



EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF POTI

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Chapter 1: Main Findings	4
Chapter 2: General Information about the City Council of Poti	5
Chapter 3: Important Developments	8
Chapter 4: Activities of Commissions and Factions of the City Council	9
Chapter 5: Control of Bodies Accountable to the City Council	12
Chapter 6: Incomplete Asset declarations and Incompatible Activity	13
Chapter 7: Involvement of Members of the City Council in the Council’s Activities	15
Chapter 8: Citizen’s Involvement in the City Council’s Activities	16
Chapter 9: Activities of the Gender Equality Council	17
Chapter 10: Expenditures of the City Council of Poti	18
Recommendations	22

INTRODUCTION

Transparency International Georgia has evaluated the performance of the representative body of the Municipality of the City of Poti which was elected in 2017 – the City Council (hereinafter the City Council of Poti).

The report is based on information requested and received from the City Council and that posted on the City Council's official website, as well as on observations of our organization.

The study covers the period from November 2017 up to 2019.

CHAPTER 1: MAIN FINDINGS

- During the reporting period, the City Council of Poti exercised weak oversight on the executive body and on entities established by the municipality, and the City Council's control over officials and individual agencies accountable to it was formal in most cases.
- The City Council of Poti didn't reveal any cases of conflict of interest, incompatibility with public office, or violation of the Rules of Procedure of the City Council or of norms of ethics.
- More than half of the sessions held by the City Council of Poti during the reporting period (61 sessions) were extraordinary sessions (35 sessions).
- During the same period, the City Council of Poti adopted 90 resolutions, 77 of which were authored/initiated by the Mayor of Poti and 13 – by individual commissions of the City Council.
- Officials' filling out asset declarations incompletely is a problem for the City Council of Poti: 5 of 17 officials have filled out their asset declarations incompletely.
- Only 2 of 5 factions of the City Council – Georgian Dream and Poti (*2 members of the faction represent the United National Movement and 1 is a representative of the Labor Party*) – submitted initiatives during the same period; the factions of Georgian Dream – Conservatives, Georgian Dream – Industrialists, and Kolkheti (*2 members of the faction represent Development Movement and 1 is a representative of European Georgia*) didn't submit a single initiative to the City Council.
- Against the background of minimum activities carried out by the factions, the expenditures incurred on their functioning – which have amounted to GEL 560,090 in total – are disproportionately large.
- The City Council of Poti includes the Gender Equality Council, whose action plan was approved by the City Council on June 26, 2019. Accordingly, the main part of the planned activities is scheduled for the time that follows the reporting period of the present study.
- There were 373 absences of members of the City Council from the Council's sessions, including 341 absences without a valid reason. There were 529 absences from sessions of commissions, including 495 absences without a valid reason.
- Among members of the City Council, a member of the Georgian Dream faction, Apolon Bzhalava, missed the most sessions of the City Council (42 sessions), while the Chairperson of the Kolkheti faction, Maia Chkhartishvili, had the most absences from sessions of commissions. It is noteworthy that Tamar Topuria is the only member of the City Council who hasn't missed a single session of commissions.
- The salaries given to officials and staff of the City Council of Poti during the reporting period amounted to GEL 1,921,546, and they received a total of GEL 167,550 as bonuses and salary supplements.
- During the reporting period, the City Council of Poti spent 34.8 tons of fuel worth GEL **68,303**, more than 14 tons (14,131 liters) of which (with a total value of GEL 30,222) was spent by the Chairperson of the City Council, Irakli Kakulia.

CHAPTER 2: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY COUNCIL OF POTI

The City Council of Poti is the representative body of the Municipality of the City of Poti which exercises the [powers](#) determined by the Local Self-Government Code **in the territory of the said municipality**. It also **exercises control on the activities of the executive body and its officials** within the limits established by law and carries out other powers assigned to it by the Constitution of Georgia, other legislative acts, and the Rules of Procedure of the City Council.

The City Council of Poti has **25** members, **10** of whom are elected in local single-mandate majoritarian electoral districts and **15** – through the proportional system.

