



**FACT SHEET PART 9**

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

**The document includes major developments from June 28 to July 28, 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 complexity of the situation 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 June 28 to July 28, 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 and may not include all events that occurred throughout the period covered. 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 assaults against protest participants

On July 6, musician, actor, and TV host Vano Tarkhnishvili was [attacked](#) and physically assaulted near his apartment building. [According to Tarkhnishvili](#), the attack is related to a protest song performed by his band in a pub in January, which contains offensive language toward members of the Georgian Dream party. Notably, on March 3, another member of the band, Davit Gabunia, was also physically [assaulted](#) for performing the same song.

On July 8, another musician, Kordz (Aleksandre Kordzaia), [stated](#) that 4-5 individuals confronted him near his grandmother's house, verbally abused him, and chased him, but he managed to escape and found refuge in a store where citizens helped him. Kordz has also publicly [performed](#) the protest song mentioned above. [According to him](#), he has been receiving threats

for the past six months because of it. He [reported](#) the incident to the police, who informed him that they would review the surveillance camera footage.

On July 6, a participant in the ongoing protest on Rustaveli Avenue was [attacked](#) with a stun gun (a device with electric shock). [According to the victim](#), the attacker was detained by police but later escaped; however, the police [deny](#) that the suspect escaped.

## 1.2. Repressive mechanisms undermining freedom of expression

On July 8, it was reported that activist Albi Kordzaia was [sentenced](#) to **5 days of administrative detention** based on the decision of Batumi City Court Judge Ekaterine Kakhniashvili for allegedly verbally insulting a police officer. The case concerns an incident that took place on June 28, when in Batumi, Albi Kordzaia [accused](#) police officer Bidzina Zhamerashvili of giving false testimony in the case of Mate Devidze (who had been arrested and [sentenced](#) to 4 years and 6 months imprisonment for waving a small stick-like object at police officers) called him shameless, and cursed him. Notably, on June 4, Albi Kordzaia was [sentenced](#) to 10 days of administrative detention for “verbal insult” against GD MP Tea Tsulukiani.

On July 8, Tbilisi City Court Judge Nino Enukidze [fined](#) Elene Khoshtaria, one of the leaders of the “Droa” party and the “Coalition for Change,” 5,000 GEL (approximately 1,600 EUR) for “insulting” police officers. The case concerns a remark made by Khoshtaria on June 24 during the [arrest](#) of “Strategy Aghmashenebeli” leader Giorgi Vashadze, when she [referred](#) to the police officers as “slaves.”

On July 9, Zugdidi District Court Judge Irakli Apshilava [sentenced](#) activist Rostom Zarandia to **5 days of administrative detention** for “verbal insult” of a Zugdidi City Hall employee. The case concerns a **comment** Zarandia made under the post on the Zugdidi City Hall’s Facebook page, in which he [called](#) City Hall employee Magdalena Todua “stupid” and “slow-witted” in the Megrelian language (Kartvelian language spoken primarily in the Samegrelo region of western Georgia).

On July 18, GD MP Tea Tsulukiani [announced](#) that she had filed a defamation lawsuit against journalist and active protest participant Nanuka Zhorzholiani. [According to her](#), the basis for the lawsuit is Zhorzholiani’s publication of a list of 20 individuals titled: “People Executed by Tsulukiani’s Father.”

On July 21, Judge Manuchar Tsatsua [sentenced](#) 23-year-old Keta Daudishvili to **2 days of administrative detention** for “insulting” Davit Matiashvili, head of the Tbilisi City Court’s Bailiff Service. Notably, the representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Tamta Kimbarishvili, [was](#)

[requesting](#) the imposition of a fine on Daudishvili, but the judge decided to apply a custodial sentence instead.

On July 22, it was [reported](#) that Tea Laghadze, a lawyer from the Adjara Police Department, filed a complaint against Levan Khorava, an active protest participant from Batumi, for “insulting her during a court hearing.” On July 25, Judge Aleksandre Goguadze [announced](#) the decision and imposed **a 20-day administrative detention**. According to “Batumelebi,” the Ministry of Internal Affairs [claimed](#) that Levan Khorava used offensive language toward the Ministry of Internal Affairs representative, Tea Laghadze, after the May 27 court hearing (when student Luka Natsvlishvili was [imprisoned](#) for 12 days).

### 1.3. Repressive administrative proceedings against protest participants continue

On July 1, it was reported that activist Albi Kordzaia was [fined](#) 4,500 GEL (approximately 1,440 EUR) for alleged petty hooliganism and disobedience to a police order. The case concerns a [verbal altercation](#) between activists and police officers that took place on May 22 near the courthouse during the hearing of Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze, one of the leaders of the “Coalition for Change.”

