



**Institute for Development
of Freedom of Information**

FACT SHEET PART 2 [2025]

Sharp Democratic Backsliding and Continuous Systemic Repression in Georgia

The document includes major developments from February 01 to February 14, 2025

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Introduction

The pro-European protests continue with daily rallies in Tbilisi and other cities of Georgia. The protesters have two main demands: 1. release of all regime prisoners; 2. holding of new elections.

In response, the “Georgian Dream” party continues systemic repression against demonstrators, civil servants, civil society organizations, media, and other critical voices.

Considering the situation's complexity in Georgia, the number of facts worthy of attention is increasing daily. This document presents the most alarming developments, structured to reveal the sequence of events and their interrelations, **covering the period from February 01 to February 14, 2025.**

The information provided below is based on publicly available sources. Where sources are not originally available in English, IDFI provides an unofficial translation.

1. Ongoing protests across the country continue despite systemic repression

This chapter focuses on major incidents during the recent phase of the protests and the forms of repression faced by the demonstrators and media. The list of issues covered in this part is not exhaustive since many things happen during the day. More detailed day-by-day information on protests and repression can be found in English on Civil.ge's Live Blogs - [Chronicle of Repression](#) and [Resistance 2025](#).

1.1. Searching homes of activists and following repressive actions of police forces

On February 1, 2025, police searched the homes of several activists. They particularly [searched](#) the home of Kristine Botkoveli (a.k.a. Nancy Woland), one of the co-founders of the "Daitove" Facebook group, for the second time.

Daitove was created in 2024 during the protests against the reintroduction of the Russian-style Foreign Agents Law. The group is active in the ongoing protests. It is one of the most active and well-known resources for disseminating information about protests, uniting more than 254,000 members.

The search lasted for several hours, and during this process, the need to [receive](#) medical attention emerged. The police [seized](#) blankets with imprinted protest slogans and a balaclava [a type of headgear]. Furthermore, Botkoveli's technical devices were seized for the second time. After the search procedures, she received the [summon](#) for questioning.

On February 6, Kristine Botkoveli wrote a Facebook [post](#) describing the events of that day and indicating that she became the subject of psychological violence. Furthermore, she [stated](#) that police forced her to strip naked during the search.

On February 1, in parallel with searching Botkoveli's home, the police [appeared](#) at the residence of another co-founder of the "Daitove" Facebook group, Ilia Ghlonti. He also became the subject of a search for the second time. After several hours, he was [taken](#) to the police for questioning. Before he was placed in the car, he [told](#) the supporters gathered outside his residence that the search concerned the protest planned for the next day near the Tbilisi entrance. After the questioning, he left the police building.

On the same day, the search was also [conducted](#) in the house of activist Isako Devidze. According to public information, the police forces [seized](#) even money dedicated to the medical operation of his mother. After the search, he was administratively [detained](#). After being detained, he [started](#) a hunger strike. According to his lawyer, the police [used](#) physical violence against him. On February 5, the Tbilisi City Court judge (Lela Tsagareishvili) [fined](#) Devidze 3,500 GEL for alleged disobedience to the police order.

Social Justice Center issued a statement [indicating](#) that the searches of activists' homes do not serve the legitimate aim of investigating a criminal case and maintaining public order but rather serve the purpose of intimidating socially active citizens and removing them from public processes, marking February 1 events as another example of the arbitrary and political use of criminal mechanisms.

1.2. Questioning and administrative arrest for the Facebook Post

On February 1, information about the [arrest](#) of activist - Mirian Berulava became public. He [wrote](#) on his Facebook page that police came to him to transfer for questioning. After this post, communication could not be established with Berulava. Afterward, it became known that he was arrested for an alleged administrative offense and [placed](#) in a temporary detention facility.

He [assumes](#) that his questioning and subsequent actions were related to his social media post about the gathering planned for the next day.

He was released on February 3. Berulava [stated](#) that the Ministry of Internal Affairs' version claiming he allegedly insulted police officers is untrue. He [noted](#) that he doesn't trust the system, which the police took as an insult. The first-instance court's decision on his case has not yet been delivered.

1.3. Violence, administrative, and criminal arrests in relation to the February 2 rally

At the end of January, the rally was [scheduled](#) for February 2, 2025, near the Tbilisi Mall, which is located near the city entrance. Part of the demonstrators planned to gather in other locations and then join through marching the gathering near Tbilisi Mall.

Following this announcement, on January 31, roads of international importance were [added](#) to the list of objects of strategic and/or special importance based on a decision signed by Irakli Kobakhidze. It should be noted that under the Criminal Code of Georgia, seizing or blocking an object of strategic or special importance is a criminal offense (Article 222).

On February 1, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (hereafter MIA) published the [statement](#), which indicated, among other things, that the list of objects of strategic and/or special importance includes the territory where the protest action was announced for February 2.

On February 2, MIA released another [statement](#) concerning the February 2 gathering, citing for another time the Article from the Criminal Code of Georgia and the punishment defined under it.

