



**Institute for Development  
of Freedom of Information**

**FACT SHEET PART 5**

**Sharp Democratic Backsliding and Continuous Systemic Repression in Georgia**

**The document includes major developments from April 5 to April 30, 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 continues systemic repression against demonstrators, civil servants, civil society organizations, media, political opponents, 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 April 5 to April 30, 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 used against critical voices. 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 Georgia's Live Blog Resistance 2025.

#### 1.1. Physical assault on protest participants

The leader of the anti-Western and pro-GD movement "United Neutral Georgia," Vato Shakarishvili, along with Georgian Dream propagandist Goga Khaindrava, [physically assaulted](#) Mtavari Arkhi journalist Giorgi Mamniashvili on April 5. [According to Mamniashvili](#), he called Vato Shakarishvili a "slave" because it was his organization's appeal that led to the freezing of the bank accounts of funds that were supporting pro-European protest participants and other socially vulnerable individuals, on March 17.

The following day, Shakarishvili once again [confronted](#) protesters who repeated the "slave" insult. [Footage](#) shows Shakarishvili verbally insulting the protesters and also attempting to attack them physically.

On April 14, activist Lekso Samkharadze [wrote](#) on social media that he had been attacked and struck on the back of the head and occipital area with a pointed object resembling brass knuckles. His friend, Levan Kanchaveli, suffered a skull fracture and required surgery. Samkharadze had previously [indicated](#) that there had been multiple attempts to attack him.

Notably, as already mentioned in the previous Fact Sheet, on March 27, Samkharadze, along with two of his friends, was [taken](#) to a police station for attempting to restore a damaged graffiti of a Georgian national hero and a Georgian fighter who died in Ukraine. They were [released](#) after several hours, but their stencils were confiscated. Additionally, in the spring of 2024, during demonstrations opposing the adoption of Russian-style Foreign Agents Law, Lekso Samkharadze [had a verbal altercation](#) with MP Viktor Japaridze, who voted for the Russian-style Foreign Agents Law. In response, Japaridze threw an orange at Samkharadze.

## 1.2. Attacks on protest supporters living abroad

Attacks were carried out against emigrants living abroad who are critical of Georgian Dream, with unknown individuals assaulting, threatening, and physically attacking them on the streets. On April 17, Inga Tsiklauri [reported](#) an attack in Reykjavík on social media, and on April 20, Levan Moseshvili [was assaulted](#) in Paris.

[According to Tsiklauri](#), an unknown person speaking Georgian approached her near her workplace and verbally abused and threatened her. Tsiklauri claims that the incident has political grounds, and she recalls that in 2024, she also received threatening calls because of a particular political post, and believes that this attack is a continuation of that incident.

On April 20, Levan Moseshvili [reported](#) an attack against him and published a photo showing signs of the assault. According to Moseshvili, he was walking with his wife and minor child in Paris when an unknown person approached them, first verbally abused and threatened Moseshvili, then hit him in the face and ran away. Moseshvili [states](#) that the attacker made clear references to his political views during the assault.

## 1.3. Administrative proceedings against journalists

On April 6, Indigo (online media) journalist Saba Sordia was [detained](#) under administrative charges for allegedly disobeying police orders. [According to his lawyer](#), police arrested the journalist after he was stopped for a “superficial inspection.” Although he presented his ID, the officers demanded a full bag search. Following his detention, Sordia was held for 48 hours in a temporary detention facility. The journalist [reported](#) that officers in the police car mocked him

for wearing an earring and confiscated his GoPro camera. On April 17, Judge Zviad Tsekvava [fined](#) Sordia 2,500 GEL (approximately 800 EUR).

Journalists continue to be fined for “artificially blocking the roadway” while performing their professional duties. On April 10, TV Formula journalist Eliso Jariashvili reported being [fined](#) for blocking the road while conducting an interview on a closed section of Rustaveli Avenue. On April 23, OC Media co-founder and photographer Mariam Nikuradze [stated](#) that she had been fined 5,000 GEL (approximately 1,600 EUR) for the fourth time for road blocking while carrying out her professional duties.

