



**Institute for Development
of Freedom of Information**

FACT SHEET PART 6

Sharp Democratic Backsliding and Continuous Systemic Repression in Georgia

The document includes major developments from May 1 to May 27, 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 May 1 to May 27, 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 (Vol. 2).

1.1. Physical assault on protest participants and opposition politicians

On May 2, poet Zviad Ratiani was [attacked](#) and beaten on a bus. [According to Ratiani](#), he did not report the incident to the police, as he believes the case would not be investigated and that he would be the one blamed. Notably, Zviad Ratiani has [previously](#) been the target of multiple physical assaults by police forces.

On May 5, demonstrators returning home from a protest held on Rustaveli Avenue in Tbilisi were [attacked](#) in their residential building as they exited the elevator. The attackers [sprayed](#) them with pepper spray and green dye. [According to one of the victims](#), Nutsa Makharadze, the assailant also verbally assaulted her and her friends, emphasizing a political context. Makharadze further [stated](#) that she and Ketii Jajanashvili, who was with her at the time, had been followed for a month.

On May 6, civil activist Tatia Apriamashvili [stated](#) that a member of the student movement at the National University of Georgia (SEU) was physically assaulted near her home. Apriamashvili did not disclose the girl's identity to protect the interests of the victim's family.

On May 11, two individuals [attacked](#) Taia Tsekvava. One of them sprayed pepper spray in her face, after which both physically assaulted her. According to Tsekvava, the assailants threatened her, warning her not to attend any more protests or "something worse would happen."

On May 24, opposition politician Grigol Gegelia, a member of the "Strong Georgia" coalition, [was attacked](#) and subjected to verbal and physical abuse. According to Gegelia, before the assault, the attacker asked him whether he was a politician, and then proceeded to attack him. Gegelia [stated](#) that he was able to memorize the attacker's vehicle license plate number and provided this information to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). [According to the MIA](#), a criminal investigation has been launched into the incident.

1.2. The restriction of freedom of expression on the grounds of "insulting" police officers

The Gori District Court [fined](#) "TV Pirveli" cameraman Lasha Jioshvili 3,000 GEL (approximately 966 EUR) for "verbally insulting a law enforcement officer during or in connection with the performance of official duties." The fine was based on a [video](#) Jioshvili posted on social media, in which he tagged the Ministry of Internal Affairs' official page and included verbal insults. [According to Jioshvili's lawyer](#), no evidence was presented in the case to show that Jioshvili insulted any specific police officer; the sole basis for the fine was the aforementioned Facebook post.

On May 1, Miranda Baghaturia from the press office of the political party "Akhali" and Ana Kurashvili from the press office of "Girchi – More Freedom" were each [fined](#) 4,000 GEL (approximately 1,289 EUR) by the Tbilisi City Court. They were accused of calling a police officer a "slave" and a "false witness." Baghaturia and Kurashvili [deny](#) the allegation and state that no evidence was presented in the case to prove they made such remarks toward the officer. Notably, the Ministry of Internal Affairs [had requested](#) that the court impose administrative detention as a sentence on Baghaturia and Kurashvili.

1.3. Attack on "TV Pirveli" Crew

On May 12, Mariam Makasarashvili, a journalist from "TV Pirveli," and the cameraman were [attacked](#). They had their equipment seized by the father of Giorgi Shinjikashvili, the former Deputy State Representative of Kvemo Kartli. According to Mariam Makasarashvili, the "TV

Pirveli” crew was in Martkopi, near Shinjikashvili’s house, to inquire about reports concerning his resignation from office. At that time, Giorgi Shinjikashvili’s father took her mobile phone and seized the camera from the cameraman.

Makasarashvili [stated](#) that Shinjikashvili’s father became aggressive after she asked questions regarding a possible conflict between Giorgi Shinjikashvili and the head of the Special Tasks Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Zviad Kharazishvili (known as “Khareba”). [According to TV Pirveli](#), Makasarashvili sustained a concussion as a result of the attack.

1.4. Revocation of citizenship for Lasha Gabitashvili

On May 19, Lasha Gabitashvili, an active participant in pro-European protests, [announced](#) that his Georgian citizenship had been revoked. Gabitashvili was involved in the [Abu Dhabi incident](#), during which GD MPs Irakli Zarkua and Viktor Sanikidze assaulted him and threatened him with punishment upon his return to Georgia. Later, Gabitashvili was [attacked](#) again in Tbilisi by masked individuals who physically assaulted him.

