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A Message from Our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I have been Executive Director of Transparency International Georgia since 2011 and this is the third address I am writing in this capacity for TI Georgia's annual report. Alongside the organization's achievements and challenges, this address endeavors to recall and assess the developments taking place in the country over the past year.

2013 marked an important milestone for Georgia's statehood with a new democratically-elected government. A conference dedicated to this event and entitled "100 Days in Power" was organized in early February by our organization's initiative. At the conference, the non-governmental sector representatives assessed the work of the new government and came up with a set of recommendations. Importantly, the event was attended by representatives of the three branches of Georgian government: the Prime Minister, the ministers of Interior, Justice, and Corrections, the Chief Prosecutor, the Supreme Court Chairman, and members of Parliament. The diplomatic corps were also present at the meeting.

2013 was an important year for our country in light of the scheduled presidential elections as well - another challenge Georgia had to overcome by holding the elections in a fair environment. TI Georgia followed its tradition established a few years before and monitored the use of administrative resources during the election campaign, while deploying a team of 400 local observers to monitor the election process on Election Day itself.

In 2013, as in previous years, TI Georgia surveyed the government's activities. Based on our analysis and research, we tried to identify the areas with lingering threats of corruption. Consequently, recommendations were drawn up and sent to the executive as well as the legislative authorities and the judiciary. TI Georgia has been actively engaged in the work of various commissions. I personally represented our organization in the Municipal Development Fund and was a member of the Pardon Commission.

In 2013, TI Georgia signed a memorandum of understanding with Georgian Parliament. We also maintain an office in Parliament. Our parliament office interns attended Committee sessions together with the parliamentary assistant and informed us on important bills. TI Georgia experts took an active part in the work of various working groups to improve the legislation and have been instrumental in preparing amendments. At the same time, there have been a number of instances during 2013 when TI Georgia had to voice its criticism. For example, civil service employment layoffs and postponement of the amendment to the witness interrogation rules merited our disapproval.

Of particular note are the activities of TI Georgia's regional offices. Our Kutaisi office lawyers helped up to 14 unjustly dismissed public servants to get reinstated to their former positions in 2013. The local office in Zugdidi focused on the issues of self-government, while the Batumi office monitored the AAR Supreme Council activities.

Our Free Legal Aid Center had also been very productively functioning both in Tbilisi and the regions throughout 2013.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our donor organizations whose financial support made it possible to implement aforementioned activities. I would also like to thank everyone who participated in various activities we have carried out. TI Georgia will do its best and spare no effort to make next year equally prolific and dynamic.



A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, likely belonging to the Executive Director.



About us

Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) was founded on 7 May, 2000, as a local non-governmental organization. It is a national chapter of Transparency International (TI), which, in its turn, is the major international civil society organization committed to combating corruption in the world. TI brings together civil society, businesses, and governments in a powerful global coalition. Through its Secretariat and over 100 independent national chapters, TI carries out its activities at the local, national, and international levels.

In 2004, TI Georgia staff was made up of 7 members. In 2006, it increased to 13 employees, and starting from 2013, the organization has over 50 employees. TI Georgia has offices in the regions – Kutaisi, Batumi and Zugdidi office staff are productively involved in civic activities.

TI Georgia's mission is:

- to be the primary source for reporting on the Anti-corruption reform currently underway in Georgia;
- to help the government and the public to advance reforms in the sectors in which corruption is still manifest;
- to build and strengthen institutions and promote good governance.

In recent years, TI Georgia has become the leading non-governmental research organization based on advocacy.

TI raises awareness about the damaging effects of corruption, advocates policy reform, works towards the implementation of multilateral conventions, and monitors compliance by governments, corporations, and banks. Its national chapters work to increase levels of accountability and transparency, monitor the performance of key institutions and advocate for necessary reforms. The key principle of the organization is to remain non-partisan throughout.

TI Georgia's activities are directed at helping the country to develop into a viable democracy, in which citizens will be engaged in policy-making, the government and businesses will operate in a transparent manner and where there will be no corruption at any level.





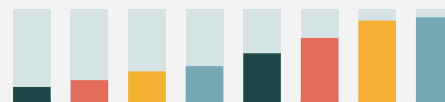


January



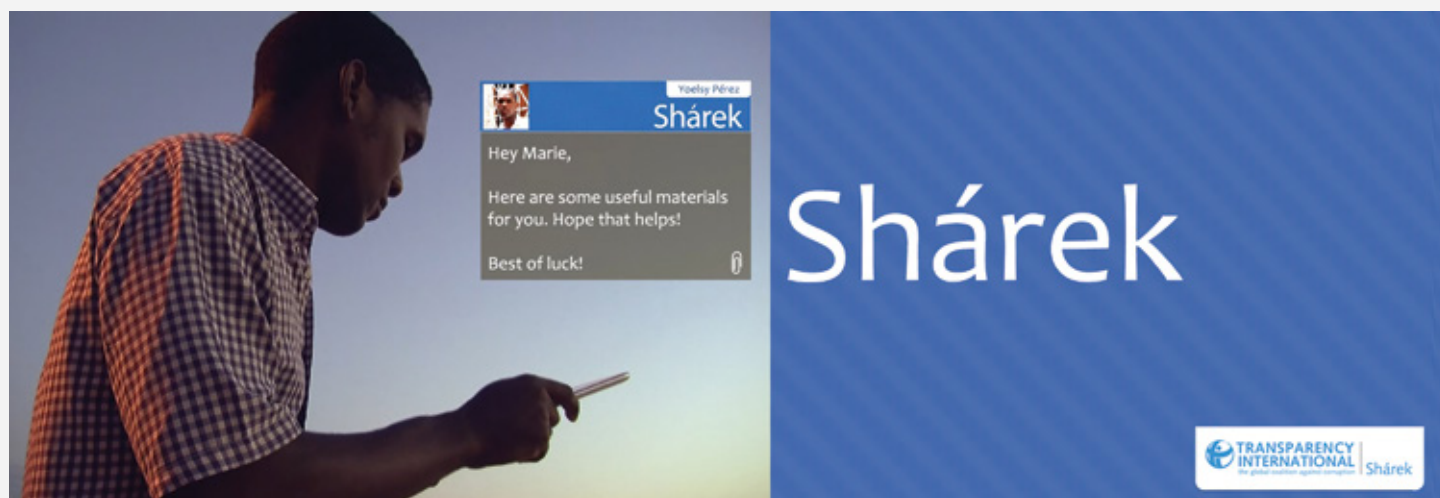


International Budget Partnership – Georgia Scores 55 in 2012 Open Budget Index



On 23 January 2013, TI Georgia and the Minister of Finance, Nodar Khaduri held a joint press conference at the Ministry of Finance where TI Georgia presented the findings of 2012 Open Budget Index (OBI). According to the biennial global report released by the International Budget Partnership, Georgia scored 55 out of 100 in OBI 2012, which is higher than the average score of 43 for the 100 countries surveyed. It could be concluded from the report that the Georgian government is only providing its citizens with a certain amount of information on the country's state budget and financial activities, thus making it challenging for them to track how public funds are managed.

Out of the eight countries surveyed in Central Asian region, Georgia's OBI score of 55 is the second highest after Russia. However, it is worth to note that the country's OBI score has not changed since 2010.



The project "Shárek"

Transparency International is a worldwide movement. Its Secretariat, located in Berlin, coordinates the National Bureaus registered in more than 100 countries. TI's organization structure takes into account how corruption differs from country to country and allows the National Bureaus to be flexible when conducting their activities. With such a high number of active National Bureaus, however, communication problems arise occasionally. For instance, a given National Bureau may have been working on an idea that already had been implemented by another National Bureau. For this exact reason, Transparency International undertook to create an innovative tool aimed at bringing all the National Bureaus together.

Before setting up the platform, TI conducted an internal survey on the future name of the tool and it was decided to call the project „Shárek“. „Shárek“ means in Arabic “to assist” or “to participate” and definitely befits the core mission of the project: to be a new, creative internal communication tool.

The tool had been under development throughout 2013 with all National Bureaus engaged in the process. The goal of the new tool is to encourage knowledge- and experience-sharing among TI's national chapters.



February

2013 Government Defence Anti-Corruption Index – Georgia’s outcomes

On 1 February, 2013, the first Government Defense Anti-Corruption Index with results covering 82 countries was released as part of the cooperation between Transparency International UK’s Defense and Security Programme (TI-DSP) and TI National Chapters.

In the 2013 Government Defence Anti-Corruption Index, Georgia was ranked in the “D”-category (high-risk of corruption), which is the fourth of six categories.

Georgia’s inclusion in the above category emerged from the analysis of its defence policy, financial resources and personnel management as well as its operating and procurement policy from 2012. The index looks at and evaluates actions undertaken by governments to reduce risks in the defense sector. The new index shows that 70% of the surveyed countries cannot effectively fight corruption in the defense sector. The index also highlights that half of the countries included in the survey are not publishing their defense budgets and do not disclose complete information thereof.

The 82 countries were classified in six different categories based on their scores. The first two categories include the following countries: Austria, Germany, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the USA. A country belonging to these two categories has a defense sector characterized by high transparency and strong institutional arrangement. The countries ranked in the last category (F) – i.e the countries with the lowest scores- are: Cameroon, Angola, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, and Algeria.



Internet freedom in Georgia

The latest trends about Internet freedom in Georgia as well as the unlimited access by Georgian Ministry of Interior to the technical infrastructure of telecommunications companies were the major themes discussed at a conference organized by TI Georgia on February 5, 2013 at the occasion of the release of its Internet Freedom report. The meeting was attended by 60 guests who together with the TI Georgia representatives reflected on the findings of the survey as well as the challenges persisting in the telecommunications sector.

The report accentuates the unlimited access of the Georgian Ministry of Interior to the technical infrastructure of telecommunications companies, which makes it impossible to enforce the judicial oversight on electronic communications surveillance. The survey also examines the offshore ownership of Internet providers, and the challenges of the local Internet market and online Media. To solve each of these problems, TI Georgia has issued very specific recommendations to both the private sector and the government.



Monitoring Report on the High Council of Justice Activities

On February 12, 2013, TI Georgia presented the assessment report of the activities of the High Council of Justice (HCOJ). The presentation was attended by current and former judges, HCOJ members and journalists.

The monitoring revealed significant shortcomings in the work of the HCOJ:

- The Council decisions are not published on its official website on a regularly basis and within reasonable time;
- Despite freedom of information (FOI) request, several HCOJ meeting protocols were not provided, which represented a significant impediment to our monitoring;
- Procedures governing the HCOJ activities are not clearly defined;
- The opportunity to challenge HCOJ decisions and to carry out court control is not stipulated;
- The entire process concerning the designation of judges remains problematic and imperfect;
- The process is not transparent: unclear legislative regulations do not allow the selection of the judges to be based on impartial criteria and assessment.

The report also contains recommendations developed by the organizations engaged in the monitoring.



100 Days in Power: Rule of Law and Human Rights

On February 18, 2013, Transparency International Georgia, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy, and partner organizations held a conference on the theme: "100 Days in Power: the Rule of Law and Human Rights".

The victory of the Georgian Dream coalition in the 2012 parliamentary elections resulted in an unprecedented change of government through elections, which marked an important step in Georgia's democratic development. At the conference, the civil society organizations discussed and evaluated the reforms initiated by the new government and presented their recommendations. It is worth mentioning that, representatives of the three branches of government attended the conference: the Prime Minister, Internal Affairs, Justice and the Corrections and Legal Assistance Ministers, the Chief Prosecutor, Chairman of the Supreme Court, and members of parliament. Several members of the foreign diplomatic corps also joined the conference.

Do you know who owned Georgia in 2003-2012?

On February 22, 2013, Ligamus Bookstore hosted the presentation of “Who Owned Georgia in 2003-2012”. The book is a joint work of Transparency International Georgia and the journalist Paul Rimple. The book - written in a novel format- tells the story of the businessmen and companies that have owned or still own significant shares in important sectors of the Georgian economy: broadcasting, communications, advertising market, oil import and distribution, pharmaceutical market, and minerals companies. It also deals with connections of the above companies with former government officials or individuals related to them.

The work encompasses the period between 2003 and 2012. During those years, there was a lot of discussion taking place among members of Georgian society about the so-called “business redistribution schemes” in large companies after the Rose Revolution. In the book, Paul Rimple made every effort to find out “who” was behind those companies. However, this proved troublesome, since most of the companies are registered offshore. Although the book considers only a relatively limited number of industries, it contains enough information so that every reader can forge their own opinion about the Post Rose Revolution tendencies in Georgia.

The presentation was attended by journalists, civil society representatives and students.



March



The Memorandum of Cooperation Signed with Zugdidi City Council and District Administration

On March 5, 2013, Transparency International Georgia signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with Zugdidi City Council and District Administration. Under the Memorandum, the District Administration will be involved in Fix My Street – a project initiated by TI Georgia. The project allows citizens to report street problems – such as potholes or broken street lights – to their local authorities via Internet.

State-sponsored Universal Health Care Program Problems and Recommendations

In March 2013 Transparency International Georgia examined the strengths and weaknesses of the public universal health care program and gave the government related recommendations.

We commended the government for:

1. extending the universal health care coverage to all citizens who previously were did not have health insurance;
2. including preventive health care, which was one of our major previous recommendations to the Georgian government, in the program. Preventive health care had not been financed by any state insurance program before;
3. giving beneficiaries the freedom to choose their outpatient service provider from among the registered health care providers.

However, we noted the program still faced the following challenges:

1. The state universal healthcare program providing insurance to all non-insured individuals living in the country, which, we believe, is too broad-brush an approach. We believe it is important to offer health insurance to the non-insured segment of the population selectively to ensure that budget expenditures and the corresponding fiscal burden do not get out of hand.

2. If the new insurance program insures all non-insured individuals, it is very likely to crowd out private and corporate spending on health insurance. In particular, if the state insures everyone, there is a significant chance that employers will no longer insure their own employees. Employers may not stop insuring their own employees if the universal healthcare program offers far worse terms than the private insurance plans and if employers want to create additional incentives for their own employees.

