgian Dream” candidate,¹³³ and later, organized a rally in the centre of Marneuli.¹³⁴

The Bishop preached against the Marneuli Mayor in the church and demanded from him to remove the monument of Nariman Narimanov. The Bishop declared that the Mayor and the administration repaired the monument instead of removing it from the centre of Marneuli. According to Giorgi Jamdeliani, Zaur Dargali repaired the monument of Nariman Narimanov and by doing so, he violated the law.¹³⁵ The Bishop addressed Azerbaijani co-citizens asking not to support Zaur Dargali. According to him, all those directly or indirectly involved in electing Zaur Dargali in the legislative body had a stake in the crime, which as the Bishop said, Zaur Dargali had committed.

131 http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29809&fbclid=IwAR34weMp7DdzrbiZltmdcOq6mbByzQe0C4vR-AFFZkqe8BDu1eXxo-HH_DA

132 <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/178696>

133 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=external&v=248311686396226>

134 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

135 <https://24news.ge/read/id/33758>

The Bishop also denied an intention of instigating ethnic strife between Georgians and ethnic Azerbaijanis.

On 16 July, the leader of the Marneuli and Hujabi church held a rally nearby the Marneuli Cultural House, where the monument of Nariman Narimanov is erected.¹³⁶ Along with the local population, clergymen and representatives of the Georgian March participated in the action.¹³⁷ There were also people from Tbilisi among the participants, including Primakov Foundation representative Dimitri Lortkipanidze and Chair of the Georgian Idea – Levan Chichua.¹³⁸ Speakers at the rally included Giorgi Jamdeliani and Erekle Saghlani, a member of the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia.¹³⁹ Participants of the action counted 200 people. The participants’ principal demands was to remove the Narimanov monument and erect instead a monument to Borchali – an ethnic Azerbaijani soldier who fought side-by-side with King Erekle II.

The Bishop and the speakers at the rally protested against the Mayor of Marneuli and the restoration of the Monument of Nariman Narimanov and demanded to remove the monument. According to the Bishop and the speakers at the rally, Nariman Narimanov is the symbol of the Soviet times, as he facilitated establishment of the Soviet rule in Georgia.¹⁴⁰ Police was there at the monument of Nariman Narimanov to ensure security during the rally.

On 30 May, the State Security Service (SSS) launched inquiry under the Article on racial discrimination. According to the SSS, there are groups of persons and citizens in Georgia, who are involved in instigation of ethnic strife between Georgians and ethnic Azerbaijanis in Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti.¹⁴¹ Activists and ordinary citizens were

136 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

137 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/609767-marneulshi-nariman-narimanovis-zeglis-agebis-motxovnit-akcia-gaimarta/>

138 <https://netgazeti.ge/news/468188/>

139 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

140 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

141 <https://netgazeti.ge/news/456898/>

summoned for inquiry under the ongoing investigation. According to the Marneuli and Hujabi Bishop, he was questioned also at the SSS.¹⁴²

MARNEULI

On 22 August, the “Georgian Dream” held a presentation of its majoritarian candidate in Marneuli and Gardabani - Marneuli Mayor Zaur Dargali in the park of Marneuli. Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Party Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze participated in the event. During the presentation, a group of people protested saying that Zaur Dargali violated the law when he repaired the monument of Nariman Narimanov and therefore, he should not be elected in the Parliament. The protesters held posters, which read, “Dargali is an offender and should not be elected in the Parliament”. They demanded a meeting with the Prime Minister. Their demand was not met and the participants of the action expressed their protests by sounding their car horns.

AKHMETA

On 27 August, Shakro Terterashvili, a representative of the UNM in Akhmeta municipality told the PMMG long term observer that he was being followed by the law-enforcement authorities to control his whereabouts, which obstructed him in his pre-electoral campaign.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 14 September, at 2 a.m., David Baliashvili, chairman of the Akhhaltsikhe regional office of the UNM and Gela Demetradze, an active member of the election headquarters were quarantined. After PCR testing, they did not test positive

¹⁴² On 19 May 2020, Zaur Dargali posted on his facebook web-page news about repairing the monument of Nariman Narimanov. On 24 may, Bishop Giorgi Jamdeliani posted a video, where he accuses the Mayor and demands from him an apology to the population. According to the Bishop, Nariman Narimanov was an enemy of the people and his monument had to be removed immediately. Ethnic Azerbaijani activists started to oppose and demanded to leave the monument in place, while Georgian activists demand its removal, which causes aggression between the ethnic groups

on coronavirus. According to them, despite the fact that they met all requirements of self-isolation, they were transferred to the quarantine area without any lawful grounds. As for other 176 persons from the same burial event, attended by the UNM members, they were advised to self-isolate.¹⁴³ The Party qualified the fact as selected quarantine and declared that they were obstructed from campaign on purpose.¹⁴⁴

SAMGORI

On 18 September, at 2 a.m., the election headquarters of Levan Khabeishvili, a UNM nominated majoritarian candidate in Samgori, situated in the Africa settlement, was raided. The windows of the building were broken and Levan Khabeishvili's banners damaged. The police started investigation of the fact.¹⁴⁵

ANNEX

Incidents of threats and pressure

ISANI

On 17 October, Khatia Dekanoidze, a UNM majoritarian candidate in Isani, held a press briefing,¹⁴⁶ during which she stated that her office was broken in to install a listening device. According to her, the power was cut intentionally before the incident. Khatia Dekanoidze blamed the Government in illegal entry into her office and attempted installation of the listening device and called on the Ministry of Internal Affairs to fully and timely investigate the matter. Investigation was launched on the fact under Article 99-177 about attempted theft.

¹⁴³ <https://www.facebook.com/TvMtavari/videos/792834701551926>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/TvMtavari/posts/416401159730000>

¹⁴⁵ <https://mtavari.tv/news/16211-gvian-ghamit-samgorshi-levan-khabeishvili>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624250-xatia-dekanoize-ukanonod-sheagcies-chvens-shtabshi-sus-i-aparaturis-dasaqeneblad-shevida>

NINOTSMINDA

On 13 October, Ninotsminda Mayor Anivald Mosoyan met with the staff of the #2 kindergarten. He announced that the kindergartens will open shortly and reminded the staff not to forget in the elections who paid them salary. The PMMG long term observer was informed about this message of threat-containing warning from three different sources, who were present at the meeting. The PMMG is not revealing the identity of these sources to guard their interest. Similar meetings were held at #1, #2 and #3 public schools in Ninotsminda. To verify the information, the PMMG long term observer applied to the ruling party Ninotsminda office, where he was told that it was not a campaign but a working meeting with the teachers to discuss problems and needs. The PMMG observer also found out that Mayor Anivard Mosoyan was on leave at that time.