There are only 4 women among the members of the City Council, which amounts to 16% of the total membership. There is only 1 woman among officials of the City Council – the Chairperson of the Kolkheti faction, Maia Chkhartishvili.

The City Council has the authority to create commissions for the purposes of drafting proposals, facilitating the implementation of decisions, and exercising control on the structural units of the City Hall and legal entities established by the City Council. The City Council of Poti has created the following commissions for the duration of its term of office:

1. the Commission on Legal, Mandate and Procedural Issues and Ethics (Chairperson – Khvicha Tskhvitaria);
2. the Finance and Budget Commission (Chairperson – Tornike Kirtadze);
3. the Commission on Social Issues (Chairperson – Bakar Eragia);
4. the Commission on Property Management and Natural Resources (Chairperson – Tornike Shonia);
5. the Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure (Chairperson – Beka Vacharadze).

There are 5 factions at the City Council:

Faction	Chairperson
Georgian Dream	Zurab Chachua
Georgian Dream – Conservatives	Zviad Dgebuadze
Georgian Dream – Industrialists	Jemal Migineishvili
Poti	Dato Khomeriki
Kolkheti	Maia Chkhartishvili

The chairpersons of all the factions except the Georgian Dream – Conservatives faction have a deputy, and the Chairperson of the Georgian Dream faction has 2 deputies.

In total, 17 of the 25 members of the City Council of Poti are officials, specifically:

Name/last name	Position	Date of election
Irakli Kakulia	Chairperson of City Council	20/11/2017
Akaki Darjania	Deputy Chairperson of City Council	20/11/2017
Chairpersons of commissions		
Khvicha Tskhvitaria	Chairperson of Commission	22/11/2017
Beka Vacharadze	Chairperson of Commission	22/11/2017
Tornike Shonia	Chairperson of Commission	22/11/2017
Bakar Eragia	Chairperson of Commission	22/11/2017
Tornike Kirtadze	Chairperson of Commission	22/11/2017
Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of factions		
Zurab Chachua	Georgian Dream – Chairperson	13/12/2017
Zviad Dgebuadze	Georgian Dream – Conservatives – Chairperson	13/12/2017
Jemal Migineishvili	Georgian Dream – Industrialists – Chairperson	13/12/2017
Dato Khomeriki	Poti – Chairperson	27/12/2017
Maia Chkhartishvili	Kolkheti – Chairperson	31/01/2018
Samson Kutalia	Georgian Dream – Deputy Chairperson	09/01/2018
Tornike Kharchilava	Georgian Dream – Deputy Chairperson	08/02/2019
Davit Esebua	Georgian Dream – Industrialists – Deputy Chairperson	09/01/2018
Mamuka Khorava	Poti – Deputy Chairperson	09/01/2018
Paata Chaganava	Kolkheti – Deputy Chairperson	31/01/2018

General statistics:

During the reporting period, the City Council held 62 sessions, more than half (35) of which were extraordinary sessions. The extraordinary sessions were convened on the initiative of the Mayor (in 12 cases), the Chairperson of the City Council (in 7 cases), and on the joint initiative of the Mayor and the Chairperson of the City Council (in 16 cases). Not a single session of the City Council was cancelled during the reporting period due to lack of quorum. Sixty-two sessions of the Bureau were also held during the same period.

Number of extraordinary sessions of the City Council of Poti, according to years		
2017 (November-December)	2018	2019
5	13	17

During the reporting period, the City Council of Poti adopted 90 resolutions, 77 of which were authored/initiated by the Mayor of Poti and 13 – by individual commissions of the City Council.

The legal supervision authority prepared 4 negative legal opinions on legal acts adopted by the City Council of Poti. The City Council refused to take 1 of these opinions into consideration, and the legal supervision authority agreed with a reasoned refusal prepared by the City Council.

A total of 4 petitions were registered at the City Council of Poti during the reporting period, 3 of which were supported and 1 was granted partially by the City Council.