However, for many employers, the basic insurance coverage for employees will be more than sufficient. To prevent free-riding we suggested that health insurance taxes be levied against employers or employees.

3. The state insurance's share of the health insurance market is so large (around 75%) that the very existence of the market depends on the government's decisions on how they will implement the state health insurance program.

To discuss these as well as other challenges and recommendations, we expressed our readiness to cooperate with the government. We are convinced this will help move the health insurance and the wider healthcare reform forward.



The Finance Minister's Order Secures **GEORGIAN POST** an Advantageous Position on the Market

In March 2013, a group of representatives of the companies involved in carrier business addressed Transparency International Georgia. They stated that the order # 30 issued by the Minister of Finance of Georgia on 25 January 2013, introducing substantial amendments to the procedures on importing/exporting goods to and from the customs territory of Georgia, created serious problems for them. According to them, the regulations were intended to drive out the private companies of the market and secure a monopoly for one carrier in particular: Georgian Post.

To protect the interests of the carriers, Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) lodged a complaint in Tbilisi City Court, seeking the annulment of the order #30 issued by the Finance Minister on January 25, 2013, as well as its subsequent order #4257 of February 6, issued by the Head of the Revenue Department. The Tbilisi City Court decision delivered on May 14, 2013, granted our appeal and annulled the impugned orders.

In parallel with the court case, the Ministry of Finance promised to gradually abolish the contested provisions; however, it ignored the fact that even the short-term effect of the order precluded the carriers from carrying out their activities and led to their expulsion from the market. The Ministry of Finance and Revenue Service, after losing the case, disputed the decision in the Tbilisi City Court of Appeal which rendered a second decision in favor of Transparency International Georgia. Without due cause, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue Department brought the dispute to the Supreme Court.

TI Georgia is preparing a lawsuit seeking monetary damages for the losses caused to the carriers by the unlawful act.



2013 “Best Journalist Investigation” Competition.

As part of its activities, Transparency International Georgia works closely with journalists. In March 2013, it announced a competition aimed at rewarding the best Georgian investigative article/TV reporting. The project was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Our organization decided to encourage investigative journalism by announcing the competition for the best Georgian investigative article/TV report as it believes that this area remains comparably weakly developed in Georgia and that the number of journalists who carry out journalistic investigations is small. Transparency International Georgia is convinced that, investigative journalism is the best way to uncover corruption schemes and cases of abuse of power by public officials.

The Criteria for the selection of the best article / TV reporting were the following

- Impartiality of the article / TV reporting, showing the positions of all parties;
- Urgency of the problem discussed in the article / TV reporting and its benefit to the public;
- Originality of the work (including ample evidence obtained using one's own resources rather than someone else's material);
- Extent to which the role of the journalist in question was decisive in detecting the problem;
- Abundance of reliable and verified sources quoted in the article / TV reporting;
- Style in which the article /TV reporting is presented to the reader/viewer;
- Structure of the article.

TI Georgia was particularly interested in the following issues: corruption (in public agencies and the private sector), use and management of public funds, accountability of government officials and private sector, public procurements, conflict of interest, and politics and private sector relations.

By the end of May 2013, TI Georgia had received 10 pieces of work. In order to assess those, a jury comprised of the following individuals was set up: Nino Zhizhilashvili, host of the “Politmetri” program; Nana Biganishvili, the “Monitori” Studio journalist; and Olesya Vartanian, a journalist from “Ekho Kavkaza”.

Based on the criteria listed above, TI Georgia named the following winners:

1st Place: Giorgi Mgeladze, “An Entrepreneur vs. a Parliament Member”- investigative journalism;

2nd Place: Tskrala Shermadini, “Cheated Farmers”- investigative journalism;

3rd place: Tea Zibzibadze, “Corrupt schemes of functionaries and business shares received by virtue of positions” – article.



საერთაშორისო გამჭვირვალობა
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GEORGIA



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April

“There are still many problems in the judiciary branch” Court Monitoring Report N2

On April, 2, Transparency International Georgia presented the results of its second court monitoring, covering the period between June 1, 2012 and October 31.

The report is based on the observations of 282 monitored hearings on 142 different cases in Tbilisi, Batumi, Khelvachauri, Gori and Telavi first instance courts. The hearings of high profile cases were also monitored. These disputes mostly concerned the breach of party finance legislation in the pre-election period.

TI Georgia has monitored the following criteria:

- Punctuality and Reasonable Time;
- Right to a Public Hearing;
- Handling of the Hearing by the Judge;
- Inquisitorial Principle (the Judge's initiative);
- Adversarial Principle (Equality of Arms, Unbiased Settlement of Dispute).

The court monitoring showed that the judges' conduct and attitude towards high profile cases, as well as towards the parties to the dispute, significantly differed from other “routine cases”.

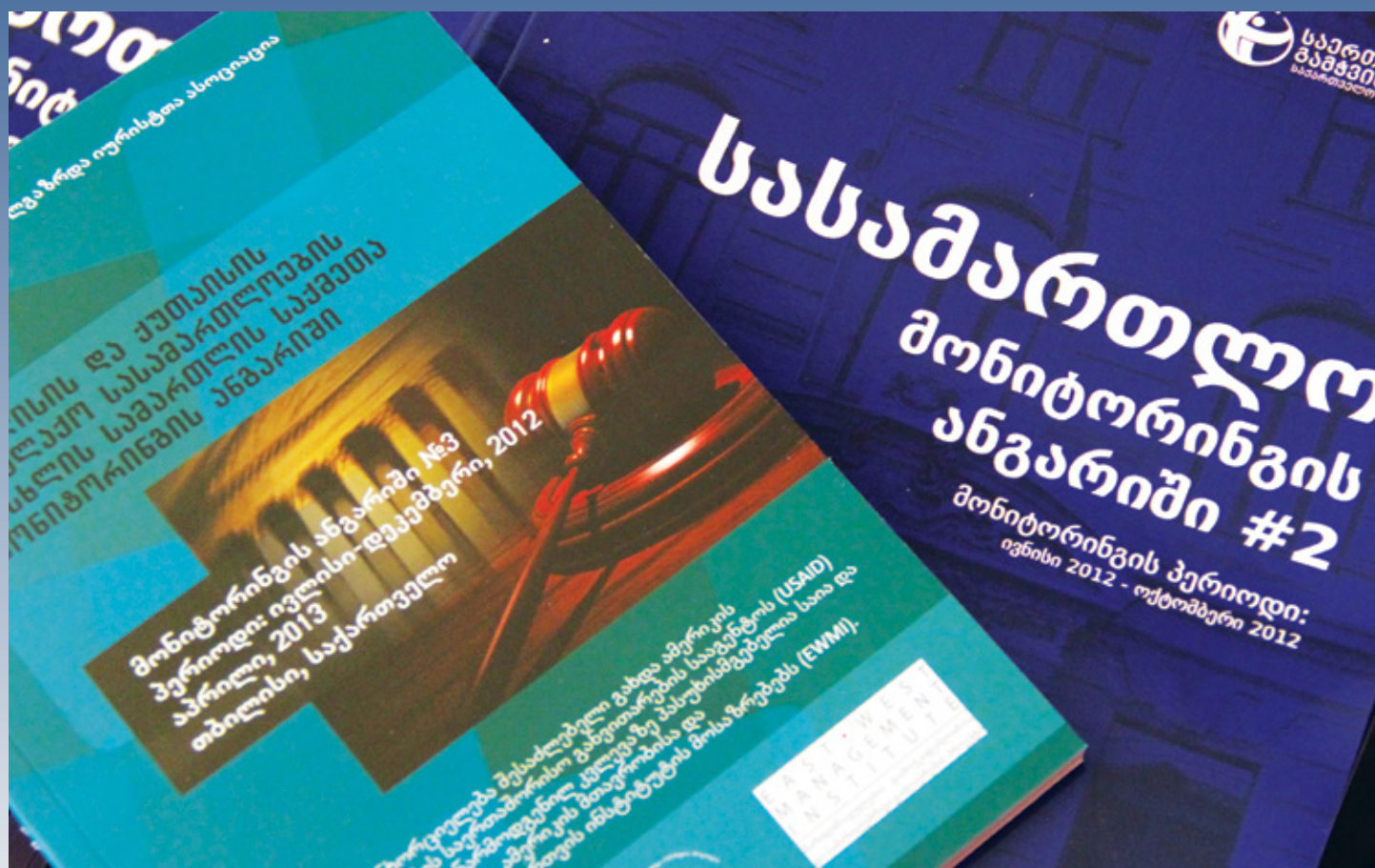
TI Georgia has observed the following violations during the hearings on the high profile cases conducted before the parliamentary elections of October 2012:

The court hindered citizens' right to attend hearings of high public interest by failing to publish the schedule of those hearings and by selecting inappropriately small courtrooms for those cases.

The court's administrative staff refused to provide information on the date and time of the hearings that were postponed for an indefinite period of time.

In cases when judges showed initiative, they did so to put the state party in an advantageous position. The success rate of the state party in administrative court cases is so overwhelming that it, as a rule, raises questions and concerns on the objectivity of the courts.

The report also contains recommendations. Current and former judges, government officials, leaders of opposition political parties, as well as journalists, attended the presentation.



How Political Parties are Financed?

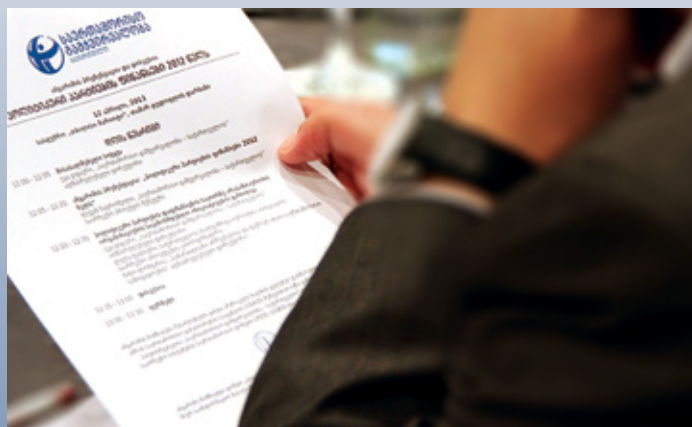
On 12 April, 2013, Transparency International Georgia released a report - Finances of political parties for the year 2012.

The report contains the analysis of the annual financial statements of the nine political parties that took part in the 2012 parliamentary elections independently or within a bloc and received over 1% of the votes.

The revenues received by political parties in 2012 (except for August and September) were distributed as follows: the six parties forming the Georgian Dream coalition received a total of GEL 4, 607,000; the United National Movement received GEL 13,434,000; the Christian-Democratic Movement received GEL 961,000 and the Labor Party received GEL 337,000. A considerable share of the revenues received by the political parties was in form of state financing and donations.

Our monitoring of the State Audit Office activities during the reporting period suggested a tendency to political reprisal rather than a thorough and impartial monitoring of the financing and expenditures of political parties. For instance, there were several cases in 2012 when a considerable part of the then opposition donors were summoned for questioning and were often subjected to threat or pressure. A biased and selective approach by State Audit Office had been repeatedly observed as the office did ignore the activities of the then ruling party while concentrating its financial monitoring on the then opposition parties. The State Audit Office had ignored the activities of the then ruling party.

Election financing legislation had significantly improved compared with the previous period, but serious difficulties still persisted. Sanctions in case of violation of the legislation on the financing of political parties were too harsh, while some of the norms allowed for unduly broad and multiple interpretations.



BBC correspondent Dan Damon's working meeting with Georgian journalists

In late April 2013, Dan Damon, one of the BBC World Service main presenters and a prominent journalist in the UK, paid a visit to Georgia after an invitation by Transparency International Georgia. He has a particularly interesting and diverse experience in covering the world news. Throughout his longstanding career as a journalist, he has often reported for British viewers and listeners from war zones (such as in Bosnia, Croatia, Iraq and etc.).

From 26 to 28 April, TI Georgia organized a media outreach workshop in Signaghi for leading Georgian journalists and newscast producers. Dan Damon conducted a one-day Master Class on April 27, during which he shared his own experience with Georgian colleagues and talked on corruption risks and journalistic ethics.



Kutaisi Office

Activities

Teona Zakarashvili and Tamar Charbadze are our employees in charge of TI Georgia's office in Kutaisi. Tamar Charbadze combines her work as a lawyer with that of a coordinator, while Teona actively supports the beneficiaries requiring free legal aid.

The office in Kutaisi has been functioning since December 2012. Its activities extend to four major areas:

- Monitoring of the activities of local self-government authorities,
- Free legal aid,
- Relations with Parliament,
- Court monitoring.

The Kutaisi office participates in various events organized by the Head Office.

During 2013, the Kutaisi office staff monitored local self-government Competition and Certification Commission activities. They also observed competitions for Kharaguli district Governor and Kutaisi Mayor.

In 2013, the Kutaisi office employees carried out court advocacy in the District/City and Appellate courts on around 20 administrative cases. Almost all of those cases were about sackings from administrative authorities that were in violation of the law. Among the grounds for sacking were: reorganization, redundancy cutdown and disciplinary action.

Among the court advocacy activities carried out by the Kutaisi office employees, protecting the interests of persons dismissed from Kutaisi City Hall was of particular importance. Kutaisi City Mayor sacked 86 department heads and other professionals, and later two Deputy Mayors, naming disciplinary action as ground for dismissal. Kutaisi office staff undertook the legal representation of 12 persons.

The Kutaisi City Court granted the claims of all plaintiffs whose positions had not been abolished but renamed with a different title. It upheld partially the claims of the plaintiffs whose positions had been reduced in the absence of appropriate procedures by the responsible administrative body. The court rejected only 2 claims. Subsequently, the Kutaisi City Hall filed an appeal after such decisions. The Kutaisi Court of Appeal decided to uphold the decisions. Concerning the partially granted claims and the claim rejected, a settlement was reached between the parties.