GARDABANI

On 10 October, Giorgi Kakhiani, a member of the “Georgian Dream”, stated that Rashid Musaev, a “Lelo” activist, verbally abused Savalan Mirzoev, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” and threatened to deprive of his life. According to Kakhiani, the reason behind the threats was the political belonging of Mirzoev.¹⁴⁷

Lana Galdava, a majoritarian candidate of “Lelo”, spoke to the contrary saying that it was their activist, who was victim of the violence, and they intended to take the

147 https://on.ge/story/66147-%E1%83%9A%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%90%E1%83%A5%E1%83%A2%E1%83%98%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1%E1%83%A2%E1%83%98-%E1%83%A9%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%9C%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%93%E1%83%94%E1%83%9E%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A2%E1%83%90%E1%83%A2%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%A1%E1%83%98%E1%83%AA%E1%83%9D%E1%83%AA%E1%83%AE%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%9B%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A1%E1%83%9E%E1%83%9D%E1%83%91%E1%83%98%E1%83%97-%E1%83%93%E1%83%90%E1%83%94%E1%83%9B%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A5%E1%83%A0%E1%83%90-%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%AE%E1%83%98%E1%83%90%E1%83%9C%E1%83%98?fbclid=IwAR0fTzz_V3tCD9pQKtOG3e9jcByrvYwtky4xVSKcZiiHuiEFUxMiMzfZYVM

matter to the Police. However, according to Galdava, there was a leak of information and the “Georgian Dream” was first to hold a press conference.

According to the information collected by the PMMG long term observer, Rashid Suleimanov (a “Lelo” activist residing in the village Birliki), being under the influence of alcohol, abused verbally Savalan Mirzon in Facebook live and threatened to kill him. Savalan Mirzoev notified the Police on the fact. On 11 October, “Lelo” activist Rashad Musaev was interviewed at the Gardabani Police station. Investigation was launched into the incident under Article 151 of the Criminal Code about threat.

BOLNISI

On 19 October, Mamed Shamirov, a supporter of the “Georgian Dream” in the village Javshaniani, Bolnisi municipality, declared that Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition” asked to support him, but threatened with detention, when he was refused. Shamirov notified the Police on the fact. According to Shamirov, he was driving in his own car in the village Bolajuri, when Okriashvili, coming from a meeting with the electorate and accompanied with a convoy of cars, blocked his way. Okriashvili asked him, why he did not gather people for the meeting. Shamirov responded that he was not his supporter, to which Okriashvili replied with a threat of incarcerating him if he did not back him. Investigation was launched into the incident under following Articles of the Criminal Code: Article 151 about threat, Article 87 about damage caused to another person’s property and Article 236 about unlawful purchase/possession of a firearm.¹⁴⁸

TELAVI

On 12 September, Giorgi Botkoveli, a majoritarian candidate of the UNM, released a statement about a pressure used against his supporters.¹⁴⁹ According

148 <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/videos/691538058160715>

149 <https://www.facebook.com/giorgibotkoveli555/>

to Giorgi Botkoveli, his supporter Mamuka Tcharbadze, who owns Ltd “Limbo” in Telavi, received a notification from the Revenue Service, requesting documents to make an audit, just after the Ltd “Limbo” placed a billboard of the candidate - Giorgi Botkoveli, on the building of its trade centre.

NINOTSMINDA-AKHALKALAKI

Enzel Mkoyan, majoritarian MP of the “Georgian Dream” in the Ninotsminda-Akhalkalki district, declared that he is a victim to criminals controlled from Russia, who extort money from him and pressurize him to leave the politics.¹⁵⁰

On 10 August, Enzel Mkoyan told to the radio “Nori” that his family and himself are being threatened.¹⁵¹ According to Mkoyan, he is threatened with murder unless he pays 5 million USD. When commenting to the radio “Nori” the member of the Parliament said that he got two calls from Russian numbers in WhatsApp and Messenger during which callers spoke in Russian with Caucasian accent.¹⁵²

According to the majoritarian member of the parliament, he was told to leave the politics and give up participation in the October Parliamentary elections, or else, he said he was threatened with losing something most precious, he was also threatened with a murder if he did not pay. According to Mkoyan, his family was under stress after these threats. He told the media that he had approach the Chief Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia and was questioned on the matter.

On 21 August, there was an attempt to explode Mardun Mkoyan’s car, a brother of Enzel Mkoyan. Enzel Mkoyan linked the fact with threats he had received and stated that it was meant for him, as **someone wanted to kill him.**¹⁵³ According to

videos/346026130089199

150 <http://jnews.ge/?p=55749>

151 http://nor.ge/?p=151501&fbclid=IwAR1JxDP_7Spr6Yzejq-rLaRGNEXT7A_G9Wc32H-JjG1GQoIcMUM7D-JxCJs

152 According to the majoritarian candidate, the first call was made on 20 July via Messenger, and the other – on 24 July via WhatsApp.

153 <https://tv9news.ge/ka/akhali-ambebi/samarthali/>

the MP, his brother’s car was parked during explosion and that the explosive device was planted 2 meters away by the tree.¹⁵⁴ The Ministry of Internal Affairs started investigation under the Part 1 of Article 229 of the Criminal Code.¹⁵⁵

MTSKHETA

According to the information in media, on 17 September, Giorgi Khumarashvili, a driver of Tamaz Metchiauri, Mayor of Tianeti and a majoritarian candidate of the “Tamaz Metchiauri – for United Georgia” in Mtskheta-Mtianeti, attempted a suicide. Giorgi Khumarashvili was hospitalized and put to mechanical ventilation.¹⁵⁶

Later, Giorgi Khumarashvili said that Zurab Bekauri, a trustee in one of the villages of the Mtskheta municipality, applied a psychological pressure against him and requested to collect information about Tamaz Metchiauri and hand it over to him. The pressure continued over a year.¹⁵⁷ In addition, Khumarashvili said that Zurab Bekauri was working for the majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”. Khumarashvili explained that on 17 September Zurab Bekauri came to his house drunk and assaulted him physically and verbally before his mother and threatened. He could not bear this and decided to kill himself.¹⁵⁸ Zurab Bekauri denied using pressure against Giorgi Khumarashvili, although he confirmed the fact of physical confrontation with him on 17 September.¹⁵⁹

article/20962--naghmi-romelic-distanciurad-amoqmedda-khesthan-akhlos-mitsaze-ido-enzel-mkoiani

154 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/614690-enzel-mkoiani-zmis-mankanastan-momxdar-apatkebas-mis-mimart-mukaras-ukavshirebs>

155 Which implies an explosion to cause severe injuries, significant damage of property or other kinds of serious effects.

156 <https://www.facebook.com/tvpirveli/videos/770630516838255/>

157 <https://web.facebook.com/TVFormula/videos/2515086032114686>

158 <https://web.facebook.com/tvpirveli/videos/333258744666820>

159 <https://web.facebook.com/tvpirveli/videos/333258744666820>

MTSKHETA

On 13 October, Eka Beselia, a majoritarian candidate of a party “For Justice” in Mtskheta, held a press briefing about pressure from the local government over her supporters.¹⁶⁰ According to her, they contact the voters through different means of communication and threaten to deprive them of social assistance, to dismiss them or their relatives from work, if they publicly support the opposition parties.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 16 October, Gela Kvaratskhelia, a majoritarian candidate of “David Tchitchinadze Tribune” in Akhlatsikhe-Adigeni-Aspindza-Borjomi district, held a special press briefing and talked about intimidation of and pressure used on the voters. According to him, his office has difficulties in recruiting observers as they are threatened with deprivation of the social assistance and dismissal from work.¹⁶¹

DMANISI

In the beginning of September, the PMMG long term observer was informed by a supporter of the “European Georgia” that the voters of the village Kizilajlo, Dmanisi municipality, were threatened by Juliaz Garaeva, spouse of Azer Aliev, who is a member of the Dmanisi Assembly from the “Georgian Dream” party, with the deprivation of social assistance.