CHAPTER 3: IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

Arrest of the Chairperson of the City Council:

On November 8, 2019, the Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance [arrested](#) the Chairperson of the City Council of Poti, Irakli Kakulia. According to the Investigation Service, Irakli Kakulia, together with other employees of the City Hall, embezzled a total of GEL 528,821 when he worked as the Mayor of Poti, from which Kakulia [appropriated](#) GEL 170,000.

Changes in the composition of the City Council of Poti:

In December 2017, a member of the City Council of Poti from Development Movement, Iagor Tavartkiladze, resigned from membership of the Council, and he was replaced by Paata Chaganava from the same party.

In August 2018, a member of the City Council from the Democratic Movement – Free Georgia party, Otar Kharchilava, also resigned from the Council's membership, and he was replaced by Tornike Kharchilava from the same party. After becoming a member of the City Council, Tornike Kharchilava became a member of the Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia and now holds the position of the Deputy Chairperson of the Georgian Dream faction.

Gratuitous transfer of property to the State:

During the reporting period, the City Council of Poti gratuitously transferred the following pieces of property to the State:

- a non-agricultural [land plot](#) with an area of 10,807.00 sq. meters on April 9 Alley in the City of Poti;
- a bus (ZONDA BUS, YCK6850HC2), to be subsequently transferred to the Abasha City Hall;
- a non-agricultural [land plot and a building](#) located at 56 Davit Kldiashvili Street in the City of Poti.

CHAPTER 4: ACTIVITIES OF COMMISSIONS AND FACTIONS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Activities of commissions of the City Council:

The 5 standing commissions of the City Council of Poti held 230 sessions in total during the reporting period. Not a single session of any commission was cancelled due to lack of quorum. The commissions submitted a total of 83 draft legal acts to the City Council and, also, drafted 404 legal opinions on the conformity of legal acts to be considered by the Council with the legislation.

Number of sessions of commissions of the City Council					
Year	Commission on Legal, Mandate and Procedural Issues and Ethics	Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure	Finance and Budget Commission	Commission on Social Issues	Commission on Property Management and Natural Resources
2017 (November-December)	19	3	6	3	5
2018	16	11	26	16	20
2019	18	21	25	18	23
Total:	53	35	57	37	48

Number of draft legal acts submitted to the City Council by commissions					
Year	Commission on Legal, Mandate and Procedural Issues and Ethics	Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure	Finance and Budget Commission	Commission on Social Issues	Commission on Property Management and Natural Resources
2017 (November-December)	13	0	3	0	0

2018	13	2	9	6	0
2019	2	17	11	3	4
Total:	28	19	23	9	4

Activities of factions of the City Council:

There are 5 factions altogether at the City Council of Poti elected in 2017. Three of these factions didn't submit a single initiative from the day of their registration up to 2019.

The factions of the City Council of Poti raised only 3 issues during the reporting period. The Georgian Dream faction approached the City Council in connection with the following initiatives:

- an initiative regarding the creation of an *ad hoc* task force on the development of the Matlakva coastline and approval of its composition;
- an initiative regarding the creation of an *ad hoc* task force on the development of rugby in the city and approval of its composition.

An initiative raised by the Poti faction concerned "the creation of an *ad hoc* task force on the development of football in the Municipality of the City of Poti and approval of its composition".

In all the 3 cases, the City Council adopted a corresponding decree.

Faction	Number of initiatives
Georgian Dream	2
Georgian Dream – Conservatives	0
Georgian Dream – Industrialists	0
Poti	1
Kolkheti	0
Total initiatives	3

In November 2019, the factions of Georgian Dream, Georgian Dream – Conservatives, and Georgian Dream – Industrialists prepared their opinions on the draft Budget of Poti of 2020.