Kutaisi City Court also granted the claim to annul the Kutaisi City Hall decrees about the discharge of the Deputy Mayors.

With the active participation of Kutaisi office lawyers, 4 of Kutaisi City Hall officials and 1 Zestaphoni Municipality official (Head of Administrative Service Division) were re-instated in their positions, in 3 cases decision was enforced through monetary payment (the former Kutaisi City Hall officials received compensations for lost salary) and in 3 cases former officials returned to their official positions according to reached settlements.

Throughout 2013, Kutaisi local office representatives defended citizens' interests in five administrative cases. In three of these settlements were reached under the Settlement Agreements: the administrative body reappointed the claimants to their positions (from which they had been dismissed in violation of the law). Two of these cases are still under examination - these relate to the reinstatement of the unlawfully dismissed Zestaponi District Administration officials to their positions.

In 2013, Kutaisi local office representatives assisted the claimant Matthias Hutter who had appealed to the Constitutional Court for the deprivation of his right to purchase agricultural following the amendments made to the Law on the Agricultural Land Ownership in June 28, 2013. Under the above amendment, non-Georgian nationals, legal entities registered abroad and foreign legal entities registered in Georgia in accordance with the Georgian legislation are not allowed to purchase agricultural land until December 31, 2014. This provision contradicts Article 21 of the Georgian Constitution that guarantees everyone the right to property as well as Article 14 of the Georgian Constitution securing the right to equality. In that matter, it is worth to note that the Constitutional Court repealed the restrictions on agricultural land acquisition imposed on foreigners and deemed those unconstitutional by a decision rendered on June 26, 2012. Therefore, the claimant requested the Court to rule the act unconstitutional at the preliminary hearing, without a trial on the merits.

During 2013, hearings on 33 administrative cases held at the Kutaisi City Court were actively monitored. 4 monitors attended court hearings on daily basis and monitored their compliance with the requirements of the law based on specially developed questionnaires.

Our organization also monitored criminal proceedings against Vano Merabishvili, the former Prime Minister, and Zurab Chaiaberashvili.

Transparency International Georgia on Radio“Old City”

TI Georgia's Kutaisi local office representatives prepared four radio programs that were aired on Radio “Old City”. The programs had to do with issues of public interest that are especially relevant for Imereti region, such as:

- Civil service recruitment, reorganization and dismissal procedures;
- Property rights, their restriction in case of urgent public necessity, and relevant compensation procedure;
- Local Government Competition and the Certification Commission staffing and operational procedures;
- Freedom of assembly and manifestation and the state's positive obligation to ensure those freedoms;
- Difficulties faces by the population following the Highway and High Speed Railway construction;
- The rights of persons with disabilities;
- Compensations to individuals whose injury was recognized as industrial injury.



The program format did not allowed to ask questions live on the radio. After the program, however, our Kutaisi office received calls from listeners who had further questions concerning the above-mentioned issues.

▪ Meetings

TI Georgia's office in Kutaisi has been cooperating with local media as well as local and international organizations. In this respect, several important meetings were held in 2013.

A special meeting was organized to inform journalists on the court decisions related to the Kutaisi City Hall dismissals. The court hearings were regularly covered by local media as well.

A second meeting was organized with local organizations and media representatives in order to present the results of the “Revolving Door Research”. The report included an assessment of international best practices in the field of post-public employment regulations; identify the gaps in Georgia's current legislation; include case studies of instances where high-ranking officials have moved to the private sector immediately or shortly after leaving public office; and identify the public institutions where the risk of conflicts of interest is higher and stronger regulations are required.

During the 2012 pre-election period, our local office was regularly visited by the NDI observer mission representatives. The issues that were discussed during those visits included the pre-election environment in the region and the general human rights situation.

TI Georgia's local Office in Kutaisi had meetings with the British Ambassador David Moran and the US Embassy Councilor on political issues Benjamin Rinak. Local issues, the pre-election and post-election situation were brought up during the meetings. Ambassador Moran was also briefed on the overall activities of our organization.

During 2013, the Kutaisi Office was actively involved in the monthly meetings of non-governmental organizations operating in the region. At these occasions, as far as their format allowed, our office activities throughout the month in question were mentioned. The meetings also covered current topical issues and planning of joint projects.

Besides, the office collaborates with the student organization The Inky Generation. The students receive regularly information about how to set up a student self-government body and are briefed on their rights; they also are advised on self-government guidelines (including regulations) and shown the best practices on the topic.

A large crowd of people is walking down a city street. The street is lined with trees and historic buildings. The crowd is dense and diverse, with people of various ages and ethnicities. The street is paved with cobblestones. The buildings are made of brick and have many windows. The trees are green and leafy. The sky is blue and clear. The overall atmosphere is lively and festive.

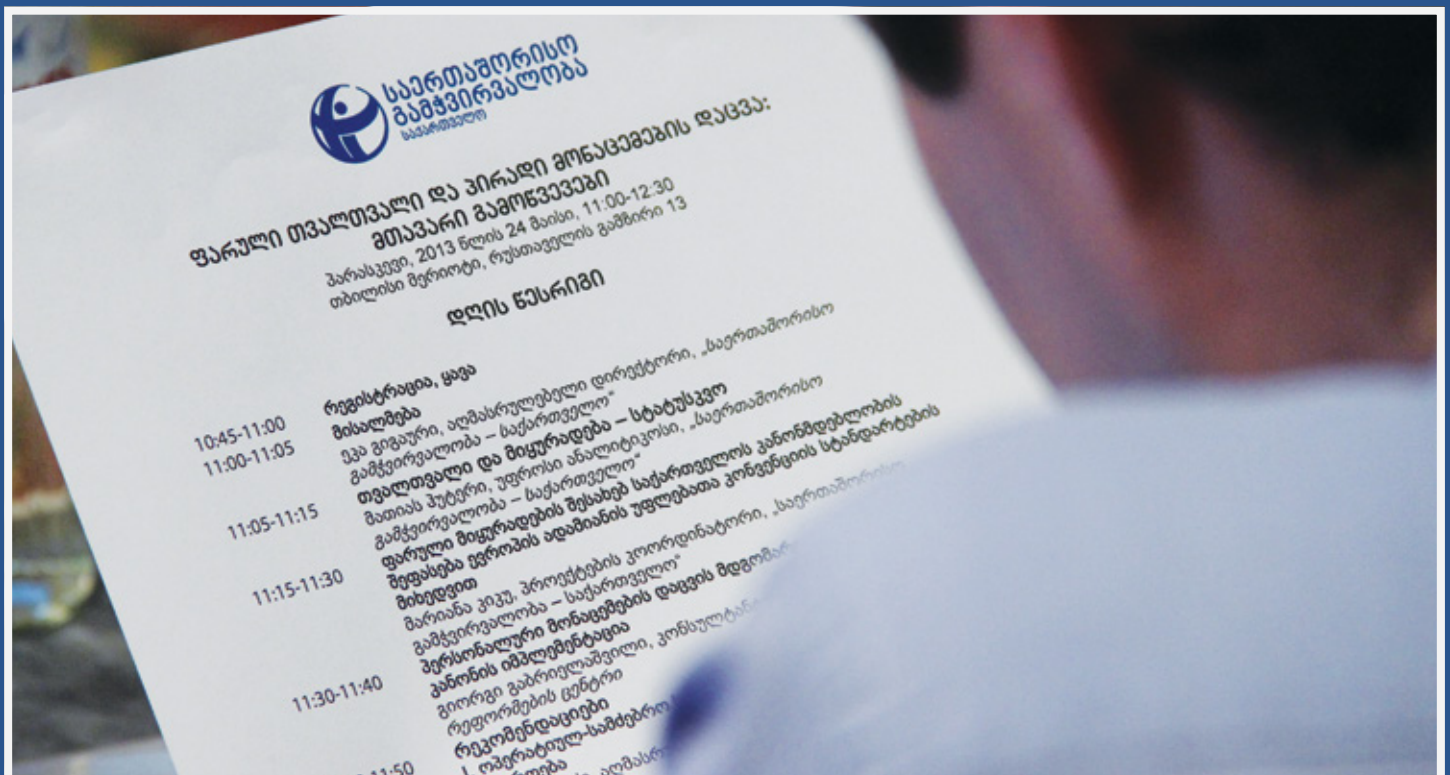
May

24 May Secret Surveillance and Personal Data Protection Moving Forward

Transparency International Georgia issued a report assessing the Georgian legislation on secret surveillance and its compliance to international standards established by the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The study showed that the current legislation regulating the secret surveillance and interception mechanisms, regrettably, does not meet the terms with international standards and requires legislative adjustments in order to avoid future infringements of privacy.

The report emphasizes the persistent problem within the Interior Ministry as it maintains special 'black boxes' in offices to have a direct and uncontrolled access to data of the telecommunications operators and to monitor all types of communications between private entities. According to telecom insiders, the authorities have the technical capacity to monitor 21,000 mobile phone numbers at the same time. The problem is further exacerbated by the fact that there is no effective oversight mechanism in place to monitor secret surveillance and interception.



Don't eavesdrop!

Secret surveillance and interception in Georgia

There was much discussion about the Ministry of Internal Affairs being able to secretly listen to or watch anybody without an appropriate court decision. The suspicions were confirmed in October 2012 when 28,687 files of secretly surveyed and recorded materials were discovered at the Ministry of Interior. In fact, the recordings mostly contained material about meetings, offices and houses of government officials, opposition political parties, their activists and various individuals holding key positions, as well as individuals involved in opposition movement. Part of the recordings consisted of intimate video footages.

This fact attracted wide public attention. On 15 August, 2013, the government decided to set up a Commission with the prime objective to list, analyze, and decide on the eventual destruction or preservation of the illegally recorded material discovered. The Committee comprised government, media and civil sector representatives, TI Georgia Executive Director Eke Gigauro participated in the Committee.

On September 5, 2013, the Commission publicly destroyed 110 electronic discs. They contained intimate life scenes of individuals placed under surveillance. The recordings that did not contain intimate life scenes were handed over to investigative bodies who were tasked to identify the officials taking and carrying out the decisions on illegal surveillance.

At the same time, the Parliament initiated a draft law with the aim of improving the legislation in question and to prevent further abuse of power as well as illegal deprivation of the right to privacy. A special working group was set up in the Parliament to work on these issues, which also include several members from our organization.

However, the existence of special 'black boxes' in the Ministry of Internal Affairs' offices since 2005 enabling the law enforcement agencies to directly, without any control, access data of the communications operators remains a significant challenge.

TI Georgia's main objective is to establish an oversight mechanism that would secure the right to privacy as well as other rights upheld by the Georgian Constitution and international laws and to prevent further government abuse in the area of personal privacy



Active Citizen - Accountable Government Student Competition for the Best Essay

To encourage active citizenship in Georgia, TI Georgia announced a Student Competition, Active Citizen - Accountable Government, during the spring of 2013. The competition was conceived for students who enjoy writing about current “hot topics” and who wish to be better at holding governments accountable.

By the rules of the competition, students were required to write a short analysis that would highlight a problem related to government accountability. The participants were given the freedom to independently select the research topic and one of the local or central government agencies.

At the end of May 2013, TI Georgia had received eight papers.

The papers were assessed by a qualified jury. The winner of the competition is Marine Kapanadze, a second year student from Free University Law School, who received an iPad for her paper “The level of Transparency and Information Capacity of Samtskhe-Javakheti Municipality Websites” (<http://personal.crocodoc.com/hCL6UDn>). The second prize, a Kindle, was awarded to Nino Tchovelidze, a GIPA student, for the paper “How Accessible is the Tbilisi City Hall Public Information for Citizens” (<http://personal.crocodoc.com/JZPXQz5>). The third prize, another Kindle, was awarded to Ketevan Lursmanashvili, a 4th- year undergraduate student of Ilia state university Business department, for the paper “Analysis of a local self-government budget intended expenditure, staffing policy and its effects” (<http://personal.crocodoc.com/TWLCHwb>).





June

We Are Tired of Receiving Spam SMS! What about You?