[According to Gabitashvili](#), he acquired Israeli citizenship through marriage, but applied to the Ministry of Justice in February 2025 to retain his Georgian citizenship; however, his request was denied. Under the law, “a Georgian citizen retains Georgian citizenship if, before acquiring citizenship of another country, he or she obtains consent from the Georgian state to keep their Georgian citizenship.” [According to Radio Liberty](#), Lasha Gabitashvili already held an Israeli passport when he applied to the Ministry of Justice of Georgia for permission to retain his Georgian citizenship. Further details on this issue are not yet available.

1.5. Use of repressive mechanisms by the Georgian Dream party members against protest participants

On May 6, it was [reported](#) that GD MP Nino Tsilosani filed a lawsuit demanding that Levan Ghambashidze, an active member of the protest movement, retract a statement he made about Tsilosani’s father and pay 10,000 GEL (approximately 3,222 EUR) in damages. The case concerns a post made by Ghambashidze on social media, in which he [accused](#) Tsilosani’s family of stealing 65 million GEL from the state-owned company. It is noteworthy that Nino Tsilosani’s father was [arrested](#) in 2013, along with other individuals, based on the above-mentioned allegations. However, ten years later, in 2023, a first instance court [acquitted](#) him, and in 2024 the Court of Appeals [upheld](#) the acquittal.

GD MP Mariam Lashkhi had [filed](#) a complaint against Tatia Apriamashvili, Magda Mamukashvili, and [Lika Lortkipanidze](#) for “insulting a political official” — an offense introduced by a repressive amendment to the Administrative Offenses Code in February 2025. The offense is punishable by a fine ranging from 1,500 to 4,000 GEL (approximately from 483 to 1,289 EUR) or **up to 45 days of administrative detention**. The case concerns an incident that took place on May 17, when activists encountered Mariam Lashkhi, who was at a café with her minor children, and expressed their protest. In a [video](#), the activists can be seen approaching Lashkhi and chanting: “Freedom for the regime’s prisoners,” “No to Russia’s slaves,” and “Down with Russia’s slaves.” On May 23, the Ministry of Internal Affairs [requested](#) that a 45-day detention be imposed on Apriamashvili. The MIA also [requested](#) the imposition of detention against Lika Lortkipanidze. The next court hearing is [scheduled](#) on May 30, 2025.

On May 21, GD MP Irakli Zarkua [filed](#) a complaint against activists from Zugdidi, Mariam Sichinava and Keren Esebua. Reportedly, this case also concerns proceedings under the charge of “insulting a political official.” The case relates to an [incident](#) that occurred on May 20, when Zarkua was having dinner at a hotel with his companions, while activists participating in the Zugdidi protest were denied entry to the hotel. [Footage](#) shows that as Zarkua was leaving the hotel, activists confronted him with chants, and a verbal altercation ensued between the two sides. [According to Sichinava](#), Zarkua, and one of his companions physically touched Esebua and damaged her phone. Sichinava and Esebua also contacted the police, though they [state](#) they have no positive expectations regarding the outcome. On May 22, Mariam Sichinava’s bank accounts [were frozen](#). According to Sichinava, she had accumulated several thousand GEL in unpaid fines, which was cited as the reason for the account freeze. However, she [noted](#) that her child had been granted the social status of a dependent of a deceased breadwinner, and therefore, the state had no legal right to freeze her accounts. Sichinava [linked](#) the freezing of her accounts to the confrontation she had with Zarkua. Later, on the same day, Sichinava [announced](#) that the banks had restored her access to the accounts. On May 23, Keren Esebua and Mariam Sichinava [were fined](#) 3,500 GEL (approximately 1,128 EUR) and 4,000 GEL (approximately 1,289 EUR), respectively, for allegedly insulting Zarkua.

1.6. Tensions around the courthouse during Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze’s court hearing and detention of protest participants

On May 22, the Tbilisi City Court [held](#) a hearing regarding the criminal case initiated against Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze for refusing to appear before the “Parliamentary Investigative Commission.” Supporters of Japaridze began gathering in the courtyard to show their support, but access to the court premises and building [was restricted](#), and media coverage was limited. On May 23, the Media Advocacy Coalition [condemned](#) the restrictions imposed on media

representatives at the Tbilisi City Court on May 22 and 23. A large number of police forces were mobilized at the scene. Several confrontations occurred between the gathered citizens and police officers/court marshals. During the protest outside the court, police [detained](#) activists Albi Kordzaia and Salome Kenchiashvili. Before the detention, Albi Kordzaia was live-streaming on Facebook, where a verbal altercation between her and police officers is visible; however, the [footage](#) does not clearly show what led to her arrest.