Before the gathering, Shalva Papuashvili [posted](#) on his Facebook page the screen of Publika's (online media) informational post concerning the gathering planned. In his post, Papuashvili [presented](#) the spread of information about the protest as advertising a crime and talked about accountability/liability. Papuashvili [used](#) the following phrases in his post: "The EU-funded Publika" is announcing a criminal offense;" "The EU Embassy, as a representative of the funder, is responsible for the consequences of the pre-announced criminal offense." In response, the Media Advocacy Coalition [assessed](#) Papuashvili's statement as the continuation of terror and repression against independent media.

Despite the intensive attempts of intimidation and the likelihood of being convicted of an alleged criminal offense, protesters have gathered near the Tbilisi Mall, demanding new elections and the release of those detained during the demonstrations. An excessive number of police forces have been [deployed](#) in the area, and cordons have been set up on both sides of the highway, including near the Free University, where the part of the demonstrators was gathering.

Police allowed the part of demonstrators to cross the road and move to the opposite side, accompanied by the police forces; however, the larger part was not allowed to join and had to stay in front of the Tbilisi Mall building. The police forces started to use [violence](#) against those who moved to the opposite side, including those who were standing on the sidewalk.

According to the information [disseminated](#) by the media, on that day, police arrested 31 persons. Police forces [used](#) violence against demonstrators, including the detained persons and media. At least seven individuals [needed](#) to be hospitalized for being hit in the head. Some of the opposition politicians were also arrested, but those who at that moment formally held the MP mandate were later [released](#).

According to the [Media Advocacy Coalition](#): 1. A Radio Liberty journalist faced obstruction and threats while working. 2. Mtavari Arkhi journalist Dea Mamiseishvili was physically assaulted by police and subsequently reported the incident on Facebook, including a video of the attack. 3. TV Pirveli cameraman Niko Kokaia sustained injuries while covering the illegal detentions and required hospitalization. 4. Police verbally abused TV Pirveli's filming crew and targeted their broadcasting equipment in an attempt to disrupt their work. 5. Mirza Kezevadze, the deputy head of the Special Tasks Department of MIA, damaged a TV Pirveli journalist's phone, while there were also attempts to seize a Formula TV journalist's microphone. 6. MediaChecker journalist Ninia Kakabadze was physically pushed by law enforcement while attempting to perform her duties. 7. Guria News reported that a masked individual, not in a police uniform, attacked their camera.

The Legal Aid Network of CSOs [received](#) information on its hotline concerning the arrest of 26 persons, including a minor. In its statement, Network [indicated](#) that the majority of persons detained on February 2nd point to physical violence during and after their arrest, with some noting that violence was carried out inside vehicles.

The [footage](#) disseminated by media on February 2nd clearly shows a white minibus where several detainees, including a minor, are being placed. [Footage](#) from TV Pirveli also clearly reveals the vehicle's license plate (state number UD 117 DU). One of the detainees who was in the minibus [states](#) that immediately after the car door closed, detainees were physically beaten for approximately 1 minute (disseminated [video footage](#) also shows that members of the Special Tasks Department enter the minibus in groups, use violence, and then exit after several minutes).

The minor detainee also [speaks](#) about violence against persons in the minibus. He notes that both before and after being placed in the minibus, his personal belongings were taken, and he was subjected to violence despite his age being known. The minor also confirms physical

violence against other detainees in the minibus and indicates that it was accompanied by verbal abuse.

It's notable that on December 2nd, detainees had already [provided](#) a detailed description of the circumstances of brutal treatment in special minibuses, recalling that at least 6 Special Tasks Department members were violent towards them. IDFI [believes](#) that the license plate and other characteristics of the minibus documented by media on February 2nd are significant evidence for the Special Investigation Service, including for identifying those responsible for torture in the minibus in early December.

Furthermore, the footage [disseminated](#) by TV Pirveli reveals that the head of the Special Tasks Department, Zviad Kharazishvili (Khareba), personally participated in the violence. The [footage](#) also shows Kharazishvili verbally abusing the demonstrators through a loudspeaker.

During this gathering, women became the [subject](#) of intensive verbal insults from the police forces. Furthermore, police forces also [targeted](#) vehicles, signaling in solidarity for demonstrators.

After several hours of tense situation near the Tbilisi Mall, part of the demonstrators managed to [march](#) towards the Parliament building, and after marching around 14km, they united with the other demonstrators gathered on a daily protest on Rustaveli Avenue. While walking toward the Parliament building, accompanied by police forces, several individuals were [arrested](#), including the former President of the National Bank of Georgia.

On February 4, after the expiry of 48 hours of administrative detention, criminal charges were [brought](#) against eight persons. On February 5, Tbilisi City Court Judge Davit Kurtanidze [decided](#) on measure of restraint on the cases of Giorgi (Gigi) Ugulava, Dimitri Bidzinashvili, Irakli Tsignadze, Irakli Tabatadze, Nikoloz Kutubidze, Vasil Eliava, Nikoloz Kumsishvili, and Aleksandre Gogoladze. The judge had imposed a bail of 3,500 GEL on Vasil Eliava and Nikoloz Kutubidze, 4,000 GEL on Nikoloz Kumsishvili, and 5,000 GEL on Gigi Ugulava, Dimitri Bidzinashvili, Irakli Tskignadze, Irakli Tabatadze and Alexandre Gogoladze - meaning their release after payment of the defined amount.