Against the background of minimum activities carried out by the factions, the expenditures incurred by the Municipality of Poti on their functioning – which have amounted to GEL 560,090 in total – are disproportionately large, specifically:

Expenditures incurred on the activities of factions (in GEL)					
Year	Telephone communication	Work trips	Cost of fuel	Salaries	Bonuses
2017 (November-December)	0	60	147	3,886.3	7,200
2018	4,031	195	15,376	207,215	21,300
2019	3,116	0	18,519	279,045	0
Total:	7,147	255	34,042	490,146.3	28,500

CHAPTER 5: CONTROL OF BODIES ACCOUNTABLE TO THE CITY COUNCIL

According to the Local Self-Government Code, the municipal/city council has the powers to monitor the activities of the municipality's executive bodies and of their officials and to hear and evaluate their reports,¹ and the mayor is accountable to the municipal/city council and to the population.²

The City Council of Poti which was elected in 2017 has heard and given a positive evaluation to a total of 15 reports of the Mayor of Poti, individual officials of the City Hall, and municipal legal entities. The City Council also invited representatives of the executive body with the aim of discussing specific issues 73 times.

Only 14 members of the City Council asked questions to the bodies accountable to the City Council, the Mayor, and other officials.

The City Council (both the commissions and individual factions) submitted a total of 97 remarks to the Poti City Hall with regard to draft budgets, out of which the City Hall took 30 remarks into consideration (20 out of 23 remarks in 2017, 10 out of 27 remarks in 2018, and 28 out of 47 remarks in 2019).

During the reporting period, the City Council of Poti refused to support 3 proposals submitted by the Mayor. In 2017, the City Council rejected the Mayor's initiative that aimed to regulate specific issues related to the management of municipal property, and in 2019 the Council refused to grant the Mayor's proposals to transfer of a moveable wooden cottage owned by the City of Poti to the State and to make an amendment to a decree of the City Council.

The City Council of Poti elected in 2017 also didn't reveal any infractions, conflict of interest, and/or incompatibility with public office in the activities of the Mayor. In addition, according to the [information](#) provided by the City Council, "During the reporting period, there were not any infractions with regard to incompatibility of a member of the City Council with public office or conflict of interest".

However, opinions prepared by the State Audit Office, on the one hand, and the arrests of the former Mayor and Chairperson of the City Council of Poti as well as of former officials of the City Hall by the Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance, on the other hand, confirm the opposite.

The Report on Compliance Audit of Programs Provided for by the Budgets of the Municipality of the City of Poti of 2016-2017, which was published by the State Audit Office in February 2019, [reviews](#) a number of shortcomings that were revealed in the process of implementation of municipal programs, as well as the weakness of existing mechanisms of control in the municipality. It is noteworthy that during the aforementioned period, the position of the Mayor was held by Irakli Kakulia, who was elected as the Chairperson of the City Council of Poti in November 2017 and was [arrested](#) by the Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance along with former officials of the Poti City Hall on November 8, 2019, on the charges of embezzlement and appropriation of large amounts of funds.

1 Sub-paragraph C.A, Paragraph 1, Article 24 of the Local Self-Government Code.

2 Paragraph 2 of Article 48 of the Local Self-Government Code.

CHAPTER 6: INCOMPLETE ASSET DECLARATIONS AND INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITY

Officials' filling out asset declarations incompletely and with shortcomings is a considerable challenge to the City Council of Poti. Seven of 17 officials of the City Council (Chairperson of the City Council, Deputy Chairperson of the City Council, Chairpersons of Commissions, Chairpersons of Factions, and Deputy Chairpersons of Factions) have filled out their declarations incompletely.

Requirement of legislation:

According to the [Law](#) on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public Service, an official is obliged to fill out an asset declaration completely within two months after his/her appointment to the office,³ indicate information about his/her and his/her family members' property and economic interests,⁴ transfer the management rights of his/her stakes in business entities to another person, and resign from the position of the head (director) of the business entity within 10 days after being appointed to the office.

Shortcomings in the asset declarations of officials of the City Council of Poti:



IRAKLI KAKULIA

(Former) Chairperson of the City Council of Poti

In a [declaration](#) filled out in April 2019, Irakli Kakulia failed to indicate that he owns a 50% stake in Black Sea LLC and a 25% stake in Karibche LLC.