The following day, the Public Defender [announced](#) that representatives from their office had visited the detained activists, who reported excessive use of force and ill-treatment by the police. **According to the Public Defender, one of the detainees showed visible bodily injuries, including swelling, redness, bruises, and scratches on their limbs.** On May 23, Aleksandre Darakhvelidze [stated](#) that the detainees had thrown coffee at police officers. The detained activists [were released](#) from detention the next day. Information about court hearings in their case is not yet available.

1.7. Repressive administrative proceedings against protest participants and journalists

On May 26, in Batumi, Luka Natsvlishvili, a member of the youth wing of the “Strong Georgia” coalition, [was detained](#) at a protest rally on charges of petty hooliganism and disobedience to a police order. On May 27, Batumi City Court Judge Guliko Kazhashvili [sentenced](#) Luka Natsvlishvili to **12 days of administrative detention**. During the court hearing, police officers [claimed](#) that Natsvlishvili was swearing and that he refused to comply with their order to calm down. However, an eyewitness [testified](#) that while there was loud conversation among the protesters, no harsh or obscene language was used. At that moment, around 20 police officers rushed in and detained Natsvlishvili.

On May 26, protest participant Ucha Kemashvili [was detained](#) in Tbilisi. According to Kemashvili’s sister, after the protest rally on Rustaveli Avenue ended, police officers waited for Kemashvili near his residence and detained him. She [links](#) the arrest to Kemashvili’s act of burning the Georgian Dream party flag on Rustaveli Avenue.

On May 22, protest participant Megi Diasamidze and her friend [were stopped](#) by individuals in civilian clothing who told them they needed to be taken to the police station for identification purposes. Upon request, the individuals presented police identification. A few hours after being taken to the police station, both were released. [According to Diasamidze](#), the likely reason for their transfer was to search their bags to see if they had masks or similar items in their possession.

On May 23, Tbilisi City Court Judge Zviad Tsekvava [fined](#) Mariam Kavshbaia, a journalist from the online media outlet “Publika”, 5,000 GEL (approximately 1,611 EUR) for “artificially blocking the roadway.” [According to the media outlet](#), the journalist was performing her professional duties at the time of the alleged offense, and photographic evidence taken by her was presented in court to support this. Nevertheless, Kavshbaia was fined.

On May 25, protest participant Saba Baghdavadze, who was detained at a protest rally on May 23, [was sentenced](#) to **30 days of administrative detention** by Judge Manuchar Tsatsua. [According to his lawyer](#), Baghdavadze was charged with committing four administrative offenses: disobedience to a lawful police order, insulting a police officer, using pyrotechnics at the protest, and covering his face during the rally. The lawyer [stated](#) that the Ministry of Internal Affairs claimed Baghdavadze committed all of these acts on the same day. The lawyer further [explained](#) that Baghdavadze denied insulting the police or disobeying their orders but admitted to using pyrotechnics and covering his face during the protest.

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. Politically motivated dismissals

Politically motivated dismissals of individuals critical of the Georgian Dream party continue. On May 1, it was [revealed](#) that Ekaterine Bendeliani, Deputy Director of the LEPL - Environmental Information and Education Centre under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, who had been working at the Ministry since 2007, was dismissed from her position for an “unknown reason.”

On May 1, Giorgi Kobakhidze, Secretary of the Embassy of Georgia in Lithuania, also [announced](#) that he had been dismissed from his position. Kobakhidze links his dismissal to his signing of a petition condemning the actions of the Georgian Dream party.

On May 1, it was [announced](#) that a reorganization is set to begin at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This information was initially [spread](#) by Grigol Gegelia, a member of the “Strong Georgia” coalition, who stated that the reorganization would result in the dismissal of up to 250 employees from the Ministry. In response, Maka Bochorishvili [declared](#) that she has no intention of dismissing employees and explained the reorganization as a necessary step for reforming the Ministry.