AKHALKALAKI

On 7 October, Melik Raisyan, a majoritarian candidate of the UNM in the Akhalkalaki municipality, said that the ruling party was using pressure over their representatives in the PECs, agitators and personnel.¹⁶² According to him, following the statement of the former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili in the social media about the Nagorno Karabach conflict, saying that

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/beseliaeka/posts/1696420973854801>

¹⁶¹ https://droa.ge/?p=87202&fbclid=IwAR3o49yW1IS8dUvhp1CsB8_AHYdXs1pOAK-q1BY_9onhCGsTcOCzXZ3QsU

¹⁶² <http://nor.ge/?p=155920>

the Nagorno Karabach was the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan and nothing could change it, which caused a protest in the local population of Ninotsminda municipality, rumours started to spread in the population that the UNM office was closing down. “Our representatives and the Commission members are pressurized. They are telling everyone that our office is closing down and that we have to work on behalf of the “Georgian Dream”,” – Takukhi Vardanyan, head of the UNM Office said.¹⁶³

AKHALKALAKI

On 16 October, Arsen Karapetyan, a majoritarian candidate of “European Georgia” in Akhalkalaki, spoke about the pressure on his supporters.¹⁶⁴ According to him, the “Georgian Dream” agitators were pressurizing agitators of the “European Georgia” in all villages. They spread disinformation as if the “European Georgia” is linked to Mikheil Saakashvili and in this way they are trying to win them over their side¹⁶⁵.

ANNEX

Incidents of violence and physical retaliation

GARDABANI

According to the TV channels “Mtavari” and “Formula”, on 12 October, an activist of the “Georgian Dream” assaulted and beat Oktai Skandarov, a member of the “European Georgia”, who was pasting up election posters in the village Karajalari, Gardabani municipality. After being at the Police station, he said that he was drunk at that time and could not tell who attacked; he excluded that the attacker was the supporter of the “Georgian Dream”, as he himself also supported the same party.

¹⁶³ <http://nor.ge/?p=155920>

¹⁶⁴ <http://jnews.ge/?p=60014>

¹⁶⁵ <http://nor.ge/?p=155469&fbclid=IwAR137qD3wnYDMRUUp8b-GWTF43EJoNPbAyCPuBMT7xbhRPsJ845piIt3q9NY>

Sergi Kapanadze, head of the electoral office of the “European Georgia” commented on the fact. He stressed that Oktai Skandarov was telling totally different story before he went into the Police station for questioning, namely, that he was attacked by a supporter of the “Georgian Dream”. After several hours of questioning, he denied being attacked and declared that he was a supporter of the “Georgian Dream”.¹⁶⁶

Gabil Gasanov, head of the Gardabani electoral office of the “European Georgia”, said that Oktai Skandarov changed his statement under the pressure of the State Security Service.

According to the PMMG long term observer, Oktai Skandarov is indeed an activist of the “European Georgia” and continued his support to that party even after the occurrence of the incident.

AKHALKALAKI

On 25 October, an incident took place in the village Didi Samsari, when Samvel Manukyan, a majoritarian candidate of the Georgian Dream, was meeting with the voters.¹⁶⁷ Samvel Manujyan stated that when meeting with the population in the village Didi Samsari he was attacked by Haik Rtakyan, supporter of independent majoritarian candidate in Akhalkalaki - Enzel Mkoyan. As he noted, it was a provocation just before the elections.¹⁶⁸ He was taken to the hospital. He noted that Haik Rtakyan damaged his car as well.

BOLNISI

On 28 October, UNM supporter Islam Gajiev was verbally assaulted and attacked in the village Mamkhuti of the Bolnisi municipality by the resident of the same village Dilgam Ibragimov, who is a supporter and an activist of the Georgian

166 <https://droa.ge/?p=86642&fbclid=IwAR0IUUA0sEIO6SBYcgWiaCtNna0an9560bl0K4NRDUpwZr1maSerZfa6iDzQ>

167 http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29893&fbclid=IwAR2e-Foh8pWicUdq41_RjkqyZrNAHv3CdFbeTbsYLTdxwyl1-d7trjLn9r4

168 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29901>

Dream. Presumably, Ibragimov demanded from Gajiev to support the ruling party instead of the UNM, but was refused and consequently physically insulted him.¹⁶⁹

SAMGORI

On 11 October, Levan Kartvelishvili, a member of the electoral office of Levan Khabeishvili, a UNM majoritarian candidate in Samgori, was attacked and beaten. According to him, he was wearing a UNM campaign T-shirt, which irritated the attackers, who started to abuse him verbally and then attacked him.¹⁷⁰ Investigation was launched into the incident under Article 126 of the Criminal Code about violence.

GORI

On 16 October, confrontation took place between the representatives of the “Georgian Dream” and the “European Georgia” in the villages Mejvriskhevi and Akhalubani, Gori municipality. The parties blamed each other for the incident.¹⁷¹

A member of the “European Georgia”, Eter Jalaghania, said a poster of Giorgi Khojevanishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” was pasted over the “European Georgia” poster. As she explained, they started to clear away the posters, which were pasted over the majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia” - Levan Tarkhnishvili. When the representatives of the “European Georgia” were screening the process, a drunken young individual approached them and physically attacked Eter Jalaghania. According to Levan Tarkhnishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia”, one of the activists of the “Georgian Dream” attacked Eter Jalaghania physically and broke her glasses, which developed into the physical confrontation between the sides.

169 https://mtavari.tv/news/20647-otsnebashigadasvlaze-uaris-shemdeg-bolnisshienm?fbclid=IwAR2e-Foh8pWicUdq41_RjkqyZrNAHv3CdFbeTbsYLTdxwyl1-d7trjLn9r4

170 <https://mtavari.tv/news/18817-angarishscoreba-politikuri-motivit-levan>

171 <https://droa.ge/?p=87238&fbclid=IwAR3R3h5ZY02jw-UhOr8bmAqpggrBeQPd0Y0Awth3aF7vuddJcYeCu9Xns03c>

According to Mikheil Goginashvili, an Executive Secretary of the regional office of the “Georgian Dream”, the incident took place when the representatives of the “European Georgia” were tearing down the posters of the majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”. Some locals expressed disapproval on the happening. According to the “Georgian Dream” headquarters, following the incident, a representative of the “European Georgia” in the village Akhalubani, Gori municipality, threatened the locals with a firearm. The “Georgian Dream” representatives called on the Police to timely investigate into the matter. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched the investigation under Article 126 of the Criminal Code about violence.

