



TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL
GEORGIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA'S TEAM IN 2023



E. Gigauri



G. Oniani



G. Gvilava



Z. Koridze



L. Sajaia



M. Gersamia



S. Kevkhishvili



V. Kintsurashvili



P. Lokhishvili



N. Khutsidze



M. Chkadua



A. Todua



L. Motsonelidze



T. Uchidze



T. Zakarashvili



G. Chikhladze



B. Namchavadze



T. Tatanashvili



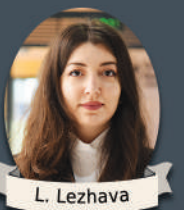
N. Vakhtangashvili



T. Makharashvili



L. Oniani



L. Lezhava



M. Bezhanishvili



T. Kakhidze



V. Kvitatiani



A. Berdenishvili



M. Shainidze



G. Kumsiashvili



T. Goglichidze



T. Jakonia



J. Stepnadze



T. Vakhtangadze



K. Shoshiashvili



D. Partskhaladze



S. Zubiasvili



D. Aroshidze



V. Buchukuri



G. Gagoshidze



G. Mzhavanadze

21 WOMEN / 18 MEN



საერთაშორისო გამჭვირვალობა - საქართველო
TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA

ABOUT US



Transparency International Georgia has been working in the country for 23 years and has established itself as one of the leading civil society organizations in Georgia.

We are a member of the Transparency International (TI) global movement which unites over 100 independent national chapters. The movement is led by the International Secretariat based in Berlin, Germany.

It is a great honor that TI Georgia's Executive Director Eka Gigauri, in addition to being a board member of Transparency International global movement, has been elected as a member of the OGP Steering Committee for a three-year term, which is another international recognition of our organization's effective activities and success.

In addition, Transparency International Georgia actively cooperates with civil society organizations, including within the Coalition for an Independent and Transparent Judiciary and the Media Advocacy Coalition.

In addition to the central office in Tbilisi, our organization carried out its activities through its regional offices in Kutaisi, Batumi, Zugdidi and Akhaltsikhe.

As of the end of the year, TI Georgia had 37 staff members, with a gender balance of 21 women and 16 men.

Our mission

TI Georgia's key mission is to promote anti-corruption policies, advocacy, good governance, fair electoral environment, strengthening of the judiciary, oversight of the legislative process, free and pluralistic media. Our goal is to support the sustainability of the country's European and Euro-Atlantic course.

We help citizens who are oppressed by the state to protect their rights through our selfless advocacy, and we also encourage citizen activism to hold the government accountable to them.

We offer the public a reliable, fact-based analysis in the form of in-depth research, statements and blogs. We try to convey our message to the audience through media, social networks and visual technology.

Our activities have stood the test of time!

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EKA GIGAURI



Dear friends,

To describe it in a few words, 2023 was the year when the Georgian people proved that they are always on the right side of truth and believed that standing together and showing strong determination brings a concrete result - the EU candidate status.

We proved to the whole world that our people are committed to Western civilization, their own future, and will resist any attempts to return to the Russian orbit.

This was evident during the events surrounding the 'Russian law' when the government was prevented from acting against the will of the Georgian people. The government, following Putin's lead, faced tens of thousands of demonstrators and had to back down. The ruling party MPs voted down the 'Russian law' in a record time during a session that lasted only a few minutes.



By introducing Russian rules, some individuals sought to silence the civil society and media, impeding their efforts to assist the people.

In 2023, our main priority was again to assist ordinary citizens. We added suspended pensions to our list of free services. By winning Ms. Ketevan Mgebrishvili's case, we set a significant precedent for the restoration of pensions for other pensioners. Throughout the year, we provided free legal consultations to more than a hundred pensioners. Of course, we continued with the cases of illegally dismissed people, land registration and protection of journalists. During the rallies against the Russian law, we defended the rights of arrested

students. In 2023, we provided free legal aid to a total of **3,072** citizens, won **61** court cases, were involved in **107** cases to protect journalists, and fought for the rights of **38** detained activists.

Direct contact with people helps us identify and understand their problems. The activities of our Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC) are a very good example of this, as we meet with people in the regions and bring their concerns to the attention of the government. In 2023, through our advocacy efforts, **60 out of over 150 identified infrastructure problems were resolved, and fundraising began for 30.**





Throughout the year, our activities were focused on the reforms necessary to obtain the EU candidate status. These reforms are essential to ensure that officials do not profit at the expense of citizens, to promote justice, truthful media, government accountability through elected MPs, and to improve living conditions to match those of Europeans.

In 2023, we uncovered dozens of corruption cases at both central and local levels, proving that the problem of corruption is not a baseless claim. Unfortunately, there has been no response to our official calls for each such case to be investigated and addressed. As a result of suspicious tenders identified by us in the regions, senior officials and companies related to them **won tenders worth up to GEL 2.15 billion**. It is a fact that today many high-ranking officials are enriching themselves at the expense of people. **Corruption hinders the country's development and impoverishes its population. Therefore, detecting corruption is a key priority for our organization.**





Corruption is not limited to procurements. In 2023, for the first time in Georgia's history, international sanctions were imposed on the odious figures of the judicial clan for their involvement in corruption. However, the government failed to respond adequately to this signal. Instead, it covered up the individuals involved and took no action to repair the damage caused to the reputation of the country and the decent judges. The U.S. has imposed sanctions on former chief prosecutor Otar Partskhaladze for collaborating with Russian special services. We have frequently covered the issues of his illegal enrichment, informal influence on the prosecutor's office, and participation in corruption schemes. The government again rushed to defend him and even amended state regulations in his favor.



Unfortunately, the situation of journalists' rights did not improve in 2023. We described **more than 40 cases of various types of violence** against them, which is the result of non-investigation and encouragement of crimes against the media.

Particular challenges were observed in terms of transparency and openness of the Parliament. **Parliament was closed as never before.** With the introduction of strict rules and punitive mechanisms, the space for free activity in the legislature was limited for journalists, especially representatives of critical TV channels.

Despite the attack on the civil society sector, we continued to use all possible formats of communication and cooperation with the authorities, and at the same time, we were tirelessly convincing our Western friends that the Georgian people, with its 30-year history

of independence, truly deserved a place in the European family.

Georgia will hold important parliamentary elections next year. There is still a lot of work to be done in 2024 to implement reforms, hold good elections, open accession negotiations, and take a step forward towards the European Union. **We are hopeful, because the Georgian society has always been on the right side of history, and we are sure that next year will be no different.**

Finally, I would like to thank each member of our team for their contributions to the organization and the people we serve. I also extend my gratitude to our local and international partner organizations for their contributions to the democratic development of Georgia alongside us.



FOREIGN ACTIVITIES

Giorgi Oniani

Deputy Executive Director



The year 2023, following 2019, turned out to be the most dramatic and important for Transparency International - Georgia and for the country, as a whole. The people's struggle for European integration took its most active form and moved to the streets. **I am proud to have been one of the tens of thousands of people who resisted the attempts to divert the country from its European path using Russian methods.**

The main topic that dominated our organization's agenda and the country's life in 2023 was the path towards European integration. This effort culminated in a landmark victory – due to the Georgian people's efforts, the country did not miss the opportunity to become an EU candidate country by the end of the year. It is worth noting that our organization strongly supports the country's integration into the European Union and made significant efforts towards this goal in 2023.



Our meetings with partners and visits abroad aimed to express clearly and loudly our support for Georgia's EU candidate status. Our position has been simple and unambiguous: for Georgian people, the European choice is an existential issue, not just a foreign policy direction. Many generations of Georgians have been striving to bring their country into the European family, which, in modern times means bringing the country closer to the European Union. We have always faced significant obstacles on this path, and it is precisely for this reason that Georgia should seize this historic opportunity unveiled as a result of Ukraine's self-sacrifice.

Throughout 2023 **we met with ambassadors from almost all EU member states** - both individually and with partner organizations. Additionally, we held meetings in the capitals of EU member states, including **Brussels, Amsterdam, Paris, Copenhagen, and Vilnius. During our visits to the United States**, as well, among the main topics of discussion was Georgia's commitments on the path to EU integration and steps ensuring the successful final outcome.

Of course, we continued work on issues in our core areas of expertise at the local and central levels. This included exposing corruption, monitoring processes in the judiciary and the media, as well as the activities of the Parliament, especially in terms of its oversight of the executive branch. Based on the identified problems and needs, we made recommendations to the government for legislative changes and other institutional reforms.





We tried to communicate and cooperate with the government through various formats, but unfortunately, it was the government that took steps against this cooperation. The first example was the closure of our office in the Parliament at the beginning of 2023, citing renovation work. We had been using this office for years under the memorandum signed with the Parliament, and it had been a significant support for our parliamentary activities.

After the process of initiating and voting down the Russian law, we were **expelled from the Parliamentary Standing Council of Open Government** together with other partner organizations.



The cooperation (or rather the lack of it) in the OGP Forum and Council, of which we are co-chairs, is particularly noteworthy. Despite our full openness and constructive cooperation throughout the development of the Action Plan, the government showed no willingness to engage in a truly collaborative process. Despite this, and despite the fact that none of the important proposals put forward by civil society were taken into account by the government, **we still supported the adoption of the Action Plan at the end of the year to prevent the country from being suspended from the Open Government Partnership.**



At the end of the year, we **attended the 10th session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC COSP)** in Atlanta and held a series of meetings with both our traditional and new partners on the sidelines of UNCAC COSP.

CORRUPTION RELATED CHALLENGES

Sandro Kevkhishvili
Anti-corruption team leader



The year 2023 was particularly challenging for the anti-corruption team as well as the entire organization. Our activities throughout the year included oversight and investigative, as well as analytical and advocacy components.

In 2023, we continued to work on highlighting the problem of high-level corruption. The list of alleged cases of high-level corruption was updated 9 times, with 57 new cases being added throughout the year. By the end of 2023, the list included **151 cases** involving **163 officials**. The content and scope, number and growth dynamics of alleged cases of high-level corruption provide grounds to say that **high-level corruption in Georgia takes the form of kleptocracy**, where officials systematically use political power to appropriate the country's wealth.

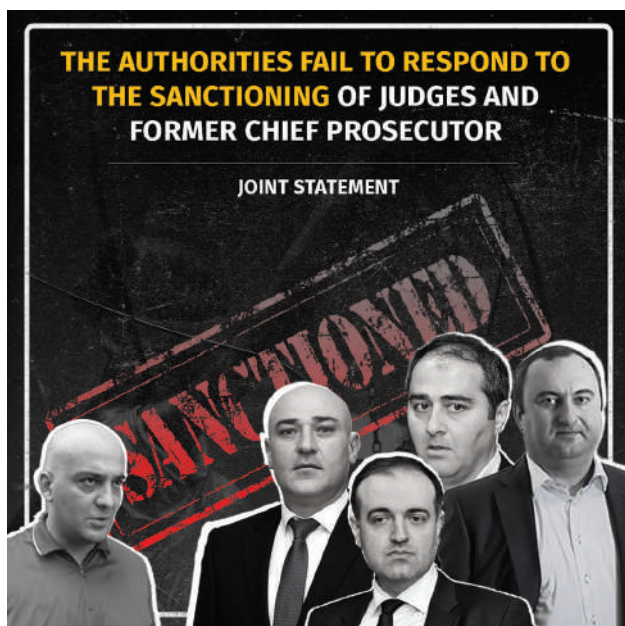




We evaluated the new Anti-Corruption Legislation and actively monitored the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Bureau created upon the European Commission’s request. For years, we have been advocating for the creation of an effective anti-corruption agency which would bring together all anti-corruption functions. After the second parliamentary hearing, a number of important functions were added to the initial version of the bureau, including monitoring of asset declarations and political party funding, which was our long-standing recommendation. However, the appointment procedure of the head of the bureau and its lack of investigative power remain a problem.