On April 30, it was [revealed](#) that TV Formula journalists Eliso Jariashvili and Tata Porakishvili were banned from working inside the Parliament building for one month. Jariashvili and Porakishvili [are accused](#) of violating a rule that prohibits journalists from continuing to record an interview if the respondent refuses to speak. [According to the official letter](#), on April 16, despite GD MP Archil Gorduladze’s refusal to give an interview, Jariashvili “continued attempting to record the interview.” Porakishvili’s accreditation [was suspended](#) due to questions she asked Nino Tsilosani.

#### 1.4. Administrative detentions on Rustaveli Avenue

Administrative proceedings against protest participants continue. On April 7, during a protest held in front of the Parliament building, three demonstrators — Tazo Kveselava, Vato Samkharadze, and Rezi Dumbadze — were [detained](#) under administrative charges. [According to the Public Defender](#), two of them reported verbal abuse and ill-treatment by the police. Kveselava’s court hearing was already held, and the judge [fined](#) him 5,000 GEL (approximately 1,600 EUR).

Compared to the previous month, there has been a growing trend in the use of administrative detention as a form of liability in administrative cases since the second half of April. Gela Khasaia, a member of the political party “Girchi – More Freedom,” who was [detained](#) on March 31 for agreeing to a visual inspection of his bag but refusing a search, was [sentenced](#) to 12 days of administrative detention on April 16 by Judge Davit Tetrauli.

Protest participants Giorgi Ortoidze and Mikheil Samkharadze were [detained](#) on April 20, during Easter night, on Rustaveli Avenue. [According to Samkharadze](#), late at night, police were instructing protesters to vacate the blocked roadway, which he complied with by moving to the sidewalk — yet he was still detained. Samkharadze was [released](#) after spending 48 hours in the detention facility. Giorgi Ortoidze was [sentenced](#) to five days of administrative detention.

In response to the aforementioned detentions, on April 21, citizens gathered on Rustaveli Avenue from the morning and blocked the road, during the clearing of which active participants of the ongoing protest, Levan Zazadze and Davit Gunashvili, were [detained](#) by police. Later, Lasha Dgebuadze was also [detained](#). [According to the lawyer](#), Dgebuadze had injuries on his body that he sustained during the arrest.

On April 23, Levan Zazadze was [sentenced](#) to 12 days of administrative detention. This decision [triggered](#) a protest by Levan Zazadze's relatives and demonstrators, which led to a confrontation between them and officers of the Court Bailiffs Service. The officers forcibly removed the citizens from the courthouse. During the incident, one demonstrator, Guram Ghonghadze, became ill and [required](#) hospitalization. Later, Ghonghadze [stated](#) that he had sustained bruising in the chest area and had been diagnosed with a concussion.

On April 23, Davit Gunashvili was also [sentenced](#) to 7 days of administrative detention. In the [footage](#) of Gunashvili's detention, one of the police officers can be seen pulling a female student by the hair. It turned out that the police officer was Roland Meskhi, Deputy Head of the Tbilisi Police Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, who was [appointed](#) as the First Deputy to the Interior Minister, as announced on April 24.

### **1.5. The restriction of freedom of expression on the grounds of "insulting" police officers and public officials**

On April 8, it was reported that TV Pirveli cameraman Lasha Jioshvili [was issued](#) an administrative offense report by the police due to a [video](#) he posted on social media. He is accused of verbally insulting a law enforcement officer "during or in connection with the performance of official duties." The [post](#) in question tagged the Ministry of Internal Affairs' official page and included verbal insults.

During a confrontation that occurred in the courtyard on April 22, following the hearing of Saba Skhvitaridze, who was [detained](#) on criminal charges during the pro-European protests, Giorgi Chkheidze was [detained](#) under administrative charges. After the court hearing, citizens were protesting against the investigator handling Skhvitaridze's case, which led to Chkheidze's detention. [According to his lawyer](#), Chkheidze sustained multiple injuries as a result of ill-treatment by the police. [Video footage](#) shows Chkheidze walking with a phone in his hand when officers arrested him. The lawyer [stated](#) that Chkheidze is being accused of calling a police officer a "slave," but Chkheidze denies this and claims that the only phrase he uttered before being detained was: "We will remember the false witnesses." On April 24, Judge Davit Tetrauli [fined](#) Chkheidze 4,000 GEL (approximately 1,280 EUR).