DMANISI

On 21 October, physical confrontation took place between the activists in the Dmanisi office of the “Georgian Dream”. According to the TV channel “Mtavari Arkhi”, activists of the “Georgian Dream” confronted each other with firearms. One of the participants of the incident is a criminal dignitary Zurab Okmelashvili.¹⁷² According to “Newpost”, Zurab Okmelashvili is close to the brother of Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the ruling party in Dmanisi, and has been tasked to supervise situation in the criminal world in the run up to the elections.¹⁷³

According to the same source, members of the Dmanisi office – Merab Khorguani and Lasha Vibliani got wounded in the feet and David Chkhetiani – in the waist. Investigation was launched into the incident under Article 117 of the Criminal Code about intentional damage caused to health and under Article 236 about unlawful purchase-possession of a firearm.¹⁷⁴

Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Dmanisi called the case a provocation and blamed the

172 <https://mtavari.tv/news/19920-srola-garcheva-dmanisis-otsnebis-saarchevno?fbclid=IwAR1FAHLD3Hwu3s9384JV2IMsOyXRF3IvWq7bPxuGPa-n3ShmdokbPbSvI8U>

173 <https://www.newposts.ge/?newsid=243587>

174 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624921-dmanisshi-kartuli-ocnebis-opisze-tavdasxma-moxda-arsebuli-inpormacii-arian-dachrilebi>

UNM and Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition in the district, in the incident.¹⁷⁵

On 22 October, Dimitri Shashkin, a member of the UNM, commented on the fact. According to Shashkin, confrontation between the participants of the incident was caused by the money and fuel talons sent from the “Georgian Dream” head office, which they could not share among themselves.¹⁷⁶

Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition also commented on the incident in the Dmanisi district. According to him, it was precisely Zurab Okmelashvili, who organized a group assault on the head of his electoral zone - Imeda Mamuladze on 15 September, in Dmanisi. As a result, Mamuladze’s car was also damaged. As he also noted, Zurab Okmelashvili had not been charged so far, despite the existence of a video-recording proving the attack, which was duly handed over to the Police.¹⁷⁷

BOLNISI

On 19 October, Levan Mikeladze, a member of the head office of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition in Bolnisi, was followed by about 8 persons in two cars on the Bolnisi-Tbilisi highway. According to him, the mentioned persons firstly attempted to push him off the road and then fired six shots in his direction. Levan Mikeladze identified two attackers: Beka Tsakadze, a member of the Bolnisi Assembly from the “Georgia Dream”, who is also a member of the electoral head office of Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgia Dream” in Bolnisi, and Archil Mindiashvili, a member of the “Georgia Dream”. According to “Mtavari

175 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624931-gogi-meshveliani-dmanisis-incidentze-dachrilia-rogorc-chveni-aktivis-cevri-aseve-tavdamsxmelebi-es-nacionaluri-mozraobis-da-chemi-oponentis-xelceraa/>

176 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/625008-dimitri-shashkinis-gancxadebit-dmanisshi-ertmanets-cecxli-kartuli-ocnebis-cevrebma-gauxsnes-radgan-mat-shtabidan-gamogzavnili-puli-da-benzini-ver-gaiqves/>

177 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624988-kaxa-okriashvili-acxadebs-rom-ocnebis-aktivistma-zura-okmelashvilma-cecxlsasroli-iaragit-gushin-3-piri-dachra>

Arkhi”, a nephew of majoritarian candidate Gogi Meshveliani was presumably also among the attackers.¹⁷⁸ The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched investigation in the incident under Article on intentional damage caused to other person’s property.

DMANISI

On 15 September, in Dmanisi municipality, Imeda Mamuladze, head of Kakha Okriashvili’s electoral zone, was assaulted physically, which resulted in Mamuladze’s serious health injury and damaging his car. According to Mamuladze, Paata Aslanishvili, member of Dmanisi DEC, and Zurab Okmelashvili, activist of the “Georgian Dream”, were among the attackers. The incident is being investigated on the grounds of group violence and intentional damage of the property.¹⁷⁹

MARNEULI

On 30 September, Temur Shubitidze, electoral specialist of the “Georgian Dream”, was attacked while driving in his car on the Marneuli-Tbilisi highway. Three unknown persons driving a car collided intentionally with Shubitidze’s car, stopped him and assaulted physically in his car. Injured Shubitidze was hospitalized. He relates the incident to the elections and his political activity. The fact is being investigated.¹⁸⁰ On 8 October, the Tbilisi City Court sentenced the four persons arrested for committing an attack on Temur Shubitidze to imprisonment as a preventive measure.

BOLNISI

On 27 September, in the Bolnisi municipality, a physical confrontation took place in the Tea House, situated in the village Nakhiduri, between the supporters of the “Georgian Dream” and the United National Movement. The UNM activists used physical violence against activist of the “Georgian Dream” -

178 https://mtavari.tv/news/19689-khelisupleba-oponentbs-tsetskhls-ukhsnis?fbclid=IwAR1px6XEOHjMn2roWEsM_bWqFFit9VLyWSxYpaylpT0azP70uxBHWCDJO8

179 <https://mtavari.tv/news/15957-kakha-okriashvilis-mkhardamcherebze>

180 <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/177168>

G. A. and agitator – I. A. The cause of the confrontation was presumably sticking the posters. On 4 October, the Prosecutor’s office detained one person – A. I. on the ground of physical violence used against two persons during confrontation in Bolnisi over the election posters. He was charged on two episodes under the Part 1 of the Article 126 of the Criminal Code (violence resulting in physical pain committed against two persons).¹⁸¹

MARNEULI

On 28 September, an incident occurred in the village Sadakhlo of Marneuli municipality. Ramin Abdulaev, one of the activists of the “European Georgia” was attacked by shooting from a sports gun while pasting up the election posters. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched the investigation under Article 120 of the Criminal Code about causing intentionally minor damage to health.¹⁸²

MARNEULI

On 29 September, a physical confrontation took place between the supporters of the UNM and the “Georgian Dream”. The confrontation followed a verbal assault of Lasha Kveladze, UNM member of the Marneuli DEC against the “Georgian Dream” supporters that happened near the “Georgian Dream” regional office. Lasha Kveladze was on the location in his own car together with his father and accompanying person.

The confrontation involved supporters of the UNM and representatives of the “Georgian Dream”, namely Amiran Giorgadze - Chairman of Marneuli municipality Assembly, Shermadin Botchoidze - lawyer at the Assembly, Lasha Chkhitunadze – representative of the Mayor’s office, Giga Jalaghonia – Director of the non-commercial legal entity “Auto Park”, Vazha Shubitidze – Head of the Service for Military Registration and Conscription.

181 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621803-bolnisshi-saarchevno-plakatebis-gakvrastandakavshirebit-momxdari-konplikisas-ori-piris-mimartzaladobis-paktze-dakavebuls-brali-caregina/>

182 <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/176989>

Amiran Giorgadze confronted also the crew of the TV channel “Mtavari Arkhi”. The “Georgian Dream” activists used physical violence against the crew members of “Mtavari Arkhi” and the GPB. According to “Mtavari Arkhi”, journalist Jeihun Muhamed Ali suffered head injury, the TV station’s camera and microphone have been also damaged. According to the GPB, the TV station’s camera was broken and the operator was beaten.