Our Chief Economist *Beso Namchavadze* identified several state procurements containing signs of corruption, for example: the company of the former police chief Soso Alavidze that allegedly won a tailored tender of 7.8 million GEL from Georgian Railways; The state-owned railway company required 20 years of experience in security services.



He also studied **the economic ties between Georgia and Russia**, which we have been doing since 2019. In a series of studies we found that in 2022, after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Georgia became more economically dependent on Russia in a number of parameters. According to the research, this increase in economic dependence is dangerous for Georgia and needs to be reduced.

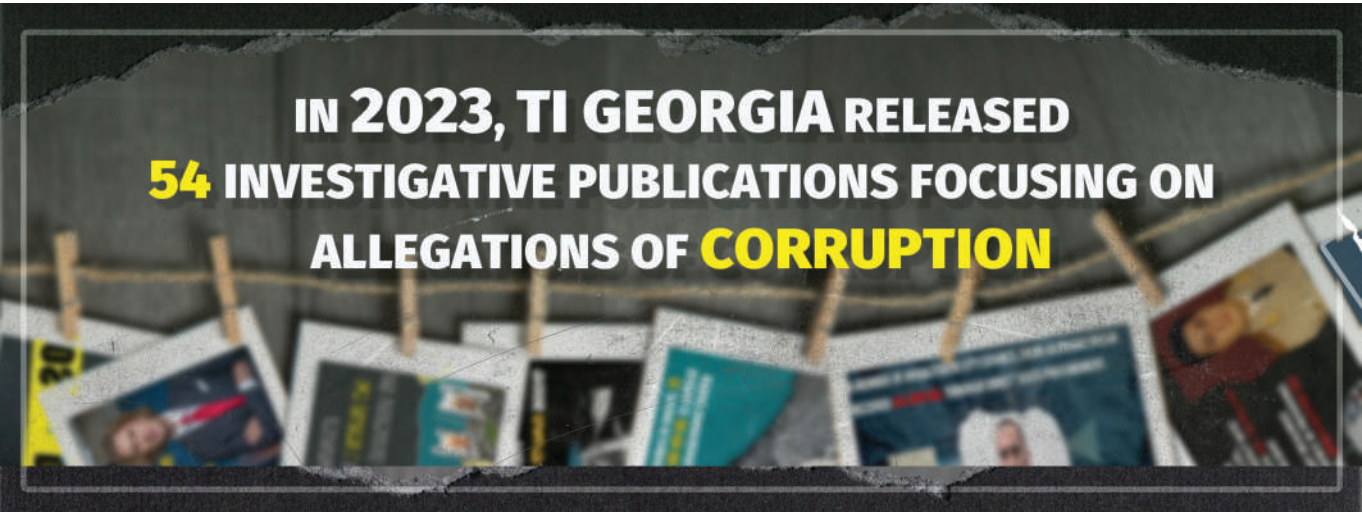
In 2023 **we also examined the Georgian electricity market and its main actors in 2010-2022.** The study showed that the consumption of electricity increased more than its generation, which increased import. The increase in import coupled with devaluation of the Georgian Lari significantly increased the price. The price was further increased by the existence of intermediary companies in electricity import, which are owned by former high-ranking public officials.

We continued to monitor the asset declarations of public officials and identified violations in declarations filed by **11 high-ranking public officials**. All these cases have been forwarded to the Anti-Corruption Bureau for monitoring.



TI Georgia’s Senior Analyst *Lili Lezhava* analyzed the Asset Declaration Monitoring Report for 2023 published by the Civil Service Bureau. The report shows once again that the monitoring mechanism fails to detect and prevent corruption-related offenses. In response to these challenges, she brought together all of TI Georgia’s recommendations aimed at improving the declaration system in the form of a draft law, which the organization submitted as a **legislative proposal to the Parliament**.

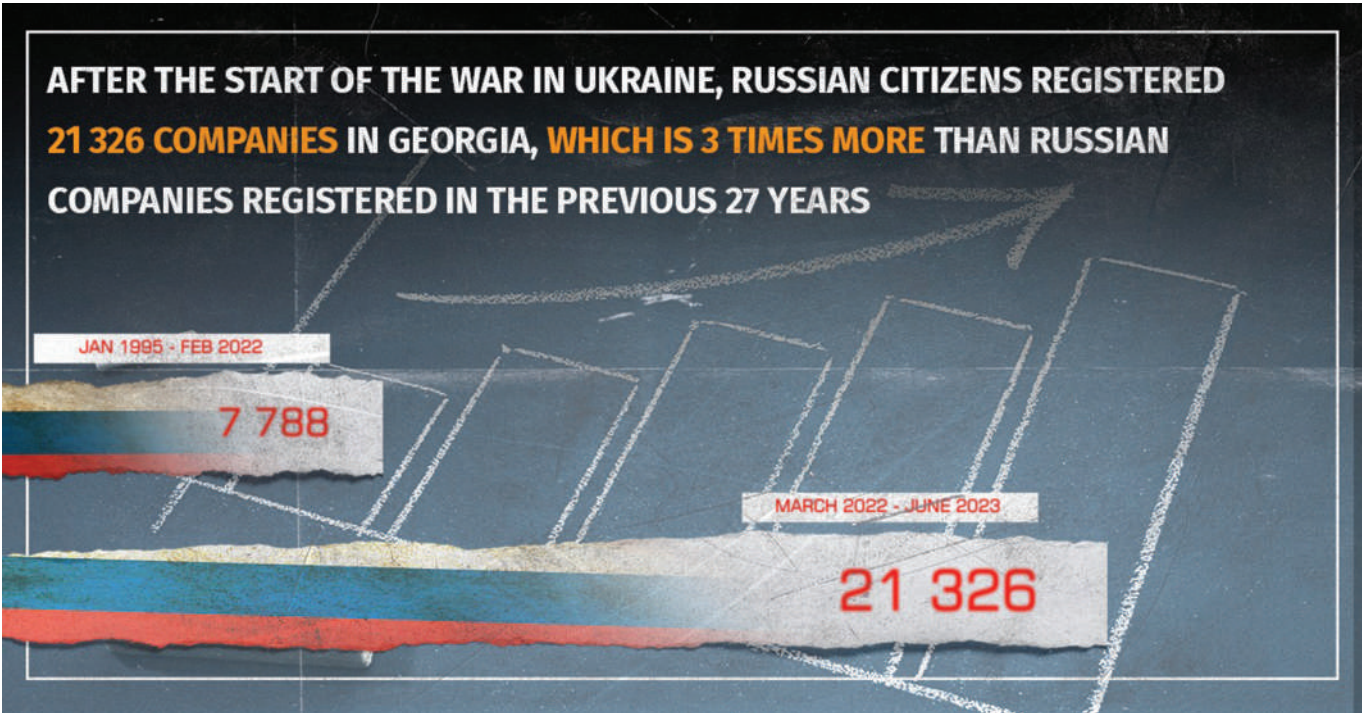




IN 2023, TI GEORGIA RELEASED **54** INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS FOCUSING ON ALLEGATIONS OF **CORRUPTION**

In terms of monitoring of asset declarations, an important achievement in 2023, as in 2022, was the creation, through our efforts and coordination, of an independent commission for the selection of declarations under the Anti-Corruption Bureau. The Commission **selected 300 asset declarations for review in 2024.**

The organization played a leading role in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) process as well. After the government's attempt to pass the 'foreign agent' law in March 2023, by which it grossly violated the principles of the OGP, **TI Georgia, on behalf of OGP member CSOs, prepared and submitted a letter of concern to the OGP Steering Committee.**



AFTER THE START OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE, RUSSIAN CITIZENS REGISTERED **21 326 COMPANIES** IN GEORGIA, WHICH IS 3 TIMES MORE THAN RUSSIAN COMPANIES REGISTERED IN THE PREVIOUS 27 YEARS

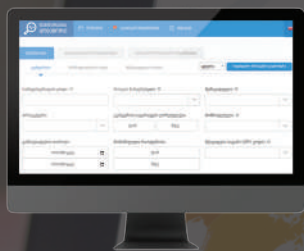
JAN 1995 - FEB 2022

7 788

MARCH 2022 - JUNE 2023

21 326

Expose corruption by using Transparency International Georgia's investigative websites



PoliticalDonations.ge

Officially reported donations by Georgian political parties since 2012

- 🚩 Search by donor
- 🚩 Search by political party



TenderMonitor.ge

Full information about public procurement conducted in Georgia since 2010

- 🚩 Detailed supplier and procurer profiles
- 🚩 Corruption risk analysis
- 🚩 Data visualization
- 🚩 Open data format



CompanyInfo.ge

Georgian company owners and their business interests

- 🚩 Search by company or person
- 🚩 Search connections between entities
- 🚩 Historic company ownership data
- 🚩 Links to political donations and public procurement



Please note that the information provided here should be verified on official web platforms

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Gia Gvilava

Program Manager



The main political developments of 2023 revolved around the process of granting Georgia EU candidate status. Naturally, this had a significant impact on our activities, as getting closer to Europe and eventually joining the European Union is a clear priority for us. Accordingly, in 2023, our activities were focused on supporting this goal, because the implementation of tangible reforms in the justice system is crucial to bring us closer to the European Union and provide a system that primarily serves the best interests of citizens.

In addition to supporting the country's EU candidate status, ensuring the independence, effectiveness and stability of Georgia's constitutional institutions is of paramount importance. It is clear that strengthening institutions is the main prerequisite for integration into the European Union. The Rule of Law Program team acted accordingly. Specifically, a significant part of our work involved identifying critical gaps, describing problems and their underlying causes, and seeking solutions.

The primary concern is the problems caused by clannish rule in the judicial system, which restricts the freedom of individual judges. Our main task is to change this vicious system by balancing power within it. In 2023, we developed **a vision for improving the judicial system with partner organizations** and shared it with the Parliament of Georgia and the representatives of partner countries.

Unfortunately, we worked in a consistently tense environment, which made achieving our goals much more difficult. Throughout the past year, the non-governmental sector faced challenges due to government propaganda and complicated relations with state agencies. Obtaining public information and cooperating on various issues became significantly difficult.

In 2023, the justice system did not improve; on the contrary, the existing problems intensified. The power of influential judges, known as the "clan" strengthened unprecedentedly. The seriousness of these problems is confirmed by the high-profile and unprecedented development in the history of Georgian justice. On April 5, 2023, the U.S. State Department imposed sanctions on three incumbent and one former influential judges of Georgia. **The United States has imposed sanctions on Mikheil Chinchaladze, Chairman of the Tbilisi Court of Appeals; Levan Murusidze, member of the High Council of Justice; Irakli Shengelia, Deputy Chairman of the Tbilisi Court of Appeals, and Valerian Tsertsvadze, former Chairman of the Tbilisi Court of Appeals.** These judges had been the focus of our organization and

partners for several years due to their informal influence. Moreover, TI Georgia uncovered their involvement in seizing the judicial system and their connections with the government. Therefore, **it was not surprising to find their names on the list of sanctioned individuals.**

In 2023, we implemented several projects, including monitoring the process of conducting high-value business disputes in court. Our colleague *Tamta Kakhidze* is coordinating this process. **By the end of the year, we had observed over 80 cases.** The project will be completed in 2024 and its goal is to evaluate the efficiency of the high-value commercial dispute resolution mechanism and to develop recommendations for rectifying any shortcomings.

Throughout 2023, we closely monitored the developments in the judicial system, made assessments and issued recommendations. **We revealed cases of nepotism involving influential judges and individuals close to them.** Specifically, we uncovered a case in the Georgian State Electrosystem (GSE), where former Georgian Dream MP Vano Zardiashvili, who is considered a contact person between the influential judges and the government, holds the position of one of the directors and employs six individuals connected to the government and the judicial clan in departments under his supervision.