BAKAR ERAGIA

Chairperson of the Commission on Social Issues

In a [declaration](#) filled out in January 2019, Bakar Eragia failed to indicate that he owns a 50% stake in [B B G Group LLC](#).

³ Paragraph 1, Article 14, the Law on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public Service.

⁴ Ibid, Article 15.



DATO KHOMERIKI

Chairperson of the Poti faction

In a [declaration](#) filled out in February 2019, Dato Khomeriki failed to indicate that he owns a 20% stake in [Veteran Sportsmen' Club 'Bermukha' LLC](#).



TORNIKE KHARCHILAVA

Deputy Chairperson of the Georgian Dream faction

In a [declaration](#) filled out in March 2019, Tornike Kharchilava failed to indicate that he owns a 40% stake in [PotiGalvanizMetal LLC](#).



DAVIT ESEBUA

Deputy Chairperson of the Georgian Dream – Industrialists faction

In a [declaration](#) filled out in March 2019, Davit Esebua failed to indicate that he owns a 55% stake in [Kviparosi LLC](#).

CHAPTER 7: INVOLVEMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

The [Rules of Procedure](#) of the City Council of Poti do not specify what kind of absence from a session by a member of the City Council is to be considered as absence without a valid reason. The Rules of Procedure rely on a provision of the Local Self-Government Code, [according](#) to which the powers of a member of a municipal/city council are to be prematurely terminated if he/she has not participated, without a valid reason, in the work of the municipal/city council for six consecutive months.

In the letter we received from the City Council of Poti, the reason for absences from the City Council's and commissions' sessions is explained as follows – "Reason unknown", which presumably implies that members of the City Council who were absent from sessions of the City Council and/or its commissions were not on vacation or a work trip.

Participation in sessions of the City Council:

There were 373 absences of members of the City Council from the Council's sessions, including 341 absences without a valid reason.

Among members of the City Council, a member of the Georgian Dream, Apolon Bzhalava, and the Chairperson of the Kolkheti faction, Maia Chkhartishvili, missed the most sessions (42) without a valid reason.

See detailed information in the [annex](#):

Participation in sessions in the City Council's commissions:

Members of the City Council had 529 absences from sessions of commissions, including 495-absences without a valid reason.

Among members of the City Council, the Chairperson of the Kolkheti faction, Maia Chkhartishvili, missed the most sessions (77) without a valid reason, followed by the Deputy Chairperson of the Kolkheti faction, Paata Chaganava (67 sessions), and the Chairperson of the Poti faction, Dato Khomeriki (56 sessions).

It is noteworthy that Tamar Topuria is the only member of the City Council who hasn't missed a single session of a commission.

See detailed information in the [annex](#):

CHAPTER 8: CITIZEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CITY COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

The City Council of Poti has adopted all the regulations that ensure citizens' involvement in the activities of the municipality, including those of the City Council:

- The electronic system for submitting petitions has been introduced;
- Citizens can also electronically submit a concrete initiative to the municipality, as well as request desired information by means of the website;
- The City Council of Poti has established a special rule, according to which a citizen has the right to apply to the City Council 2 days before a session of the City Council and register as a speaker or co-speaker and/or make a special statement at the session, although this rule does not limit a citizen's ability to do the same without registration;
- Sessions of the City Council are broadcast through the social network;
- Officials of the City Council of Poti submit their activity reports twice a year, whereas the Local Self-Government Code only establishes the obligation to submit the report at least once a year;
- The City Council [holds](#) public [discussions](#) of budgets together with the City Hall;
- During the reporting period, 4 petitions were registered at the City Council of Poti with the following demands:

Petitions considered at the City Council of Poti	
Petition	Outcome of consideration
Making an amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the City Council of Poti	Was granted partially
Adoption of the procedure for receiving funding for projects of civil society organizations	Was supported
Changing the procedure for submission of a report by members of the City Council of Poti	Was supported
The issue of looking after stray animals	Was supported

The City Council of Poti has adopted the procedures for convening the general assembly of the settlement, although, in spite of this, the general assembly of the settlement hasn't yet been held in the Municipality of Poti and citizens haven't used this important mechanism of involvement.