Giorgi Mumladze, a representative of the observation mission “2020” was also subject to physical violence, who accuses specifically Amiran Giorgadze, Giorgi Shubitidze and Shermadin Botchoidze in the incident. Lasha Kveladze, his father Givi Kveladze and their accompanying person were also seriously injured in the confrontation. Lasha Kveladze’s car was also damaged.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched investigation into the incident under Article 126 of the Criminal Code. As for the incident of physical violence against the “Mtavari Arkhi” journalist – Jeihun Muhamed Ali, the investigation was launched under Article 154 of the Criminal Code regarding the interference with the journalist’s professional activities.¹⁸³ On 3 October, following the operative-investigative activities, Marneuli regional office of the Kvemo Kartli Police Department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, arrested two persons on the basis of a warrant issued by a judge, on violence charges.¹⁸⁴

ANNEX

Damaging the campaign material and obstruction in their dissemination

ASPINDZA

Ramaz Beridze, head of the Aspindza

¹⁸³ <https://mtavari.tv/news/17395-dzaladobis-zhurnalisturi-sakmianobis>

¹⁸⁴ <https://publika.ge/nakhidurshi-momkhdari-konfliqtisas-ori-piris-dzaladobis-faqtze-dakavebul-brali-warvudginet-prokuratura/>

office of the political union “Strategy Agmashenebeli” told to the PMMG observer that there is a little space assigned for the posters in Aspindza. Stands are erected only in three places, where other parties already pasted up their posters and there is virtually no place left for their posters.

AKHLATSIKHE

On 1 October, posters of the party “Strategy Agmashenebeli”, which were pasted on unauthorized places, were removed and the party was fined to pay 50 GEL. Party representative Koba Gorgodze spoke of selective justice and said that there was campaign material of the “Alliance of Patriots” pasted up just beside their posters, but they did not get fined. Mikheil Makaridze, head of the Supervision Service of the Akhaltsikhe municipality City Hall, explained that they found a person on the spot pasting up the posters and therefore, he got fined.¹⁸⁵

ASPINDZA

According to the PMMG long term observer, the campaign material is damaged almost in all villages of the Aspindza municipality, however there is no evidence, who are involved in these incidents. In many cases, posters of the Georgian March are pasted over the campaign material displayed in the municipality.

TSALKA

A representative of the “European Georgia” head office told the PMMG observer that they are actively pasting up their posters, which are then torn down by unknown persons, which hampers their pre-electoral campaigning.

¹⁸⁵ http://toktv.ge/%d0%bd%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%be%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8/%e1%83%a3%e1%83%99%e1%83%90%e1%83%9c%e1%83%9d%e1%83%9c%e1%83%9d-%e1%83%90%e1%83%93%e1%83%92%e1%83%98%e1%83%9a%e1%83%96%e1%83%94-%e1%83%9e%e1%83%9d%e1%83%a1%e1%83%a2%e1%83%94%e1%83%a0%e1%83%98%e1%83%a1/?fbclid=IwAR2BYHaYysCjy603BZTMj8rWoMpTiHDonH6XONC9Tn_deStmAB8Ux_0oYwQ

TETRITSKARO

On 19 October, the UNM head office noted that in Tetrtskaro unknown persons damaged electoral posters and banner of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition”.

AKHLATSIKHE

Zurab Chilingarashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia”, told the PMMG observer that his posters are permanently damaged at the #17 electoral district, which is composed of four municipalities (Akhalsikhe, Aspindza, Adigeni and Borjomi), while his office renews the posters. According to him, in some places of Akhalsikhe the campaign material of the candidates of the “Georgian Dream” and the UNM are untouched, whereas the posters of the “European Georgia” pasted just between those of the mentioned parties are damaged.¹⁸⁶

TBILISI

On August 29, an election banner of the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia placed on the Rose Revolution Square was damaged by the paint. The banner displays party leaders – David Tarkhan-Mouravi and Irma Inashvili.¹⁸⁷

TBILISI

On 20 September, an election banner of the “Strategy Agmashenebeli” was torn down.¹⁸⁸

LAGODEKHI

On 15 September, in Lagodekhi, posters of Giorgi Botkoveli, a UNM majoritarian candidate, were pasted over the election posters of the “European Georgia”. The fact was noted by Gigi Ugulava on his Facebook page.¹⁸⁹ Later, Giorgi Botkoveli also shared

¹⁸⁶ <https://tv9news.ge/ka/akhali-ambebi/archevnebi/article/21962-mkholod-chemi-plakatebia-chamokheuli-evropuli-saqarthvelos-kandidati>

¹⁸⁷ <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/30809996.html>

¹⁸⁸ https://mtavari.tv/news/16429-otsnebis-aktivistebma-isanshi-giorgi-vashadzis?fbclid=IwAR08vQo00UpZyypFftuyQxUcDpYhDtt0YLcqVm9B-UQfJesfL_c2IZGDZc

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/ugulavageorge/>

his statement on the matter via Facebook calling it a mistake of some persons and distanced himself from the fact.¹⁹⁰

BORJOMI

During the reporting period, in Borjomi, the “Georgian Dream” placed its campaign material in violation of the rules established by the Borjomi municipality Assembly. Namely, the party put up the campaign material on the outdoor lighting poles violating the allowed height. According to the decree of the Borjomi municipality Assembly, after receiving a necessary permit from the Infrastructure, Spacial Development, Architecture and Construction Supervision Division of the Mayor’s Office, the banners are allowed to be put up on the outdoor lighting poles along the highway at no less than 3 meters above the ground.¹⁹¹

TBILISI

In August 2020, the Tbilisi City Hall Inspection Service fined the political unions – “European Georgia”, “Strategy Agmashenebeli” – for pasting up pre-electoral posters, and the “Girchi” representative – for painting a stencil.¹⁹² The fine was charged under the Article 150² of the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia,¹⁹³ which foresees a liability for the distortion of the appearance of the Tbilisi City Hall.¹⁹⁴ Representatives of the political parties pasted up election posters on the fences of the construction sites prior to the official launch of the pre-electoral campaign

[posts/3330992583661071](https://www.facebook.com/giorgi.botkoveli/posts/3330992583661071)

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/giorgi.botkoveli/posts/3296178143752092>

¹⁹¹ <https://borjomi.tv/archevnebi/archevnebi-2020/article/11617-borjomshi-saarchevno-plakatebisthvis-adgilebi-ganisazghvra>

¹⁹² <https://mtavari.tv/news/14303-evropuli-sakartvelo-strategia-aghmashenebeli>

¹⁹³ Article 150² refers to making various types of inscriptions, drawings or symbols on building façades, shop windows, fences, columns, trees or other plantings, roads for pedestrians and means of transport in the Tbilisi municipality without authorisation, also putting up posters, slogans, banners at places not allocated for this purpose, which foresees carrying a fine of 200 GEL and a fine of 1000 GEL for repeating same act.

¹⁹⁴ <https://www.matsne.gov.ge/document/view/28216?publication=465#>

– 1 September, which was regarded as a violation by the municipal services.