Furthermore, administrative proceedings have been [initiated](#) against four individuals for allegedly insulting police officer Mirian Kavtaradze (the police officer whom Saba Skhvitardze is accused of assaulting). These individuals are: Miranda Baghaturia from the press office of the political party “Akhali,” Ana Kurashvili from the press office of “Girchi – More Freedom,” Ani Kavtaradze, and Tornike Skhvitardze, the brother of Saba Skhvitardze. On April 17, Kavtaradze [was questioned](#) during Skhvitardze’s court hearing. Following his testimony, Kavtaradze exited the courtroom amid protest chants. The initiation of the administrative cases is presumably related to this incident.

Administrative proceedings have also been [initiated](#) against Beka Papashvili and Albi Kordzaia for allegedly insulting Tea Tsulukiani, Chair of the Parliamentary Commission “Investigating UNM Government”. The case concerns a protest held on April 12 in front of Tsulukiani’s residence, which followed her controversial [statement](#) referring to Georgia’s national hero, Giorgi Antsukhelidze, as someone who was “senselessly sacrificed for someone’s PR.” During the protest, Kordzaia [voiced](#) slogans in front of Tsulukiani’s home, such as: “Antsukhelidze is immortal,” “Tea, you Russian traitor,” and “Our heroes don’t die for PR — they die because of Russian traitors like you.” Papashvili, for his part, [stated](#) that he swore at traitors and at all those “who believe that Georgia started the war.” The Social Justice Center [responded](#) to the activists being summoned to the police station, condemning the case as a gross violation of freedom of expression.

#### **1.6. Imposition of the repressive administrative fines on the participants of the ongoing protest continues**

The imposition of disproportionate financial sanctions (amounting to 5,000 GEL, approximately 1,600 EUR) on protesters for allegedly “artificial” blocking of Rustaveli Avenue (in front of the parliament building) continues, taking on an especially repressive nature amid the freezing of bank accounts of victim-supporting funds.

On April 23, 2025, citizens [reported](#) on social media receiving messages (SMS) from the police concerning fines imposed on them. These messages were formulated [similarly](#) to notifications about vehicle-related fines. Later, the Ministry of Internal Affairs [claimed](#) this was due to a “technical problem.” In reality, these messages related to fines for allegedly “artificial” blocking of roads during protests.

It seems that the fines that were not delivered to the recipients in the previous period were published on the portal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and these messages seem to be aimed at notifying individuals that their fines were published.

### 1.7. Politically motivated dismissals

Politically motivated dismissals in the public sector continue. According to the “Independent Trade Union of Public Servants – Article 78 of the Constitution,” as of April 24, 2025, around 800 individuals have been [dismissed](#) from the civil service for supporting Georgia’s European integration. (Notably, the National Agency of Public Registry [has repeatedly refused](#) to register the aforementioned trade union of public servants, which was established after the Georgian Dream began repression against civil servants who supported the pro-European protests.) In addition to civil servants, repressions also affect various sectors of society.

On April 16, the Ministry of Culture [announced](#) that Davit Doiashvili had been dismissed from his position as head of the Vaso Abashidze Music and Drama Theatre. The ministry justified Doiashvili’s dismissal by [stating](#) that, despite “repeated warnings” from the ministry, he had refused to fulfill his official duties, resulting in the suspension of the creative process at the theatre for several months.

For context, as noted in one of the previous Fact Sheets, the Vaso Abashidze Theatre [went on strike](#) after actor Andro Chichinadze was [arrested](#) on criminal charges in relation to the pro-EU rally. In response, the actors [launched](#) a tour across various cities in Georgia to promote freedom and engage with citizens.

On April 11, the “Temur Chkheidze Workshop” [was liquidated](#). The workshop was established in 2014 based on the Royal District Theatre, “to create a space for free creative exploration for emerging playwrights and directors.” According to the workshop’s [statement](#), the liquidation resulted in the termination of contracts for 24 employees and the suspension of approximately 20 projects. The [statement](#) describes the decision to shut down the center as a politically motivated punitive operation.