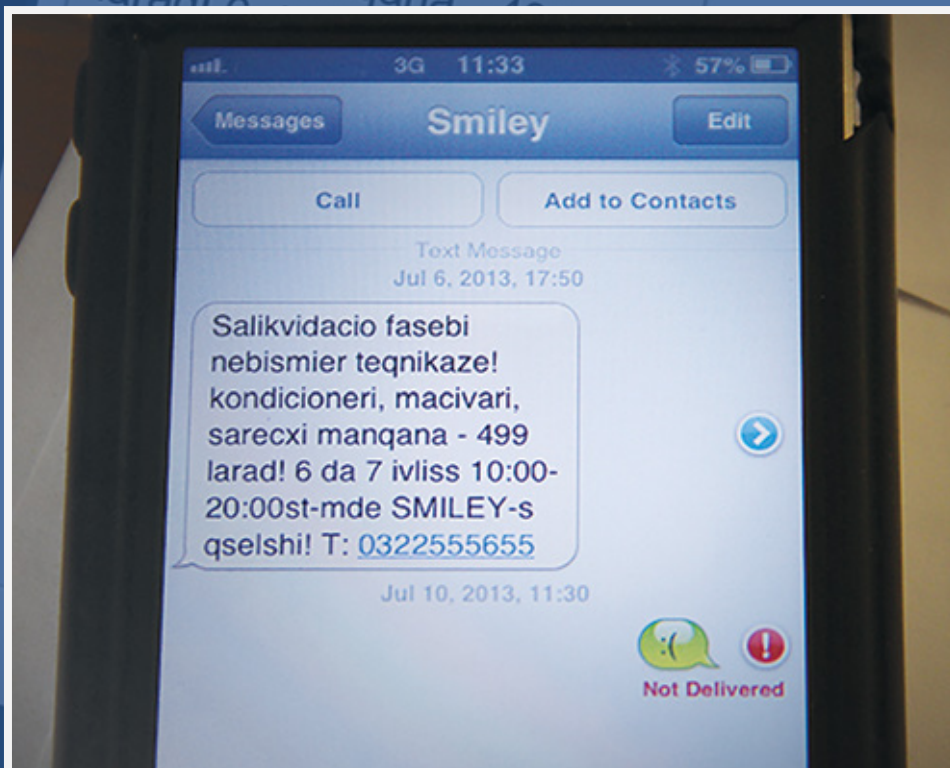
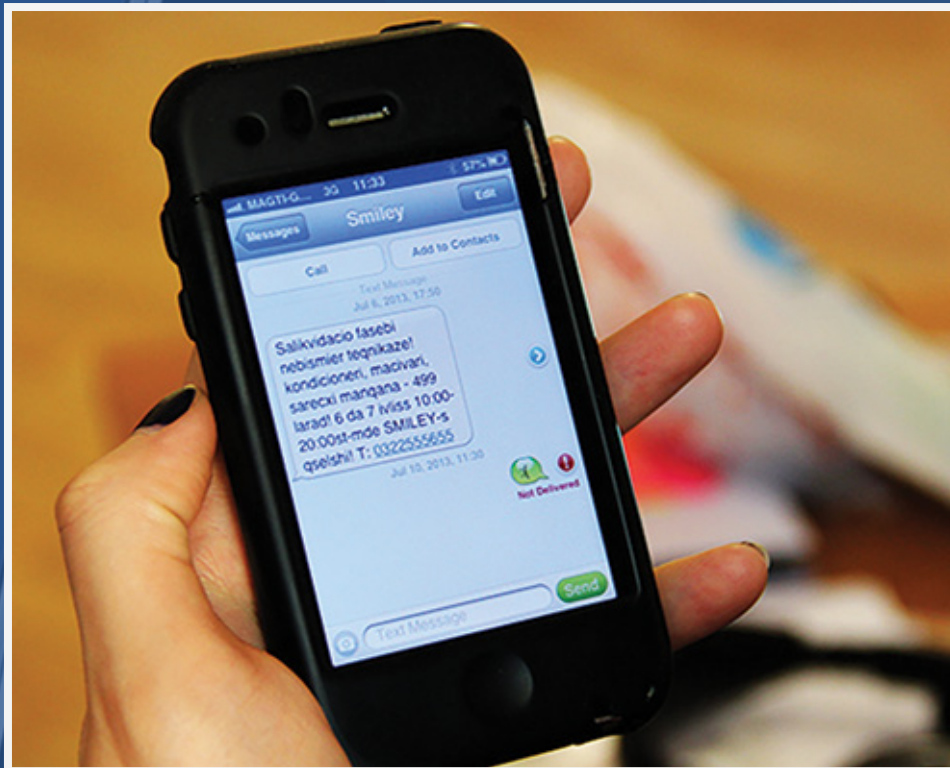
If you have a mobile phone in Georgia, you probably receive several advertising SMS messages per week, maybe even several messages per day. These messages are often sent to promote various products and services by companies you have never heard. The unsolicited spam SMS violates people's right to privacy and threatens the safety of personal data.

Due to the urgency of the matter, TI Georgia launched a campaign to counter the unsolicited spam advertising-SMS and its related challenges. Our aim was to raise awareness on the issues of confidentiality and personal data protection. In reality, on the basis of our survey, we found out that the Georgian public did not really understand those above-mentioned issues.

Transparency International Georgia's anti spam SMS campaign has gained significant attention after we published the list of companies that periodically send out unsolicited mobile ads, violating the Law on Personal Data Protection.

After the launch of the campaign, TI Georgia received numerous emails and comments from consumers, asking us how to protect their privacy and request companies to stop spamming them. In response, TI Georgia published several blog posts that contained explanations of the relevant consumer rights and urged the companies to take social responsibility and act in accordance with the law.

For a long time, private companies took advantage of the fact that they could not be held accountable for violating the law, as up until 2016 the Personal Data Protection Inspector will have limited powers. Therefore, the main challenge was to adjust the legislation. TI Georgia made its own contribution to developing the draft on the unauthorized spam SMS advertizing. The process was led by the Personal Data Protection Inspector Office. Importantly, the amendments, among other things, aimed to introduce a simple mechanism to unsubscribe from receiving unwanted advertising messages, which should stop unauthorized dissemination of advertisements.



28 June–How competitive is the Georgian advertising market?

TI Georgia conducted one additional survey of the advertising market in order to assess developments in the Georgian advertising sector after the 2012 parliamentary elections. The survey findings were summed up in the report *The Georgian Advertising Market – Competition at Last?* TI Georgia hold a presentation of the report for approximately 50 representatives of media outlets, advertising agencies and advertising customers.

The survey found out that shortly after the change of government in 2012, the structure of the advertising market saw significant changes as it became more competitive. “Politics no longer plays a significant role in the allocation of advertising budgets. Companies at this point do not appear to practice self-censorship when planning marketing budgets”, - states the report.

At the presentation, the authors of the survey also highlighted that the Georgian advertising market has not grown in recent years, which has a negative impact on the independence and sustainable development of Georgian media. TI Georgia believes that the private advertising market has stagnated because of perceived political uncertainty.



A photograph of a meeting or conference. In the foreground, three people are seated at a table. On the left, a woman with dark hair is looking towards the camera. In the center, a man with a beard and balding head is wearing a headset and looking forward. On the right, a man with glasses and grey hair is looking towards the right. In the background, another man in a suit is standing. The table has several water bottles and microphones. A large, semi-transparent grey box with the word 'July' in yellow is in the upper right corner.

July

9 July – Global Corruption Barometer

According to the findings of the new survey conducted by Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, only 4% of Georgians stated that they had paid a bribe in the past 12 months (during the 2010 survey, 3% of respondents had answered this question positively). Georgia is among the countries with the lowest rate of individuals acknowledging that they have paid a bribe among the 107 countries in which the survey was carried out. On the whole, more than one out of four people (27%) around the world said that they had paid a bribe in the previous 12 months.

However, corruption remains a concern for many Georgians. When asked in September 2012 which institutions they perceived as the most affected by corruption, 51% of respondents described the judiciary as extremely or very corrupt. Other sectors perceived as extremely or very corrupt were the media (42%), Parliament (34%) and health care providers (33%). The institutions perceived as least corrupt were religious organizations (81% saying it was not corrupt at all or had very little corruption), the military (73%) and non-governmental organizations (71%).

In Georgia, the survey was performed by the Institute for Polling & Marketing (IPM) for Transparency International, which interviewed 1,000 Georgians face to face across the country (except Abkhazia and South Ossetia) in September 2012. The Global Corruption Barometer, carried out by the Secretariat of Transparency International in Berlin, is the only worldwide public opinion survey on views and experiences of corruption. The 2013 Global Corruption Barometer reflects the responses of 114,270 people in 107 countries.

"The results underline that there is a strong need for a continuing reform of the judiciary, which has been started in recent months. But we also need extend reforms to the prosecutor's office, which remains a very powerful body that often appears to be highly politicized rather than being a body that is truly independent from the government, so that citizens develop a strong trust in the independence and fairness of law enforcement and the court system", affirmed Eka Gigauri, TI Georgia's Executive Director after the release of the survey.

The survey also highlights that in Georgia, nepotism in the public sector is still a challenge. Asked about the role of personal contacts in dealing with government agencies, 38% of respondents stated that contacts were important, 15% said they were very important (28% stated that contacts were of no or little importance). Asked if they would report an incident of corruption, 63% of Georgian respondents said they would file a complaint. Of those, 49% said they would report it to a government hotline (which does not exist in Georgia). A large share of respondents who said they would not report corruption stated that it would not make any difference (46%); more than a quarter said they didn't know where to report corruption and 21% of respondents said they were afraid of consequences.



15

July

Presentation of the Code of Ethics for Georgian MPs

Transparency International Georgia actively cooperates with the Parliament and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on the issues related to Parliamentary Ethics. In April 2012, as a result of this cooperation, Transparency International Georgia conducted a survey aimed at finding out the main reasons why the “2004 Code of Ethics of Members of Parliament” had failed in eradicating instances of improper conduct

Based on the findings of the survey, TI Georgia submitted the newly elected parliament a number of recommendations dealing with the adjustment of the Code of Ethics System, including:

- The incorporation of the Code into the Parliament Regulations;
- Requiring the MPs to publicly sign the document and swear allegiance to its principles before assuming office;
- Raising both the MPs and the general public's awareness on the Code.

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights organized the survey presentation for the previous as well as current members of Parliament. The last conference, held on July 15, 2013, was attended by Davit Usupashvili, the Speaker of Parliament, who expressed his active support for TI Georgia's recommendations. He has come up with the initiative to set up a special working group consisting of MPs, civil society representatives and experts, which will develop a mandatory Code of Ethics for members of Parliament based on best international practices. Transparency International Georgia will be actively involved in this process.



Zugdidi office



Activities

Transparency International Georgia's Zugdidi office has been operational since September 2012. In 2013, it was actively involved in the monitoring of Zugdidi district budget drafting, adoption, and expenditure.

It is worth to note that Zugdidi municipality incorporated several of our recommendations in the 2014 budget, including the following recommendations:

- to increase the number of the food pantry beneficiaries,
- to build social housing for vulnerable and indigent citizens instead of a one time GEL 100 assistance,
- to introduce municipal transport benefits for the Khurcha village population (situated at a conflict zone) and for and vulnerable students.

Scrutinizing the distribution of bonuses and financial assistance to civil servants is part of the Zugdidi municipality budget expenditure monitoring. Having processed the information obtained from the region's local authorities and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti Regional Administration, TI Georgia's Zugdidi office published complete assessment on salary increments and bonuses issued to officials, and specifically recommended the administrative bodies to change the rules for issuing bonuses. Nevertheless, these recommendations have had no consequences so far.

Zugdidi office, in cooperation with local authorities, examined the activities of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti majority Parliament Members' bureaus. It turned out that the bureaus have added similar number of employees. While some of the bureaus appeared to be more actively involved in government activities, others seemed more passive. Unfortunately, most of these bureaus are only receiving requests from citizens and do not actively seek information related to municipal problems. In that sense, they do not find themselves in the position to petition colleagues and the executive authorities so that to find a solution to those problems.

Another issue examined by Zugdidi Office during 2013 concerns the monitoring of the websites of the region's local self-government authorities. The study found out that the local authorities in question often published a limited amount of the relevant public information. Our office invited the web administrators and public relations representatives the municipalities, showed them the monitoring findings, and gave specific recommendations. It should be noted that some municipality websites started to publish more information after the meeting.

In 2013, our Zugdidi office studied the situation at the municipality landfill site. The study results were posted on one of Transparency International Georgia's websites (Beyond Tbilisi). It turned out that the landfill is not properly fenced and livestock can easily penetrate it. The situation requires immediate attention to save the environment from even greater damage.

In the same 2013, our Zugdidi office organized several public discussions in the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE), which were attended by the governmental and non-governmental sectors, media representatives and students. The discussions intended to enhance public awareness and increase the accountability of public officials.

The most significant public discussions concerned:

- The Zugdidi Municipality draft budget for 2014,
- The draft law on the amendments to the Georgian Law on the Occupied Territories,
- The draft Organic Law on Local Self-Governance Code.
- In addition, our office had a special discussion dedicated to the Zugdidi street rehabilitation and civic activism.

TI International Georgie is convinced that such meetings are vital and give citizens greater opportunities to engage in local processes.

Meetings in the villages

What do the locals know about self-government? How well are they informed about their rights and obligations? Have they ever participated in the Council (Sakrebulo) meetings? Have they ever requested public information from state agencies? What do they do if their property, religion, or other constitutional rights are violated?

Our Zugdidi office had been trying to seek answers to these questions from Zugdidi residents throughout the entire year. TI Georgia had 30 meetings in the District Territorial Bodies together with its partner organizations - Civil Monitoring and Research Center, and "Atinati" association. This was made possible through winning

the competition for the project "Community Involvement for Democratic Self-Government" announced by the Eurasia Partnership Foundation. The common project began in July 2013 and lasted six months. In the framework of this project, our organization met local college students in addition to the residents of the villages, and held seminars on governance issues. Simultaneously, it published monthly reports on municipal issues, including the situation in kindergartens, public contracts; city parking system and the cleaning service improvement. A separate study was devoted to the dire situation in Onaria settlement. This latter project was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).



Guests of the organization

During the 2012 pre-election period, our Zugdidi office hosted a number of representatives from different international missions and the foreign diplomatic corps. At the meeting with the EU Election Observation Mission, the general situation in Zugdidi, budget priorities, and the IDPs living conditions were discussed. The focus during the meetings with NDI, on the other hand, was the pre-election environment and the activities of the political subjects. On September 17, 2013, our local Office was visited by the US Ambassador to Georgia, Richard Norland. The Ambassador's questions concerned the pre-election environment and violations found by Transparency International Georgia. On October 10, a discussion was held on the same topic with the Ambassador of Estonia to Georgia, Priit Turk. At a latter date, Richard Norland paid another visit to Zugdidi on October 25. Our Zugdidi office organized a meeting with Ambassador Norland and the representatives of the NGOs monitoring the pre-election activities.





Listen to 105.9 FM-In Samegrelo or www.radioatinati.ge!

On February 14, 2013, "Atinati" Radio aired the first live joint radio program "Our self-government", which is a joint work of Transparency International – Georgia's Zugdidi office and the "Atinati" Association." The program preparation and launching was possible under the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the TI Georgia representation and the Association. Every Thursday, during half-an-hour, (starting from 16:05), the programme is devoted to a discussion on different difficulties faced by residents in Zugdidi and the ways to resolve them. Invited guests at various times were: students, school teachers, preschool caregivers, architects, agricultural specialists. The programme even hosted the Zugdidi Shalva Dadiani State Drama Theatre manager, various Zugdidi City Council and District Administration officials, civil society representatives, and not least the Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia and representatives of the Public Defender's office. The program turned into a platform for public discussions around issues such as how to enhance the accountability of public officials and how to achieve a more active engagement of citizens in the process.