ALLEGED **NEPOTISM** IN THE GEORGIAN STATE ELECTROSYSTEM, WHICH IS CONNECTED TO ONE OF THE DIRECTORS, **VANO ZARDIASHVILI**



SIX INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE RELATED TO ZARDIASHVILI, THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND MEMBERS OF THE SO CALLED 'CLAN' ARE EMPLOYED IN THE GEORGIAN STATE ELECTROSYSTEM

RELATIVE

DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

BROTHER

COUSIN

FATHER

Our lawyers *Tamta Kakhidze* and *Magda Jimsheleishvili* evaluated the process of appointing non-judge members of the High Council of Justice and studied the biographies of the selected candidates. Their evaluation revealed significant shortcomings, including **the connections of two members with U.S.-sanctioned judges Mikheil Chinchaladze, Levan Murusidze and Irakli Shengelia.**

PROFILES OF THE NEW **NON-JUDGE MEMBERS** IN THE HIGH COUNCIL OF JUSTICE: UNRAVELING THEIR **AFFILIATIONS** AND **CONNECTIONS**





On November 9, we, along with partner organizations in the Coalition for an Independent and Transparent Judiciary, developed a coalition vision for justice reform and measures necessary for EU integration. This included balancing power in the judicial system and reducing the influence of the clan. However, the government responded with unconstructive attitude and criticism when the document was presented. Later, **the issues outlined in this document were included in the recommendations of the Venice Commission.**

In 2023, we implemented the land reform support project, which involved assisting families in registering land in various settlements across seven regions. **We held 12 field meetings with landowners and provided counseling and legal assistance to over 200 families.**

Our main priority, together with our partners, is EU integration and the strengthening of state institutions. We will continue to work actively towards this goal.



SUCCESS STORIES – 2023

Teona Zakarashvili

Senior Lawyer, Coordinator of the Legal Aid Center



For over a decade, Transparency International - Georgia has provided free legal aid to individuals facing problems in their relations with the public sector. Our goal is to advocate for the rights of victims of unfair treatment. In this regard, the year 2023 proved to be full of new challenges and important court decisions.

Throughout the year, we provided **3,072** citizens with free legal consultations. We won **61** court cases, litigated **107** cases to defend **journalists** and fought for the rights of **38** detained **activists** in court. Additionally, we met with residents of various villages and communities throughout Georgia.

The successful resolution of the pension assignment dispute is particularly noteworthy. This success led to an increase in referrals from elderly people who also had their pensions illegally terminated and lacked the financial resources or information to pursue legal action and fight for their rights.

The success of each case is measured by the tireless work of our lawyers and the hours spent in courtrooms. The end result is the restoration of people's belief that fighting for justice is always worthwhile.

IN 2023 LAWYERS OF TI GEORGIA HAVE:



PROVIDED FREE LEGAL CONSULTATION TO
3072 CITIZENS



DEFENDED THE INTERESTS OF UP TO **107 JOURNALISTS**



LITIGATED **38 CASES** RELATED TO THE ARREST OF
CIVIL ACTIVISTS IN VARIOUS COURTS



The case of Maka Turkia

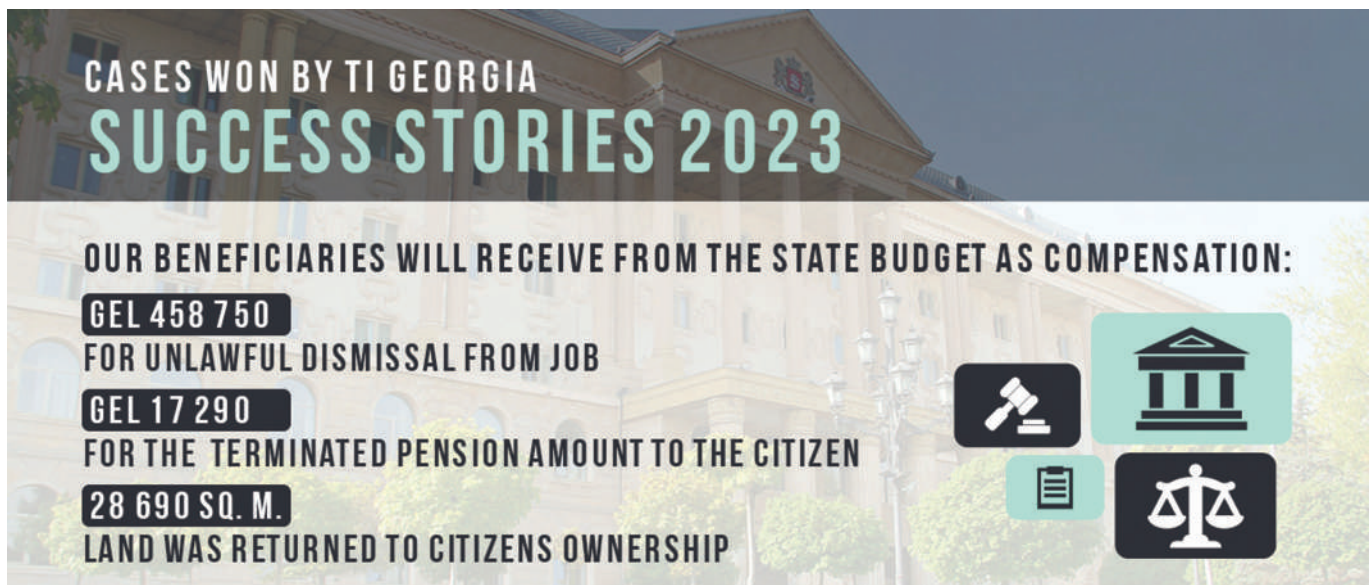
One notable court case from 2023 involves the civil dispute of **journalist Maka Turkia**.

Maka had worked for the Georgian Public Broadcaster for 32 years before experiencing an eyesight problem. She requested a change in position due to her condition, but instead was wrongfully terminated from her job. This illegal dismissal left Maka in a difficult financial situation as she lost her only source of income, while also caring for a parent with health problems.

The case was litigated successfully in all three court instances, resulting in the declaration that the order to dismiss Maka Turkia was illegal. The Georgian Public Broadcaster was ordered to pay compensation and back pay.



Viktor Kvitationi
Lawyer



CASES WON BY TI GEORGIA
SUCCESS STORIES 2023

OUR BENEFICIARIES WILL RECEIVE FROM THE STATE BUDGET AS COMPENSATION:

- GEL 458 750**
FOR UNLAWFUL DISMISSAL FROM JOB
- GEL 17 290**
FOR THE TERMINATED PENSION AMOUNT TO THE CITIZEN
- 28 690 SQ. M.**
LAND WAS RETURNED TO CITIZENS OWNERSHIP

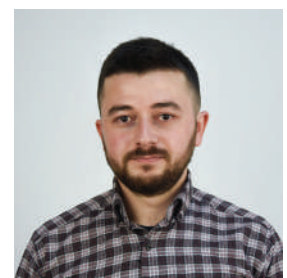
Icons: Gavel, Court building, Document, Scales of justice.

The case of Ekaterine Labartkava

Among the cases won in 2023, the dispute between **Ekaterine Labartkava** and the National Agency of State Property is particularly noteworthy to me.

The Agency fired Ekaterine after nine years of service citing reorganization, which left our beneficiary in a difficult financial situation with a newborn baby.

However, we were able to prove in all three court instances that her termination was illegal. As a result, Ekaterine received GEL 30,000 as compensation.



Giorgi Kumsiashvili
Lawyer

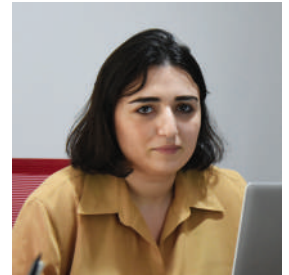
BATUMI OFFICE

The case of Vazha Tavartkiladze

Among the cases in 2023, the one involving Vazha Tavartkiladze stands out as an example of the value of perseverance.

The Batumi City Court fined Tavartkiladze GEL 1,000 for displaying the inscription 'The Sonder Mayor of Batumi is the enemy of the people' on the window of his Shawarma shop. With the assistance of TI Georgia, he contested the decision in the Kutaisi Court of Appeals. As a result, the court terminated the case and did not find Vazha Tavartkiladze guilty.

This case sets an important precedent for safeguarding freedom of speech and expression.



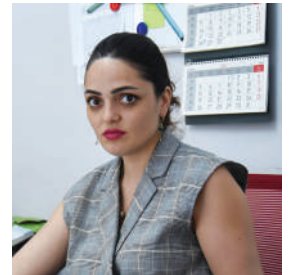
Mariam Shainidze

Lawyer

The case of Lado Mzhavanadze

One of the most notable cases of 2023 is the story of Lado Mzhavanadze, who has been trying to register a plot of land in Gonio since 1986.

Lado Mzhavanadze and 86 other residents of Gonio were granted 250 square meters of land in front of their houses, but they were unable to legalize it for years. With our assistance, Lado Mzhavanadze successfully won the dispute in the Supreme Court twice. The court decision in this case will apply to 86 other citizens who have similar legal problems. This further emphasizes the significance of the case won.



Ana Berdzenishvili

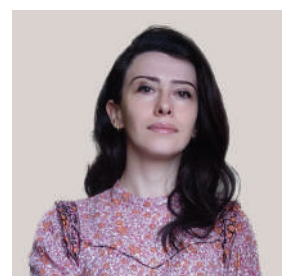
Lawyer

KUTAISI OFFICE

The case of Natela Chikviladze

Among my cases, I would like to point out the case of Natela Chikviladze. She has owned land in Kutaisi since 1998, and despite meeting all legal requirements for the plot's legalization, the City Hall's Land Recognition Commission unlawfully denied the request.

With our assistance, the Kutaisi City Court overturned the Commission's decision and ordered a re-examination of the issue.



Teona Goglichadze

Lawyer

AKHALTSIKHE OFFICE

Among my cases, the case of Zaza Merabishvili is especially noteworthy. He lives in Vale village, where his family house is in a hazardous state of disrepair. We advocated for him by submitting an appeal to the local government and pushing for alternative housing.

Following our intervention, the representatives of the local self-government began active work to resolve Zaza Merabishvili's problem. We believe that it is important to assist citizens in obtaining vital services from the state.



**Juna
Stepnadze**
Lawyer

ZUGDIDI OFFICE

The case of Shorena Poniava

One of the notable cases won by the lawyers of the Zugdidi regional office in 2023 was **Shorena Poniava's** dispute against the Public Service Development Agency.

Shorena Poniava, who had 15 years of work experience in the Civil Registry Service of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, was illegally dismissed from her position as deputy head. The reason given was reorganization.

We successfully concluded the dispute in the Senaki District Court - the court ordered the annulment of the order to dismiss Shorena Poniava and her reinstatement to an equal position with back pay compensation.

IN 2023 TI GEORGIA

WON 61 COURT CASES

IN COMPENSATION FOR OUR
BENEFICIARIES SECURING

476,040 GEL



STANDING UP FOR CITIZENS' RIGHTS!

GRATEFUL BENEFICIARIES



**Shorena
Poniava**

I would like to express my gratitude to Transparency International Georgia and special thanks to the best person, Viktor Kvitatiani for his kindness, tireless work and for facilitating my reinstatement and compensation, which was paid by the employer.



**Meri
Pitskhelauri**

Thanks to Mr. Giorgi Kumsiashvili's professionalism and experience, the court found my dismissal to be illegal. I give his work 100 points!



**Ketevan
Mgebrishvili**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my lawyers Teona Zakarashvili and Ana Berdzenishvili for their efforts in restoring my illegally suspended pension. I hope this wonderful team will also assist other pensioners facing similar problems.





**Khatuna
Tsimnaridze**

I visited the Legal Aid Center of TI Georgia's Batumi office after a friend recommended it to me. I had encountered a problem with registering land plots in the public registry. Mariam Shainidze provided legal consultation and assisted me in preparing an administrative complaint. While I was able to register one plot, we are still in dispute over the other.

It is crucial for the public to be aware of the existence of this center.