Repressions against employees of the Georgian Public Broadcaster continue. On April 11, journalists Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani and Nino Zautashvili were [dismissed](#) from the Public Broadcaster. As noted in previous Fact Sheets, both had been openly critical of the channel’s editorial policy and expressed solidarity with repressed protest participants. According to the broadcaster’s official [statement](#), through their public remarks, Ivanov-Chikovani and Zautashvili had “completely exhausted the possibility of a professional and constructive relationship with the employer.” It is noteworthy that on the same day, in addition to the dismissal of the anchors, the broadcaster [imposed](#) disciplinary sanctions on four employees: Tamar Mshvenieradze, Ioseb Katsitadze, Kakha Melikidze, and Irma Chubinidze. Furthermore, after several days, four additional employees — Tukha Kvinikadze, Ana Abakelia, Tamar Chincharauli, and [Givi Kitia](#) — [received](#) formal warnings for “causing reputational damage” to the institution.



Tsiala Katamidze [wrote](#) on social media that on April 8, she was dismissed by the Ministry of Defense from her position as a reservist in the National Guard. She was fined 2,000 GEL (approximately 640 EUR). Tsiala Katamidze is a civil activist who actively participates in the ongoing pro-European protest rallies in Batumi. She [states](#) that she was dismissed from the military reserve due to her civic engagement.

Another citizen, Aleksandre Grigalashvili, was also dismissed from the military reserve service and fined 2,000 GEL (approximately 640 EUR) due to his participation in the protests. According to him, he was demanded to cease participating in protest rallies in exchange for remaining in the reserve, but he refused to comply.

### **1.8. Searches conducted on multiple locations connected to the trade union LABOR**

On April 24, 2025, the Investigative Service of the Ministry of Finance conducted [searches](#) at multiple locations connected to the independent trade union LABOR, including: LABOR's current office in Tbilisi; LABOR's former office; The residence of Chairman Giorgi Diasamidze; and A venue where LABOR recently held its third extraordinary congress.

[According to the Chairman of the organization](#), Giorgi Diasamidze, the investigation is politically motivated rather than based on financial or legal grounds. He [believes](#) it represents an attempt “to suppress the organization’s social and labor activism.”

Notably, LABOR is the co-host of the protest-related [event](#) scheduled for May 1, 2025.

### **1.9. Searches of the residences connected to an investigation into solidarity funds supporting victims of systemic repression**

Early on April 29, 2025, reports emerged about residential searches being conducted simultaneously across multiple locations.

Particularly, investigators [appeared](#) at the residences of TV presenter and founder of Nanuka’s Fund, Nana Zhorzholiani, her daughter and activist Mariam Geguchadze, activist Mariam Bajelidze (co-founder of Shame Movement), and the head of the non-governmental organization Human Rights Center, Aleksandre Tskitishvili.

Later on the same day, it became known that the search was also [conducted](#) at the home of Guga Khelaia, the founder of the Fund For Each Other 24/7, and [also](#) at the home of Lasha Arveladze, the founder of Prosperity Georgia.

Furthermore, information was [disseminated](#) concerning the conduct of the search at Mariam Bajelidze's workplace (in addition to the search of her residence). Notably, she is pregnant and [was](#) with a 7-year-old child when the investigators appeared at her residence. [According to the Partnership for Human Rights](#) (PHR), "Investigative actions that are conducted when children or pregnant women are present at the location are incompatible with children's rights and their best interests. The state is obligated to consider the best interests of children and their psychological and emotional safety during any investigative actions."

Based on the explanations made by the targets of the searches, investigators were focused on [seizing](#) phones and other technical equipment; the family members' technical devices were also taken. According to the [available information](#), the searches were conducted based on the court rulings issued on April 2, 2025, with a 30-day validity period. Following [the available information](#), the judicial act was general, not mentioning precisely the authority of seizing the phones.