1.4. Administrative arrests and violence against demonstrators and media at the gathering of February 4 "Freedom for Mzia Amaghlobeli"

On February 4, from 11:00 a.m., a protest was [held](#) near the Parliament building demanding the release of Mzia Amaghlobeli. The founder and director of online media outlets "Batumelebi" and "Netgazeti" has been placed in pre-trial detention, and she has been on a hunger strike

since her detention. During the peaceful demonstration, police [used](#) excessive force against journalists. [Specifically](#):

- While performing professional duties, a masked police officer attempted to seize the phone of OC Media journalist Givi Avaliani;
- "Publika" photographer Natia Leverashvili was subjected to physical violence;
- News.on.ge's editor-in-chief, Vantsent Khabeishvili, was physically assaulted and knocked to the ground by police officers. According to the reported information, due to the injuries received, he needed emergency medical examinations.

The police pushed the demonstrators to move to the sidewalk, part of which was already occupied by police forces. As [seen](#) on Radio Liberty's Facebook Live, two participants were arrested. The [footage](#) disseminated reveals that at least one of them was moving peacefully on the sidewalk.

Media Advocacy Coalition, while assessing the developments of that day, [stated](#) that the "Georgian Dream" deliberately continues to persecute independent media representatives and restrict their activities.

1.5. Actions taken against the Journalist Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani

On December 1, 2024, pro-European protest participants appeared on the Georgian Public Broadcaster (GPB), along with the channel's host Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani, who [stated](#) on air that the Public Broadcaster's editorial policy fails to meet the demands of society.

Additionally, Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani [expressed](#) solidarity with detained journalist Mzia Amaghlobeli. Starting January 14, at the beginning of each news item during the evening news broadcast, Ivanov-Chikovani repeated the phrase "Solidarity and freedom to Mzia Amaghlobeli."

At the February 3 Board meeting, a verbal confrontation [occurred](#) between Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani and Vasil Maghlaperidze, GPB's board chairman. Ivanov-Chikovani accused Maghlaperidze of "slander" and stated that he had not engaged in any offensive behavior. At the same meeting, GPB's live broadcast director Kakha Melikidze revealed that he was reprimanded for airing footage of President Salome Zurbishvili during the Georgia-Greece football match on March 26, 2024.

The following day, on February 4, Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani [announced](#) that by the channel management's decision, he would no longer host the news broadcast on GPB "until the

complicated situation normalizes.” The official reason cited was a statement from news broadcast producers who refused to continue working with Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani.

On January 29, the Media Advocacy Coalition [responded](#) to the ongoing events at the GPB, condemning “Georgian Dream”’s influence on the channel and demanding the immediate resignation of the broadcaster’s leadership. On February 4, the Media Advocacy Coalition [appealed](#) to international organizations, including the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), calling on them to express their position on the ongoing processes at the Georgian Public Broadcaster.

On February 4, the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) issued a [statement](#) expressing support for GPB journalist Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani. According to the EFJ statement, “If the unjustly sanctioned journalist is not immediately reinstated, GPB must be excluded from the EBU.”

On February 11, GPB’s evening news broadcast was [hosted](#) by producer Maia Chuchulashvili, who had previously refused to work with Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani.

1.6. Administrative arrest of three students

On February 6 at 3:00 a.m., students Achi Gochitashvili, Luka Khizadze, and Giorgi Barbakadze were administratively [detained](#) on Chavchavadze Avenue in Tbilisi for alleged disobedience to a police order. According to the available information, their arrest was allegedly related to making stencils.

On February 7, the court [ruled](#) that the students had committed an administrative offense. Giorgi Barbakadze received a verbal warning, while Achi Gochitashvili and Luka Khizadze were fined 2,000 GEL each. During the court hearing, Barbakadze [stated](#) that the police made him do push-ups twice.

1.7. Initiation of the administrative case against nine persons for solidarity gathering

In connection with Mzia Amaglobeli's pre-trial detention, around 30-minute solidarity gathering near a judge's house in Kutaisi was [held](#) on January 26 (Judge Malkhaz Okropirashvili did not review journalist Mzia Amaglobeli's appeal concerning the change of measure of restraint).

The Ministry of Internal Affairs [issued](#) an administrative offense protocol against nine persons: Gela Mtivlishvili - Journalist; Nino Katamadze - Musician; Vladimer Apkhazava - Teacher, First recipient of the National Teacher Award; Khvicha Vashakmadze - Journalist; Ketevan Pilauri -

Psychologist; Maia Tsiramua - Psychologist; Irina Zarandia - Civil activist; Givi Tsintsadze - Member of Lanchkhuti City Council; Eka Kukhalashvili - Journalist.

The hearing of the case was [held](#) on February 10, 2025, at the Kutaisi City Court (Judge Tsitsino Mosidze). On the same day, the judge [imposed](#) a fine of 5,000-5,000 GEL on each above-mentioned person (9 individuals).

On February 14, Lado Apkhazava [announced](#) that over 9,000 teachers had each transferred 1.50 GEL to his bank account, raising more than the amount needed to pay his fine.

1.8. Hundreds of ongoing administrative cases against the demonstrators

After the adoption of [repressive amendments](#) by the “Georgian Dream” in December 2024, the initiation of administrative offense cases on alleged “artificial” blocking of Rustaveli Avenue against the demonstrators participating in daily gatherings intensified.