August

მეჭვირვალეობა – საქართველო
INTERNATIONAL
V.TRANSPAR



Interns in TI Georgia Offices

We have been implementing our internship program for many years. 15 of the 45 TI Georgia employees are former interns. During a three-month internship period, the interns, most of them students, are actively involved in the organization's day-to-day activities and acquire practical skills. In 2013, Transparency International Georgia had three internship programs. The first group of trainees served internship from February through May. We take this opportunity to thank Mariam Sakhvadze, Nino Balarjishvili, Mariam Kvaratshkelia, and Mariam Begadze.

TI Georgia had four new interns over the period from May to August 2013. After completing the internship program, two of them became our employees- Tamar Gzirishvili is involved in the anti-corruption reforms research and Pelagia Makhauri works as the office assis-

tant. The other two interns - Gvanca Ichkiti and Nino Karanadze - continue their studies abroad. We are happy that talented and motivated young people are members of our organization.

The last round of our 2013 internship program started in September. Giorgi Gugenishvili, Mariam Darakhvelidze, Revaz Tkhemadze, Teona Jincharadze, and Tornike Dزامunashvili worked with us until December. They actively participated in the activities of our organization and were involved in the election-monitoring mission.

We hope that the three months spent with Transparency International Georgia were a stimulating experience for all the interns and that the skills acquired by working in our organization will help them build their careers. We wish success to all of them!





Career in Transparency International Georgia



Paata Lokhishvili
HR Manager

In conjunction with its increasing staff number, Transparency International Georgia needed to develop an effective tool of human resource management. Therefore, the first stage, we managed to develop human resource management policies at the Action Plan level.

At the second stage, from August 2014, Transparency International Georgia started to implement the pre-planned operations and activities. To this effect, we developed a new organizational structure, a flexible and efficient system of internal communication and coordination, and introduced new versions of human resource management documentation, data types and electronic databases.

At the same time, Transparency International Georgia went ahead with internal researches and regular analysis of statistical data in terms of human resource management. A unified and transparent system of recruitment was set up enabling interested persons to start and develop their careers within the organization. In addition, we consistently ensure a certain number of our employees to be foreign nationals, which contributes to a comfortable working environment and helps generate interesting ideas.

It is important to note that Transparency International Georgia developed a special policy for its staff training and career development. As a result, each employee has the opportunity to upgrade his/her skills, and do various certification courses and trainings. In that manner, they are able to enhance their work efficiency and productivity. At the same time, we conduct periodic analysis of the results and the work done by the employees using up-to-date system of motivation and evaluation and ensure their career advancement equal with their achievements.



September



September - Transparency International Georgia is preparing to Monitor the Presidential Elections Day and the organization's Observer Mission

Transparency International Georgia has observed elections since 2006. Nevertheless, we launched our first large-scale election observation mission at the occasion of the 2012 parliamentary elections and monitored over 300 polling stations across the country. In so doing, we managed to acquire the necessary experience and skills in order to conduct our observation mission during the 2013 presidential elections.

We started to get prepared for the presidential elections from September. We took the decision to monitor 330 polling stations across the country, covering 66 of the existing 73 districts. Sampling sites were selected at random. In addition to stationary observers, TI Georgia deployed 40 mobile observation teams that were assigned

to monitor the overall electoral processes.

The recruitment of volunteers for the mission started as early as in September 2013. Although there was no financial incentive, many volunteered, mostly students, as they wanted to take active part in - as they believed - crucial process taking place in the country. By the end of September, we had managed to recruit around 350 volunteers who, after participating in the trainings, were ready to participate in the mission. One of the main criteria for selecting a volunteer was to be non-partisan. The selected volunteers underwent a one-day training session organized by our lawyers. Transparency International Georgia covered the Presidential elections across the entire country.



13 September–Digital Broadcasting: a Reality in Georgia from 2015



On 17 June 2015, Georgia switched over to digital broadcasting, which was regarded as the most important event in the field of broadcasting since the invention of color TV. Digital switchover is a complicated and lengthy process and it was clear from the very outset that civil sector involvement would be extremely important for ensuring its efficiency and transparency.

Digital switchover became a priority for TI Georgia. During 2013, we periodically held meetings with government agencies as well as representatives of TV companies and jointly discussed the different options aimed at ensuring a quick and effective process.

In September 2013, Transparency International Georgia presented its own vision of the digital switchover. This vision is detailed in a thorough document that was forwarded to broadcasters, telecommunications companies, the Georgian National Communications Commission, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. The document also contains recommendations for the appropriate government agencies.

Let's Protect the Landscaped Areas in Tbilisi!

In 2013, Transparency International Georgia resumed its scrutiny of the Tbilisi City Hall's City Service for Ecology and Greening activities (our 2012 study of the bid announced by the Tbilisi City Hall for the procurement of trees to be planted in Baratashvili Street sparked a massive outcry)

The article posted on Transparency International Georgia blog in April 2013 focused on the dangers of corruption displayed in the bids announced by the Tbilisi City Hall for the procurement of services to cut down, pollard, and prune trees in the Tbilisi territory. Remarkably, our suspicions were largely confirmed by the City Hall Service for Ecology and Greening audit report, released by the State Auditor's Office a few months later.

As early as April 2013, Transparency International Georgia released information about the City Hall continuing to cooperate with Green service, a company in the Procurement Agency's Black List at that time, with which the City Hall discontinued the contracts in 2012, following our publication.

In August 2013, Transparency International Georgia responded to the construction of a restaurant in one of Tbilisi's recreation zones - Turtle Lake area. An article was published containing information on how the land was transferred into the ownership of a company related to the MP Archil Gegnava.



Batumi office

TI Georgia's office in Batumi monitors the work of Adjara Autonomous Republic (AAR) Supreme Council, as well as Batumi City Council (Sakrebulo) activities and court cases. Furthermore, the office is engaged in the government commissions both with the right to vote and as an observer. The office lawyers are primarily involved with providing citizens free legal aid.

During 2013, the Batumi Office was actively associated in the 2004 Batumi City budget discussion during which TI Georgia made comments concerning the financing of unprofitable projects. Our comments were taken into consideration and the authorities had to take local needs into wider consideration.

Collecting information on bonuses issued by local municipalities and local projects is part of the local Self-government Budget Monitoring. The data on bonuses and projects are obtained through filing FOI requests, after which the material is analyzed. In 2013, the Batumi Office released information on salary supplements issued in AAR. TI Georgia submitted the AAR Government recommendations to enhance transparency and impartiality when issuing bonuses, albeit the authorities, like in other regions, continued with such old practices.

TI Georgia's Batumi office prepared its first report on the work of the bureaus of AAR majority MPs. The report focused on the research of the efficacy of these bureaus and identification of the number of issues initiated by them on both legislative and local government levels. The survey found the MPs' activities in this respect to be very low (almost nonexistent); they are chiefly preoccupied with responding to the citizens' complaints. Our Batumi office plans to publish reports containing the analysis of the above bureaus on a 6-month basis.

Batumi Office guests

During the preparation for October 2013 presidential elections, as well as in the course of elections, TI Georgia's Batumi office was frequently visited by all long-term and short-term international observers from the United States, Switzerland, Belgium, Finland, and Kazakhstan. Our organization often provided them assistance. In particular, we explained them the specificities of the AAR region. We were particularly honored by meeting the British Ambassador to Georgia, Alexandra Hall as she came on a visit in Batumi during the elections.

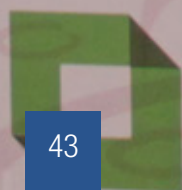


In October 2013, our organization was invited by the U.S. Ambassador to Georgia, Richard Norland, to participate in the intercultural dialogue on religious tolerance. Religious tolerance is paid serious attention in Adjara as several ethnic minorities have traditionally lived in the region. Disturbances caused by the dismantling of the minaret in Chela village in October 2013 accentuated the need to start a dialogue between different religious beliefs. Batumi office played a mediating role during the meeting. Later on, in November 2013, our Regional Coordinator attended the 20th anniversary ceremony of the cooperation between the United States and Georgia, a ceremony that took place aboard the Mount Whitney, an American warship.

One of the key activities of our Batumi office is to monitor the tenders announced by the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. Our attention was particularly brought to the tender invitation announced for the purchase of a car for the Supreme Council Chairman, car that cost GEL 83,000. Our organization actively collaborated with the media and informed the Central government thereof. As a result, the tender was canceled. However, the issues are still widely discussed in the region.

The Office organized presentations for children in Adjara's six public schools within the Anti-Corruption Week program. In addition, a symbolic action was held in the least landscaped neighborhoods, the so-called "Refugees District", during which evergreen trees were planted. The media provided a positive coverage of the activities carried out by the representation.

October



27 October

Presidential Election monitoring

Transparency International Georgia monitored the 2013 presidential elections. It deployed 370 local observers. Our stationary observers were assigned to monitor the whole election process at 330 randomly selected polling stations in 66 out of 73 districts across the country.

The electoral process was generally held in a calm environment during the day. Our monitors did not observe a single case of misuse of administrative resources and direct pressure or intimidation of voters.

TI Georgia identified 80 serious procedural violations across the country and our observers filed 36 complaints.



November

True Stories



Maya Gvantseladze's Case

"In 1992 I illegally took hold of the land adjacent to the Grmaghele metro station and built a small shop. I know my action was a violation of the law, but I had to support my family and it was the only opportunity at that time "- said Maya Gvantseladze to TI Georgia's Legal Aid Center lawyers in 2012 from whom she sought advice. As it turned out, Maya Gvantseladze, in compliance with the law, applied to the Ownership Rights Commission on the Recognition of the Right of Ownership of Land Belongings to (in use of) Individuals and Legal Entities and requested a land ownership recognition and transfer certificate request. However, the Commission did not consider her store as a permanent structure, which was supposed to be a key preconditions for the recognition of her property rights, and refused to issue Maya Gvantseladze the certificate of ownership. It was clear that the state had limited Maya Gvantseladze's property rights. Therefore, the organization's lawyer, Zurab Gvelesiani, looked deeper into the case.

Due to the illegal and groundless rejection of the request by the commission, the dispute continued in the court in 2013. TI Georgia's Legal Aid Center helped Maya Gvantseladze to defend her rights in all three court instances. It was through our lawyers' efforts that the Court of Appeal granted Gvantseladze's claim and mandated the Property Rights Commission to reexamine her application. The court decision has already been enforced and the Property Rights Commission recognized Maya Gvantseladze's ownership on the arbitrarily occupied land.

Assistance to Maya Gvantseladze was provided within Transparency International Georgia's Judicial Monitoring and Legal Assistance Program. The program aims to promote judicial independence and improve the quality of justice system. The program also provides free legal assistance to community on property rights issues. Advocacy for justice system reform is also carried out within the program. The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development and is implemented through East-West Management Institute.



Leila Narimanidze's Case

During the election campaign, from June 28 to October 2012, the Public Registry registered 487,569 Agricultural lands under a Government Resolution, without any documentation, and even issued relevant registration extracts confirming the ownership on those lands. Due to the scale of the project, the public registry action had affected a vast number of people, Leila Narimanidze being one of them. She purchased land registered by the Public Registry within the above project, but the Public Registry refused to register the land based on the contract of sale since there was no document confirming the seller's ownership of the property.

Leila Narimanidze's interests in court were defended by Transparency International Georgia's lawyers. Her claim was granted on 16 December 2013, as the court deemed Public Registry's refusal to register the contract illegal and directed Public Registry to register the property. This decision is important insofar as it is the first decision of its kind concerning this issue, and which, we hope, will establish a correct practice to restore the rights of persons affected by Public Registry's illegal registration.

Assistance to Leila Narimanidze was provided within Transparency International Georgia's Judicial Monitoring and Legal Assistance Program. The program aims to promote judicial independence and improve the quality of justice system. The program also provides free legal assistance to community on property rights issues. Another aspect of the program is advocacy for justice system reform. The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development and is implemented through East-West Management Institute. The organization also has a free Legal Aid Center whose main purpose is to examine property rights violations and unlawful dismissals as well as offering legal aid. The center is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.



Khelvachauri “Dream City” in Tents

This is a story of people living in Khelvachauri, on the territory of former Russian military base. TI Georgia looked at the dire social conditions of thousands of persons and decided on the World Children’s Day to specially highlight the infringed rights of the children living in the “Dream City”.

In October 2012, thousands of vulnerable families settled on the territory of the former Russian military base in Khelvachauri administrative district of Batumi. In a very short time 3000 huts were put on a total of 90 thousand hectares. Thousands of people from Shuakhvei, Keda, Kobuleti, Khikhadziri, Tsalka, and Guria settled in the open field hoping to find a better life. Over time, of the 3,000 families 832 remained (their decision to settle down was influenced by political parties, or the governors in the pre-election period).

These families with small children have to struggle for survival in a poor environment, without water, electricity or natural gas. The situation becomes especially difficult in windy and rainy weather, when water and cold penetrates their narrow lodgings. This is an example of a humanitarian crisis.

Such individuals have been using our free legal aid since October 2013. TI Georgia’s Batumi Office acts as a mediator 24 hours a day with the authorities to help them solve their problems. It was through our mediation and recommendations that a collective electric meter was installed in the settlement. It was a great joy for those who lived in complete isolation for more than a year.

It is also worth to note that during a strong snowfall in December 2013, the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara supplied “Dream City” settlement with hot meals at TI Georgia’s request. The photographs and TI Georgia’s address to the Adjara government posted on our website attracted the attention of the diplomatic corps employees working on human rights issues who visited the Adjara Ombudsman to resolve the above problems. Building municipal houses is a priority for TI Georgia’s Batumi office and it continues to support and assist the most vulnerable groups.