The Prosecutor's Office of Georgia issued the [statement](#) indicating the following:

*"The Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, as part of an ongoing investigation into acts of sabotage, attempted sabotage with aggravating circumstances, assistance to foreign organizations and organizations under foreign control in hostile activities, and mobilization of finances for activities directed against Georgia's constitutional order and national security foundations, has, as is known to the public, on March 17, 2025, frozen the bank accounts of "Nanuka's Foundation," "Prosperity," "Foundation for Each Other 24/7," "Shame Movement," and "Tbilisi Human Rights House." These organizations participated in providing financial support to persons charged with serious crimes against public order and their family members, as well as in paying administrative fines imposed on offenders.*

*In the criminal case, to obtain information and documentation of evidentiary significance for the investigation, the Tbilisi City Court issued rulings regarding searches of the residential homes at the actual and registered addresses of the leaders of these so-called "foundations" - Nana Zhorzholiani, Aleksandre Tskitishvili, Lasha Arveladze, Guga Khelaia, and Mariam Bajelidze, as well as personal searches, based on which the investigative units of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia and the State Security Service are jointly conducting relevant investigative actions."*

It should be noted that Aleksandre Tskitishvili is not the chairperson of the Human Rights House Tbilisi (HRHT). The organization (Human Rights Center), of which he is the Executive Director, is a [member organization](#) of the Human Rights House Tbilisi, and he is a member of the Board of HRHT. The Executive Director of the Georgian Centre for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims – GCRT, Lela Tsiskarishvili, is the current chairperson of the HRHT. For the context: HRHT is a [membership-based](#) organisation that unites five civil society

organisations working in the field of human rights in Georgia and is a member of the [Network of Human Rights Houses](#).

Several Georgian Civil Society Organizations issued the [statement](#) indicating the following: “The targets of these operations are individuals at the forefront of humanitarian work—supporting the most vulnerable segments of our society, including people with disabilities, internally displaced persons, low-income families, and victims of violence. These organizations have played an essential role in areas where state support is lacking, providing food, shelter, medical care, education, and psychosocial services.”

Furthermore, the [statement](#) underlines that “The use of state power to disrupt the work of such funds is not only morally indefensible—it is a blatant attempt to criminalize compassion and silence those who advocate for dignity and justice. These searches, conducted without credible legal justification or transparency, appear to be politically motivated and part of a broader campaign against civil society and democratic institutions.”

## **2. Adoption and/or initiation of other restrictive measures for the consolidation of the Georgian Dream's systemic repression**

The Georgian Dream and institutions under its effective control continue to announce and/or adopt further repressive measures against critical voices.

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

### **2.1. The sessions of the “Parliamentary Investigative Commission” continue**

The “Parliamentary Investigative Commission,” whose mandate is “to investigate the activities of the United National Movement committed from 2003 to this day,” continues to summon opposition politicians and critical individuals to its sessions. Attending a session upon the commission’s request is mandatory, and failure to comply carries criminal liability — punishable by a fine or **imprisonment for up to one year**, and disqualification from holding office or engaging in specific activities for up to three years. Notably, the commission [requested](#) a one-month extension of its mandate, until June 5.

A large number of opposition politicians have boycotted the commission and refused to attend its sessions, which has become grounds for initiating criminal proceedings against them. As of

April 30, the following individuals have been formally charged for failing to appear before the commission:

- [Mamuka Khazaradze](#) (Coalition “Strong Georgia”) – bail set at 50,000 GEL (approximately 16,000 EUR);
- [Badri Japaridze](#) (Coalition “Strong Georgia”) – bail set at 50,000 GEL (approximately 16,000 EUR);
- [Irakli Okruashvili](#) (served as Prosecutor General and minister in various ministries between 2004–2006) – bail set at 20,000 GEL (approximately 6,400 EUR) and prohibition on leaving Georgia until the end of the proceedings;
- [Giorgi Vashadze](#) (Coalition “Unity – National Movement”) – bail set at 50,000 GEL (approximately 16,000 EUR);
- [Nika Gvaramia](#) (Coalition “For Change”) – bail set at 30,000 GEL (approximately 9,600 EUR);
- [Zurab Girchi Japaridze](#) (Coalition “For Change”) – bail set at 20,000 GEL (approximately 6,400 EUR);
- [Givi Targamadze](#) (Member of Parliament from 2004 to 2016) – bail set at 10,000 GEL (approximately 3,200 EUR);
- [Nikanor Melia](#) (Coalition “For Change”) – bail set at 50,000 GEL (approximately 16,000 EUR);