According to publicly [reported](#) information, at least 593 new cases were initiated only at the beginning of February.

In addition to the problematic interpretation of the legislation by the judges and other systemic shortcomings usual to such category of cases, it is noteworthy that the Ministry of Internal Affairs submits as the alleged evidence the photo/video materials that are taken from the video surveillance cameras under the control of "Public Safety Management Center - 112" and uses a special program to identify the demonstrators. It is highly likely that for this purpose, the MIA processes biometric data of individuals. In most cases, among other things, the court does not assess whether the person was lawfully identified and whether the person who made the identification had proper access to the protected databases following personal data protection legislation.

GYLA [addressed](#) the Personal Data Protection Service to inspect the practice of MIA concerning the usage of video surveillance cameras in administrative offense cases.

Information concerning the imposition of administrative fines by the Tbilisi City Court is [disseminated](#) almost daily, including in the cases in which fines (5,000 GEL (approximately 1,700 EUR) are imposed stemming from the repressive amendments adopted in December 2024.

1.9. Imposition of the administrative fines stemming from the new repressive legislative package

On February 6, 2025, the “Georgian Dream” adopted a new repressive legislative package (details are provided in section 2.1 of this document) targeting the demonstrators of the ongoing protest. Among other things, stemming from these amendments, the police became authorized to directly impose fines against demonstrators on alleged “artificial” blocking of the road (previously, the police had to submit case materials to the court and the decision on the imposition of the fine was made by the judge).

On February 9, opposition activists Nika Narsia and Giorgi Mumladze [reported](#) that they were fined 5,000 GEL by police officers directly who arrived at their homes, one in Marneuli and the other in Tserovani, at dawn. Furthermore, on February 11, they both were [fined](#) stemming from the new repressive amendments for the second time.

In the following days, demonstrators received phone calls from the police concerning the imposition of the 5,000 fines GEL, and in some instances, several police officers appeared at the place of residence of the demonstrators with the protocol for the imposition of the fine. For instance, on February 13, Paata Burchuladze, a famous opera singer, was [fined](#) 5,000 GEL for allegedly “artificially” blocking the road during his 70th-anniversary procession. (On February 12, the march began at the Tbilisi Concert Hall and proceeded to Rustaveli Avenue in response to the Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theatre's decision to [deny](#) space for the celebration of Burchuladze’s anniversary.)

1.10. Targeting injured media representatives with administrative proceedings

On February 10, Tbilisi City Court [imposed](#) a verbal warning to “Mtavari Arkhi” cameraman Sergi Baramidze for allegedly disobeying a police order. Baramidze had been physically [assaulted](#) by the police on November 19, 2024, while carrying out his professional duties.

Police [arrested](#) Baramidze on November 19 during a protest while he was filming detentions. According to Baramidze, the police physically assaulted him during his arrest, “I was lying on the ground, and they were beating me, there were so many of them,” he [recalls](#). He had injuries to his head and eye area.

On February 12, the Ministry of Internal Affairs [took](#) legal action against another beaten journalist - Aleksandre Keshelashvili, a reporter for Publika (online media), who was physically [assaulted](#) by the police on the night of November 28, when Keshelashvili was covering a protest near the Parliament building. While performing his professional duties, he was detained by

masked special forces officers and subjected to a violent beating for an extended period. The police also confiscated his cameras. Upon being taken to a police station, he was informed that he was administratively detained.

He is [accused](#) of committing disorderly conduct and disobedience to police orders. Keshelashvili refused to sign the detention report disputing the charges. Following his release, he required surgical treatment for a nasal injury. Meanwhile, the Special Investigation Service has [launched](#) an investigation into the violence against him. However, no law enforcement officers have been held accountable.

On February 13, the Media Advocacy Coalition [condemned](#) the administrative proceedings against Sergi Baramidze and Aleksandre Keshelashvili, stating that these cases reflect a growing tendency of systemic violence against the media and serve as a mechanism to encourage self-censorship.

1.11. Initiation of administrative proceedings for stencil made in Batumi

On February 11, activist Tamar Kuratishvili [received](#) a notification that the Batumi Police Department had requested the Batumi City Hall to initiate administrative proceedings against her on January 24. The request was based on a stencil Kuratishvili had created concerning Batumi Police Chief Irakli Dgebuaдзе.

The Batumi police [accuse](#) Kuratishvili of distorting the visual appearance of a municipal area, an offense for which the fine increased from 50 GEL to 1,000 GEL following [repressive legislative amendments](#) enacted in December 2024. It remains unclear whether Batumi City Hall has initiated administrative proceedings

1.12. Physical assault on Lasha Gabitashvili

On February 11, Lasha Gabitashvili, who was involved in an [incident](#) in Abu Dhabi on January 12-13 where he was physically assaulted by “Georgian Dream” MPs, was [attacked](#) again in Tbilisi by masked individuals who physically assaulted him. Gabitashvili held “Georgian Dream” MPs responsible for the attack, [stating](#) that what they themselves couldn’t accomplish in Abu Dhabi, they carried out through perpetrators in Tbilisi.