ACTIVITIES IN REGIONS

Zviad Koridze

Manager of Regional Offices



Transparency International – Georgia has its regional offices in Batumi, Kutaisi, Zugdidi and Akhaltsikhe. Our doors are open to anyone seeking legal assistance or mediation with local authorities to solve their own problems.

We analyze the activities of local authorities actively. Through research and blogs, we try to uncover facts containing signs of corruption and draw the attention of various public authorities to these problems, as well as empower local people to promote their civic activities.

In 2023, our regional offices identified and reported to the public **83 cases of alleged corruption involving 24 public officials**.



- *Tamuna Uchidze*, head of TI Georgia's **Akhalsikhe office**, revealed in her blog how the heads of the state company bought the state-owned land and the buildings on it at an auction without competition and then sold it to the Akhalsikhe municipality with a profit of more than one million GEL. She also found out that the companies of the brothers of the mayor's representative in the Khevasheni administrative unit of Adigeni municipality received state procurement contracts worth up to GEL 2 million; the uncle of the senior official of the Ninotsminda City Council and a donor to the ruling party received state procurement contracts worth up to GEL 3 million; the company of the director of the Akhalkalaki Municipal NNLE won local tenders worth GEL 1.3 million.



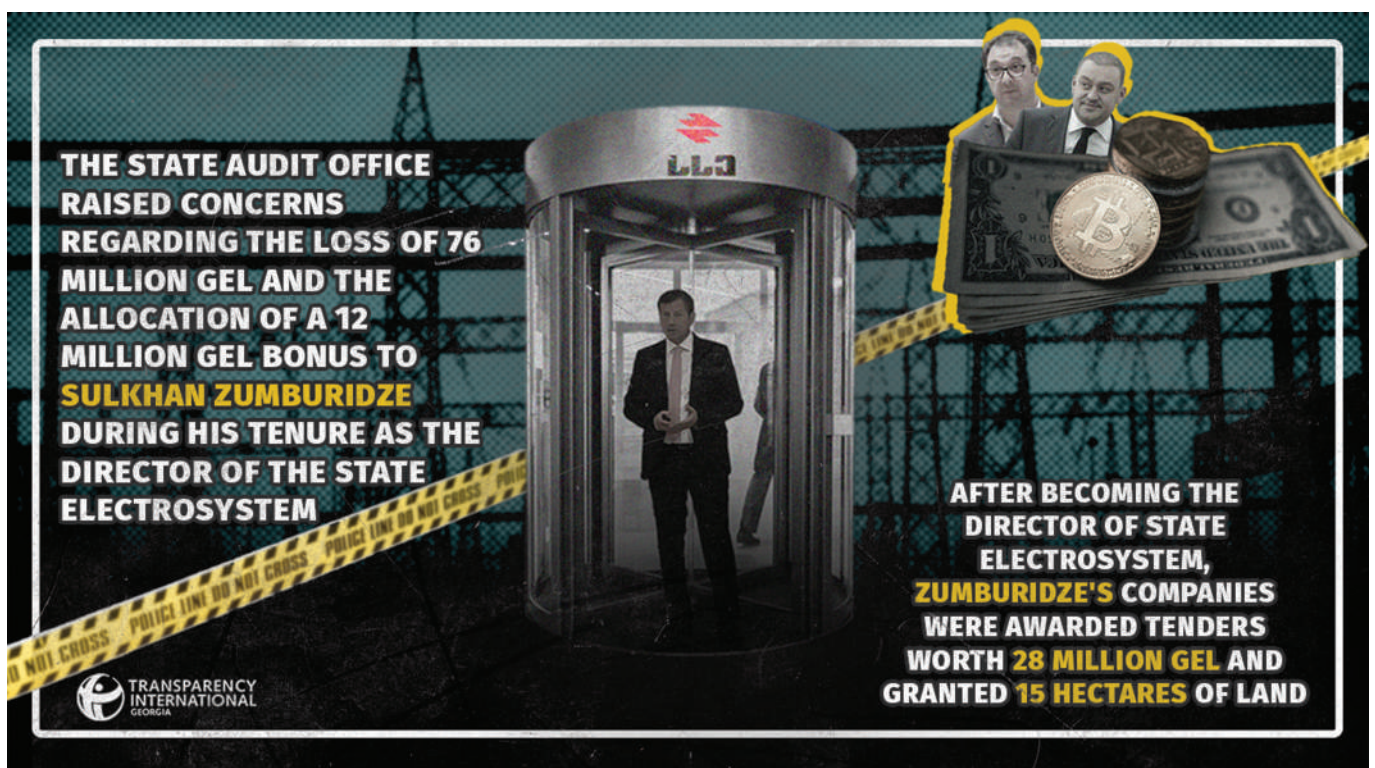
The blog about how the company owned by the son of Nodar Talakhadze, the chairman of the Infrastructure Commission of the Akhalsikhe City Council, received state procurement contracts worth up to GEL 9 million attracted a lot of attention. These studies confirm that loyalty to the ruling party is one of the necessary conditions for obtaining state procurement contracts.

- *Archil Todua*, head of TI Georgia's **Zugdidi office**, continued to monitor business interests related to MP Viktor Japaridze. This time, it turned out that Japaridze's brother-in-law Aleko Khvistani received GEL 34.6 million through state procurement contracts. In 2023, our attention was drawn to the case of Senaki, when the companies of the uncle of Senaki Mayor Vakhtang Gadelia won tenders worth up to GEL 10 million without any competition.





- Malkhaz Chkadua, head of TI Georgia's **Batumi office**, and Gocha Mzhavanadze, analyst at the same office, investigated illegal construction by officials in Adjara. Of particular note were articles on how a company linked to a Russian businessman received GEL 5 million from the municipalities of Adjara; how the company linked to the Beridze brothers, high-ranking officials, participated in suspicious corrupt deals; how Giorgi Chkonia, a businessman with close ties to the government and a major donor to the ruling party, received GEL 335.6 million through state procurement contracts. TI Georgia's Batumi office also investigated signs of corruption in the construction business of MP Resan Kontselidze and his family members. In 2023, Neostar, a privileged company, was awarded state procurement contracts worth over GEL 53 million by Adjara municipalities.



Among the **140** mining license holders in Imereti, **25** companies donated a total of **2 485 931 GEL** to political parties, while **26** received state procurement totaling **757 566 585 GEL**.



- *Lela Motsonelidze*, head of TI Georgia's **Kutaisi office**, analyzed political donations and tenders won by mining companies in Imereti. She found that these companies received state procurement contracts worth over GEL 757 million and financed the ruling party.

Stories containing signs of corruption have attracted a lot of media attention that should be enough to prompt relevant agencies to respond. Unfortunately, this is frequently not the case. Therefore, we send written notifications to government agencies for each problematic story.



In 2023, regional offices prepared **reports on the performance of the city councils of five municipalities - Batumi, Zugdidi, Kutaisi, Poti and Akhaltsikhe**. The reports aimed to inform citizens about the performance of their elected officials and to help citizens better control the performance of mayors, making them more oriented to the needs of locals. The reports on city councils commonly found that they do not adequately oversee the activities of mayors. We provided concrete recommendations to address this issue.

In 2023, we analyzed asset declarations of over 900 officials from various regions of Georgia and discovered that 144 officials from Samtskhe-Javakheti, Imereti and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, including state representatives, their deputies, and officials of Adjara municipal companies, filled out declarations with violations and factual inaccuracies. We reported the violations to the Civil Service Bureau for further action. Monitoring public officials' asset declarations is an effective tool for detecting corruption. **We aim to improve the quality of filling out declarations while also revealing any suspicious facts.**

After conducting a thorough analysis of asset declarations, we found that the Deputy Minister of Health of Adjara, as well as the wives of the Chairman of the Kobuleti City Council and the Head of the Adjara Forestry Agency **were constructing houses without permission**.



The process of selecting public school principals also drew our attention after the Ministry of Education and Science nominated only a single candidate to the school boards of the absolute majority of more than 900 public schools across Georgia for the position of the principal, excluding a number of applicants from elections. This non-competitive process, in the opinion of TI Georgia, aimed to select school principals based on political loyalty and possibly to use them for electoral purposes.

Throughout the year, we held **six training sessions** for local self-government bodies, teachers, and civil society groups. The training covered program budgeting, budget implementation monitoring, local self-government control mechanisms, and fundraising.

In 2023, we regularly provided information on our research findings and discussed solutions to local problems with our guests through our radio projects – *Archil Todua's* program “**Our Self Government**” on Radio Station Atinati in Zugdidi (**20 programs**), as well as *Lela Motsonelidze's* program “**Transparent Policy**” broadcast on Radio Station Dzveli Kalaki in Kutaisi (**12 programs**). These radio projects help us keep citizens properly informed. In 2023, a new rubric called “**A Lawyer is Listening**” was added to radio programs. Listeners could receive live advice from our lawyers.



THE YEAR OF NEW CHALLENGES FOR COMMITTEES OF CONCERNED CITIZENS - “FOR THE PEOPLE WITH THE PEOPLE”

TI Georgia’s annual publication provides an excellent opportunity for our Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) to report to our supporters, observers, and interested citizens on our efforts to improve citizens’ daily lives through their own involvement. In this year’s report, we will again share the results of our activities and look forward to your initiatives, recommendations and support.

ACTIVITY OF OUR COMMITTEES OF CONCERNED CITIZENS IN 2023



WE SUBMITTED 6 PETITIONS AND 30 STATEMENTS ON BEHALF OF UP TO 5,000 CITIZENS TO SOLVE INFRASTRUCTURAL PROBLEMS IN 12 MUNICIPALITIES



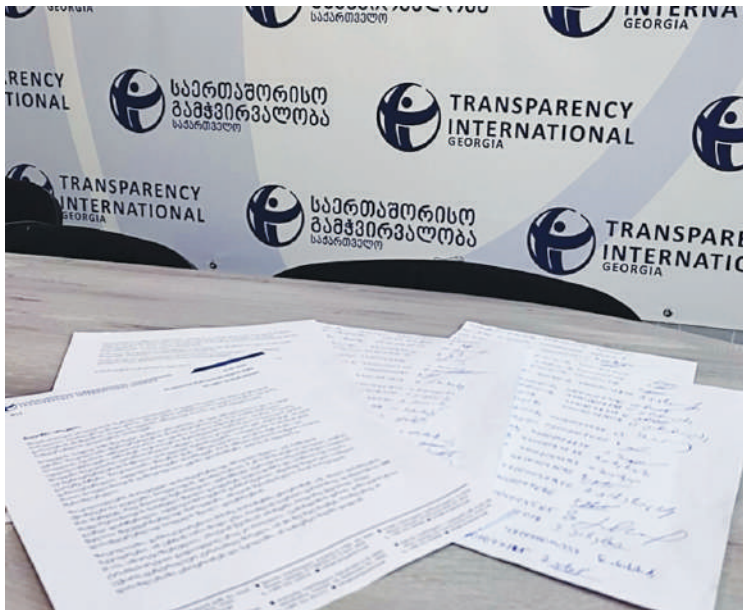
CCC MET WITH RESIDENTS IN 25 SETTLEMENTS IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY THEIR PROBLEMS AND ADVOCATE THEM

I focus on support because the government's open attacks on civil society led to cases of neglect of the issues we advocated for, as well as a lack of political will on the part of local self-governments to discuss and resolve the issues raised through petitions and appeals. Despite these challenges, our CCCs spared no effort to advocate for the problems identified during the meetings with the rural population and to engage in dialogue with the municipal, autonomous and central governments to improve the daily lives of citizens.

In 2023, **60 out of over 150 identified problems were resolved** through our advocacy efforts. **For another 30 problems**, the responsible bodies sought additional funding from the ministries of the autonomous republic and the central government.