On July 16, Tbilisi City Court Judge Koba Chagunava [fined](#) activist Tatia Apriamashvili 4,000 GEL (approximately 1,280 EUR). The case concerns an [incident](#) that took place on March 21 on Rustaveli Avenue, when activists brought chairs to the protest site. Police officers [instructed](#) them not to use the chairs, but when the students placed them on the sidewalk and sat down, they were arrested and released later that evening. Apriamashvili was fined for allegedly disobeying a police order.

On July 23, it was [reported](#) that Ucha Kemashvili’s sister, Nini Kemashvili, was fined 500 GEL (approximately 160 EUR) for allegedly littering in the area surrounding the Parliament building. As noted in Fact Sheet Part 6, in May, Ucha Kemashvili was [detained](#) “for disobeying police orders” after burning a Georgian Dream flag on Rustaveli Avenue and was [sentenced](#) to 10 days of administrative detention. Ucha Kemashvili [links](#) his sister’s fine to the fact that, following his detention in May, Nini Kemashvili also burned a Georgian Dream flag in solidarity with her brother.

On July 25, Ilia State University student Guja Tabatadze was [arrested](#), allegedly for disobeying a police order.

On the night of July 27-28, activist Vakho Legashvili was [detained](#) by the police during the restoration of traffic flow on Rustaveli Avenue, which had been blocked as part of the daily protest.

On July 28, it was reported that Tbilisi City Hall [fined](#) activist Tamar Kuratishvili 5,000 GEL (approximately 1,600 EUR) for coloring the water in a fountain. The City Hall [claims](#) that dangerous substances were found in the water. The case concerns a protest-performance [held](#) on June 20 in front of the Parliament building, aimed at commemorating the events of June 20, 2019. Kuratishvili [states](#) that she poured natural dye into the water, which would not cause harm even if consumed. She [intends](#) to appeal the fine in court.

#### 1.4. Drug testing as a new mechanism of repression

On July 9, the Ministry of Internal Affairs [announced](#) that over the past week, 337 individuals had been required to undergo drug testing. Of these, 314 agreed to be tested, and drug use was confirmed in 240 cases. In its statement, the MIA [denied](#) allegations that participants in pro-European protests and politicians were specifically targeted for drug testing.

Despite this, according to publicly disseminated information, police [demanded](#) drug testing for several activists and representatives of political parties, including members of the Lelo party — Oto Parulava, Levan Jorbenadze, and Beka Beridzishvili; members of the Girchi – More Freedom party — Roko Mtskerashvili and [Tinatin Bolokadze](#); and activists and protest participants — Beka Papashvili, Tako Kheladze, Giga Makarashvili, Salome (Barker) Nikoleishvili, Zuka Berdzenishvili, and [Gia Jvarsheishvili](#). Some of these individuals were [confronted](#) by the police near their residences and were demanded to undergo drug testing.

[According to the Social Justice Center](#), in recent months, Georgian Dream has passed a series of legislative changes in drug policy, aimed at strengthening repressive and control instruments. Among other changes, the amendments [adopted](#) in April 2025 made it an administrative offense to refuse mandatory drug testing, for which a fine ranging from 500 to 2,000 GEL (approximately 160 to 640 EUR) or administrative detention for up to 60 days is prescribed.

#### 1.5. Excessive use of force by court bailiffs

On July 3, the sentencing of Giorgi Mindadze, who had been arrested on criminal charges during the pro-European protests (detailed information is provided in Section 3.1), led to a [confrontation](#) between individuals present in the courthouse and court bailiffs. Initially, a confrontation [followed](#) the decision to change the courtroom. The hearing was to be held in a relatively large courtroom; however, it was [moved](#) to a smaller one that accommodates around

25 people. As a result, court bailiffs [expelled](#) part of the audience wishing to attend Mindadze's hearing. The confrontation [continued](#) after the verdict against Giorgi Mindadze was announced, when Mindadze's supporters, family members, and media representatives present in the court yard were forcibly [removed](#) from the surrounding area by the court bailiffs.

During the confrontation, a young woman [felt](#) unwell, and an ambulance had to be called. Due to the use of force by the court bailiffs, Lado Jakhua [sustained](#) injuries and, [according to reports](#), suffered a broken nose. He was subsequently [transported](#) by an ambulance.