Gabitashvili was taken by ambulance to the Ingorokva Clinic, where he underwent medical examinations. The doctor [confirmed](#) that he had a concussion. He was offered hospitalization but refused. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has [launched](#) an investigation into the attack on Gabitashvili on charges of group violence.

GD MP Irakli Zarkua, who had attacked Gabitashvili in Abu Dhabi, [responded](#) to the assault on him. Zarkua [stated](#) that he is not accustomed to attacking people covertly, claimed that Gabitashvili is known for provocative actions, and suggested that he might have been attacked by his neighbor or former friend.

2. Adoption and/or initiation of other repressive measures

Since the beginning of February, the “Georgian Dream” Party and institutions under its effective control have announced and/or already adopted further repressive measures targeting critical voices.

The following chapter aims to provide information about the recent decisions/initiatives aimed at further targeting demonstrators, media, civil servants, CSOs, and other critical voices.

2.1. Initiation and adoption by the “Georgian Dream” party in a rush of the new repressive legislative package

On February 3, 2025, one of the leaders of the “Georgian Dream” party, Mamuka Mdinardze, [announced](#) a new [repressive package](#) of legislative amendments. The package largely concerned the repressive amendments to the Law on Assemblies and Demonstrations, the Code of Administrative Offenses, and the Criminal Code.

On February 4, the Public Defender of Georgia issued a statement [indicating](#) the following: “The proposed legislative amendments concern important issues, such as establishing various prohibitions for participants in assemblies and demonstrations, including relating to the location of the assembly, the attributes and forms of the assembly; granting the Ministry of Internal Affairs a number of powers when prohibiting or terminating assemblies. The amendments to the Administrative Offences Code will increase liabilities for a number of violations. They will also change the rules for conducting administrative cases, as well as procedural guarantees during consideration of cases in the court. Along with increasing sanctions, liability for committing insulting acts against representatives of the state authorities will be added to both criminal and administratively punishable actions. According to the Public Defender, the aforementioned legislative amendments concern the realization of the fundamental rights to assembly, expression, and a fair trial and create threats of disproportionate restrictions on these rights.”

On February 5, the Public Defender [addressed](#) OSCE/ODIHR and requested the preparation of a legal opinion on the draft laws introduced.

On February 6, the “Georgian Dream” hastily [adopted](#) the package with the third reading, and on the same day, amendments were promulgated by the “Georgian Dream” President and published in the Legislative Herald of Georgia.

Among other things, the amendments further aggravated criminal liability for assaulting a law enforcement officer, and also defined as a special crime, and imposed severe punishment for threatening and assaulting a state political official, a political official, a civil servant, and/or a member of their family.

In addition, the aforementioned legislative package significantly [increased](#) administrative liability for such offenses as petty hooliganism, vandalism, disobedience to the request of a law enforcement officer, and violation of the rules for organizing and holding a meeting or demonstration. Moreover, imprisonment for up to 60 days was defined as a maximum penalty concerning the several administrative offenses used to repress demonstrators. Furthermore, verbal insults, cursing, and/or other insulting actions against a state or political official or civil servant became punishable under the Code of Administrative Offenses.

The procedures concerning the proceedings on some of the administrative offenses were also changed. For instance, the representatives of MIA are empowered to directly impose administrative fines on the demonstrators for allegedly “artificial” blocking of roads. On February 9, opposition activists Nika Narsia and Giorgi Mumladze [reported](#) that they were fined GEL 5,000 by police officers directly who arrived at their homes, one in Marneuli and the other in Tserovani, at dawn.

After the adoption of the new repressive legislative package, the amount of police force during the daily protests in front of the parliament building gradually increased over several days.

On February 10, a massive number of police forces were mobilized on Rustaveli Avenue, whose efforts were directed at preventing the protest participants from moving on Rustaveli Avenue. Despite the significantly increasing number of demonstrators, police officers were refusing to allow them to move to the street at their discretion.

The demonstrators tried to break through the police cordon and move to the road, during which several of them were detained. Eventually, the protesters succeeded in moving on the road in front of the parliament building. According to Radio Liberty, in total, six people were [detained](#) on February 10, including Levan Gogichaishvili, a politician from the party “Gakharia For Georgia.” Of the six detained persons, 2 of them, including Levan Gogichaishvili, were released on a written pledge.

2.2. Announcement of further initiatives targeting CSOs and Media

On February 5, 2025, Mamuka Mdinaradze [announced](#) another set of repressive initiatives. In Particular, Mdinaradze [announced](#) the “Georgian Dream” party’s plans to adopt a more restrictive law against civil society organizations and repressive measures against the media. As previously, they [claim](#) that they will simply copy Western models: anti-CSO law would be an “exact copy” of the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), and the media legislation copy “approaches and practices” from Britain.

Furthermore, Mdinaradze spoke about other initiatives, among other things, [indicating](#) that:

- Provisions on mandatory participation of NGOs in the public decision-making process will be removed from all relevant laws and by-laws;
- Civil servants will be prohibited from receiving any benefits from foreign sources, whether direct or indirect, salary supplements, financing of training, visits, etc.;
- Funding of the media from foreign sources will be limited, except for funds from commercial advertising.