Throughout the year, we met with locals in **over 30 settlements across 20 municipalities**. When organizing these meetings, we prioritized inclusivity and made sure to include all stakeholders ensuring that the issues we advocated for would benefit everyone. **Improving women's healthcare and the legal status of persons with disabilities in mountainous Adjara; solving infrastructural problems of compact settlements of IDPs in Samegrelo; adding healthcare and development services for children with disabilities in Samtskhe-Javakheti; reinforcing landslide-prone areas and accelerating the gasification process in Adjara; as well as maintaining road infrastructure in Imereti** - these and other issues were covered by the advocacy campaigns carried out by TI Georgia in 2023.





In 2023, our advocacy efforts led to **the completion of the gasification process for 100 families in the village of Erge, Khelvachauri municipality; the rehabilitation of the road connecting the village of Chanchkhalo in Shuakhevi municipality with the central road; the construction of a sports field and water pipeline in the village of Sviri in Akhaltsikhe municipality; the rehabilitation of bridges in the villages of Odishi and Akhalsopeli in Zugdidi municipality; and the rehabilitation of internal suburban roads in Zugdidi, Tskaltubo, Akhaltsikhe, Khulo, etc.** - we can still list successful projects, despite the aforementioned difficulties, and this makes us happy, because each appeal, petition and meeting is the result of the hard work and dedication of our CCC members, regional office employees and active citizens who strive to improve their environment and demand change while taking into account the resources available to the municipality.

The **stray animal care campaign** is especially noteworthy - during the meeting of our CCCs in 2023, both old and new members identified the abundance of stray animals and the inadequate living conditions as persistent problems in local communities. Petitions were filed in Zugdidi, Kobuleti and Khulo, which were joined by approximately 2,000 citizens. The petition requested that local self-governments introduce free or affordable animal castration-sterilization programs in their respective territories within two years to prevent chaotic reproduction of the animal population, and build modern standard animal shelters after two years. **All municipal councils supported the petition and sent it to the city halls for implementation. The executive bodies are currently working on implementing the program.**

Since we have discussed the petitions, we would like to share other initiatives that have been submitted. In **Akhalsikhe**, we requested that the city hall transfer municipal property to organizations working on healthcare and development of children with disabilities. In Kobuleti, we requested that the villages of the Chakhati community be granted the status of a high-mountain settlement and that a kindergarten be opened in the village of Chakhati. In Tskaltubo, we requested the rehabilitation of the road connecting the villages of Gumati and Banoja. In total, about 5,000 citizens joined the six petitions we organized in 2023.



The primary focus of our CCCs is to engage in direct dialogue with citizens, studying their initiatives and identified problems. Therefore, we strive to share news from villages, communities, and cities through social networks, television broadcasts and other media. This is because the voice of their population may not be heard as loudly and intensively.

Sharing news on social media is beneficial because we are often contacted about neighborhood issues, and such contacts serve as the basis for organizing new meetings. Therefore, **we encourage everyone to be active, write to us, ask questions, and bring problems to our CCCs so that we can solve them together. What is more, we should solve them together!**



MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Mariam Gersamia

Media Program Manager



Throughout 2023, Transparency International Georgia systematically addressed all developments affecting the media environment, highlighting the threats of kleptocratic rule, including **the unjustified imprisonment of Nika Gvaramia, the general director of the Mtavari Arkhi TV, and his subsequent pardon by the President of Georgia, the deterioration of legislation and its impact on the financial independence of the media; the facts of arrests of journalists during protest rallies (including during discussions of the “Russian Law”), etc.**

At the beginning of the year, the media team, with the support of International Media Support (IMS), published a study titled **“Spreading Disinformation in Georgia - State Approach and Countermeasures.”** The study authored by *Salome Tsetskhladze* revealed that the government lacks a systemic approach to countering disinformation and even appears to be spreading anti-Western narratives.





Throughout the year, **over 40 incidents involving various forms of violence against media representatives** were publicly documented in the country, according to the reports by the media team (*project manager Mariam Gersamia and senior researcher Natalia Vakhtangashvili*). Against this backdrop, the protracted investigations of legal cases and impunity, along with aggressive rhetoric from the ruling party and campaigns discrediting journalists, remained a challenge.



In February, a new accreditation rule for journalists was introduced in the legislature. This rule has had a significant impact on journalists covering parliamentary issues, with more than a dozen journalists or cameramen from critical media outlets having their accreditation suspended.

The Law on Broadcasting was amended by the Parliament in an accelerated manner, without broad public discussion. The amendments provided for the transfer of hate speech and obscenity from the realm of self-regulation to that of regulation. This move was controversial and triggered harsh criticism from local civil society organizations.

In 2023, TI Georgia continued to provide legal assistance to journalists and media professionals amid the challenges facing the media environment in the country.

We advocated for the rights of journalists and fought for media freedom through active cooperation with local and international organizations.



In May, the organization hosted a media forum titled “Media and Democracy Resilience versus Corruption” to celebrate World Press Freedom Day. The forum was attended by journalists, representatives of international and local civil society organizations, and academics. The conference focused on the challenges faced by the media, including problems encountered by investigative journalism, politically motivated imprisonment of Nika Gvaramia, interference in journalistic activities, inadequate investigations, and the instrumentalization of court practice against journalists, which is typical of kleptocracy. The forum participants discussed ways to improve the deteriorating media environment.



Transparency International Georgia published a traditional report on the TV advertising market review, which covers the trends identified in 2022. According to the report, already scarce advertising revenues of broadcasters decreased by GEL 10 million in 2022, amounting to **GEL 73.6 million**. The decrease in advertising revenues was largely caused by the ban on gambling ads from the 2nd quarter of 2022. Additionally, pro-government television channels received almost twice as much advertising revenue as media outlets that are critical of the government.



One of the organization's main priorities was to create and update critically essential educational resources for media professionals and provide them with professional training. With the support of **the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation**, the project **"Training the Media and Empowering Ethnic Minorities' Access to Quality Journalism in Georgia"** was successfully implemented in the regions of Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, which are populated by ethnic minorities.

As part of the project, Transparency International Georgia published an updated guide to corruption research titled **"How to Find Corruption Pebbles in the Big Sea of Information?"**. The guide was presented to young journalists at the University of Georgia. An additional resource **"The Anti-Corruption Guide"** was created to assist investigative journalists, civil society representatives, and interested individuals in identifying and exposing the facts of potential corrupt deals, exceeding authority, abuse of power and unjustified spending of the budget by the government, through open data search and processing. The guide was also translated into Armenian and Azerbaijani languages.



As part of the same project, five trainers were trained in working with open data. These trainers then went on to train approximately 200 civic activists, students, and journalists.

Throughout the year, the **Media Help Desk**, established to support investigative and ethical journalism, actively assisted journalists, students, and civil society representatives in preparing comprehensive articles or reports using open data.

As in previous years, Transparency International Georgia collaborated with the Media Advocacy Coalition and partner organizations to develop media and protect freedom. Our organization joined **over 40 statements** issued by the Media Advocacy Coalition, addressing various forms of discrimination and violence against individual journalists and media organizations, as well as controversial legislative amendments.

In 2023, Transparency International Georgia joined the anti-SLAPP platform aimed to fight the so-called SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) filed by the government against journalists and activists. Currently, there are approximately 40 such lawsuits against media professionals in Georgia, and Transparency International Georgia is defending the rights of two of them in court.



”



Aidan Yusubova, a journalist for iFact: “It is crucial for many people to be aware of open sources and be able to use them. During the training of trainers, I gained additional expertise in time management, audience engagement and diverse teaching methods”.

”



Temo Inasaridze, a journalist for Samkhretis Karibche: “During the training, we discussed methods for obtaining and processing information from open sources, which helps me a lot in my professional activities.”

”



Misha Darbaidze, a journalist for Tok TV: “Awareness of how to work with open data is critical when information and comments from public agencies are limited. Thanks to this training, I now know better where to find the information I need.”

PARLIAMENT IN OUR FOCUS

Lika Sajaia

Parliamentary Secretary



The year 2023 proved to be challenging and unusual amid the tense political situation. Especially noteworthy are the protests against the “Russian law” and large-scale rallies during the spring session. The Parliament of Georgia faced difficulties in maintaining the same level of openness and transparency achieved in the previous convocation with the involvement of civil society organizations. **In 2023, the Parliament’s openness significantly worsened.**

TI Georgia’s parliamentary team actively participated in committee hearings on the “Russian law.” During the committee hearings, we, along with civil society representatives, protested against the adoption of a law that was unprecedented in Georgian reality. The law was aimed at suppressing the free opinion of the media and the civil sector, posing a threat to our country’s European future. The draft was discussed in Parliament amidst extreme tensions caused by verbal and physical abuse. **The government was ultimately forced to vote down the “Russian law” initiated by the parliamentary majority.**

THE RULES OF PROCEDURE LEGITIMIZE THE DETERIORATION OF PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL AND OPENNESS

AMONG OTHERS:

- TV REPORTING FROM COMMITTEE SITTINGS IS PROHIBITED
- THE MAJORITY DETERMINES FOR THE MPS WHO WILL SPEAK WHEN AND HOW MUCH
- 27 REPORTS ARE NO LONGER DISCUSSED AT THE PLENARY SESSION



In 2023, the country's most significant achievement was obtaining EU candidate status. We presented several recommendations to Parliament to guarantee the success of this process.

Transparency International Georgia submitted **three legislative proposals** to the Parliament, which aimed to fulfill the recommendations of the European Union. The proposals involved power sharing in Parliament, improvement of the system of asset declarations of officials, and strengthening of parliamentary oversight of the security sector.

Before submitting these proposals, we held **discussions** with the involvement of MPs and civil society organizations to gather their input and consider valuable suggestions.

In 2023, we published the **Performance Assessment Report of the Parliament**. TI Georgia's senior lawyer, *Tamar Tatanashvili* analyzed extensive information about the performance of each member of the Parliament, the activities of committees, factions, councils, the efficiency of adopted laws and the exercise of parliamentary oversight. After analyzing the Parliament's performance, we developed recommendations to help the Parliament improve its performance.

TI Georgia also published Performance Assessment Reports for **the Gender Equality Council** and **the Parliamentary Standing Council of Open Government**. The reports assessed their activities and provided recommendations for improving performance.

Throughout the year, we published the **analysis of seven important draft laws**, including the analysis of the amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, which worsened the rules of use of parliamentary oversight mechanisms, as well as the amendments, which worsened the openness of the Parliament: the rules of entry to the Parliament building for journalists and visitors were complicated, while the discussion of important reports at the sessions of the Parliament is no longer mandatory.



Together with Caucasus University, we held a conference on “**Parliamentary Control and Separation of Powers**” with the participation of the academic community. The conference was attended by representatives of civil society and students. Professors from seven universities delivered reports on the challenges and mechanisms for strengthening parliamentary control and the separation of powers.



In addition to analyzing the legislative process, we responded to ongoing processes in the Parliament, including putting the Ethics Council into operation, with a number of statements. The year 2023 was notable for instances of physical altercations between members of parliament, including microphone throwing, swearing and insults.

In 2023, we **held four training sessions** for opposition MPs and parliamentary staff on the following topics: the opposition’s role in implementing parliamentary oversight; Parliament’s Rules of Procedure and recommendations for improvement; anti-corruption legislation; the main challenges of media legislation, and searching for corrupt facts from public sources. The training topics were selected in consultation with the MPs and Parliament’s staff, taking their needs into account.

Training was provided to business sector representatives regarding the important updates to the new **law on personal data protection**.



ELECTION ISSUES

While 2023 was not an election year, a number of important developments related to election issues occurred throughout the year. During this period, TI Georgia published an extensive report and carried out dozens of other activities. Deputy Executive Director *Giorgi Oniani* and Project Coordinator *Gigi Chikhladze* were the main actors in these processes.



In January, together with the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) and the Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA), we [assessed](#) the amendments to the electoral legislation: some of the amendments were a step forward, such as the extension of deadlines for submission and review of complaints/lawsuits; however, there were fundamental problems, including the rule on staffing of the CEC, which was ignored by the law and needed to be resolved. In May, together with ISFED, we [criticized](#) the new draft law, which worsened the existing standard for staffing the CEC and gave the ruling party the power to select and nominate candidates for the position of chairperson and professional members of the CEC. The same arguments were later highlighted by the Venice Commission in its December report, where it considered the CEC composition rule to be inconsistent with good practice.