On May 5, the editorial team of the TV program “Real Space,” aired by the Georgian Public Broadcaster (GPB), [held](#) a press conference. The program’s host, Nino Zautashvili, had previously been [dismissed](#) due to her critical stance. During the press conference, the team [announced](#) their refusal to accept the terms proposed by the GPB’s management, which would have resulted in the disbandment of the program and the reassignment of its staff to other positions. [According to the team](#), agreeing to the management’s proposal would have effectively meant voluntarily abandoning a program that fulfilled “the core mission of the Public Broadcaster – to ensure that the voice of the public is heard on public television.” Therefore, the editorial team [stated](#) that full responsibility for the unlawful dismissal of Nino Zautashvili and the closure of “Real Space” lies with the broadcaster’s management.

On May 19, it was [revealed](#) that five team members of the TV program “Real Space” — Ketikapanadze, Tukha Kvinikadze, Soso Katsitadze, Tamar Mshvenieradze, and Omar Tsotsoria — were dismissed from their positions after refusing to accept the terms proposed by the management.

Notably, on May 8, journalists Nino Zautashvili and Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani, who were unlawfully [dismissed](#) from the GPB, [filed](#) lawsuits challenging their dismissals in court.

2.2. Refusal to register political parties, civil movements, and trade unions

Recently, the National Agency of Public Registry under the Ministry of Justice has been refusing to register political parties, civil movements, and trade unions, citing various technical reasons, and has been artificially delaying the process.

The “Independent Trade Union of Public Servants – Article 78 of the Constitution” has been [denied](#) registration multiple times. After receiving the seventh refusal, the union [appealed](#) to the International Labour Organization. The union was established to protect the rights of public servants who were dismissed for supporting Georgia’s European integration process.

The “Movement for Social Democracy” has also been repeatedly [denied](#) registration as a civil organization. Members of the movement [link](#) these refusals to their critical civic positions and

public activism. On March 11, they [initiated](#) legal proceedings regarding the denial of their registration.

The Public Registry has also [refused](#) to register the “Freedom Square” as a political party. On May 14, Chairman Levan Tsutskiridze [stated](#) that in the past two months, they had received two refusals for registration as a political party, citing bureaucratic and technical grounds.

2.3. Criminal proceedings for refusing to appear before 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 its sessions. On May 23, the Commission once again [requested](#) the extension of its mandate, this time until July 5. 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.

In parallel with the commission's sessions, criminal proceedings are ongoing against opposition politicians and former public officials who are under prosecution, as noted in the previous Fact Sheet.

Some politicians who refused to attend the commission's sessions as a form of protest are also refusing to pay the bail imposed by the court as a measure of restraint. One such figure is Irakli Okruashvili, who served as Prosecutor General, Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Economy between 2004 and 2006. As a result, on May 14, Judge Nino Tarashvili of the Tbilisi City Court granted the motion of the Prosecution and [replaced](#) the 20,000 GEL (approximately 6,444 EUR) bail previously imposed on Okruashvili with pre-trial detention, and he was taken into custody in the courtroom.

Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze, an opposition leader and one of the leaders of the “Coalition for Change,” also refused to pay the bail as a form of protest. His court hearing [was held](#) on May 22 at the Tbilisi City Court, amid a gathering of his supporters and heightened police presence. Despite the reasonable expectation that a large number of people would wish to attend the hearing, Japaridze’s court session was scheduled in a small courtroom. The lawyers’ motion to move the hearing to a larger courtroom [was denied](#). Judge Irakli Shvangiradze also granted the motion of the Prosecution and [replaced](#) Japaridze’s 20,000 GEL (approximately 6,444 EUR) bail with pre-trial detention. He was [taken into custody](#) in the courtroom.

As of May 27, the status of the criminal cases initiated due to failure to appear before the “Parliamentary Investigative Commission”, according to the publicly available information, is as follows:

- **Currently in pre-trial detention:** Irakli Okruashvili and Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze;
- **Refusing to pay bail as a form of protest:** Nikanor Melia and Nika Gvaramia (the deadline set for them to pay the bail expires on May 29 and June 7, respectively);
- **Have paid/plan to pay the imposed bail:** Mamuka Khazaradze, Badri Japaridze, Givi Targamadze, and Giorgi Vashadze.