In parallel, the “Georgian Dream” party [plans](#) to create a “Governmental Fund” for financing “civic initiatives.” The amendments to the law “On Grants” have already been [initiated](#).

2.3. Announcement of the decision on the abolition of the Civil Service Bureau

Since December 2024, the repression against civil servants has intensified significantly, mainly related to their publicly expressed stances. In December, the “Georgian Dream” party initiated and adopted repressive [amendments](#) to the Law on “Public Service,” which removed the key legislative guarantees for civil servants. From January 2025, the “Georgian Dream” [actively began](#) dismissing civil servants who lack party loyalty.

On February 3, 2025, employees of the Civil Service Bureau issued a [statement](#) regarding expected legislative changes, according to which the Civil Service Bureau will be abolished, and its functions will be [transferred](#) to the Government Administration.

The Civil Service Bureau’s function is to develop strategies and reforms necessary for establishing a qualified and ethical civil service, as well as coordinate measures needed for its implementation. IDFI [believes](#) that the abolition of this institution and the transfer of its functions to a political body is a logical continuation of the repression initiated by the “Georgian Dream.”

2.4. Repression against Tetrtskaro Local History Museum employees

On February 12, the head of the Tetrtskaro Local History Museum, Aleksandre Melikidze, [announced](#) his resignation. According to him, the contract of museum employee Mariam Charkviani was not renewed after she had shared Melikidze's critical post about the ongoing political developments. Melikidze stated that his post became the basis for Charkviani's dismissal, which, according to him, left him with no moral right to continue his work at the museum.

2.5. Initiation of the criminal investigation by the Prosecutor's Office

On February 8, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia [opened](#) an investigation into alleged cases of "sabotage and assistance to foreign and foreign-controlled organizations in hostile activities aimed at undermining Georgia's state interests." The statement about the launching of the investigation was [published](#) on February 10, 2025. The investigation is [opened](#) under Article 318, Part 1, Article 19 (Attempted crime) Article 318, Part 2, and Article 319 of the Criminal Code of Georgia.

The first and the second parts of Article 318 (Sabotage) of the [Criminal Code of Georgia](#) stipulate the following: 1. Interference with the normal functioning of public or other enterprises, institutions, organizations or agencies for the purpose of weakening Georgia, shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of two to four years. 2. The damage, making unfit for operation or destruction of enterprises, transport and communication facilities or mass media, roads, structures, equipment, documents, strategic raw materials, materials or products in large quantity, as well as of facilities that are required for the normal functioning of establishments or organizations vital for the public and which are designated for the maintenance of public security or public order, or of other special-purpose facilities, – shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of five to ten years. According to Article 319 (Assistance to a foreign country, foreign organization or an organization controlled by a foreign state in hostile activities) of the Criminal Code of Georgia assisting a foreign country, foreign organization, or an organization controlled by a foreign state in activities intended to undermine the state interests of Georgia, unless there are elements of any of the acts provided for in Articles 308, 310-314, 318, 322-325 and 329 of this Code, shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of seven to fifteen years.

The Prosecutor's Office said it had launched an investigation following a [complaint](#) from the "United Neutral Georgia" movement, which is known for its anti-Western views. According to

the Prosecutor's Office, the movement accused both – domestic and foreign actors of engaging in activities that threaten Georgia's "constitutional order and security."

According to the [statement](#) of POG along with the Investigation Unit of the Prosecutor General's Office of Georgia, the relevant units of the State Security Service of Georgia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs are involved in the investigation group "to effectively implement relevant measures and conduct a comprehensive, complete and objective investigation." Pro-GD media outlets are [reporting](#) that members of the "United Neutral Movement" have been attending interviews/questioning at the prosecutor's office.

2.6. Creation of the "Parliamentary Commission"

During the pre-election period, the "Georgian Dream" party [stated](#) that after the victory in the elections, they would issue a strict political and legal condemnation to the collective UNM [meaning NGOs, Media, and political opponents].

On February 5, an investigative commission was [established](#) to "investigate" the activities of the United National Movement government (2003-2012 years). The temporary investigative commission is [established](#) for a period of 3 months, but its term of office may be extended to 6 months. 83 representatives of the "Georgian Dream" party [supported](#) the creation of the commission.

"For those who do not cooperate, there is a specific clause in the criminal code, and the corresponding liability will take place," - [said](#) Davit Matikashvili, the chairman of the committee on procedural issues and rules of the "Georgian Dream" one-party Parliament. On February 13, the first organizational meeting of the temporary investigative commission [was held](#) in the Parliament building, chaired by Tea Tsulukiani.

It is noteworthy that on February 5, the mandates of 49 opposition MPs from three political alliances (the Coalition for Change, Unity-UNM, and Strong Georgia) were [terminated](#) by the "Georgian Dream." These alliances submitted formal requests to [revoke](#) their mandates following the disputed October 26 elections, which they consider rigged. The opposition party, Gakharia-For Georgia, [refuses](#) to participate in legislative activities and doesn't recognize the legitimacy of the Parliament, however, according to the available information, they have not yet submitted formal requests for mandate termination.