Transparency International Georgia explores Khelvachauri “Dream City” problem within the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency project. One of the project components is to improve local government accountability and responsiveness to local problems.





Highway construction causing problems in the villages of Imereti

Due to the construction of the highway, 20 families from Argveti village were obliged to concede their agricultural lands situated along the highway to the state. As the repurchase price offered by the state was rejected by the owners as unacceptable, our organization provided consultations to the local population on expropriation procedures and mechanisms for determining the alternative price. However, due to costs required for alternative price setting and litigation expenses, the village residents finally accepted the price previously offered.

Because of the construction of the highway, other families in Shorapani village are also unable to use their land, while the population of Tsiplnari village has been left without any road. The contracting company did not pay appropriate compensation to them. No alternative road had been constructed as of June 2013. The population have been provided on-site consultations. To solve the problem, TI Georgia contacted the Georgian Railway administration.

At the same time, the construction of the highway damaged houses in Kvishkhethi village, some of them even becoming improper for habitation. The information obtained was transferred to the Department of Highways. Our representative attended the meeting gathering Department of Highways, the construction companies and local government officials with the local residents.

Monitoring the highway construction was made possible within the project funded by Open Society – Georgia Foundation. The aim of the project is to identify facts of property deprivation across the country. The project also envisages providing legal assistance to affected persons, informing people living in the regions about how to register property and legalize land. Within the project, advocacy campaign is also underway to improve the legislation regulating the property rights.

Perevisa village in Chiatura Municipality

After meeting Perevisa residents and on-site visits, it was established that the mining works conducted by Georgian Manganese damages the houses and makes the soil unusable. A meeting with the Georgian Manganese administration, on the other hand, revealed that the company pays compensation to families owing land situated in the vicinity of the mining works. Compensations are also paid if an interested individual submits the company a report drawn up by an authoritative entity confirming the harm incurred as a consequence of the mining activities.

Perevisa village residents were given appropriate explanation. After a meeting with TI Georgia representatives, Georgian Manganese administration offered some residents compensation.

Assistance to Perevisa village residents was made possible within Transparency International Georgia's Judicial Monitoring and Legal Assistance Program. The program aims to promote judicial independence and improve the quality of justice system. The program also provides free legal assistance to community on property rights issues. Another aspect of the program is advocacy for justice system reform. The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development and is implemented through East-West Management Institute. The organization also has a free Legal Aid Center whose main purpose is to examine property rights violations and unlawful dismissals as well as offering legal aid. The center is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.



Kakhaber Machitidze Fire Safety and Rescue Service Twice-Dismissed Head

Kutaisi City Hall dismissed Kakhaber Machitidze, the Head of the Fire Safety and Rescue Department - twice within three months.

He was first dismissed on June 24, 2013, for reorganization reasons, while the grounds for his second dismissal were disciplinary sanctions. In both cases, the decision was appealed in Kutaisi City Court. In the first case, the dismissal was deemed illegal and the city hall was directed to immediately reinstate Mr. Machitidze in his position and reimburse his lost salary. Although the court decision is mandatory, the City Hall did enforce it only after the commencement of enforcement proceedings with almost a month delay.

Mr. Machitidze, who reinstated on his position of Head of the Fire Safety and Rescue Service, took office on 16 September 2013. However, within 4 days after his restoration, a new dismissal procedure began. Initially, his attendance at work was controlled at one occasion and it was found out that he was not present at this office at the time. Not being in the office proved to be sufficient grounds for the Kutaisi Mayor to launch a new procedure for his dismissal. It seems that the City government realized that only one absence would not be enough to dismiss Mr. Machitidze, who had not previously committed any disciplinary offense. That is why they started to engage "additional forces" and prepare a second and a more serious inspection. On September 30, two auditors, accepted as such in the Audit and Control Service 4 days prior, were commissioned to audit the Fire Safety and Rescue Service head's activities. This time too, the City Hall was open in its intent- to investigate not the entire Service activities but only its former and current head. After a one-month inspection, the Audit and Control Department came up with a report and required the dismissal of Mr. Machitidze, without even discussing any violations. As a result, Kakhaber Machitidze who had been reinstated in office on September 16, was dismissed again on 1 November.

Paradoxically enough, Kutaisi City Hall appealed Mr. Machitidze's first dismissal decision first in the Appeals Court and then in the Supreme Court of Georgia, however, after losing the appeal process in the Appeals Court, it decided not to rely on the Supreme Court and released Mr. Machitidze from his position. While the Supreme Court is examining the admissibility of the complaint, Mr. Machitidze is expecting the first instance Court decision related to his second dismissal and is intending to appeal against it - hoping that he will get reinstated in office again.

Nothing is impossible. In 2013, Machitidze managed to be reinstated in his position twice and in 2013, hearings in the Court of Appeal are awaiting us. In the event of Mr. Machitidze's being restored to his position, the Kutaisi City Hall is also facing a challenge: To dismiss him a third time on more plausible grounds than reorganization of the service, poor attendance or improvised audit inspection.

Assistance to Kakhaber Machitidze was made possible within Transparency International Georgia's free Legal Aid Center whose main purpose is to examine property rights violations and unlawful dismissals as well as to offer legal aid. The center is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency



Onaria Settlement – 21st century reality is Zugdidi

Onaria settlement is located 3 km from the center of Zugdidi. Buildings, that have long become denigrated, poor drinking water sanitation systems, cold, extreme poverty, and diseases—these are the conditions in which around 200 families have to live. To compound their problems, a sewer pipe running from the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti Regional Main Division of the Georgian Ministry of Interior's adjacent building is connected to the settlement's drain pipe. However, the water delivered was putting the residents' health in danger. Transparency International Georgia's Zugdidi office has examined the settlement's needs, published blogs and addressed relevant agencies to solve the problems. As a result, Zugdidi Municipality undertook to roof apart of the building in 2014 and will organize a playground for children. At the same time, our organization is expecting the answers to our letters from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti Regional Administration and the Interior Ministry, which were focusing on the sewer pipe.

Onaria settlement problem is examined by Transparency International Georgia within the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency project, one component of which is improving the local government accountability and responsiveness to local problems.



Kanta School without a Building of its own and Taia Kindergarten

School in Kanta was burnt down because of a sudden fire in 2010. Consequently, the school's administration had to rent an adjacent store to continue the schooling of the children in question. Right now, the school is attended by 21 pupils in total. The lessons are held without proper heating, in the cold and, the school children suffers from a lack of general equipment and toilets. 13 pupils are from vulnerable families. Although the school receives firewood supplies from the Tsalenjikha municipality, it is virtually impossible to maintain a warm temperature in the classrooms, as the metal doors, partitions and old windows are fit with cardboard instead of glass and cannot sustain heat. Despite a number of letters sent to the Ministry of Education and Science by TI Georgia's Zugdidi office, the Ministry has not provided an official response to the question concerning any future plans of restoration of the school building and its obligation to ensure that education takes place in accordance with the Law on General Education.

Like Kanta School in Tsalandjikha district, neither Taia kindergarten in Tschkhorotsku district has a building of its own. 15 pre-school children are being educated in one single room in the administrative building, without hot water and proper hygiene conditions. The children did not have enough inventory or toys. Several teachers wrote, painted and bound books for the children with their own hands. The amount of GEL, 3500 that the kindergarten received within the State Rural Support Program in 2013 could not even cover for the school's most essential needs. It should be noted that many of the Zugdidi district preschool facilities suffer from the same problems. In addition, the 2013 decree on abolishing fees in kindergartens increased the demand for municipal kindergartens and left 550 children in Zugdidi without the opportunity to attend them.

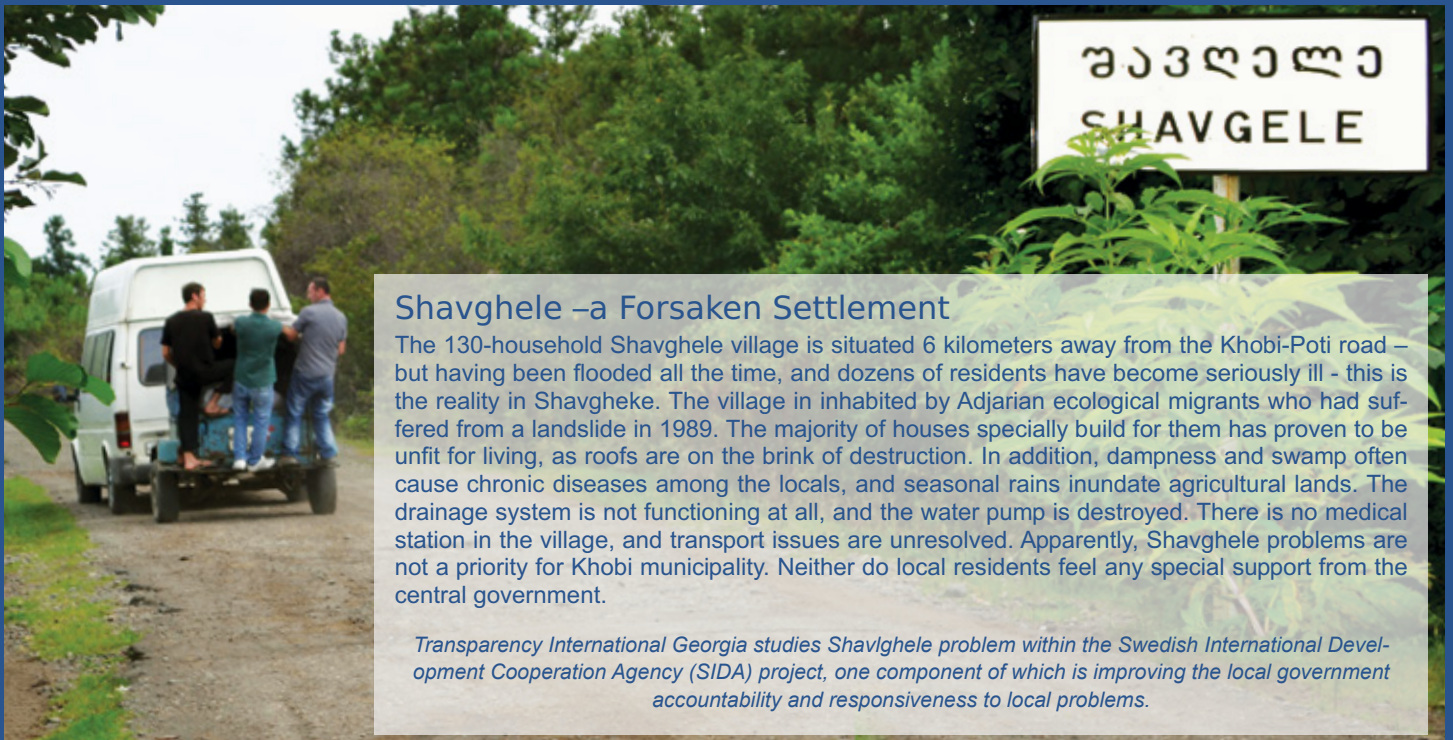
Transparency International Georgia studies Kanta problem within the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA) project, one component of which is improving the local government accountability and responsiveness to local problems.



Killing Dogs in Zugdidi Streets

In March 2013, a citizen provided photos to Transparency International Georgia's Zugdidi office, which reflect the killings of homeless dogs by "Zugdidi dasuptaveba" (municipal service) employees in the streets of the town. After examining the details of the incident, the organization's office released photos and a blog post. Such cruel treatment of animals is punishable under the Criminal Code. Nonetheless, nobody has been held responsible for slaughtering the homeless dogs. After holding talks with the Zugdidi district administration and "Zugdidi dasuptaveba", the administration promised that it would not use similar methods in the future. The problem is rooted in the fact that the municipalities do not have the homeless dog shelters and that such dogs are not castrated (to reduce risks of aggressiveness and rabies).

Transparency International Georgia studies this problem within the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) project, one component of which is improving the local government accountability and responsiveness to local problems.



Shavghele –a Forsaken Settlement

The 130-household Shavghele village is situated 6 kilometers away from the Khobi-Poti road – but having been flooded all the time, and dozens of residents have become seriously ill - this is the reality in Shavghele. The village is inhabited by Adjarian ecological migrants who had suffered from a landslide in 1989. The majority of houses specially built for them has proven to be unfit for living, as roofs are on the brink of destruction. In addition, dampness and swamp often cause chronic diseases among the locals, and seasonal rains inundate agricultural lands. The drainage system is not functioning at all, and the water pump is destroyed. There is no medical station in the village, and transport issues are unresolved. Apparently, Shavghele problems are not a priority for Khobi municipality. Neither do local residents feel any special support from the central government.

Transparency International Georgia studies Shavghele problem within the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) project, one component of which is improving the local government accountability and responsiveness to local problems.

Community Canteen Beneficiaries

One of the most successful cases in 2013 deals with Zugdidi based community canteen. Transparency International Georgia's Zugdidi office employees identified violations in the lists of beneficiaries and forwarded the information to the appropriate agencies. As a result, Zugdidi district administration (Gamageoba) has started to work on changing the rules for the selection of beneficiaries. At the same time, our organization's recommendation to allocate more finances in the 2014 Zugdidi district budget to fund social programs was taken note of, resulting in the increase of the number of beneficiaries to 50. Transparency International Georgia is well aware that such a program is vital for many of the country's citizens; nevertheless, the government should focus not on increasing the numbers of beneficiaries, but on creating jobs to allow its citizens to be able to sustain themselves and their families.

Transparency International Georgia studies this problem within the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) project, one component of which is improving the local government accountability and responsiveness to local problems.



Wissol Has Stopped Selling “Api Super” Branded Gasoline

In a survey published in 2013, Transparency International Georgia highlighted the fact that, according to the information provided by both the Italian customs and the revenue service of Georgia, there was no evidence in their databases of the import of the “Api Super” branded gasoline (Octane 98) to Georgia. Thus, the gasoline that was branded under this name and was sold at Wissol gas stations in the country could not have been the authentic gasoline of the “Api Super” brand. This constituted a violation of consumer’s rights and the illegal use of a trademark, which are punishable offences under Georgian laws.