2.4. Adoption of legislative amendments to the Law on the Diplomatic Service

On May 14, the Georgian Dream [adopted](#), under an expedited procedure, amendments to the Law on the Diplomatic Service. As a result of the changes, a new ground [was introduced](#) for the early termination of a rotation-based secondment to a diplomatic mission or consular office, and for the early recall of an official (excluding certain officials). This new ground is defined as: “a violation by the seconded person of the general rules of ethics and conduct in the diplomatic service, as approved by an administrative-legal act of the Minister, which may harm the interests and/or image of the country, or the commission of an act that contradicts the main directions of Georgia's foreign policy and/or the interests of the Ministry.”

[According to the amendments](#), diplomatic officials (excluding political appointees and those holding positions defined by the diplomatic service career system) and administrative personnel will be subject to performance evaluations twice a year. Under the previous legislation, evaluations were conducted at least once a year. Notably, according to the law, a diplomatic official may be dismissed if they receive two consecutive unsatisfactory evaluations.

2.5. Adoption of legislative amendments concerning the banning of political parties

On May 13, the Georgian Dream [adopted](#) in the third reading legislative amendments that seek to declare the “successor parties” of the United National Movement (UNM) unconstitutional. During a briefing on March 27, Mamuka Mdinardze, the leader of the parliamentary majority of the “Georgian Dream”, [emphasized](#) that banning the “collective UNM” was one of GD’s pre-election promises. He also [claimed](#) that an upcoming report from a “parliamentary investigative commission” would provide sufficient grounds for GD to seek the Constitutional

Court's ruling "regarding the declaration of the 'National Movement' and its satellite parties as unconstitutional."

Later, Georgian Dream [claimed](#) that it would 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 amendments [entered](#) into force on May 14. [According to the amendments](#), the Constitutional Court may ban a political party "whose aim is to overthrow or forcibly change the constitutional order of Georgia, undermine the country's independence, violate its territorial integrity, or that engages in war or violence propaganda, incites national, regional, religious, or social discord, or creates or has created an armed formation." The court may also ban a party that "essentially repeats the declared goals or/and the essence of the activities of a party previously banned by the Constitutional Court."

2.6. Updates on Georgian Dream's FARA: Anti-Corruption Bureau held several meetings

On May 20-22, the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Razhden Kuprashvili, [held](#) informational meetings with members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of international organizations, and other interested parties regarding the implementation of Georgian Dream's FARA (Foreign Agents Registration Act). Georgian Dream has designated the Anti-Corruption Bureau as the agency responsible for enforcing the law.

Following the meetings, Kuprashvili [stated](#) that "this is not about imposing any restrictions. On the contrary, it will further improve the transparency of projects implemented in our country with the help of donor organizations." He also [noted](#) that the law may apply to media outlets, non-governmental organizations, and individuals.

Based on the [information](#) disseminated after meetings, it became known that the Georgian Dream plans to apply this law also to the Georgian employees of foreign embassies and the international organizations present in Georgia. Additionally, Kuprashvili [claimed](#) that if a person receives funding from a foreign source and is at the same time involved in any form of "political activity," the law will apply to them regardless of whether the foreign funding is related to their "political activity."

[According to Kuprashvili](#), if a journalist is financed from abroad and "engages in politics," they must register in the agents' registry. He further [explained](#) that "engaging in politics" includes, for example, hosting any political broadcast. [According to journalist Nino Zuriashvili](#), Razhden

Kuprashvili defined political activity in such broad terms that simply posting something critical about someone on social media or attending a protest could be considered political activity.

Kuprashvili also [noted](#) that even if an organization receives funding from abroad in the form of an award, the law would still apply if the organization meets the remaining criteria.

On May 22, the Anti-Corruption Bureau [issued](#) a statement summarizing the meeting held on the same day and noting that incorrect information or disinformation regarding FARA had been disseminated through the media; However, the statement does not specify what exactly is meant by “incorrect information.”

Notably, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), along with several media outlets, [has challenged](#) the constitutionality of Georgian Dream's FARA in the Constitutional Court.

Georgian Dream's FARA enters into force on May 31, 2025.

2.7. Initiation of the abolition of the Special Investigation Service

On May 19, it was [announced](#) that Georgian Dream initiated legislative amendments that would abolish the Special Investigation Service and transfer its main investigative functions to the Prosecutor's Office. The amendments were adopted in the first reading on May 27. The Special Investigation Service is currently responsible for investigating particular crimes committed by law enforcement officers.