CHAPTER 9: ACTIVITIES OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

The City Council of Poti includes the Gender Equality Council, whose action plan was approved by the City Council on June 26, 2019. Accordingly, the main part of the planned activities is scheduled for the time that follows the reporting period of the present study. So far, the Gender Equality Council has not analyzed a single legal act adopted by the bodies of the Municipality of Poti.

CHAPTER 10: EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF POTI

Salaries and bonuses:

The salaries given to officials (17 individuals) and staff (27 individuals) of the City Council of Poti which was elected in 2017 amounted to GEL 1,921,546, and a total of GEL 167,550 was given as bonuses and salary supplements.

Salaries and bonuses given at the City Council of Poti (in GEL)		
Year	Salaries	Bonuses
2017 (November-December)	59,316	56,850
2018	909,272	74,800
2019	952,958	35,900
Total	1,921,546	167,550

You can see information about salaries and bonuses given to officials of the City Council in the table below:

Salaries and bonuses given to officials of the City Council of Poti (in GEL)			
Name/last name	Position	Salary	Bonus
Irakli Kakulia	Chairperson of City Council	72,883	5,850
Akaki Darjania	Deputy Chairperson of City Council	68,052	5,200
Khvicha Tskhvitaria	Chairperson of Commission	63,356	4,900
Beka Vacharadze	Chairperson of Commission	63,174	4,900
Tornike Shonia	Chairperson of Commission	63,086	4,900
Tornike Kirtadze	Chairperson of Commission	63,086	4,900
Bakar Eragia	Chairperson of Commission	63,086	4,900

You can see information about salaries and bonuses given to chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of factions of the City Council in the table below:

Salaries and bonuses given to Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of factions (in GEL)

Name/last name	Position	Salary	Bonus
Zurab Chachua	Georgian Dream – Chairperson	60,914	4,900
Zviad Dgebuadze	Georgian Dream – Conservatives – Chairperson	61,486	4,900
Jemal Migineishvili	Georgian Dream – Industrialists – Chairperson	61,486	4,900
Dato Khomeriki	Poti – Chairperson	60,620	2,500
Maia Chkhartishvili	Kolkheti – Chairperson	57,801	2,500
Samson Kutalia	Georgian Dream – Deputy Chairperson	52,741	2,200
Tornike Kharchilava	Georgian Dream – Deputy Chairperson	23,650	
Davit Esebua	Georgian Dream – Industrialists – Deputy Chairperson	52,773	2,200
Mamuka Khorava	Poti – Deputy Chairperson	52,764	2,200
Paata Chaganava	Kolkheti – Deputy Chairperson	51,028	2,200

Expenses of work trips:

During the reporting period, a total of GEL **8,453** was spent on the work trips of members and staff of the City Council of Poti within the country and abroad.

Expenses incurred by the City Council of Poti on work trips (in GEL)

2017 (November-December)	1,064
2018	4,788
2019	2,601
Total	8,453

Telephone communication expenses:

The City Council of Poti has spent GEL **14,007** on telephone communication.

Expenses incurred by the City Council of Poti on telephone communication (in GEL)	
2017 (November-December)	1,017
2018	6,348
2019	6,642
Total	14,007

Reimbursement of expenses of members of the City Council:

The Local Self-Government Code provides for the possibility of reimbursement of expenses associated with the exercise of powers by those members of the City Council who are not officials and, accordingly, do not receive remuneration. The total amount of these reimbursements by the City Council of Poti elected in 2017 equals GEL **73,162**.

Reimbursement of expenses associated with the exercise of powers by members of the City Council of Poti (in GEL)	
2017 (November-December)	10,402
2018	35,732
2019	27,028
Total	73,162

Vehicles and fuel expenses:

The City Council of Poti has 1 vehicle on its balance sheet, which has been used by the Chairperson and the staff of the City Council. The brand of the vehicle is Volkswagen Passat; it was manufactured in 2012 and was procured by the municipality in 2013 for GEL 49,100, while a total of GEL 16,092 has been spent on its repairs (GEL 717 in 2017, GEL 11,302 in 2018, and GEL 9,379 in 2019).

