



TI Georgia publishes a new report: Open Governance in Georgia - Achievements and Challenges

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For immediate release

What should the government do to give citizens more information about its activities? What data can be found on government web sites? Where can citizens find information about the assets of Ministers and other public officials but also about the owners of big corporations?

In its new report released today Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) finds that most of the people in Georgia have no answers to these questions. Neither do they have much knowledge, proficiency or interest in Open Government Partnership (OGP) which makes it a luxury policy of an exclusive club of organizations only.

Georgia was among the first group of countries to join the OGP. In April 2012, the country's government presented a relevant Action Plan which is focused on improving public services, increasing public integrity, managing public resources effectively, and creating safer communities. The implementation of these commitments is currently coordinated within an NGO forum created under the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

The OGP is a global initiative, launched in September 2011, under which the governments are committing to give citizens more information about their activities, increase civic participation in decision-making, implement high professional and ethical standards in public service, and harness new technologies to spur innovation.

TI Georgia welcomes the willingness of the Georgian government to develop open governance standards in the country and provides a list of recommendations for the government to better implement these standards in practice:

- The government should **raise public awareness** of Georgia's participation in the OGP and of the actions being carried out under the OGP Action Plan by using the media as effective channel of communication.
- The government should **proactively disclose more sector-specific data sets** in significant detail and in easily usable formats. This should also include providing contextual information on what the purpose of this raw data is and how citizens can benefit from using it.
- The government should **increase corporate accountability standards** in Georgia. Those companies that are holding high market shares in the country's major sectors and performing essential public functions should ensure that citizens are provided with more choice and information about their activities.
- The MoJ should **actively engage businesses and NGOs from different sectors** in the work of the NGO forum. The latter would enrich the agenda of the forum meetings but also have easier access to more public data and services to the benefit of the country's economy.
- The government in close collaboration with NGOs should **elaborate a set of clear benchmarks** against which to measure the progress in the implementation of Georgia's OGP commitments.

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