Notably, ensuring the effectiveness, institutional independence, and impartiality of the Special Investigation Service, as well as implementing related recommendations of the Venice Commission, is outlined in the European Commission's 2023 [enlargement report](#) on the EU enlargement policy.

It is noteworthy that on May 14, 11 civil society organizations, including IDFI, [released](#) a report titled “Human Rights Crisis in Georgia Following the 2024 Parliamentary Elections.” The report addresses severe and systemic human rights violations that occurred between November 28, 2024, and February 28, 2025, which were committed with the aim of suppressing peaceful and legitimate protest. Among other issues, the report [provides](#) a detailed account of the Special Investigation Service's failure to investigate crimes committed by law enforcement officers. These failures include insufficient investigative actions, incorrect and incomplete legal qualification of crimes, disregard of publicly identified alleged perpetrators, and more.

According to the GYLA's [assessment](#), “by abolishing the service, the Georgian Dream once again demonstrates that it does not intend to effectively investigate police violence and ill-treatment,

fulfill its obligations under the EU association process, implement the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, and take into account the recommendations of the Venice Commission.”

2.8. Advancement of legislative amendments related to the citizens of foreign countries

On May 13, Georgian Dream [passed](#) legislative amendments in the first reading, aimed at combating illegal migration, preventing the abuse of asylum procedures, and refining 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 173¹⁶); violation of certain rules for organizing and holding assemblies or manifestations (Article 174¹). These are the articles most frequently and routinely used for repressive purposes against participants of the ongoing protest.

Aleksandre Darakhvelidze [stated](#) that foreigners had participated in the ongoing pro-European protests and were “engaged in destructive actions.” He [added](#) that there should be a mechanism to ensure the expulsion of such individuals from the country. Darakhvelidze also [claimed](#) that a number of foreign nationals involved in destructive activities had entered Georgia in the days right before the start of the protests, “which may raise additional questions.” [According to him](#), there were instances where these individuals actively incited others to engage in destructive acts, and had the organizational component of these actions been clearly established, criminal liability would have applied. Darakhvelidze [stated](#) that the proposed legislative amendments are intended to introduce a mechanism for expelling such individuals from the country.

3. Updated information on the criminal and expulsion 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 May 27, 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 May 27, 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 **May 1 to May 27, 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 May 1 and May 27, 2025, not a single case resulted in the substitution of pretrial detention with an alternative measure of restraint.**

Court hearings are ongoing, including in cases against individuals charged with organizing and participating in group violence. These hearings have now entered the stage of examining evidence. Notably, in connection with these cases, a number of police officers have already been questioned as witnesses, some of whom have been granted victim status. The police officers [stated](#) that protest participants threw pyrotechnics, stones, and other objects at them. However, they also [noted](#) that they could not identify the attackers, as they had not seen who threw the objects. **In addition to refraining from identifying the “attackers,” the police witnesses have not confirmed any organized actions by the detainees.**

For example, at the May 23 hearing of eight individuals charged with organizing and participating in group violence, police witness Kakha Oniani [testified](#) that he did not see who threw the stone and did not observe any coordinated or organized actions by the protest participants.

3.2. Key developments in the criminal proceedings against Mzia Amaghlobeli

Court hearings in the case of Mzia Amaghlobeli are ongoing. On May 8, Batumi Police Chief Irakli Dgebuadze was [questioned](#) in court — Amaghlobeli has been charged with slapping him. During the hearing, Dgebuadze repeatedly [stated](#) that as a result of the slap by Mzia Amaghlobeli, he “experienced pain” and had “redness” on his cheek and around his ear. Dgebuadze admitted that he was the one who said the phrase on the night of the incident: “I’ll have her arrested under criminal law...,” which was followed by profanity, but claimed that it did not constitute a threat.

Mzia Amaghlobeli’s lawyers [filed](#) a motion to summon Irakli Kobakhidze for questioning, as he had stated that Mzia Amaghlobeli was “carrying out an assignment,” but the court denied the motion.

On May 16, the court hearing continued with the testimony of forensic medical expert Givi Chkhartishvili, who [stated](#) that he had examined Dgebuadze, who complained of mild pain in the area of his right ear. According to the expert, he did not observe any objective signs of injury on Irakli Dgebuadze’s body. He also [noted](#) that he does not recall whether Dgebuadze had any redness, but added that “even if he had, it would not have been included in the report, as redness is not an objective sign of injury.”