The report on **Georgia's Political Finance in 2022**, which we [published](#) in June, once again revealed a financial disparity between Georgian Dream and other parties, as well as alleged corruption cases related to the ruling party's donors, which remained unaddressed.



In 2023, we continued **to publish quarterly newsletters** on political donations. We published four newsletters throughout the year, once again providing the public with information on party donors, their business interests and alleged corrupt connections, when donors to the ruling party often receive multimillion-dollar public procurement contracts. As part of these observations, we identified large donations from donors linked to those wine-producing companies that receive large amounts of money from the state budget as part of vintage subsidies.



We held two discussions with representatives from political parties, local and international organizations, the diplomatic corps, as well as the CEC and the Public Defender's Office. One topic discussed was **intra-party democracy**, specifically the compatibility of the Georgian context with international standards. The second discussion focused on creating a **fair pre-election environment**, where we discussed the threats of using administrative resources for the 2024 elections, systemic violations that were revealed in the last elections, and ways to prevent them.



In 2023, we again held a training series entitled “How to Investigate Corruption?”. The University of Georgia and Tbilisi State University hosted the training, where we introduced open data public platforms, investigative websites created by our organization, and the rules for their use to about 70 journalists, students and civic activists.

By the end of 2023, we responded to the armed attack on former Dmanisi Mayor Giorgi Tatuashvili. The attack was likely due to his political activities and was a continuation of uninvestigated violent incidents that occurred during the 2020-21 electoral processes. It is crucial to investigate such cases to prevent impunity of perpetrators from being perceived as an encouragement of political violence, which in turn causes irreversible damage to the electoral environment.

Conducting the 2024 parliamentary elections with high democratic standards is vital for our country, because it will largely determine our further progress towards joining the European Union.



PR ACTIVITIES 2023

“OUR EUROPE”

In 2023, TI Georgia, in cooperation with Mtavari Arkhi TV channel, resumed the TV program Our Europe, co-hosted by Eka Gigauri and Giorgi Ushikishvili. The new season aimed to showcase the work of Georgian activists and civil society members who play a crucial role in building a European-style democracy.

As part of 13 programs, we toured six regions and visited historical sites that demonstrate our country’s connection with Europe. We met and presented to the audience the people who defend our country’s democracy through their daily activities and activism. In the TV programs, we focused not only on our country’s European aspirations but also covered the issues related to human rights, environmental protection, and occupation.

In 2023, “Our Europe” expanded beyond the borders of Georgia. The goal was to introduce our compatriots living in Europe and foreign friends who appreciate Georgian culture and actively popularize our country, promoting our Europeanness on the ground. The Georgian songs performed by the Dutch elicited extremely positive reactions on social media. We presented Georgian students and their success stories to the audience, along with our diaspora who effortlessly maintain their Georgian identity in the Netherlands and Belgium.

The TV program “Our Europe” received a high rating with over 600,000 viewers out of an audience of 1.5 million.



SABA LITERARY CONTEST

Our longstanding friendship with the Saba Literary Contest has been further strengthened in 2023 by introducing our award. In our special nomination “Reflection of Soviet and Post-Soviet History in Georgian Literature”, the winning literary works are those that best highlight Soviet influences. It is important to understand the past well in order to avoid repeating mistakes and to become a part of Western civilization.

In 2023, the jury announced two winners: “Zaodi” by Elza Gurgenzidze and “A Story of a Man and a Country” by Levan Berdzenishvili. A special award was presented to the authors at the award ceremony by our Executive Director Eka Gigauri and French Ambassador to Georgia Sheraz Gasri.



REGIONAL MEETINGS

As part of our campaign “Strength is in Europe”, in 2023, we continued to hold regional meetings with the population. This was an effective way to explain the necessary steps for our country to receive EU candidate status. We met with residents of towns and villages in Adjara, Samegrelo, Imereti and Svaneti throughout the year and hosted civic education teachers.

We were accompanied by the writers who won the Saba Literary Contest and were awarded a special prize introduced by Transparency International - Georgia. They presented their books focusing on the negative aspects of the Soviet past and the inevitability of European choice to young people. These meetings were supported by USAID’s Civil Society Engagement Program and concluded with insightful discussions.



“YOUR VOICE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION”

By the end of the year, we participated in the “Your Voice to the European Union” march. Prior to the European Union’s decision to grant Georgia candidate status, we reiterated our message to Brussels and other European capitals that the Georgian people deserve and sincerely aspire to be a member of the European family.

To embody this spirit, Georgian civil society organized a public march from Republic Square to Europe Square. The crowning moment of the march was the unfurling of the European Union flag of record size.

The twelve stars on the flag were symbolically sewn each in twelve different regions of Georgia to demonstrate public unity and commitment to the European integration.



CAMPAIGNS SUPPORTING UKRAINE

#KutaisiForDnipro

#ZugdidiForPokrovsk

Through our offices in Kutaisi and Zugdidi, we joined the campaigns organized by civil society to provide assistance to the Ukrainian cities of Dnipro and Pokrovsk, which were affected by Russian military attacks. The purpose of these campaigns was to encourage and provide material support to the war-affected population of Kutaisi's sister city Dnipro and Zugdidi's sister city Pokrovsk.

As part of the campaign, a series of fundraising events were organized, including street events to inform the population, a charity concert, and a handicraft market. The goal was to raise awareness that even a small donation of one lari could make a significant contribution to helping our Ukrainian brothers and sisters. The media also supported our efforts.



“VILIKLIKOT EVROPAZE”

For the seventh consecutive year, our organization maintains its friendship with the Kutaisi regional radio Dzvili Kalaki on the issues of EU integration. Kutaisi-based journalist Dato Liklikadze, host of the program cycle “Viliklikot Evropaze” (Let’s Talk about Europe), together with invited guests from various professions, successfully continued to talk about how our country will benefit from joining the European family and how it will improve the lives of Georgian citizens.



COOPERATION WITH UNIVERSITIES

In 2023, we signed two memorandums of cooperation with the University of Georgia and the Caucasus University to strengthen our ties with the academic and student communities.

Our goal is to collaborate in improving the qualifications of students and graduates of these universities, developing their professional skills, and providing them with practical experience through internships, training, or employment opportunities.



INTERNSHIP WITH TI GEORGIA – OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



We are especially proud of our internship program, which has been creating a mutually beneficial environment for many years, providing young people with practical work experience and giving the organization’s employees the opportunity to develop close relationships with students and learn about their innovative visions.

As a result of the competition, which was announced three times in 2023, **46 young people** were given the opportunity to work with us for three months at the organization’s head office in Tbilisi, as well as at its regional offices (Batumi, Kutaisi, Zugdidi, Akhaltsikhe) and within the parliamentary program.

A new development was the employment of **corruption and court monitors**, who provided significant support to our team in relevant areas.

An internship with TI Georgia provides students with a valuable opportunity to begin their professional careers. This is evidenced by the fact that two more interns were hired by our organization last year, and 18 former interns have been promoted to join our team over the past six years.

The benefits of the program are best described by the young people who have participated in it:





**Luka
Lomsadze**

The internship at TI Georgia was significant for my career development in several ways. Firstly, I learned methods for searching and utilizing public information in research, which I will undoubtedly apply in the future. Additionally, during the internship, I developed soft skills such as communication and time management. Finally, **the internship at TI Georgia equipped me with more confidence** on my academic and professional development path.



**Mariam
Chkhikvadze**

The period of my internship coincided with significant developments taking place in Georgia and the region, and I had the opportunity to assist the organization's team in researching these processes through searching and processing data, which helped me improve my research skills.

The experience I gained was invaluable for my future internships in both the public and private sectors, as well as my subsequent employment. The **process of accumulating professional experience that began here was crucial in achieving my goal** of enrolling in a master's program at Sciences Po Paris, one of the most competitive universities in the world.



Gagi Gigauri

During my internship at Transparency International Georgia, I gained my first full office experience. This opportunity allowed me to work alongside a team of professionals in the non-governmental sector and develop new skills.

During my internship, I improved my analytical skills and learned to work with open data and databases for government monitoring. I also gained experience in analyzing the media environment, dealing with administrative issues, and conducting anti-corruption activities related to state procurement control. This involved detecting and analyzing potential corruption cases.

I entered the internship competition twice and was ultimately successful. This means that **the door of opportunity is always open at this organization**. The skills I acquired here were crucial in my future employment. It is noteworthy that the internship deepened my interest in corruption studies and I will consider pursuing an academic degree in this field.



**Mariami
Aliashvili**

My internship at TI Georgia was a valuable first work experience. In addition to office skills, I gained in-depth knowledge of corruption issues. The working environment was supportive, and the team members spared no effort in helping us. This confirms that **it was the best place to take the first steps.**

Now, I have the opportunity to continue anti-corruption activities at TI Georgia as a corruption monitor. This experience will have a positive impact on my career decisions.



Anna Suladze

TI Georgia's office and parliamentary internships were more interesting than I had imagined. This experience helped me better understand the important role of non-governmental organizations in policymaking and fighting corruption by promoting transparency and accountability.

During my internship, I developed my research and analytical skills. I also learned how to effectively communicate findings to different audiences. **The internship motivated me to study abroad and participate actively in various projects.**



**Giorgi
Pachuashvili**

The experience I gained at TI Georgia still benefits me today. I learned how to retrieve, sort, and analyze public documents. This helped me develop the analytical thinking and attention to detail necessary for my profession. I also had the opportunity to work with a team of interesting and professional people.

I chose to pursue an internship while applying to the University of Jena. I **believed that cooperating with such a prestigious organization would positively impact my candidacy.** Currently, I am participating in the University of Jena's exchange program.



**Tamara
Obgaidze**

During my office internship, I performed administrative tasks. **This experience helped me develop important skills that will benefit me in the future.**

I also had the opportunity to meet and learn from experienced professionals in my field.



**Tamari
Lomidze**

The internship provided valuable experience for my personal and professional development. **I worked with a very friendly and supportive team that provided support and comprehensive guidance.**

Because I was assigned different tasks by representatives from different departments, I worked on both legal issues and research for the corruption team. The variety of cases made the work process more interesting. The experience I gained in organizing events is particularly noteworthy.



TI GEORGIA IN THE MEDIA

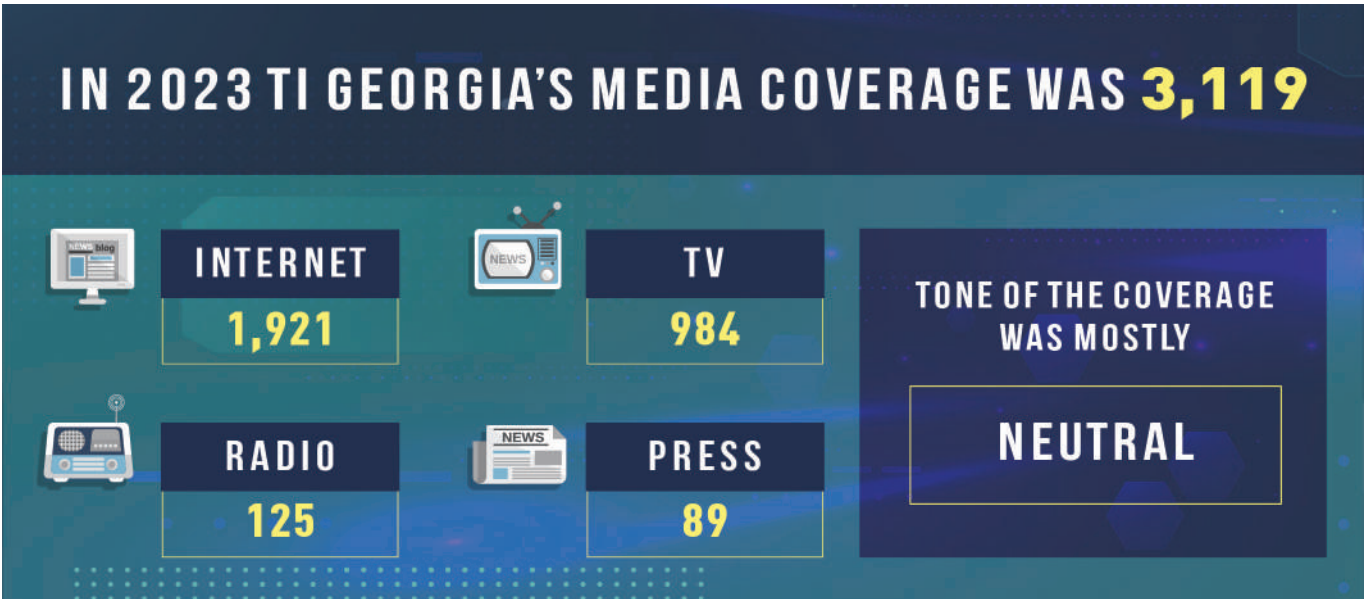


Media interest in TI Georgia remained traditionally high throughout 2023. In addition to covering our reports, statements, and activities, the media contacted us for comments on current issues. We frequently participated in various talk shows.