The case demonstrated the importance of effective competition policy and adequate state oversight of the compliance of companies with free competition rules and principles. Given that such oversight is non-existent at the moment, this practice by a privately-owned company can be regarded as a means of gaining an unfair advantage over competitor businesses. It is indeed well-known that Italian-produced merchandise is considered to be of high quality by the public and the mislabeling of the product may lead the consumer to make a misinformed decision when choosing the product.

Transparency International Georgia explained to Wissol Petroleum Georgia that under the regulations currently in place in the country sale of mislabeled merchandise is a violation of the law. Our organization welcomes the fact that the company has taken notice of these consultations, and has ceased the sale of “Api Super” branded gasoline in its gas stations.



Sophio Kobaladze's Case

Sophio Kobaladze was released from her position of assistant to the AAR Supreme Council Constitutional, Legal and Procedural Issues Commission Chairperson, Medea Vasadze, on 7 August 2013; the dismissal decision cited as grounds nonperformance of official duties and indecent behavior aimed at discrediting the government political official, Medea Vasadze, and the institution in general. Transparency International Georgia defended Sophio Kobaladze's interests in court from the very start and believes that the Supreme Council artificially created legal and factual grounds for her dismissal, which was confirmed later on by the court decisions. Batumi City court granted her claim, reinstated her in her former position, and ordered the Supreme Council to reimburse her lost salary. The Supreme Council appealed the decision but the appeal upheld the decision in favor of Sophio Kobaladze.

Assistance to Sophio Kobaladze was made possible within Transparency International Georgia's Judicial Monitoring and Legal Assistance Program. The program aims to promote judicial independence and improve the quality of justice system. The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development and is implemented through East-West Management Institute. The organization also has a free Legal Aid Center whose main purpose is to examine property rights violations and unlawful dismissals as well as offering legal aid. The center is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency



Fake Report

Levan Lortkipanidze was dismissed from his position of Border Police chief specialist on the grounds of drugs consumption on 5 June 2013. The former employee disagreed with the results of the inspections carried out in the agency. Upon his will, TI Georgia applied to the National Bureau of Forensic Expertise. The Report prepared by the Bureau of Forensics annulled the results of the Border Police checks—as Mr. Lortkipanidze's organism did not contain any drugs. Thus, the Kutaisi Court of Appeal overturned the decision of the Batumi City Court (on imposing an administrative penalty); eventually the Tbilisi City Court reinstated Mr. Lortkipanidze in his position.

Assistance to Levan Lortkipanidze was made possible within Transparency International Georgia's Judicial Monitoring and Legal Assistance Program. The program aims to promote judicial independence and improve the quality of justice system. The program also provides advocacy for justice system reform. The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development and is implemented through East-West Management Institute. The organization also has a free Legal Aid Center whose main purpose is to examine property rights violations and unlawful dismissals as well as offering legal aid. The center is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

The Interference Case

Under the Presidential decree № 525 on the Recognition of the Right of Ownership of Land Belonging to (in use of) Individuals and Legal Entities and Issuance of the Ownership Certificate issued on 15 September, 2007, AAR citizens were able to gain ownership of the lands in their use recognized and received certificates of ownership.

Nugzar Sharabidze was among those who received the above land ownership certificate. However, when he decided to register his ownership right in the Public Registry, it turned out that the land had become the property of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (the so called Overlap (interference). Transparency International Georgia provided Nugzar Sharabidze with free legal assistance within the project of Free Legal Assistance on Property Rights Issues and took the case to court. The process was postponed several times with the purpose to settle the case with agreement. After the Commission on Issues of Overlapping was set up within then AAR Ministry of Finance and Economy, it discussed the issue concerning the overlapping of the land owned (used) by Nugzar Sharabidze. In the end, the Ministry decided to abolish the state ownership right concerning the overlapping. Upon TI Georgia's advice, Nugzar Sharabidze applied to the Public registry. Since the problem of overlapping was removed, the Registry registered his ownership of the land recognized under the ownership certificate.

Assistance to Nugzar Sharabidze was made possible within Transparency International Georgia's Judicial Monitoring and Legal Assistance Program. The program aims to promote judicial independence and improve the quality of justice system. The program also provides advocacy for justice system reform. The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development and is implemented through East-West Management Institute. The organization also has a free Legal Aid Center whose main purpose is to examine property rights violations and unlawful dismissals as well as offering legal aid. The center is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.



December



3-9 December - Anti-Corruption Week

9 December is the International Day for the fight against corruption. On this occasion, Transparency International National Bureaus schedule a variety of events annually, such as anti-corruption school debates in India, a peaceful march in Sri – Lanka, and tree planting in Georgia. We all unite around a message: “We want to live in a corruption-free society!”

Transparency International Georgia’s anti-corruption week program for December 2013 included:

- releasing the outcomes of the Corruption Perceptions Index on 3 December;
- a presentation of a new report - “Businessmen in Politics and Politicians in Business: problem of revolving door in Georgia” on 4 December;
- an informal meeting-discussion on the topic of “Nepotism in the Public Sector” in a cafes in Tbilisi on 5 December;
- another presentation of a new report: “Simplified Procurement - Corruption Risks” on 6 December;
- TI Georgia representatives planted trees in Tbilisi and Batumi trees on 7 December;
- the Anti-corruption week closed on 9 December with the Conference “The Power of Open Data: Engaging Citizens in the Fight against Corruption”.
- On the same day, Transparency International Georgia together with other non-governmental organizations released a statement on the situation in the country in terms of corruption and presented its views thereof to the president, the prime minister, and the speaker of Parliament. The statement also contained a vision of the future reform priorities.



Postponement of the enactment of the new rule of witness interrogation an incident in Georgian Parliament

On December 26, 2013, Parliament was discussing at its plenary session the Government’s proposal to postpone the enactment of the new rule of witness interrogation envisaged by the Criminal Procedure Code for two more years. During the discussion the representatives of Transparency International Georgia and the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association were not allowed to express their silent protest against the Government’s proposal through displaying banners. The banners displayed in the meeting room read: “Human rights cannot wait for two more years”, “Protect the Right to Protect”, and “Say No to Postponement.”

Workshops for regional journalists: Bakuriani - Lopota

Transparency International Georgia continued its close cooperation with regional journalists in 2013 and organized a series of meetings called "Working meetings with regional journalists." The purpose of these meetings was to share experiences and plan future cooperation. On 9 February, 2013, Transparency International Georgia had a meeting in Bakuriani with journalists representing newspapers, television, radios and online media in different regions: Adjara, Guria, Samegrelo, Imereti, Kakheti and Shida Kartli. The issues discussed at the training covered problems related to property rights, court monitoring findings, and the media environment. Eka Bokuchava, TI Georgia's lawyer, spoke on ownership rights. Transparency International Georgia media group, Mathias Hutter and Mamuka Andguladze, presented the assessment of media environment in Georgia and public databases.

A second meeting with regional journalists was organized in the summer, on Lopota Lake. During the two-day seminar, the journalists were informed about the outcomes of our latest research (the electronic procurement system, competition in Georgia, information retrieval from open databases). Our Slovak colleagues also had a presentation for the journalists. They told the Georgian media representatives about the benefits and drawbacks of the procurement system in Slovakia. The week-end spent on Lopota Lake was very informative and educational for everyone. We are thankful to all the journalists who work closely with Transparency International Georgia.



Media team visiting regional media

In 2013, Transparency International Georgia representatives organized training sessions for regional media outlets. Unlike traditional trainings, this time our employees themselves paid visits to Akhalkalaki ("South Gate", Armenian edition), Akhaltsikhe ("South Gate", Georgian edition), Kutaisi ("New Newspaper") and Kharaguli ("My Kharaguli") media outlets and worked with them for a few days.

The purpose of TI Georgia's visit to the regions was to inform local journalists on the journalism principles pertaining to data and developing the skills to analyze the data obtained from public sources. TI Georgia analysts introduced several official as well TI Georgia-developed online databases. Journalists were not aware about some online resources, which contain interesting information for journalists (e.g. the public procurement system, property statements of officials, business registry, etc.). Remarkably, after our visits, some of the media started to actively use publicly available online resources and even published articles based on the retrieved information.



Transparency international Georgia Office in Parliament

Through its office in Parliament, Transparency International Georgia implements a project that focuses on ensuring transparency of the legislative process and developing appropriate recommendations to improve Parliament's work and management. On 25 July 2013, Transparency International Georgia and Parliament signed a memorandum of cooperation.

TI Georgia activities during 2013 included several directions

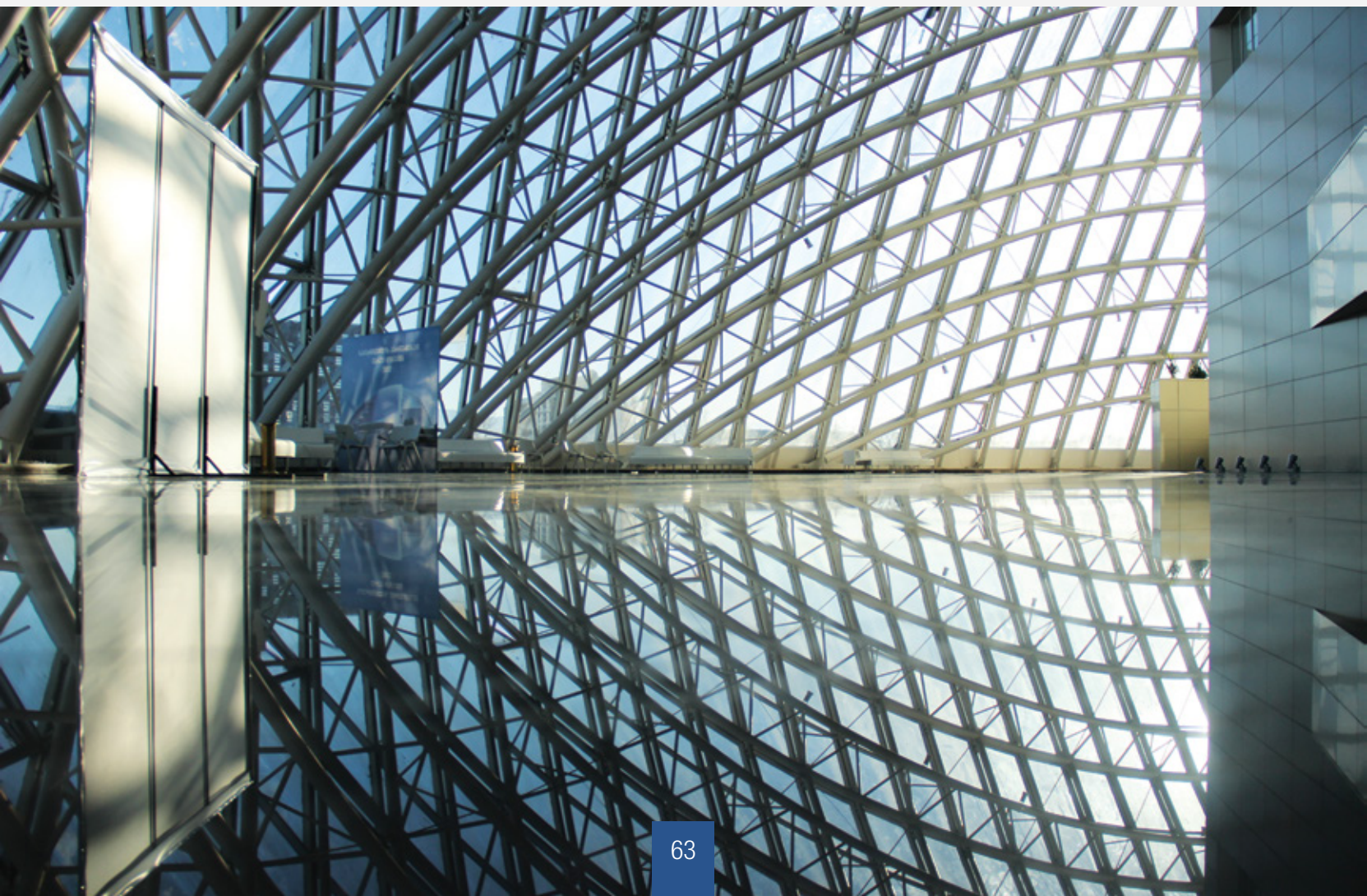
Analyses of draft laws:

The organization was actively involved in the legislative process and delivered opinions, comments, and recommendations concerning particular draft laws, which were published on his website, as well as submitted in writing to the Parliament and presented at Committee hearings. Transparency International Georgia made a detailed analysis and submitted extensive notes on draft amendments to important laws, such as Georgian Labor Code, Election Code, Local Government Code, the Organic Law on General Courts, law on the Constitutional Court, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Civil Code, the Administrative Code, Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the Law On the State Budget for 2013, law on Free Trade and Competition, law on Occupied Territories , law on Higher Education, law on Agricultural Land Ownership, law on Enforcement, law on Broadcasting, law on Police, rules for Georgian Citizens to exit and enter Georgia, law on the Capital of Georgia - Tbilisi

With the help of the Parliament office TI Georgia members actively attended various committee hearings and participated in the discussions of different bills.

- Short text messages:

TI Georgia provided public with information on important legislative developments through short text messages in Georgian and English. Over 400 users used this service, including non-governmental organizations, diplomatic corps, media representatives, students, and other active citizens.



- A weekly podcast:

TI Georgia wrote the weekly audiopodcasts (<http://transparency.ge/podcast/>), in which its members examined relevant issues and draft laws discussed in Parliament over the week. The Podcast was published on TI Georgia website and was disseminated through social networks.