On July 9, during the court hearing of another defendant, Saba Skhvitaridze, a member of the "Coalition for Change," Dimitri Bidzinashvili [had](#) a verbal altercation with court bailiffs. [According to him](#), he was then locked by the bailiffs in one of the rooms of the Tbilisi City Court for four hours. Following the incident, Bidzinashvili was administratively [detained](#) on charges of petty hooliganism.

On July 22, the head of the Tbilisi City Court's Bailiffs Service, Davit Matiashvili, [used](#) force and issued threats against Publika's (online media) editor Zura Vardiashvili for filming in the court yard. Vardiashvili [recalls](#) that following a verbal altercation between Matiashvili and Nodar Chachanidze, a member of the political party Akhali, Matiashvili forcibly removed Chachanidze from the court building. At that moment, Vardiashvili began filming the incident, [stating](#) that he did not recall that the new legislative [amendments](#) also prohibit filming in the yard of the courthouse. In response, Matiashvili forcibly [took](#) Vardiashvili into one of the court's rooms, where he confiscated his phone and ID card and, [according to Vardiashvili](#), attempted to unlock his phone. Ultimately, Matiashvili [returned](#) the belongings and threatened him with legal consequences.

### 1.6. Imposition of fines for "artificially blocking the road" continues

Fining of participants in the ongoing continuous protest on Rustaveli Avenue for "artificially blocking the road" continues. On July 1, Giorgi Mumladze [announced](#) that he had received 10 additional fines with a total of 50,000 GEL (approximately 15,980 EUR) and had accumulated a **total of 42 fines**. On July 2, Paata Burchuladze [stated](#) that when he went to the police to appeal one of the fines, he discovered that **a total of 34 fines** had been issued in his name for "artificially blocking the road". On July 8, Nino Kalandia [announced](#) that Judge Koba Chagunava had fined her **for 6 instances** of road blocking and imposed **a total fine of 30,000 GEL (approximately 9,585 EUR)**.

### 1.7. Administrative arrests in parallel to the large eviction

On July 24, an eviction [was carried out](#) in one of the settlements in Tbilisi amid a large police deployment, affecting more than 100 families (according to unofficial estimates).

By the end of July 24, 17 people were [arrested](#), including residents and participants of the ongoing pro-European protest who came to support them.

According to the publicly available information, detainees were [charged](#) with administrative offenses for “disobeying police orders”. The lawyers [indicated](#) that several detainees sustained physical injuries.

On July 26, the decisions of the first Instance Court were announced concerning several detainees: Judge Koba Chagunava [issued](#) a verbal warning against three individuals (residents); Judge Zviad Tsekvava [fined](#) two residents 2,000 GEL each (approximately 640 EUR), and [two activists](#) 5,000 GEL each (approximately 1,600 EUR). In several cases, the hearings were [postponed](#).

### 1.8. Judgment delivered in the case of physical and verbal assault carried out against Zviad Koridze

Zviad Koridze, a well-known journalist and the manager of the regional offices of Transparency International - Georgia (hereafter TI Georgia), was physically and verbally [assaulted](#) on the night of January 14–15, 2025, in the lobby of the Sheraton Hotel in Batumi by a group [composed](#) of representatives of the Georgian Dream. According to TI Georgia, “the attackers were [led](#) by Dimitri Samkharadze – one of the most infamous figures in Bidzina Ivanishvili’s inner circle and the regional secretary of “Georgian Dream.”

On July 25, TI Georgia [reported](#) that “despite the group violence, only one individual was charged, leaving the other attackers unpunished.” On June 24, 2025, the accused person was [found guilty](#) and [fined](#) only 3,000 GEL (approximately 960 EUR). TI Georgia [indicates](#) that “this verdict is yet another example of how the regime protects its own violent supporters.”

## 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. Application of repressive mechanisms by the Anti-Corruption Bureau against civil society organizations**

As noted in the previous Fact Sheet, in June, according to the publicly available information, eight non-governmental organizations were [served](#) with court orders issued based on motions filed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, requiring them to provide various types of detailed information to the Bureau — a decision that the civil society organizations [appealed](#) to the Court of Appeals. The appeals were [rejected](#) by the Tbilisi Court of Appeals. However, the civil society organizations indicated that they will [continue](#) to protect personal data and sensitive information related to beneficiaries and third parties.

On July 2, the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Razhden Kuprashvili, [criticized](#) the organizations for “noncompliance with the law” and questioned why, if their goal is to help beneficiaries, they had “purchased helmets, masks, and flags”.