Almost all members of our team are sought-after respondents for the media. We try to communicate our messages to the public in a comprehensive and clear manner. Media outlets frequently use multimedia products provided by us.

Consulting journalists is a separate direction of our cooperation with the media – journalists often ask us for advice on various issues and receive relevant recommendations from our researchers.

In 2023, TI Georgia’s media activity indicator reached 2,826, According to IPM, a company that has been conducting media monitoring for our organization for years, the tone of the coverage was mostly neutral.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media continues to be one of the most important information dissemination platforms for our organization. All our products – reports, statements, video clips and information cards about our activities – attract great interest on relevant platforms.

Facebook remains the main platform for establishing quick communication with citizens, answering their questions and reacting to current developments in the country.

TI Georgia runs two Facebook pages – one in Georgian and the other in English. In 2023, the total number of users of the Georgian and English Facebook pages increased by 2,884 and 414, respectively.

TI Georgia runs a separate Facebook page for the campaign “Strength is in Europe” aimed at countering Russian propaganda and popularizing the Euro-Atlantic course.

We continue to actively use Twitter to inform the international community about TI Georgia’s work. In 2023, the total number of followers on TI Georgia’s Twitter page increased by more than 1,000.

We use our Instagram page to post the images that illustrate our organization’s performance and report visualizations. We also use LinkedIn to post announcements about job openings in our organization.

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA IN SOCIAL MEDIA



FACEBOOK PAGE ENGAGEMENT

IN 2022

34,418 FOLLOWERS

IN 2023

37,302 FOLLOWERS

+2884

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023

Georgia’s score dropped by 3 points, according to Transparency International’s 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), where the country had a score of 53 points, and even though Georgia maintained its leading position in the region, it has not had such a low score since 2015.

The Corruption Perception Index is traditionally conducted in 180 countries. Countries are evaluated using a 100-point system, where 100 is a positive result and 0 is a negative result.

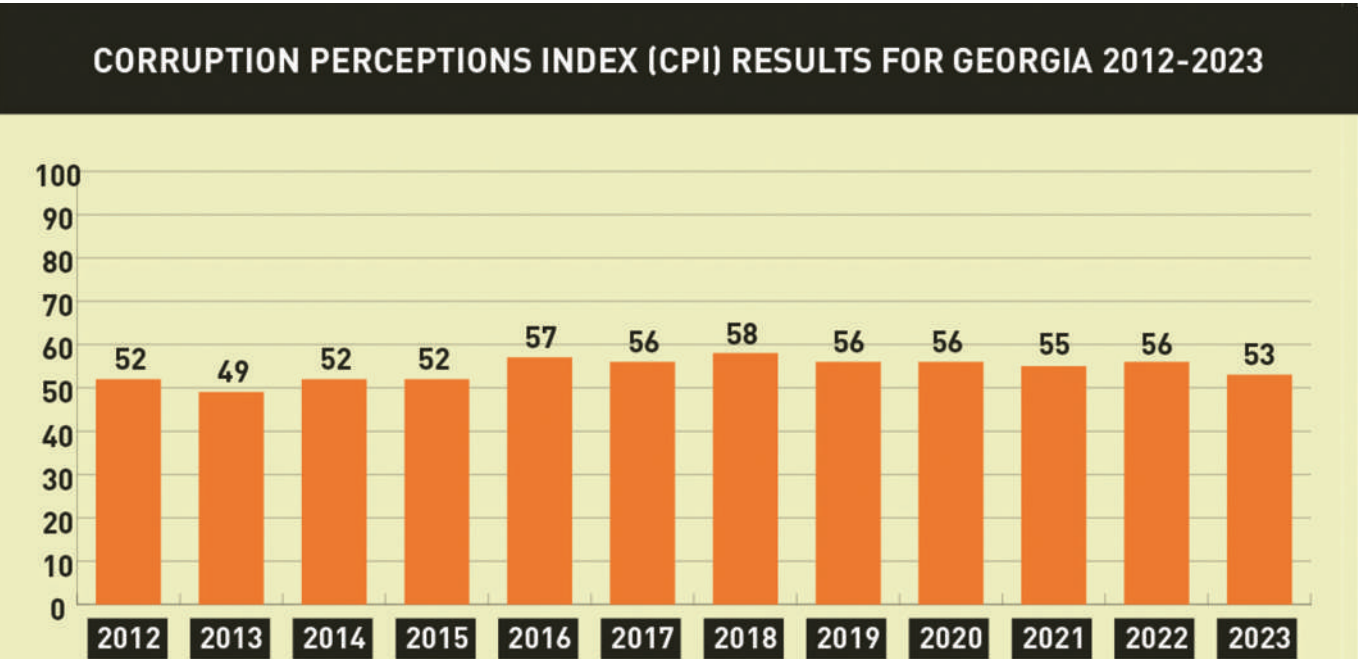
According to Transparency International’s analysis, the high-level corruption is rising in Georgia and state capture is deepening:

“In Georgia corruption remains a problem, indicating a deeper systemic issue – the concentration of power and the pervasive influence of elites on state institutions and decision-making.

For several years, Georgia has been experiencing democratic backsliding, where deepening state capture and high-level corruption are turning the government into a kleptocracy. The recent “return” to active politics of Bidzina Ivanishvili, the founder of the ruling party, is another sign that he has been instrumental in the capture of the country’s institutions. Once celebrated as an anti-corruption champion, Georgia’s corruption problem has grown to the point that it is now one of several major obstacles to EU integration.

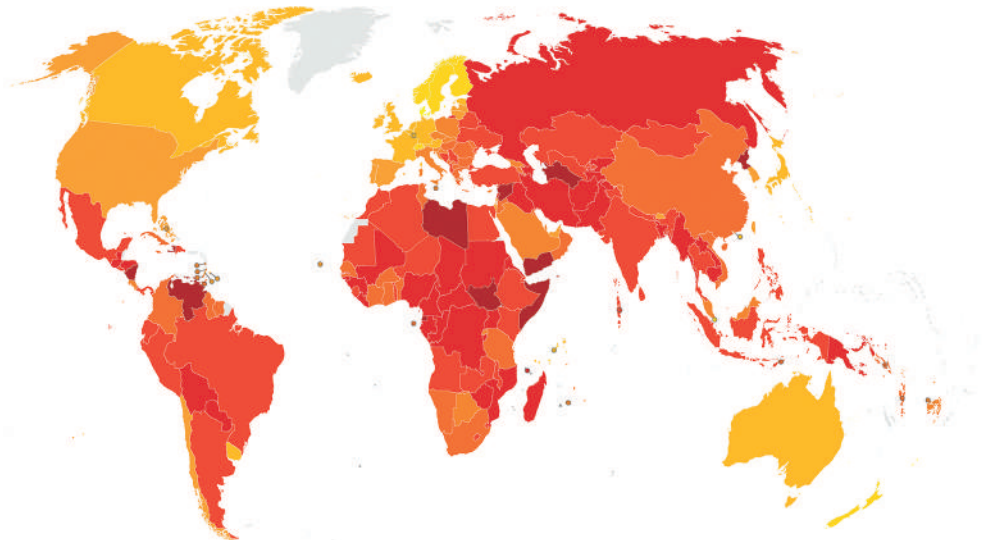
Even though a new anti-corruption agency was set up per the EU’s request, its independence is under question and it has not been granted investigative powers to tackle high-level corruption, which continues to enjoy impunity. Without significant reform, Georgia is expected to sink even deeper into a kleptocratic style of rule.”

Following the publication of the Corruption Perceptions Index, we made recommendations to the government to take real steps against high-level corruption in the country, including strengthening the independence of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, implementing genuine judicial reform, de-oligarchization, strengthening parliamentary oversight, civil society and investigative media, which will directly contribute to Georgia’s progress on the path to European integration.

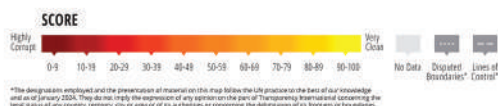


CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023

The perceived levels of public sector corruption in 180 countries/territories around the world.



SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY	SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY	SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY	SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY	SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY				
90	Denmark	68	United Arab Emirates	52	Fiji	42	Moldova	36	Ukraine	29	Bolivia	22	Congo
87	Finland	67	Taiwan	52	Saudi Arabia	42	North Macedonia	35	Bosnia and Herzegovina	29	Pakistan	22	Guinea-Bissau
85	New Zealand	66	Chile	51	Malta	42	Trinidad and Tobago	35	Dominican Republic	29	Papua New Guinea	21	Eritrea
84	Norway	64	Bahamas	50	Mauritius	41	Burkina Faso	35	Egypt	28	Gabon	20	Afghanistan
83	Singapore	64	Cabo Verde	50	Croatia	41	Kosovo	35	Nepal	28	Laos	20	Burundi
82	Sweden	63	Korea, South	49	Malaysia	41	South Africa	35	Panama	28	Mali	20	Chad
82	Switzerland	62	Israel	49	Greece	41	Vietnam	35	Sierra Leone	28	Paraguay	20	Comoros
79	Netherlands	61	Lithuania	48	Namibia	40	Colombia	35	Thailand	27	Cameroon	20	Democratic Republic of the Congo
78	Germany	61	Portugal	48	Vanuatu	40	Côte d'Ivoire	34	Ecuador	26	Guinea	20	Myanmar
78	Luxembourg	60	Latvia	47	Armenia	40	Guyana	34	Indonesia	26	Kyrgyzstan	20	Sudan
77	Ireland	60	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	46	Jordan	40	Suriname	34	Malawi	26	Russia	20	Tajikistan
76	Canada	60	Spain	46	Kuwait	40	Tanzania	34	Philippines	26	Uganda	20	Libya
76	Estonia	59	Botswana	46	Montenegro	40	Tunisia	34	Sri Lanka	25	Liberia	18	Turkmenistan
75	Australia	58	Qatar	45	Romania	39	India	34	Turkey	25	Madagascar	17	Equatorial Guinea
75	Hong Kong	57	Czechia	45	Bulgaria	39	Kazakhstan	33	Angola	25	Mozambique	17	Haiti
73	Belgium	56	Dominica	45	Sao Tome and Principe	39	Lesotho	33	Nigeria	25	Nigeria	17	Korea, North
73	Japan	56	Italy	44	Jamaica	39	Maldives	33	Mongolia	24	Bangladesh	17	Nicaragua
73	Uruguay	56	Slovenia	43	Benin	38	Morocco	33	Peru	24	Central African Republic	16	Yemen
72	Iceland	56	Costa Rica	43	Ghana	37	Argentina	33	Uzbekistan	24	Iran	13	South Sudan
71	Austria	55	Saint Lucia	43	Oman	37	Albania	32	Niger	24	Lebanon	13	Syria
71	France	55	Poland	43	Senegal	37	Belarus	31	El Salvador	24	Zimbabwe	13	Venezuela
71	Seychelles	54	Slovakia	43	Solomon Islands	37	Ethiopia	31	Kenya	24	Azerbaijan	11	Somalia
71	United Kingdom	54	Cyprus	43	Timor-Leste	37	Gambia	31	Mexico	23	Guatemala		
69	Barbados	53	Georgia	42	Bahrain	37	Zambia	30	Togo	23	Honduras		
69	United States	53	Grenada	42	China	36	Algeria	30	Djibouti	23	Iraq		
68	Bhutan	53	Rwanda	42	Cuba	36	Brazil	30	Eswatini	23	Cambodia		
		53		42	Hungary	36	Serbia	30	Mauritania	22			