3. Updated information on the criminal cases against the demonstrators concerning the April-May 2024 and ongoing protests

One of the most repressive measures taken by the “Georgian Dream” Party is the opening of criminal cases against more than 50 individuals in connection with the ongoing protests. Previously, criminal proceedings have also been initiated in connection with the April-May 2024 protests.

As of February 14, 2025, no individual responsible for torture, inhumane treatment, or violence against peaceful demonstrators and media has been held criminally liable, and police forces continue systemic physical violence.

The following chapter provides major updates from **February 01 to February 14, 2025**, about the criminal cases initiated against the demonstrators.

3.1. Major updates about the criminal cases initiated from November 2024

As of February 14, 2025, according to public information, criminal investigations have been initiated against 52 persons in connection with the ongoing protests from November 2024. Out of the overall number, 38 persons are detained. Furthermore, Temur Katamadze is in custody, while a decision regarding his deportation from the country is pending.

Mzia Amaghlobeli continues her hunger strike (34th day) and, as of February 14, is [placed](#) in the civil sector clinic for examinations. Based on the [appeal](#) of GYLA (the lawyers of GYLA are representing Amaghlobeli’s interests) and the [decision](#) of the Public Defender of Georgia, “a group of doctors to assess the adequacy and timeliness of medical services provided to Mzia Amaghlobeli by the Penitentiary Service (including the contractor clinic(s))” has been set up. On February 12, the clinical director of the “VivaMedi” clinic [stated](#) that each subsequent day of the hunger strike carries a high risk of organ failure.

On February 12, Mzia Amaghlobeli’s lawyers held a press conference, during which her lawyer and the chairperson of GYLA [stated](#) that Amaghlobeli does not intend to end her hunger strike and does not wish to receive any privileges because of it. Therefore, after undergoing the necessary medical examinations, she requested to be returned to prison. She also noted that Amaghlobeli’s current health condition requires monitoring in a clinical setting, and based on doctors’ recommendations, she remains in the hospital. On February 13, Amaghlobeli’s lawyers [submitted](#) a motion to the court requesting the revocation of Amaghlobeli’s pretrial detention. On February 14, the court [dismissed](#) the motion and kept Amaghlobeli in pretrial detention.

Temur Katamadze also continues his hunger strike (29th day) in the Temporary Placement Center of the Migration Department. On February 7, the Tbilisi Court of Appeals [dismissed](#) Temur Katamadze's appeal and left him in custody. On February 11, GYLA issued a [statement](#) indicating that the relevant authorities are not providing information about Temur Katamadze's health condition. According to GYLA, the information provided by the Public Defender indicated the necessity of certain medical examinations. GYLA called on the relevant authorities to disclose information about Katamadze's health and to conduct the necessary medical examinations. On February 13, GYLA [announced](#) that medical documents were handed over to the lawyer on February 12. The documents reveal that Katamadze is only being monitored for minimal vital parameters, which is not sufficient for a full assessment of his health condition.

On February 4, it became known that Nikoloz Javakhishvili, who was arrested during pro-European protests and is in pre-trial detention, has [resumed](#) his hunger strike for the fourth day. On February 12, it was [reported](#) that Nikoloz Javakhishvili ended his hunger strike due to deteriorating health conditions.

On February 7, Vepkhia Kasradze, who is in pre-trial detention, was [taken](#) to hospital due to a deterioration in his health. According to his lawyer, Kasradze [underwent](#) nose surgery on February 3 and was immediately taken to pre-trial detention, and Kasradze's rehabilitation process became difficult.

During the period covered by the present document, several court hearings were held within the criminal cases initiated. For instance, [Saba Skhvitaridze](#), who is charged with harming the health of a police officer, [spoke](#) about his arrest and the severe violence and torture against him at the police station during the February 11 court hearing.

He asserted that the official police report does not reflect the truth, as it falsely states that he voluntarily appeared for the interview as a witness. In reality, according to him, he was arrested on the road while traveling with his father. Despite fully complying with police orders, he was denied access to a lawyer, and his father's phone was confiscated when he attempted to contact legal assistance. Instead of being taken to a local police station, Skhvitaridze was transported toward Tbilisi, where he was transferred into a black vehicle near Gori. He [recounts](#) being subjected to verbal abuse, threats of sexual violence, and intimidation during the journey.

Skhvitaridze [recalls](#) that upon arrival at the Tbilisi police department, Skhvitaridze was physically assaulted several times by masked individuals in police uniforms, one of them tried to break his arm. Requests for medical assistance were ignored, and he was only provided with a plastic bag when he began vomiting due to injuries. The abuse escalated with further beatings involving wooden objects, continued psychological pressure, and threats of sexual violence. Despite suffering from a concussion and other injuries, he was denied emergency medical care until he

was transferred to a penitentiary. According to Skhvitardze, in one episode, he heard police officers mocking a deaf and non-verbal person who had been detained at one of the protests. Skhvitardze insists he was wrongfully accused, while those responsible for violence against peaceful demonstrators remain unpunished.