Only officials of the City Council use the fuel purchased by the local budget, with concrete limits of fuel established for each of them. The Chairperson of the City Council has the largest limit – 600 liters per month, while the limits for other officials amount to 70 liters.

In total, the City Council of Poti has spent 34.8 tons of fuel worth GEL **68,303**.

Fuel spent by the City Council of Poti		
Year	Liter	Cost (in GEL)
2017 (November-December)	764	1,408
2018	17,956	38,550
2019	16,162	28,345
Total	34,882	68,303

As for the Chairperson of the City Council of Poti, Irakli Kakulia, he spent more than 14 tons (14,131 liters) of fuel (with a total value of GEL 30,333) during the reporting period, which amounts to 40% of the fuel spent by the City Council of Poti during the same period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Exercise of control:

- Members of the City Council of Poti should be involved more actively in supervision activities. Specifically, they should use mechanisms of control more frequently and take effective steps with the aim of monitoring the process of public procurements and large infrastructure projects.
- The standing commissions of the City Council should be actively involved in the supervision of the activities of executive bodies.
- The City Council should work actively and in good faith to reveal cases of conflict of interest, incompatibility with public office, and violations of the Rules of Procedure of the City Council and of norms of ethics in the municipality.

Sessions of the City Council:

- The City Council should improve the organizational aspects of its work and reduce the number of extraordinary sessions, as they interfere with ensuring citizens' involvement, mobilization of interest groups, preparation for discussing issues to be considered at the sessions, and transparency of the deliberative body.

Accountability:

- Attendance of members of the City Council at the sessions of the Council and its commissions should be improved considerably. We believe that every member of the City Council should exercise responsibility and attend the sessions. In addition, the reasons for both valid and invalid absences of each member of the City Council from the sessions should be studied, and corresponding measures should be applied.
- Filling out asset declarations by officials is an important mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability. At the same time, filling out declarations incompletely also contains a risk of corruption. For this reason, it is necessary that officials fill out the declarations completely.

Activities of factions:

- It is important that the activities of factions be beneficial for the corresponding self-government body. Factions should get actively involved in the process of considering and deciding on issues that fall under the powers of the City Council; study/control the activities of the City Hall and municipal legal entities; submit initiatives to the City Council; get actively involved in the budgeting process; etc. Factions increase citizens' involvement in self-government to a considerable extent, as well as support local initiatives and advocate for citizens' needs and problems. Therefore, we call upon the factions to use the said instruments actively.

Expenditures of the City Council:

- It is important that the expenditures incurred by the City Council be in full conformity with the exercise of the powers assigned to it by the legislation.
- The City Council should exercise strict control on the administrative expenditures of both the representative body, in particular, and the municipality, in general, and be oriented at economical spending of financial resources.

Petition:

- The legislation enables self-government bodies to [decrease](#) the number of signatures required to file a petition to any number they want. The Local Self-Government Code only sets the upper limit – 1%, which may be difficult to observe considering a large number of citizens in some municipalities.
- Considering that only 3 petitions were registered at the City Council during the reporting period, we believe that the City Council of Poti, too, should decrease the lower limit of the number of signatures and set it at 0.3% or 0.5% instead of 1%, which will make the procedure of preparation of a petition easier for interested individuals.

General assembly of the settlement:

- According to the Local Self-Government Code, the general assembly of the settlement is one of the main mechanisms for ensuring citizens' involvement in self-government. The general assembly can be convened both by constituents and the mayor of the municipality – on his/her own initiative or upon the motion of the municipal/city council.
- As the general assembly of the settlement has not been held in Poti yet, it is important that the City Council take the initiative to activate this mechanism of involvement and apply to the Mayor with a motion to hold the assembly. It is necessary for the municipality to hold the general assembly of the settlement in order to better plan the budget of every following year.