#CPI2023

www.transparency.org/cpi

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PLANNING 2024



OUR DONORS

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark / DANIDA
- Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
- National Endowment for Democracy
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) EWMI
- Transparency International Secretariat
- Europe Foundation
- The Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation (BST)
- Transparency International Slovakia
- Open Society Georgia Foundation



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK



Sweden/შვედეთი

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SUPPORTING FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



B | S | T The Black Sea Trust
for Regional Cooperation
A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND

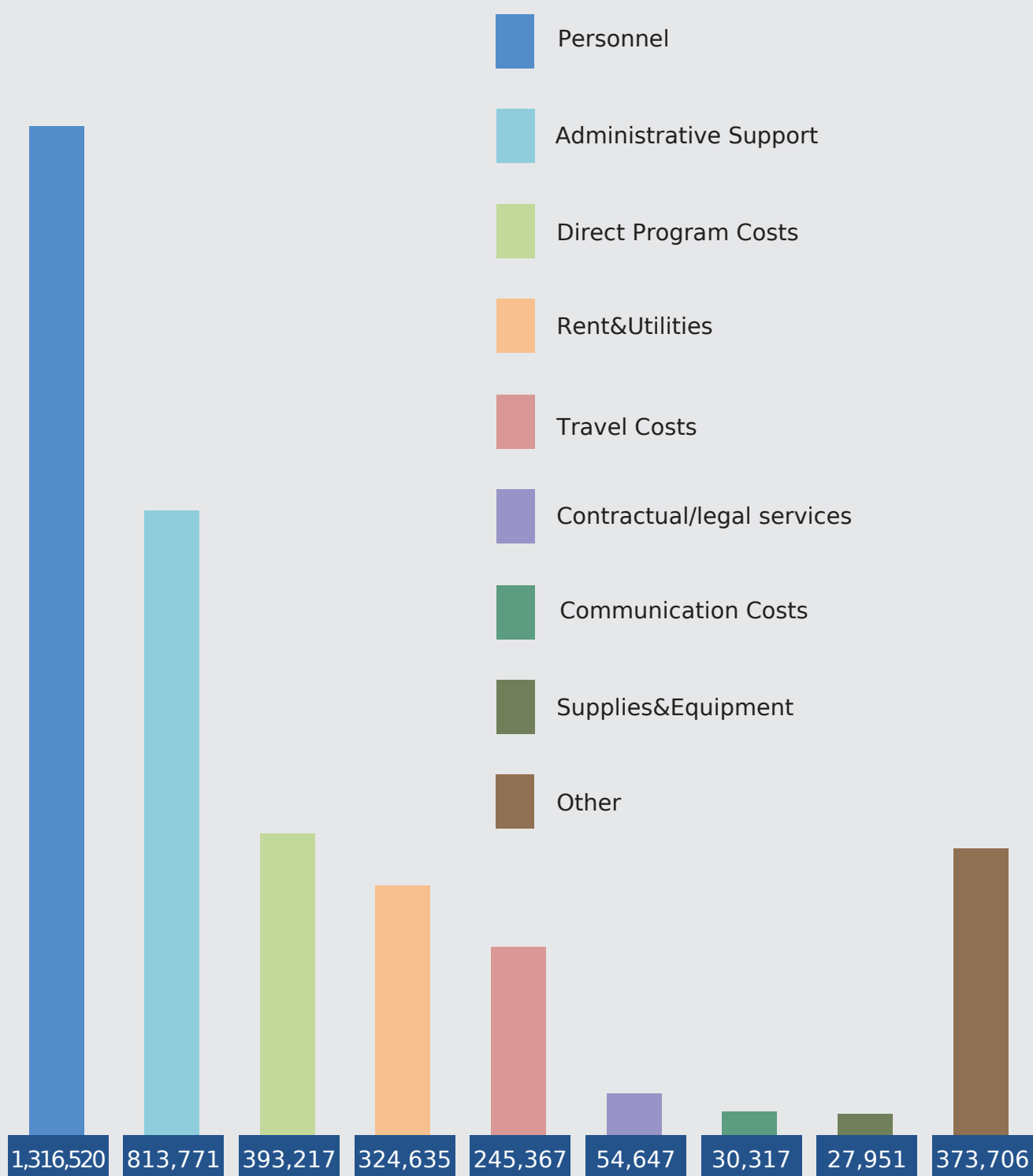


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კანონის უზენაესობის მხარდაჭერა
საქართველოში (PROLoG)

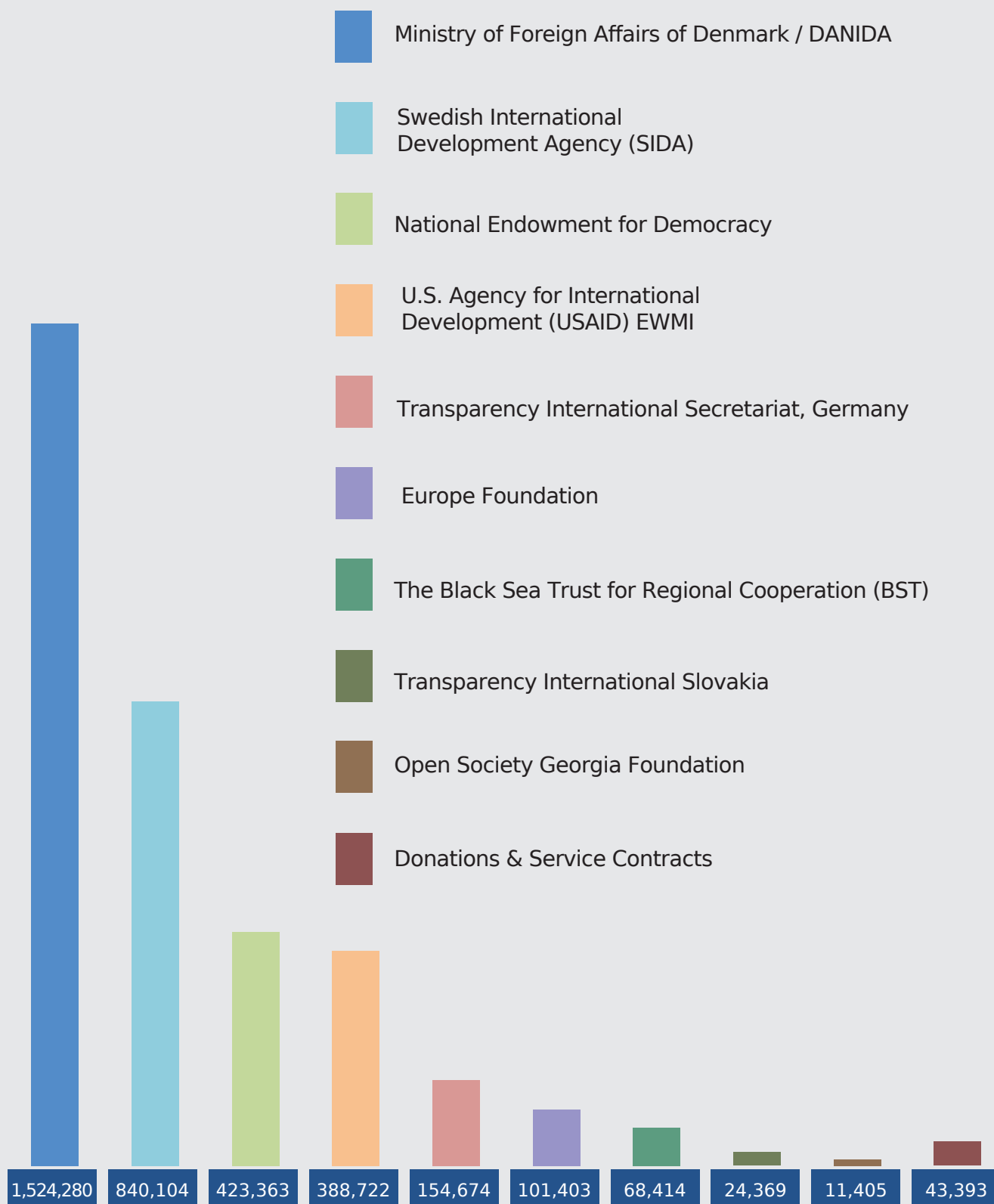


FINANCIAL INFORMATION

EXPENSES IN GEL

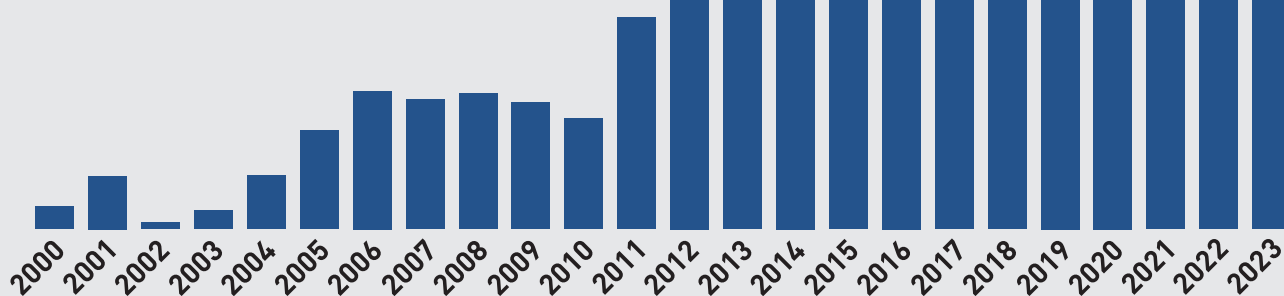


INCOME BY DONORS IN GEL



INCOME BY YEARS IN GEL

YEAR	GEL
2000	115,248
2001	268,912
2002	34,745
2003	94,754
2004	269,708
2005	496,986
2006	696,646
2007	655,022
2008	683,793
2009	638,291
2010	557,973
2011	1,067,881
2012	2,088,474
2013	2,847,099
2014	1,862,643
2015	2,254,047
2016	2,476,755
2017	4,053,619
2018	3,775,214
2019	4,126,265
2020	5,004,421
2021	2,878,145
2022	3,387,358
2023	3,580,129
Total	43,914,129



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT

To: the Members of Board of Transparency International Georgia (TIG)

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Transparency International Georgia (the Organization), which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at December 31, 2023, and the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Funds and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at December 31, 2023, and its activities and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standard for Small and Medium-sized Entities (IFRS for SMEs).

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs).

Our Responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Georgia, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standard for Small and Medium-sized Entities (IFRS for SMEs), and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our Objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatements, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the

Transparency International Georgia (TIG)
Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2023
and Independent Auditor's Report

aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matter, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

The Engagement Partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditor's report is:

Alexander Skhiladze
Partner
Crowe GE LLC
Member Crowe Global

Tbilisi, Georgia
Axis Business Center
2, D. Gamrekeli Str.,
0160 Tbilisi, Georgia
Direct: +995 32 290 45 22



Date: February 26, 2024



2023