On July 18, Sapari, one of the non-governmental organizations ordered by the court to provide information to the Anti-Corruption Bureau, [stated](#) that the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has reviewed the appeal submitted by their underage beneficiary to protect their rights. The Committee [granted](#) the request, and Georgia was called upon to refrain from requesting, disclosing, and transferring the beneficiary's personal information to any person, including to the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

On July 18, the Public Defender of Georgia [announced](#) that, based on the submissions made, the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia [examined](#) the orders of the Tbilisi City Court delivered concerning the Social Justice Center and Sapari: 1. On June 23, 2025, the Executive Director of the Social Justice Center [appealed](#) to the Public Defender's Office and requested a response within the scope of competence regarding the June 17, 2025, order of Tbilisi City Court, which satisfied the Anti-Corruption Bureau's motion concerning the request for information from the organization; 2. On July 3, 2025, Anna Arganashvili and Ketevan Bakhtadze also [appealed](#) to the Public Defender's Office on behalf of the person under their legal representation. According to the lawyers' explanation, the minor under their protection is a beneficiary of the non-governmental organization Sapari. The child's parent [approached](#) the organization due to the systematic sexual violence against the minor, after which they received legal support from Sapari.

[According to the Public Defender of Georgia](#), “since similar cases may also become the subject of appellate court review in the future, and the practical implementation of these supervisory mechanisms represents a novelty for Georgia's legal system, with practice being formed by currently adopted decisions, the Public Defender decided to submit a general amicus curiae opinion to the court hearing the case to promote the establishment of appropriate standards. This general amicus curiae applies to all cases within the framework of which the court will have to deliberate on similar factual circumstances.”

On July 24, the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Razhden Kuprashvili, [stated](#) that the agency is currently studying the activities of **240 organizations**. [According to him](#), the study includes an analysis of salary funds and revenues, expenses, and procurements. He further [indicated](#) that it is inappropriate to discuss the details of the process of reviewing organizations in advance, so as not to damage the conduct of cases.

## 2.2. Ordinance adopted based on the recent amendments to the Law on Grants

In the last few months, some major amendments have been adopted by Georgian Dream to the Law of Georgia on Grants, under an expedited procedure, including:

1. On April 16, 2025, the Georgian Dream adopted [amendments](#), based on which grant recipients are only 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”. [According to the same 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;
2. On June 12, 2025, the Georgian Dream adopted a second set of [amendments](#) to the same law in a third reading. The initiated version exempted two international programs (later, two more programs were added to this list) from obligations arising from the law; however, it was [radically changed](#) before the plenary hearing. Following the committee hearing on June 9, additional provisions were [introduced](#) to the initiated version, among other things, expanding the definition of a grant. Under the new provisions, **“technical assistance provided to the grant recipient in the form of transfer of technology, specialized knowledge, skills, expertise, and/or other forms of support”** is also [defined as a grant](#). Consequently, IDFI [considers](#) that “the purpose of the amendments introduced in the Law of Georgia on Grants is not only to establish a political filter on democratic international support/assistance, but also indirectly prohibit such support and, for this purpose, create substantial operational or other difficulties”.

Subordinate normative act adopted in light of the recent amendments in the form of an Ordinance was [published](#) in the Legislative Herald of Georgia on July 8, 2025. Among other things, it defines some procedural aspects for receiving consent and the timeframe for deciding on that matter, which can vary from 1 to 3 months.

Grant agreements concluded before April 17, 2025, are not subject to approval, [except](#) in cases where such grant agreements are being modified after the indicated date. [According to the Ordinance](#), the modification of the grant agreement is defined as follows: when the purpose of the grant utilization scope, and specific direction of fund utilization (monetary or in-kind form) provided for by the formalized grant agreement changes.

As for the examination of the content of the documents submitted for approval, the Ordinance [indicates](#) that “substantive examination means a preliminary assessment of the purpose of grant issuance, scope, and specific direction of fund utilization (monetary or in-kind form) and determination of its compliance with the government program, basic strategic documents of the Government of Georgia, and Georgia's state interests.”

Notably, on July 3, the Anti-Corruption Bureau [released](#) information that “the platform grants.acb.gov.ge was created and will become active on July 10th. Registration on the website is voluntary, and interested parties will need to complete a simple registration form. During monitoring, the Anti-Corruption Bureau will rely on the information uploaded by these organizations.”

### 2.3. The sessions of the “Parliamentary Investigative Commission” and the criminal proceedings for refusing to appear before it

The “Parliamentary Investigative Commission,” whose mandate is “to investigate the activities of the United National Movement committed from 2003 to this day,” [concluded](#) its sessions in the format of public hearings on July 2. [According to the commission members](#), the commission will prepare its report by August 4.