On May 27, the online media outlet “Batumelebi” [published](#) the response of the Director of the Adjara Public Broadcaster, in which the Director refuses to provide “Batumelebi” with footage depicting the moments shortly before, during, and after the detention of Mzia Amaghlobeli on January 12, 2025. The refusal is based on the argument that “the footage does not constitute public information, as it contains personal data.”

[According to “Batumelebi”](#), the incident where Mzia Amaghlobeli slapped Irakli Dgebuadze was preceded by a 10-minute scuffle between police officers and citizens, during which Mzia Amaghlobeli sustained injuries — a fact confirmed by forensic examination. The online publication [states](#) that releasing the footage would help the public understand the circumstances surrounding Mzia Amaghlobeli’s actions and would also reveal Irakli Dgebuadze’s response.

Notably, on May 7, Mzia Amaghlobeli [initiated](#) a civil lawsuit against Sozar Subari, Mamuka Mdinaradze, and Irakli Kobakhidze. Amaghlobeli [is demanding](#) that these individuals be ordered to publicly retract the defamatory statements they made about her. The aforementioned individuals publicly [accused](#) Amaghlobeli of acting on behalf of a “foreign power” when she

slapped Dgebuadze, and also alleged that she had placed a sticker on a police officer and verbally insulted him.

3.3. Administrative proceedings against Mzia Amaghlobeli

In parallel with the ongoing criminal case against Mzia Amaghlobeli, another administrative case has been [initiated](#), in which Amaghlobeli is now accused of defacing a building's appearance. The case concerns a sticker that Amaghlobeli [affixed](#) to a building on the night of her arrest. She was first detained on January 11, 2025, immediately after placing the sticker—police officers [removed](#) it from the wall right away.

[According to Amaghlobeli's lawyer](#), Nona Kurdovanidze, the Chairperson of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), the police had no legal basis to detain a person for "defacing a building's appearance." Kurdovanidze [states](#) that once they realized this, they falsified the records and stated that she was being charged with disobeying a police order, for which she was already [fined](#) 2,000 GEL (approximately 644 EUR) on March 18.

On May 19, Mzia Amaghlobeli's lawyers [appealed](#) to the Kutaisi Court of Appeals to terminate the case concerning disobeying a police order, arguing that the police had falsified evidence in the case. Specifically, they [claimed](#) that two video recordings submitted as evidence were filmed after Amaghlobeli had already been detained under administrative procedures, not before. Moreover, the testimony of the only police witness in the case does not reflect the truth. Accordingly, Amaghlobeli's lawyers also [called](#) on the Prosecutor General to launch criminal proceedings against the police witness who gave false testimony, as well as other police officers involved in the case.

Notably, at that time, the head of the Adjara Police, Grigol Beselia, who had arrested Amaghlobeli after she placed the sticker, [was appointed](#) Deputy Director of the Central Criminal Police Department.

3.4. Suspension of Temur Katamadze's expulsion from Georgia until a final judgment is rendered

On April 30, the Migration Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [made the decision](#) to deport Temur Katamadze from Georgia. This decision was based on the April 29, 2025, ruling by the Tbilisi Court of Appeals, which [denied](#) Katamadze international protection. GYLA [appealed](#) the deportation decision to the Tbilisi City Court and additionally requested that the

deportation procedures be suspended until the case was reviewed. The court [granted](#) this request on May 13, thereby suspending the execution of the Migration Department's deportation decision until a final judgment is rendered.

On May 15, Temur Katamadze [launched](#) a three-day symbolic hunger strike to protest the authorities' refusal to allow the delivery of a package containing food. He [stated](#) that through this hunger strike, he was expressing solidarity with businessmen Giorgi Chikvaidze and Irakli Papaishvili, who are being prosecuted on politically [motivated](#) grounds, as well as with protesting miners from Chiatura.

On May 22, it was [revealed](#) that the media outlet "Batumelebi" obtained a document confirming that if Temur Katamadze is expelled from Georgia, he faces imprisonment in Turkey. [According to lawyers](#), this document constitutes newly discovered evidence, and based on it, they may consider reapplying to courts requesting refugee status for Katamadze. It is [considered](#) that the document confirms Katamadze's previous statements about the risk of imprisonment, for which there had previously been no direct evidence in the case.