According to the information shared by the “European Georgia”, in August 2020, pursuant of Article 150² of the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia, the Tbilisi City Hall Inspection Service draw up protocols on administrative offences against 23 representatives of the “European Georgia” on the ground of pasting up the posters. The mentioned Article foresees a liability for the distortion of the appearance of the Tbilisi municipality, in other words for pasting up the posters in the municipality in places not assigned for this purpose.

According to the party, protocols on administrative offences were also drawn up against the members of the Parliament – Khatuna Gogorishvili, Sergi Kapanadze, Irakli Abesadze and Gigi Ugulava, Secretary General of the party. The protocols were appealed at the Tbilisi City Hall, but were not satisfied.

In addition, it became known to us that the municipality Inspection Service drew up 17 protocols on administrative offences against the political union “European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” on the ground of pasting up the posters on the lighting poles in the regions (distortion of the appearance of the territory within the administrative boundaries of the municipality). The protocols were drawn up under the Article 150 of the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia in Gurjaani, Akhaltsikhe and Baghdati.¹⁹⁵

GURJAANI

On August 29, in Gurjaani, the patrol police officers did not allow Giorgi Ghviniashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia”, to paste up election posters on the façade of the building of the company “Energy-Pro Georgia”.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Baghdati court did not satisfy the protocols drawn up by the Baghdati municipality Supervision Service. As for Gurjaani – the decision of the Gurjaani court is going to be appealed and in Akhaltsikhe, the activist charged with a fine did not appeal the protocol and paid the fine – 50 GEL.

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/GiorgiGviniashvili2/>

ANNEX

Alleged vote buying

AKHALTSIKHE

On 28 October, “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Anton Obolashvili, together with the Governor and Mayors of the municipality, invited the school directors to the restaurant “Emigranti”. Some of the directors are Chairs of the PECs in the elections of 31 October. In one of the premises of the restaurant Samtskhe-Javakheti Governor Besik Amiranashvili, his deputy, as well as Mayors of Adigeni, Aspindza, Borjomi and Akhaltsikhe sat at the table together with the Georgian Dream majoritarian candidate – Anton Obolashvili. Anton Obolashvili stated on the fact that he was having a dinner with the local government representatives only and the information that he had invited the school directors and the Head of the Education Resource Centre – Izolda Lomidze to the restaurant, was a lie.¹⁹⁷

According to the journalist of “Samkhretis Karibche”, who also acts as a long-term observer of the PMMG, the majority of the school directors, who he managed to take photo of, were the PEC members or the Chairs. They denied being invited to the restaurant by the Georgian Dream candidate. After the school teachers left, the journalist tried to record Borjomi Mayor David Zaalishvili, when Adigeni Mayor Zakaria Endeladze took away his phone and tried to force him out of the building.¹⁹⁸

LAGODEKHI

On 3 October, late in the evening, Irakli Kadagishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Telavi, Akhmeta, Kvareli and Lagodekhi districts, met with local businesses, entrepreneurs and farmers in the open air at the restaurant

[videos/231199744912513](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=videos/231199744912513)

¹⁹⁷ <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29937>

¹⁹⁸ <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29931>

“Kiramala”, within the pre-electoral campaign. After the meeting he invited them to meals. The information has been circulated by the radio “Hereti”.¹⁹⁹

Large-scale events and parties are banned in the pandemic, however, the majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” stayed in the closed space at the table with his guests for several hours.²⁰⁰ Jondo Mdivnishvili, Mayor of Lagodekhi, his deputy Aleko Tchankvetadze and Guram Matcharashvili, a deputy of Lagodekhi were present at the event.

According to majoritarian candidate Irakli Kadagishvili, a meeting and a reception afterwards were party of the pre-electoral campaign. As he explained, it was the businessmen in Lagodekhi, who proposed to organize a reception after the meeting, which he agreed with and attended all receptions after the pre-electoral campaign meetings in the capacity of a guest.²⁰¹ Persons attending the reception denied paying the expenses of the reception. Businessman Jumber Goletiani said that he attended the meeting, but did not stay for the reception. He also said that he was not involved in the organization and did not pay anything. Another local entrepreneur Gocha Karalashvili, who was at both the meeting and the reception, said that he did not pay the reception expenses. Mayor of Lagodekhi, attending the meeting, also denied knowing anything about the expenses.

199 <https://heretifm.com/?p=140096>

200 <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/%E1%83%98%E1%83%A0%E1%83%90%E1%83%99%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%93%E1%83%90%E1%83%92%E1%83%98%E1%83%A8%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%9A%E1%83%90%E1%83%92%E1%83%9D%E1%83%93%E1%83%94%E1%83%AE%E1%83%A8%E1%83%98-%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%9B%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%97%E1%83%A3%E1%83%9A-%E1%83%AC%E1%83%98%E1%83%9C%E1%83%90%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%A9%E1%83%94%E1%83%95%E1%83%9C%E1%83%9D-%E1%83%A8%E1%83%94%E1%83%AE%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%93%E1%83%A0%E1%83%90%E1%83%96%E1%83%94/30874321.html>

201 <https://heretifm.com/?p=140096>

LAGODEKHI

On 5 October, media holding “Kvira” published an article telling about the distribution of second-hand clothes to the population at the UNM head office in the village Leliani, Lagodekhi municipality.²⁰² A source of this information was presumably Inga Loladze, a local civic activist and a teacher, who told the PMMG observer that a big quantities of second-hand clothes were distributed free of charge to the UNM supporters at Chaladze’s house and called this act a vote buying. She justified her opinion by the fact that posters and banners of Giorgi Botkveli, a UNM majoritarian candidate, were displayed in the yard and on the outer fence of Chaladze’s house, where voters received the second-hand clothes. Loladze underlined that there was a small room in the yard, which she though was the party electoral head office.

When speaking with the PMMG observer, Nugzar Chaladze denied distribution of the second-hand clothes free of charge and showed a so-called debt registry booklet as a proof. He also denied that the clothes are sent from Ukraine and funded by the 3rd Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. Spouses Nugzar and Tamar Chaladze are open about their support and positive disposition towards the UNM. There are posters and banners of a UNM majoritarian candidate Giorgi Botkveli displayed in the yard of their house. There is also a small room in the yard, reconstructed as an office. According to Nugzar Chaladze, UNM activists gather there periodically to meet voters individually.

When speaking with the PMMG observer, Guram Kakalashvili, head of the UNM Lagodekhi head office, called the blame about vote buying ridiculous and refrained from making any more comments. The PMMG observer found out that the Chaladze family runs the business of second-hand clothes for many years. Apart from the village Leliani, they sell second-hand clothes in other villages of Lagodekhi

202 http://kvira.ge/599933?fbclid=IwAR1zzIR_xmUeHaA0LDMeoGC2xFX5bLaa8TXFPNcYUUnhv7ACyGB6CSGEVJM

municipality, including at the Bodbiskhevi and Apeni markets. The local population confirms the fact and also note that they sell good quality clothes at a very low price.