Attending a session at the commission’s request is mandatory, and failure to comply carries criminal liability, punishable by a **fine** or **imprisonment for up to one year**, as well as disqualification from holding office or engaging in specific activities for up to three years.

The court delivered guilty verdicts in all cases involving opposition leaders and former political officials who were charged with refusing to appear before the Commission. In total, at this stage, **8 active politicians or former political officials** have been sentenced to 7 or 8 months of

imprisonment for refusing to appear before the Commission, and all of them were banned from holding an appointed office in public service for 2 years:

- **Mamuka Khazaradze** (Lelo Party) – [sentenced](#) to **8 months of imprisonment** by Judge Zviad Sharadze on June 23;
- **Badri Japaridze** (Lelo Party) – [sentenced](#) to **8 months of imprisonment** by Judge Zviad Sharadze on June 23;
- **Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze** (Girchi – More Freedom Party) – [sentenced](#) to **7 months of imprisonment** by Judge Jvebe Nachkebia on June 23;
- **Giorgi Vashadze** (Strategy Aghmashenebeli Party) – [sentenced](#) to **7 months of imprisonment** by Judge Nino Galustashvili on June 24;
- **Nikanor Melia** (Akhali Party) – [sentenced](#) to **8 months of imprisonment** by Judge Nino Galustashvili on June 27;
- **Givi Targamadze** (Member of Parliament from 2004 to 2016) – [sentenced](#) to **7 months of imprisonment** by Judge Nino Galustashvili on June 27;
- **Nika Gvaramia** (Akhali Party) – [sentenced](#) to **8 months of imprisonment** by Judge Jvebe Nachkebia on July 1;
- **Irakli Okruashvili** (former Prosecutor General and minister in various ministries from 2004 to 2006) – [sentenced](#) to **8 months of imprisonment** by Judge Tamar Mchedlishvili on July 4.

On July 4, Mikheil Kavelashvili [issued](#) a statement offering convicted politicians the opportunity to apply to him for a pardon, provided that, in the same statement, they confirm their participation in the 2025 municipal elections. In such a case, he [pledged](#) to grant them an immediate pardon.

Before concluding the public hearings, as noted in the previous Fact Sheet, the Commission once again [summoned](#) several opposition politicians: Giorgi Gakharia, Mamuka Khazaradze, Nika Gvaramia, and Giorgi Vashadze. Mamuka Khazaradze, Nika Gvaramia, and Giorgi Vashadze again refused to appear before the Commission, as a result of which the Commission [referred](#) the matter to the Prosecutor’s Office. As for Giorgi Gakharia, the investigative commission ultimately agreed to his request to testify remotely, which [took place](#) on July 2.

As indicated in the previous Fact Sheet, on June 14, the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia [released](#) a statement indicating that an investigation is underway into acts of sabotage, attempted sabotage under aggravating circumstances, aiding hostile activities of foreign organizations or

organizations under foreign control, and mobilizing funds for actions directed against the constitutional order and national security of Georgia (the punishment for these crimes ranges from 2 to 15 years of imprisonment). According to the [statement](#), among other issues, the subject of the investigation is the conduct of Giorgi Gakharia, then Minister of Internal Affairs and now the leader of the opposition party “Gakharia – For Georgia”, in August 2019, specifically, the installation of a police checkpoint near the occupation line in the village of Chorchana. In addition, on July 11, the Prosecution Service of Georgia [issued](#) a statement announcing that, based on a decision of the European Court of Human Rights “concerning the excessive use of force and weapons by the Ministry of Internal Affairs during the maintenance and restoration of public order in Tbilisi on June 20-21, 2019,” the state was required to carry out certain investigative actions. The investigative activities are being [conducted](#) on Rustaveli Avenue “to reconstruct the scene of the crime and to identify possible perpetrators.” It is noteworthy that Giorgi Gakharia, who was serving as the Minister of Internal Affairs at the time, was [questioned](#) by the investigative commission regarding the excessive use of force during the dispersal of the protest on June 20-21, 2019.

Notably, on July 2, Georgian Dream [terminated](#) the parliamentary mandates of 12 members of “Gakharia for Georgia.”