## 2.2. Adoption of legislative amendments to the “Law on Grants”

On April 16, the Georgian Dream [adopted amendments](#) to the “Law on Grants” in an expedited manner, based on which grant recipients will only be able to receive grants from foreign donors “with the consent of the Government of Georgia or an authorized person/body designated by the Government of Georgia”. The term “foreign donors” in that case implies: international charitable, humanitarian, and other public organizations, financial-credit institutions, foreign governments or their representations, as well as foreign non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entities. On April 17, Mikheil Kavelashvili [signed](#) the changes into law, which take immediate effect.

According to the amendments, **donor organizations must submit the grant agreement to the “Government of Georgia or an authorized person/body designated by the Government of Georgia” and obtain consent to issue grants.**

[According to the amendments](#), the Anti-Corruption Bureau oversees the issuance of grants. In this regard, the Anti-Corruption Bureau has several tools it can use to monitor and investigate possible violations under the law. These include: a. requesting financial reports from a person if there is a reasonable belief that the rules on issuing grants have been violated; b. questioning individuals as set out by the procedures in the law; c. interrogating individuals before a magistrate judge; d. requesting information (including special categories of personal data) from public institutions, individuals, legal entities, or other relevant subjects (if the information does not fall under the category of public information, the Bureau may request it based on a court decision); e. exercising any other legal powers granted to it by law.

**Receiving a prohibited grant results in the recipient being fined double the amount of the grant.** If there are circumstances that may hinder the enforcement of the sanction, the Anti-Corruption Bureau is authorized to seize the offender's property (including bank accounts) in proportion to the sanction envisaged for the respective offense. The seizure takes immediate effect and must be submitted to the court for confirmation.

It is noteworthy that several amendments were made to the draft law after its initial introduction, before final adoption. **Specifically, if a grant is used for a different purpose than originally intended, the approval from the “Government of Georgia or an authorized person/body designated by the Government of Georgia” is now required for that change. Furthermore, if a grant is spent for an altered purpose, the recipient will be held liable, with penalties corresponding to those applicable when a grant is issued without approval.**

Additionally, if funds provided by a donor are not formally classified as a grant but are substantively similar to one, the rules governing grants will still apply, and the Anti-Corruption Bureau will exercise its designated powers in such cases as well. The authority was also expanded to allow it to request not only the grant agreement itself but also other supplementary information from the donor.

The draft law was also amended in the section defining exceptions to the mandatory approval procedure. **In the original version of the draft, the changes did not apply to grants received by international organizations operating in Georgia. This exception was also removed from the draft law.**

As for the grant agreements signed before the amendments came into force, the requirement to obtain consent [does not apply](#) to grant agreements concluded before this law became

effective, [except](#) when such grant agreements are being modified after the adoption of the above-mentioned amendments.

Notably, within the same legislative amendments package, changes were also [introduced](#) prohibiting political parties and individuals with declared electoral goals from receiving donations from legal entities intended for organizing lectures, seminars, or other similar public events.

### 2.3. Legislative amendments concerning the banning of political parties

On April 15, the Georgian Dream [adopted](#) in the first reading legislative amendments that seek to declare the “successor parties” of the United National Movement (UNM) unconstitutional. However, Georgian Dream [claims](#) that it will not ban opposition parties before the 2025 municipality elections, but soon after, citing insufficient time for completing the legal procedures required for the dissolution of parties, allegedly due to the extension of the mandate of the “Parliamentary Investigative Commission.” The draft law was [passed](#) in the second reading on April 29.

### 2.4. Initiation of legislative amendments related to the fight against migration

A legislative package concerning foreign nationals has been [initiated](#), prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The changes affect 18 laws, and according to the MIA, their purpose is to combat illegal migration, prevent the abuse of asylum procedures, and refine the regulations related to granting international protection to foreigners or stateless persons.