AKHALTSIKHE

According to the PMMG observer, on 11 October, in Akhaltsikhe, a staff member of the Akhaltsikhe City Hall took food products to the elderly people in one of the living blocks at Aspindza Street. The City Hall staff member is a resident of the same living block. He laid the table in the yard for 8 persons and told those present that the products were sent by Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” and Gia Kopadze, current deputy.

The PMMG observer also talked to the City Hall staff member, who denied the fact: “they paid their respect to the elderly people; they are very close and know each other. They asked for it and he fulfilled their wish. A vote buying?! Was it much?! Cheese, bread, come cucumbers and tomatoes?!”- he said. The PMMG observer tries to speak with Akhaltsikhe deputy Gia Kopadze: “Stop asking provoking questions, it is nonsense. May be it was Merabishvili, who did it,” – Kopadze answered over the phone and hang up.

The PMMG observer got to know about this gathering from one of the persons sitting at that table, who did not want to reveal his identity and neither that of the City Hall staff member. According to that person, Obolashvili and Kopadze gave money to the City Hall staff member and asked to take some food to the elderly people. He also noted that on the following day the same staff member asked those present at the table the previous day to go to Obolashvili’s presentation ceremony, but, as he said, none of them went there.

NINOTSMINDA

On July 26, Enzel Mkoyan met with his supporters in the village Sakhta of the Ninotsminda municipality. The meeting proceeded in a celebratory mood with tables laid. According to the member of the

Parliament, the event was organized by his supporters, who also undertook to host the guests.²⁰³

When commenting with the media, Enzel Mkoyan declared that about 900 people was present at the meeting, including 200 persons from the village Sakhta and 700 from villages of Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda, around 15-20 persons from each village.²⁰⁴

During the meeting, Enzel Mkoyan addressed his supporters and spoke about his deeds for the good of the region during his term in the Parliament. He tried to get an approval from his supporters whether to participate in the 2020 Parliamentary elections.

Supporters of Enzel Mkoyan shared the video from the meeting in the social network as if the member of the parliament was unwilling to organize such a meeting and that he was invited by his supporters to the event as a way to show respect.²⁰⁵

It has become known to the PMMG that the meeting with the supporters in the village Satkha was organized at the instruction of Enzel Mkoyan and with the financial assistance of his relatives.

ANNEX

Alleged unlawful processing of personal data

GARDABANI

According to the TV Channel “Mtavari”, on 12 August, Gardabani 3rd public school teacher, Vagipa Rustamova, asked the parents in a social network group to support the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Zaur Dargali. According to the information shared by the TV channel, the teacher told the parents to take photos of

²⁰³ <http://jnews.ge/?p=54840>

²⁰⁴ <http://jnews.ge/?p=54840>

²⁰⁵ Enzel Mkoyan comes from the village Sakhta in the Ninotsminda municipality.

the IDs of their family members, which was needed for the elections. Vagipa Rustamova is a relative of Zaur Dargali, who runs in the elections as a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Gardabani-Marneuli district. When speaking to the media, the teacher explained she was unaware that such act was unlawful. According to the school director, he never gave such instructions to the teacher and that she was acting on her own will.²⁰⁶

LAGODEKHI

Following the request from the representatives of the local self-government, in the period from 10 to 20 September, the population of the village Kabala in the Lagodekhi municipality, which is populated with ethnic Azerbaijanis, handed in copies of their banking accounts and IDs at the Kabala Social Centre to receive 300 GEL in compensation of a damage caused by the natural disaster. The local radio “Hereti” released the information about the fact and assessed it as the unlawful collection of voters’ personal data.

According to the radio “Hereti”, part of the population included pensioners, who doubted that they would receive the monetary compensation. Some declared that the representatives of the Mayor’s office were cheating people as the registration of such category was over a month ago, and that the act of collecting the ID copies at the administrative body was nothing but an unlawful attempt of collecting the votes for the elections.²⁰⁷

To verify the information, the PMMG observer contacted the representatives of the local self-government, who declared that they knew nothing about the mentioned and denied organizing collection of voters’ personal data.

²⁰⁶ <https://mtavari.tv/news/13192-archevnebis-gaqalbebis-mekanizmi-gardabanshi>

²⁰⁷ https://heretifm.com/?p=136370&fbclid=IwAR0VnoCF09AdrJ_yI6RAMsveecnH3EaEMlvCWILInMGhmtTKIe0ORMxfqP8

ANNEX

Interference with the media activity, pressure and threats

Action against the Pankisi community radio “Radio WAY”

On 29 August, Lia Margoshvili, director of the Roddy Scott Foundation, organized an action against the Pankisi community Radio “RadioWAY” in the village Duisi, Akhmeta municipality. According to Lia Margoshvili, Gela Mtvlishvili, journalist and founder of the radio, planned to seize classrooms from the Foundation. She threatened him with damaging the RadioWAY studio and demanded from him to cease professional activities in the Pankisi Gorge.

Representatives of the RadioWAY call this fact politically motivated and relate actions against the radio to its criticism and unbiased approach towards the local government.²⁰⁸ According to founder Gela Mtvlishvili, Lia Margoshvili is an activist of the “Georgian Dream” and its representative in Duisi precinct. He noted that the protest was organized at the instruction of the representatives of the Akhmeta Mayor’s office and the State Security Service.

The repeated action against the Radio was held on 5 September.

To avoid the anticipated attack/violence, the radio stopped sending its journalists out to the gorge from September. According to the radio station, following the rallies against the radio, the local government planned to sell quickly the premises to leave the radio without an office, which is located in one small part of the building. Founder of the Radio, Gela Mtvlishvili, wrote to Prosecutor General on 4 September, requesting to react on the facts of threats.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ <https://radioway.ge/news/people/item/985-pankisis-satemo-radios-sagangebo-ganzxadeba>

²⁰⁹ <https://radioway.ge/news/human-rights/item/999-xelisupleba-pankisis-satemo-radios-opis-gareshe-tovebs?fbclid=IwAR2ZV5ZMiW3RRzyIFqUQQUUIRlfbtFnFC4VArFVm8p7yPftCnixacsvGnSY>

On 7 October, at the Assembly meeting, Akhmeta municipality City Hall revoked the issue of selling a former administrative building in the village Duisi. The Pankisi community radio has been renting on lease a space in this building. According to the information disseminated by the Radio, the City Hall was requesting the sale of the building in urgent manner. However, the issue was not discussed eventually.²¹⁰

Interference with the journalists' activities and physical violence against the "Mtavari Arkhi" and GPB

On 29 September, in Marneuli, a physical confrontation took place between the supporters of the UNM and the "Georgian Dream". The "Georgian Dream" activists interfered with the professional activity of the crew members of "Mtavari Arkhi" and the GPB operator and assaulted them physically. According to "Mtavari Arkhi", journalist Jeihun Muhamed Ali has suffered head injury, the TV station's camera and microphone have been also damaged.

Also, according to the GPB, a camera of the TV station's crew in Marneuli was damaged and the operator was beaten.²¹¹

Kakha Okriashvili threatening the GPB

Kakha Okriashvili, the UNM majoritarian candidate in Dmanisi, Tsalka, Bolnisi and Tetrtskaro districts, was irritated by a journalist's question regarding the confrontation, which took place in the village Nakhiduri on 27 September. In his interview, he stated that the Georgia's Channel 1 (GPB) had to be cancelled after the October parliamentary elections.