#### **2.4. New set of repressive legislative amendments initiated and/or adopted by Georgian Dream**

On July 2, another set of amendments to the Code of Administrative Offenses (hereafter CAO) was [adopted](#) by Georgian Dream under an expedited procedure. [According to these amendments](#), in cases of repeated commission of certain offenses — such as petty hooliganism, disobedience to a police order, and violations of the rules on assemblies and demonstrations — if the individual has not paid the fine imposed for the first offense, the imposition of another fine is no longer allowed, and administrative detention is established as the sole form of liability.

Furthermore, based on the [amendments](#) adopted, if an administrative offense provided for by CAO envisages administrative imprisonment as an administrative penalty along with other types of administrative penalties, and at the same time, the consideration of the administrative offense case and the imposition of administrative penalty falls under the competence of an administrative body, the decision made by the administrative body regarding the imposition of an administrative penalty in the form of a fine shall not be appealed to a superior administrative body (to a superior official) and shall be appealed directly to the court. In addition, the amendments indicate that in case of appealing the decision to the court, the decision made by the court enters into force immediately upon its adoption, and appealing the court's decision

does not suspend its execution. These [amendments](#) also apply to the administrative offense cases that were initiated before this law came into effect. Particularly, it is [specified](#) that complaints submitted to a superior administrative body (to a superior official) on which the complaint-reviewing administrative body has not made a final decision shall be sent by the complaint-reviewing administrative body to the court for consideration, along with the case materials, within 10 days from the effective date of this law.

On July 2, amendments were also [made](#) to the Criminal Procedure Code, according to which the identity of a person participating in an operative-investigative activity or a covert investigative measure who is cooperating with the investigation shall be concealed in a manner that makes their identification impossible. The decision on this matter [will be made](#) by the prosecutor, and this decision may be of indefinite duration.

On July 2, Georgian Dream [passed](#), in the second reading, a set of [amendments](#) aimed at simplifying the procedures for seizing assets from individuals convicted of financial crimes and their associates (a detailed description of the draft law is provided in Fact Sheet Part 7). Following its adoption in the first reading, the draft law was [supplemented](#) with amendments to the Criminal Code, which introduced a new offense — concluding an unlawful agreement with a convicted person. [According to the draft amendment](#), until the convicted person who committed a financial crime compensates for the damage caused, receiving more than twice the subsistence minimum within a month (as of December 2024, the subsistence minimum for an average consumer [amounted](#) to 230.5 GEL (approximately 75 EUR)) — or the transfer of such amount by third parties to them — constitutes a criminal offense.

As one of the initiators of the bill, Archil Gorduladze [stated](#): “Whether they are friends or family members, if they decide to give a fraudster, embezzler, or misappropriator the opportunity to live in their homes, this will be a separate crime.”

As noted in Fact Sheet Part 7, representatives of Georgian Dream [indicated](#) that one of the inspirations for the amendments was the case of Giorgi Bachiashvili, who has been [sentenced](#) to 11 years of imprisonment for allegedly embezzling \$39,215,820 worth of cryptocurrency and has been [ordered](#) by the court to pay nearly 9,000 bitcoins to Bidzina Ivanishvili as compensation.

On July 11, Bachiashvili was [beaten](#) in his prison cell. [According to his lawyer](#), Bachiashvili was alone in his cell when an unidentified individual entered and physically assaulted him. The lawyer [stated](#) that Bachiashvili sustained visible injuries to his face, had stitches on his head, an injured hand, and was using a wheelchair for mobility, which is why he was transferred to a clinic and later returned to the penitentiary facility. On July 14, Bachiashvili [released](#) a letter describing how the prison director visited him and demanded that he give Bidzina Ivanishvili

access to his bank accounts, cryptocurrency transactions, and wallet addresses — a demand he refused. Bachiashvili [recalls](#) that during the physical assault in the cell, a penitentiary staff member, whom he refers to by name, opened the cell's window, at which point the fight temporarily stopped. However, the attacker [urged](#) the staff member to close the window, which he complied with. Bachiashvili [says](#) that at some point, he “momentarily lost consciousness,” and after regaining consciousness, the assailant continued to beat him. [According to Bachiashvili](#), a few minutes later, the same staff member opened the cell door, asked the attacker to leave the cell, and they left together. On July 14, the Special Penitentiary Service [responded](#) to the incident, stating that the incident took place between inmates as a result of which “two convicts sustained different types of injuries.”

## 2.5. Repressive mechanisms activated against critical media and media actors

As noted in the previous Fact Sheets, Georgian Dream [filed](#) complaints with the Communications Commission (ComCom) against the TV channels “Formula,” “TV Pirveli,” and “Mtavari Arkhi” (the latter currently operating on a website and social platforms only), citing their use of various terms during broadcasts and on social media while covering current events.