[According to the proposed amendments](#), the Criminal Code and the Code of Administrative Offenses will introduce a new type of penalty: expulsion of a foreigner from Georgia and a ban on re-entry for a specified period. This sanction may be applied against an individual if they commit, among others, the following types of administrative offenses: petty hooliganism (Article 166); disobedience to a lawful order of a police officer (Article 173); insult of a state official or public servant (Article 173<sup>16</sup>); **violation of certain rules for organizing and holding assemblies or manifestations (Article 174<sup>1</sup>)**. These are the articles most frequently and routinely used for repressive purposes against participants of the ongoing protest.

### 3. Updated information on the criminal cases initiated against the demonstrators

One of the most repressive measures taken by the Georgian Dream 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, and in the first week of February 2025, the first instance court completed a review of these criminal cases and [issued](#) judgments of conviction for all persons detained under criminal charges.

**As of April 30, 2025, no individual responsible for torture, inhuman treatment, or violence against peaceful demonstrators and media has been held criminally liable, and police forces continue to commit systemic physical violence.**

**As of April 30, 2025, according to public information, criminal investigations have been initiated against 55 persons in connection with the ongoing protests from November 2024. Out of the overall number, 40 persons are detained, and information about the imposed measure of restraint within the framework of the new criminal proceedings (information on the initiation of the investigation was released on March 31, 2025) is not available. Furthermore, Temur Katamadze, the flagbearer of the pro-European protests in Batumi, a descendant of Muhajirun who has been living in Georgia since 2012, is in custody while a decision regarding his expulsion from the country is pending.**

The following chapter provides major updates covering the period from **April 5 to April 30, 2025.**

#### 3.1. Court hearings on criminal cases initiated from November 2024

Court hearings in first instance courts continue for individuals charged under criminal law in connection with their participation in pro-European protests. **Between April 5 and April 30, 2025, not a single case resulted in the substitution of pretrial detention with an alternative measure of restraint.**

On April 23, a hearing [was held](#) for eight individuals charged with group violence during the pro-European protests. One of the defendants, Insaf Aliev, [requested](#) during the session that only Guja Avsajanishvili represent him, and that the state-appointed lawyer, Giorgi Mdinaradze, be removed from the case. Judge Tamar Mchedlishvili [denied](#) the request.

On April 24, the hearing on merits [began](#) in the case of 11 individuals charged with “participation in group violence.” Notably, Judge Nino Galustashvili [upheld](#) a motion filed by the

defendants' lawyers and opened the hearing to the public, granting permission for the detainees' family members to attend the session.

A hearing for another detainee, Anton Chechin, was scheduled for April 28 but was [postponed](#) due to the defendant's absence. On April 29, Chechin's lawyer [stated](#) that the defendant had been unable to attend because he had pain in his head and eyes. For context, Chechin's medical records [indicate](#) that he has a tumorous growth in his brain.

### 3.2. Key developments in the case of Mzia Amaghlobeli

On April 29, a hearing on merits was also [held](#) in the case of Mzia Amaghlobeli, founder of the online media outlets Batumelebi and Netgazeti, who is [detained](#) under criminal charges (possible term of imprisonment: 4-7 years) for slapping Batumi Police Chief Irakli Dgebuadze. At the court hearing, one of the key witnesses, Grigol Beselia, former head of the Adjara Police Department, testified. [According to Beselia](#), he did not notice any redness on Irakli Dgebuadze's face, nor did he hear any insults from Amaghlobeli directed at the police. However, during the hearing, Beselia [stated](#) that Amaghlobeli struck Dgebuadze in the face with such force that "the protest dispersed at the sound of the hit." By the judge's [decision](#), Mzia Amaghlobeli remains in pre-trial detention.