- Legislative proposals:

Two legislative proposals developed by TI Georgia were submitted to Parliament: amendments to the Labor Code, Organic Law of Georgia (17.09.2013) and amendments to the Law on Public Procurement (09.10.2013); the Antitrust Reform Project prepared by TI Georgia (the draft concerning amendments to the law on Free Trade and Competition) shall be presented to Parliament as the government's legislative initiatives

- Oversight of the MPs activities:

With the help of its regional offices, TI Georgia assessed the work of 27 majority MPs Bureaus in Imereti, Adjara and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti Regions, and came up with several blog posts. Of particular note are the following blog posts: "Is MP Eka Beselia interfering with exclusive authorities of the city of Poty?" (<http://goo.gl/HwRRHu>); "Obstacles to civic participation in Zugdidi" (<http://goo.gl/PEqYM9>); "Overview of the work of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti majoritarian MPs and their regional bureaus" (<http://goo.gl/Ucj1kw>). Transparency International Georgia plans to widen the scope of these activities and conduct periodic assessments of every single majoritarian member of parliament. We also oversee adherence to the Rules of Procedure of Parliament both by Parliament as a whole and individual MPs. One of our activities in this respect was examining the issue why Mariam Sajaia did not attend Parliament sessions (<http://goo.gl/jrE43m>).

- Parliamentarians' links with businesses:

TI Georgia conducted a research and published a list of those MPs who are connected with different companies (<http://goo.gl/dDTVNa>). In total, our researchers found that at least 36 MPs have connections to at least one corporation (10 from the UNM and 26 from the Georgian Dream).

- The report on Parliament performance:

In late 2013, TI Georgia began to examine the outcomes of one-year performance of the eighth Parliament that will reflect statistics on the adopted bills, as well as activities of individual MPs and other important issues related to the work of Parliament. In the future, TI Georgia plans to evaluate the work of parliament at the end of each session.



- Parliamentary website:

TI Georgia created a web portal - MyParliament.ge, which combines all the necessary information related to the work of Parliament, namely, the data on MPs, their income and voting participation. Questions can be asked to MPs via the website. The website also contains blog posts prepared by TI Georgia as well as its statements, audiopodcasts, and forwarded SMS messages. At present, the web is under construction and will soon be fully operational.

- Activities inside the Parliament working groups:

TI Georgia experts were actively involved in various groups working on the improvement of legislation and made a significant contribution to preparing draft amendments like: amendments prepared by inter-factional groups, pre-election amendments to the Election Code, amendments to the Law on Broadcasting, amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code, and amendments to the Law on Operative and Investigative Activities (secret surveillance).

- Participation in the work of parliamentary committees:

TI Georgian members are actively involved in the work of the parliamentary committees under the Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee: 1. Commission working on the project for gambling business regulatory reform; 2. Commission that will hold a competition to select the Public Defender of Consumer Interests under the National Energy and Water Regulatory Commission; 3. Commission, that will hold a competition to select the Public Defender of Consumer Interests under Georgian National Communications Commission.

Transparency International Georgia also collaborated with the Temporary Commission of Inquiry on National Communications Commission activities. During the investigation, TI Georgia representative appeared as a witness before the Temporary Commission and evaluates the National Communications Commission activities based on the surveys conducted by our organization.

TI Georgia was a member of the organization committee for the publication and public discussion of such drafts as: Draft Constitutional Law on the Amendment to the Georgian Constitution (№ 07-3/106, 13.06.2013), Draft Constitutional Law on Amendments to the Georgian Constitutional Law on Changes and Amendments to the Georgian Constitution (№ 07 - 3/107, 13.06.2013), and Draft Constitutional Law on Amendments to the Georgian Constitutional Law on the Amendment to the Georgian Constitution (№07-3/108, 13.06.2013).

TI Georgia Parliament Office hosts an Internship Program. In 2013, candidates were selected for this program during both the spring and autumn sessions. Interns were actively attending Parliament sessions, developed drafts, studied the specifics of the Parliament work and participated in TI Georgia Parliament office activities.

Transparency International Georgia intends to be even more productively engaged in the work of Georgian Parliament, take part in the legislative process, and contribute to its efficacy and transparency.



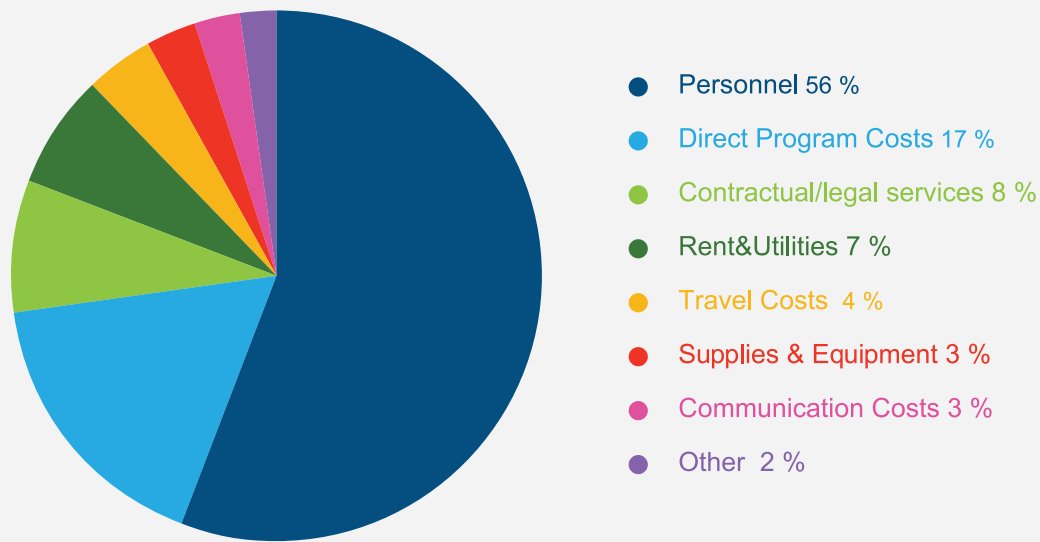
LIST OF DONORS IN 2013

1. Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
2. Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
3. European Commission DEVCO
4. Transparency International Secretariat
5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Folke Bernadotte Academy
6. Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF)
7. East-West Management Institute (EWMI) / U.S. Agency for international Development USAID
8. International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) / U.S. Agency for international Development USAID
9. International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) / U.S. Agency for international Development USAID
10. Slovak Aid

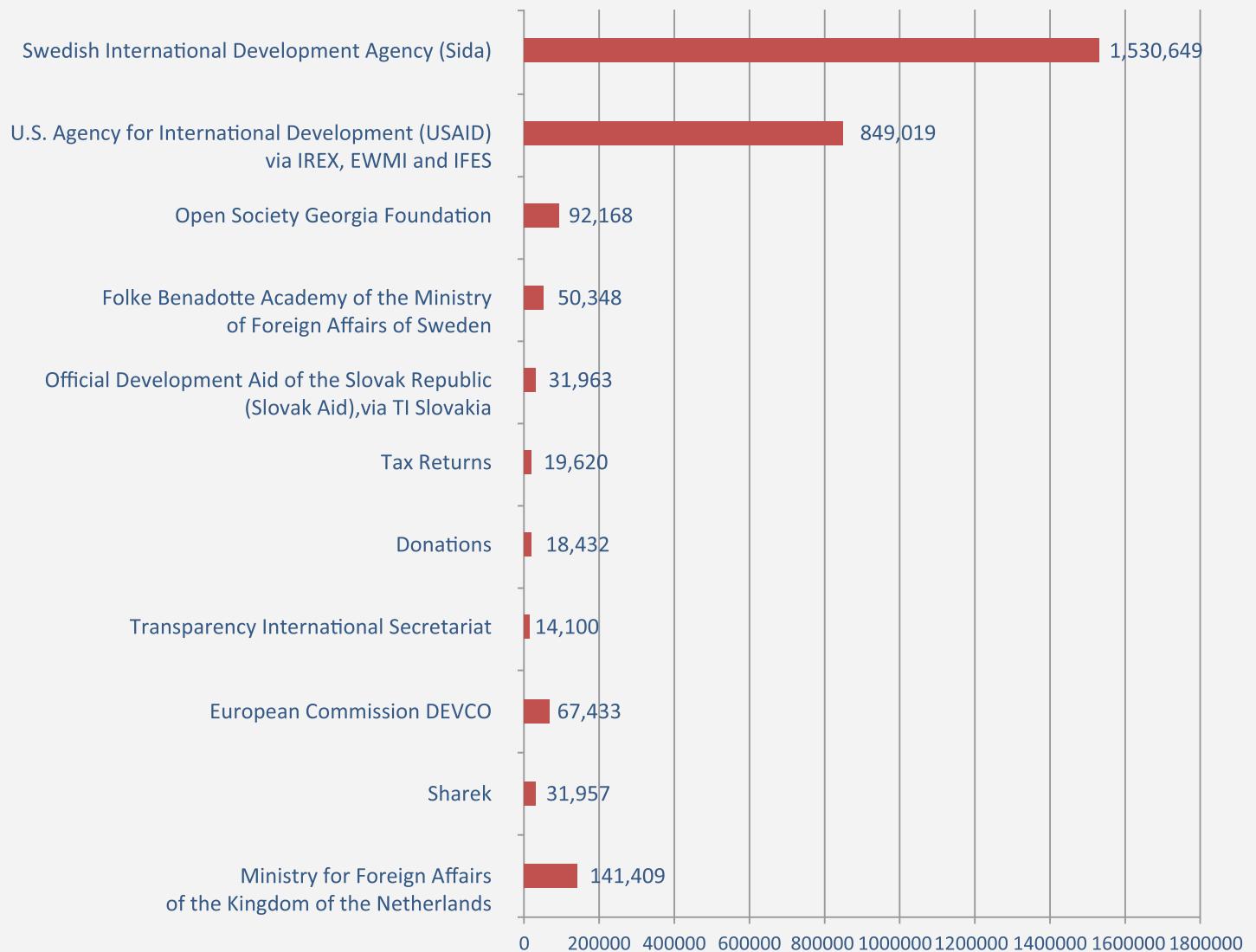


FINANCIAL STATEMENT

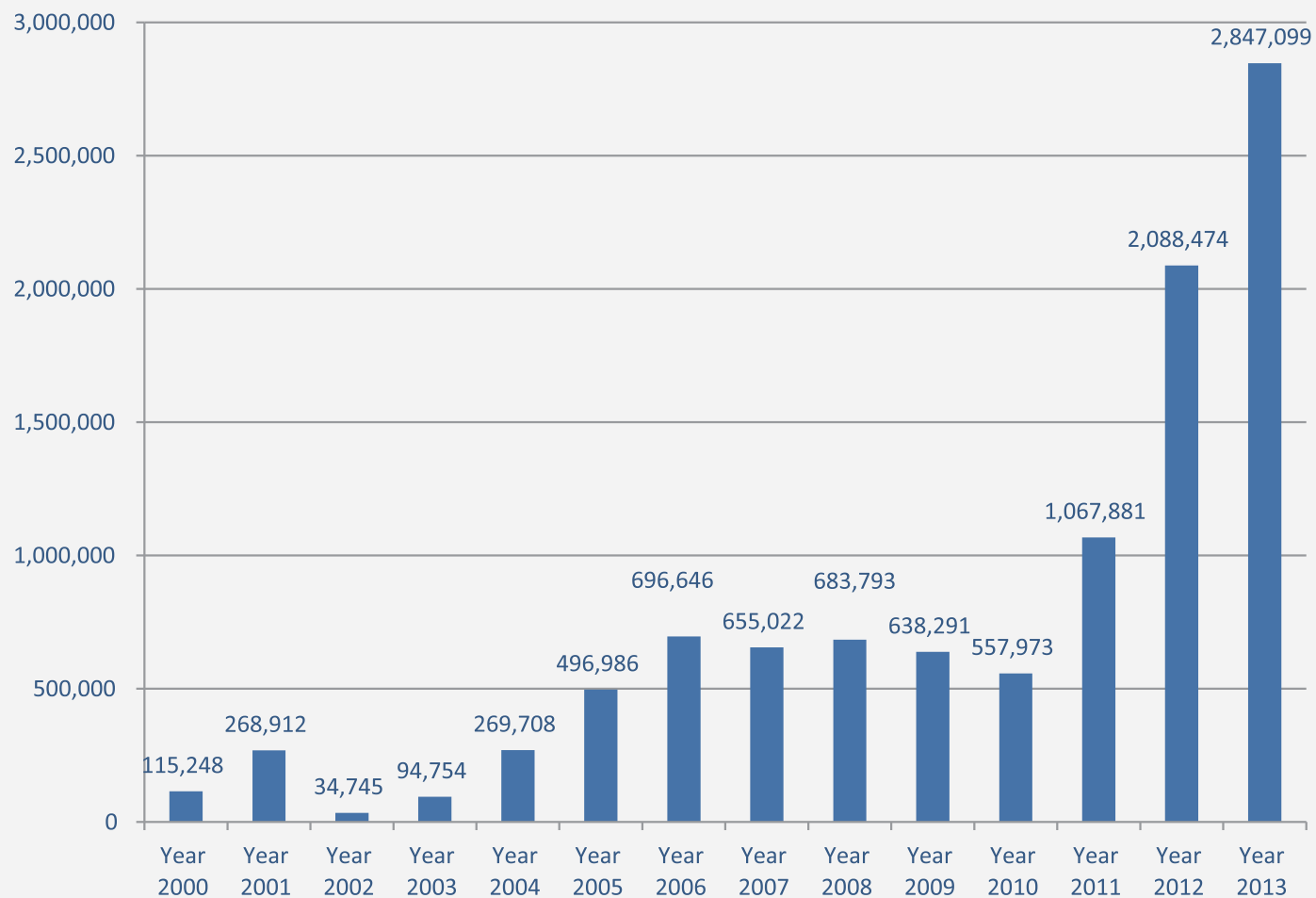
Infographic I Costs (in GEL)



Infographic II Donors



Infographic III Incomes by Years (in GEL)





Tbilisi
2014