[According to the complaints](#) submitted by Georgian Dream, the use of terms such as “regime,” “oligarchic regime,” “pro-Russian political regime,” “prisoners of the regime,” “judicial clan,” “so-called Speaker of Parliament,” and other similar expressions constitutes a violation of the law, as they fail to distinguish between factual reporting and opinion. The complaints argued that the TV channels should face appropriate sanctions for using such terms.

By its decision of July 3, ComCom [found](#) all three TV channels to be in violation of the law but did not impose any sanctions.

On July 16, the Prosecution Service of Georgia, based on a court order, [requested](#) financial documentation from the TV channel Mtavari Arkhi as part of an investigation launched following a complaint filed by the channel's director, Giorgi Kurdadze. [According to the Prosecutor's Office](#), the investigation concerns alleged abuse of managerial authority within the company, embezzlement and misappropriation of funds belonging to a legal entity, and money laundering. In response, Mtavari Arkhi [stated](#) that Georgian Dream has effectively achieved its goal of shutting down a critical media outlet through one of the channel's co-founders, Zaza Okuashvili, and the director appointed by him, Giorgi Kurdadze.

On July 21, the online media outlet “Batumelebi” [announced](#) that its bank accounts had been seized through an incasso order. [According to “Batumelebi”](#), the formal reason for the enforcement measure is tax debt; however, in reality, it is an attempt to pressure Mzia



Amaghlobeli (founder of “Batumelebi”, who has been criminally [charged](#) for slapping the head of the Batumi police) and to force the media organization to cease its operations.

The outlet [explained](#) that their current debt to the state budget amounts to 47,000 GEL (approximately 15,020 EUR), with additional interest and penalties bringing the total to 282,000 GEL (approximately 90,105 EUR). They also [stated](#) that, based on a provision in the tax legislation, they requested the Revenue Service to offer a payment schedule, but their request was denied. In support of the “Batumelebi,” crowdfunding has been initiated, and as of July 24, up to 120,000 GEL (approximately 38,345 EUR) has been [collected](#).

On July 21, the Media Advocacy Coalition [issued](#) a statement emphasizing that an incasso order is used against “Batumelebi”, while pro-government media outlets “Imedi” and “Rustavi 2” have debts of millions to the Revenue Service (17 and 25 million GEL). [According to the Coalition](#), placing an incasso order on independent media accounts is not an ordinary financial operation - rather, its purpose is to weaken and eliminate independent media.

On July 22, the Revenue Service [issued](#) a statement explaining that the measure to secure the payment of tax debt (seizure of bank accounts) is carried out automatically, which is what happened in the present case. The Revenue Service [expressed](#) its readiness to lift the seizure on “Batumelebi”'s accounts in the event of a tax agreement and to allow the organization to repay its debt to the state budget according to an agreed schedule.

On July 25, it was [reported](#) that the Public Broadcaster closed the project “Interesting People,” shut down the program “This Weekend,” and fired four more employees who have been openly criticizing the broadcaster's editorial policy for 8 months now. The dismissed employees were [offered](#) positions on various radio and TV programs, which they refused.

## 2.6. Dismissal of public servants continues

As a result of the “reorganization process” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, several individuals, including [Shalva Tsiskarishvili](#), [Giorgi Tsiskarishvili](#), and others, have announced their dismissal from office. These individuals [attribute](#) their removal from their positions to their commitment to Georgia’s European aspirations. [According to Olga Spirandi](#), who was also dismissed from the Ministry, more than 40 people have been dismissed as a result of the reorganization that began in April 2025.

On July 3, Khatia Vashakmadze, a former employee of the Parliament of Georgia, who had been a public servant since 2014, also [stated](#) that she was dismissed from her position on political grounds.



On July 22, Levan Kurtskhalia [stated](#) that he was dismissed from his position at the Ministry of Defense as a result of a so-called reorganization. [According to him](#), he dedicated 31 years to military service, during which his efforts were primarily focused on the country's integration into NATO and Euro-Atlantic structures.

### 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 demonstrators** in connection with the ongoing protests, while **no individual responsible for torture, inhuman treatment, or violence against peaceful demonstrators and media has been held criminally liable**.