On April 28, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) [filed](#) an application with the European Court of Human Rights on behalf of Mzia Amaghlobeli. The complaint [argues](#) that "the fundamental rights of the European Convention on Human Rights, such as - the right to liberty and security (Article 5 of the Convention), the right to a fair trial (Article 6 of the Convention), the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8 of the Convention), freedom of expression (Article 10 of the Convention), Article 13 of the Convention in conjunction with Articles 8 and 10 (right to an effective remedy), and the limitation on use of restrictions on rights (Article 18 of the Convention), have been violated against Mzia Amaghlobeli." Furthermore, GYLA's statement [indicates](#) that "the application sent to the European Court of Human Rights contains only a part of the violations committed against Mzia Amaghlobeli." The case review regarding the other violations is still [ongoing](#) at the national level. The potential dispute in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on those violations will be possible after the national proceedings have concluded.

On April 14, Amnesty International [launched](#) a campaign demanding justice in Mzia Amaghlobeli's case. The organization [sent](#) a letter to Karlo (Koka) Katsitadze, head of the Special Investigation Service, calling for an effective investigation into the actions of Irakli Dgebuadze and all police officers involved in the arbitrary arrests and alleged ill-treatment of peaceful protestors.



### 3.3. Rejection of refugee status for Temur Katamadze

On April 15, the Tbilisi City Court [extended](#) the immigration detention of Temur Katamadze, an active participant in the pro-European protests in Batumi, for up to six months. Initially, Temur Katamadze was [detained](#) on administrative charges, after the completion of which he was [re-arrested](#) under immigration law. On April 29, the Tbilisi Court of Appeals [denied](#) Temur Katamadze refugee status. The appellate ruling is not subject to further appeal, which effectively paves the way for Katamadze's expulsion from Georgia. [According to his lawyer](#), following the rejection of refugee status, deportation proceedings may now be initiated. The lawyer also [emphasized](#) that returning Temur Katamadze to Turkey would be dangerous, as in 2023, he received a notice from the Turkish Embassy indicating that an arrest warrant had been issued against him there. Katamadze has already [applied](#) for asylum at the embassies of Germany and France.

On April 30, it was [announced](#) that Temur Katamadze would go on a two-day hunger strike as a form of protest. On the first day, he is protesting the searches of the homes of representatives of solidarity funds. On the second day, he will express solidarity with the Chiatura miners, who [have been protesting](#) unjust labor conditions for two months. On April 28, four of the miners were [arrested](#) on criminal charges of physical assault, and two of the detainees have since [begun](#) a hunger strike. On April 30, the Prosecutor's Office [brought](#) more severe charges against the detained miners, accusing them of organizing and/or participating in group violence.

### 3.4. Conviction of Giorgi Okmelashvili upheld

On April 28, the Tbilisi Court of Appeals [upheld](#) the Tbilisi City Court's verdict sentencing Giorgi Okmelashvili to five years in prison. Okmelashvili [was arrested](#) on May 15, 2024, in relation to the protests against the Russian-style Foreign Agents Law, and on February 3, 2025, the City Court [found him guilty](#) and sentenced him to **five years' imprisonment for assaulting a police officer**. [According to Okmelashvili's lawyer](#), the case will be appealed to the Supreme Court, and they also plan to apply to the European Court of Human Rights.

On April 30, it was [revealed](#) that the court has accepted for consideration the administrative complaint of Giorgi Okmelashvili, in which he is challenging the decision of the Penitentiary Service that resulted in his risk level being increased and classified as a "heightened" risk. As a result, Okmelashvili was placed in a high-security (single-cell) detention facility.

### 3.5. Allegations of ill-treatment of protest-related detainees

As part of monitoring the criminal cases of individuals detained in the context of protests, on April 25, 2025, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) [reported](#) that 10 demonstrators, detained under criminal charges, have alleged instances of ill-treatment during arrest, transportation, or while in police custody. The individuals who reported such treatment are: Saba Skhvitardze, Revaz Kiknadze, Nikoloz Katsia, Anatoli Gigauri, Davit Khomeriki, Davit Lomidze, Temur Zasokhashvili, Archil Museliantsi, Anastasia Zinovkina, and Mzia Amaghlobeli.

The detainees [provided](#) detailed descriptions of various forms of ill-treatment, including physical violence, threats of a sexual nature, and psychological pressure, as well as other forms of degrading treatment. According to the information available to GYLA, only one of the ten individuals, Saba Skhvitardze, has been granted victim status so far.