3.1.1. Coordinated discrediting campaign against Mzia Amaghlobeli

Mzia Amaghlobeli has been the target of a coordinated discrediting campaign by “Georgian Dream” politicians, pro-GD media, and other affiliated actors. The [discreditation efforts](#) frame Amaghlobeli’s case as part of a broader Western-backed attempt to destabilize the political situation in Georgia. “Georgian Dream” politicians and pro-GD media claim that her hunger strike is a manipulation to avoid responsibility, while the opposition is accused of using her as a “sacred victim” for international sympathy. Pro-government actors label her an “attacker of police officers” and a “grant-guzzling activist” financed by foreign foundations. Additionally, some pro-Russian and far-right figures have used [sexist and dehumanizing rhetoric](#), dismissing her protest as a staged political act, likening it to the case of former President Mikheil Saakashvili and falsely claiming that she was secretly consuming food and vitamins.

Monitoring by Myth Detector between January 14 and February 9 [identified](#) key narratives spread against Amaghlobeli, including claims that her hunger strike is a repetition of the Saakashvili scenario, that attacking a police officer equates to attacking the state, and that Western-backed forces are behind the protests. These messages have been amplified by “Georgian Dream” politicians, pro-GD journalists, anti-liberal activists, and social media pages known for spreading anti-Western and anti-opposition propaganda. Facebook activity on posts related to Amaghlobeli has also shown signs of coordinated troll activity.

3.1.2. Statement of the parents of prisoners

On February 10, 2025, family members of regime prisoners [made](#) a joint statement and responded to the information disseminated about lawyer Davit Gamkrelidze. Specifically, earlier that day, lawyer Guja Avsajanishvili [spread](#) information that Davit Gamkrelidze illegally entered to meet with regime prisoner Nikoloz Javakhishvili, who was on a hunger strike, and demanded a "confession" from him.

According to the family members of the prisoners, the regime is now [trying](#) to criminalize young people with false confessions. The statement made, among other things, [indicates](#): "We, the family members of political prisoners and regime hostages, declare the following: that the

government has started the dirtiest policy to drag political prisoners into their scheme, to achieve a confession from any one of them, to set a precedent that there is a category of political prisoners who confess to crimes and are criminal offenders."

It is noteworthy that back in 2024, Davit Gamkrelidze became [involved](#) in one of the criminal cases initiated in relation to the April-May 2024 protests under [suspicious circumstances](#).

3.2. Major updates concerning the criminal cases initiated in relation to April-May 2024 protests

In the first week of February 2025, the first instance court completed a review of criminal cases against those detained in relation to the April-May 2024 protests.

The Court [issued](#) judgments of conviction for all persons detained under criminal charges in relation to the protests against the reintroduction of the Russian-style Foreign Agents Law. (One of them was [pardoned](#) by President Salome Zurbashvili in September 2024).

Particularly **in addition** to the judgments of conviction reported in the previous Fact Sheet:

- On February 3, 2025, Giorgi Okmelashvili, who was accused of violence against a policeman, was [sentenced](#) to 5 years imprisonment (Judge Giorgi Gelashvili);
- On February 4, 2025, Giorgi Kuchuashvili and Davit Koldari, who were arrested on charges of assaulting a police officer and damaging property, were [found](#) guilty by the court. Judge Mikheil Jinjolia [sentenced](#) Kuchuashvili to 4 years and Koldari to 2 years and 3 months imprisonment;
- On February 4, blogger Ucha Abashidze and his wife, Mariam Iashvili, were [found](#) guilty by Judge Mikheil Jinjolia. According to the judge's [decision](#), Ucha Abashidze will spend 5 years in prison and his wife - 4 years. Since the case contained personal data, it was [considered](#) in the closed sessions. Accordingly, journalists could not attend the sessions, and the lawyer could not discuss the details;
- On February 11, Omar Okribelashvili's lawyer, Davit Gamkrelidze, [announced](#) that Okribelashvili's family appealed to the GD president, Mikheil Kavelashvili, for a pardon.

4. New resolution of the European Parliament and rhetoric of the "Georgian Dream"

The European Parliament [adopted](#) a [resolution](#) on February 13, 2025, addressing the deteriorating political situation in Georgia, passing 400 votes in favor. The resolution takes a

strong stance against the current “Georgian Dream” (GD) government, calling for non-recognition of the GD government and demanding new elections. The EP cited the October 2024 elections as “deeply flawed” and failing to meet international democratic standards, effectively declaring the resulting one-party Parliament and GD President as lacking democratic legitimacy.

The resolution [calls](#) for comprehensive sanctions targeting multiple figures in Georgia's political and business establishment, particularly Bidzina Ivanishvili and his network. It specifically names numerous individuals for sanctions, including GD Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, other GD government officials, judges, and owners of pro-GD media outlets. The EP also [called](#) for freezing Ivanishvili's assets within the EU and urged France to strip him of the Legion of Honour.

The EP [expressed](#) serious concerns about recent developments in Georgia, including the crackdown on protesters since November 2024, pressure on civil society organizations, and the detention of opposition leaders. It also [continues](#) to recognize Salome Zurbashvili as the legitimate President of Georgia.

In response to the European Parliament's [resolution](#), the GD political council [issued](#) a statement referencing Viktor Orbán's criticizing statements on European institutions. The [statement](#) claims that “it is impossible for the Georgian Dream to take the European Parliament seriously today.” The statement also emphasizes the necessity of freeing the EU from the influence of the “deep state” and expresses the Georgian Dream's support for “European patriots” in this fight.