"I think, the Channel 1, which is supported by the budget funds of 60 million GEL, should be cancelled after the elections. We are giving you 60 million and your ranking

²¹⁰ <https://reginfo.ge/human-rights/item/19477-axmetis-meriam-pankisis-satemo-radios-opisis-gaybidva-archevnebamde-sheachera?fbclid=IwAR3bmdTo fQmLVidMaFJU23WHkJUZRY41EoS5dVsSx4k8 xG3AWPxXu9K6Ufa>

²¹¹ <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/620905-marneulshi-mtavari-arxis-gadamgeb-jgupebs-dasazogadoebrivi-maucqebelis-operators-pizikurad-gauscordnen>

is zero", - Kakha Okriashvili told the GPB journalist.²¹²

ANNEX

discreditation of the opponents, hate speech and disinformation in the pre-election campaign

Statements discrediting the opponents:

On 1 October, Irakli Kobakhidze called the UNM party list a list of degraded people: "We have many new faces, many new strong political figures, who will contribute significantly to the work of the parliament. On the contrary of this, you saw a list of absolutely degraded people, who the Georgian society cannot bear the sight of."²¹³ According to him, the UNM party list shows that they do not have resources for renewal.²¹⁴

On 12 October, Gigi Ugulava's video-address appeared in the media, where he is saying that "in fighting the monsters, Saakashvili became a monster himself... a way out is: a fist to Bidzina, a nudge to Misha.". In his address, Ugulava blamed Saakashvili in acting against the unity of the opposition.

DISCREDITATION CAMPAIGN ON FACEBOOK

Facebook page "Political Observer"

On 14 August, a Facebook page "Political

²¹² <https://1tv.ge/news/nacionaluri-modzraobis-madjoritarobis-kandidati-kakha-okriashvili-saqartvelos-pirveli-arkhi-archevnebis-shemdeg-unda-gavauqmot-video/?fbclid=IwAR0ww21O3EEgHKkXwHeCIU8SsQZ1COIBqHfTtNutzm8V-6dKv0q5pCNk40>

²¹³ <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621401-irakli-kobaxize-nacionaluri-mozraobis-mier-carmodgenili-partiuli-sia-degradirebuli-adamianebs-siaa>

²¹⁴ <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621401-irakli-kobaxize-nacionaluri-mozraobis-mier-carmodgenili-partiuli-sia-degradirebuli-adamianebs-siaa>

Observer” published an extract from an interview given by David Bakradze, one of the leaders of the “European Georgia” to the TV channel “Rustavi 2” in a TV programme “Night Courier”. In his interview David Bakradze spoke about the Council of Europe Resolution after the Russia Georgia War, namely about the 5th paragraph of the Resolution.

The Facebook page used the interview to discredit David Bakradze, the “European Georgia” and the UNM by spreading disinformation as if David Bakradze acknowledged that it was Georgia, which started the August war. According to the web-page, the former Speaker of the Parliament confirmed during live broadcasting betrayal of the state interests and recalled as a “justification” the terminological part of the Resolution, which calls Russia an occupant.²¹⁵

As it appears, the goal of the posts made on the Facebook page “Political Observer” is to link all main opposition parties, except the “Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”, with the UNM and Mikheil Saakashvili and to showcase them in negative light. The declaration field of the sponsored posts on this page indicates the organisation “Davasrulot” as a payer.

This organization is known for its critical statements against the UNM. According to the registry of Entrepreneurs and non-commercial legal entities, one of the members of the organisation’s Board is Roseta Jghamaia.²¹⁶ On 13 October 2020, she published a petition on Manifest.ge – “We demand to abolish the United National Movement”. As of 25 October, the petition was signed by 1279 persons.²¹⁷

“Bakur Svanidze’s Internet TV and friend sites (new links)”²¹⁸ and “Dzaanpolitika”

215 <https://www.facebook.com/politikurimotval/tv/videos/962724430838850>

216 <https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFHvADn6L4u1HgXEL%5bjaTX2g4egij0QviSkXsgyItDOKs>

217 https://manifest.ge/main/item/3114?fbclid=IwAR0N73aRZnr-aW8g3Z7njchqsUjDQSQM-7_BP-Zj8CbB2K6AUxyBUjiiNOg

218 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348865951977039>

Two Facebook pages were revealed in the reporting period, affiliated with and managed by Bakur Svanidze: “Bakur Svanidze’s Internet TV and friend sites (new links)”²¹⁹ and “Dzaanpolitika”.²²⁰ The mentioned pages are busy with PR campaign of the “Alliance of Patriots” party.²²¹ It also devotes some efforts to instigate negative public attitudes towards the ruling party. These web-pages display all the activities of the opposition parties in the negative context, discredit and mock the opposition parties and their representatives.

Often, the web-pages contain elements of the hate speech. It must be noted that subscribers of the page express aggression and protest against Mikheil Saakashvili in their comments, actively share articles, video and photo material about the injustice revealed during their rule, which drives the society to believe that all the opposition parties and their representatives are connected with Mikheil Saakashvili and the UNM.

Statements instigating interethnic strife and confrontation between Armenian and Azerbaijani communities:

- The third President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, posted the following statement on his Facebook page regarding the developments in Nagorno-Karabakh: “Nagorno-Karabakh is the sovereign territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and nothing can change this”.²²² The statement was shared by the political subjects concerned.²²³
- Melik Raisyan, majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition – Strength is in Unity” in the Akhalkalaki-Ninotsminda district, in his Facebook post, called the developments that started on 27 September, “next brutal provocation by Azerbaijan” and thanked the Armenian armed forces for their fight.²²⁴ “We are

219 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348865951977039>

220 <https://www.facebook.com/dzaanpolitika/>

221 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=992519264580617>

222 <http://ka.jnews.ge/?p=8086>

223 <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/371539>

224 <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/371312>

ready to take up weapon, if needed”, Raisyan wrote.

- UNM MP Azer Suleimanov wrote an open letter to President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, noting the necessity of making final steps to free the territories. In addition, the member of the parliament noted that Armenia committed crime against Georgia as well.²²⁵
- “Georgian Dream” MP Ruslan Gajiyev also expressed his support for Azerbaijan and stated that the successful operations carried out by the Azerbaijani armed forces to recover country’s territorial integrity give a reason to believe that similar conflicts in the Caucasus should be resolved as soon as possible.

BORJOMI

Giorgi Giuashvili, an independent member of the Borjomi municipality Assembly, systematically uses hate speech in his Facebook speeches. He used obscene words when addressing Gedevan Popkhadze, a majoritarian candidate of “Our Georgia – Alliance for Solidarity” in Borjomi.

On 5 September, Giorgi Giuashvili, an independent member of the Borjomi municipality Assembly shared an address via Facebook against Irma Inashvili, one of the leaders of the “Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”, which read: “Judah Inashvili, before God and nation, you have sold and delivered the single opposition Assembly of Borjomi municipality.

²²⁵ ibis