Previously, criminal proceedings have also been initiated in connection with the April-May 2024 protests. 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 July 28, 2025, according to publicly available information, criminal investigations have been initiated against **56 individuals** in connection with the ongoing protests **from November 2024**. Out of the overall number, **42 persons are detained**. Between June 28 and July 28, 2025, not a single case resulted in the substitution of pretrial detention with an alternative measure of restraint. **The judgments of conviction have already been delivered against 12 individuals, arrested since November 2024.**

Furthermore, as noted in the previous Fact Sheet, **two more criminal investigations** have been initiated in relation to the developments at the courthouse. In one of these cases, **one individual was charged and [placed](#) in pre-trial detention**.

The following chapter provides major updates covering the period from **June 28 to July 28, 2025**.

#### 3.1. Judgments continue to be announced in the first instance court on criminal cases initiated from November 2024

On July 3, Tbilisi City Court Judge Nino Galustashvili [sentenced](#) 21-year-old **Giorgi Mindadze to five years of imprisonment**. Mindadze was [charged](#) with assaulting a police officer, an offense punishable by four to seven years of imprisonment. [According to the prosecution](#), he caused a burn injury to the police officer's leg by using pyrotechnics. Giorgi Mindadze's lawyer [stated](#) that the police officer recognized as the victim had no injuries.

On July 10, Tbilisi City Court Judge Tamar Mchedlishvili [sentenced](#) 19-year-old **Saba Jikia to four years and six months of imprisonment** for allegedly assaulting a police officer. The prosecution [accused](#) him of kicking a police officer during a protest on Rustaveli Avenue on November 30, 2024. The officer recognized as the victim in the case, Beka Gotiashvili, [stated](#) that he did not sustain any injuries. Following the announcement of Jikia's sentence, pro-government media outlets circulated photo and video materials [claiming](#) that Saba Jikia was holding a knife during the "assault." However, the indictment [does not mention](#) that Jikia was holding a knife or any other object.

On July 18, Tbilisi City Court Judge Jvebe Nachkebia [sentenced](#) **Anri Kvaratskhelia to four years and six months of imprisonment**. Kvaratskhelia was also [charged](#) with assaulting a police officer. [According to the prosecution](#), he endangered a police officer by using a "Molotov cocktail." There [is no](#) police officer in the case who was physically injured. On July 28, Anri Kvaratskhelia's lawyer [announced](#) that prosecutor Roin Khintibidze had appealed Kvaratskhelia's sentence to the appellate court, which, according to him, indicates that the prosecution does not agree with the imposed sentence.

On July 25, Batumi City Court Judge Viktor Metreveli [delivered](#) a guilty verdict in the case involving the Dean of Batumi State University of Arts, Mamuka Jorbenadze, and four students (Guram Mikeladze, Davit Gvianidze, Giorgi Davitadze, and Andro (Anri) Kakabadze). The case concerns a confrontation that [took place](#) at Batumi University of Arts in December 2024, which resulted from an attempt to hang a protest banner near the rector's office. The judge [found](#) all five individuals guilty of violence committed by a group of persons and/or against two or more persons, an offense punishable by a fine, community service, or imprisonment for up to 2 years. **Mamuka Jorbenadze was [fined](#) 20,000 GEL (approximately 6,400 EUR), while three of the students (Guram Mikeladze, Davit Gvianidze, and Giorgi Davitadze) were each [fined](#) 17,000 GEL (approximately 5,435 EUR).** However, 2,000 GEL (approximately 640 EUR) was [deducted](#) from each of their fines due to the two months they had already spent in pretrial detention. **As for Andro (Anri) Kakabadze, he was [sentenced](#) to 9 months of imprisonment**, of which he had already served more than 7 months in pretrial detention.

The court [postponed](#) the announcement of the verdicts in two cases where decisions had been expected on July 28. The verdict in the case of Giorgi Akhobadze, who was charged with a drug-related offense, [was to be delivered](#) by Judge Romeo Tkeshelashvili, while the verdict in the case of Anatoli Gigauri, accused of attacking a police officer, [was to be delivered](#) by Judge Jvebe Nachkebia.

### 3.2. Examination of evidence in the cases of individuals accused of organizing and/or participating in group violence

At the hearing on July 4, evidence was [examined](#) in the case of 11 individuals accused of participating in group violence.

The lawyer [discussed](#) with the media the video evidence presented by the prosecution on July 4 during the trial of 11 individuals charged with participating in group violence. At this stage, video evidence was [reviewed](#) in relation to the following 8 individuals: Valeri Tetrashvili, Giorgi Terishvili, Ruslan Sivakov, Luka Jabua, Onise Tskhadadze, Andro Chichinadze, Jano Archaia, and Guram Mirtskhulava. According to the lawyer, in none of the videos [presented](#) is there any visible act by the defendants causing harm to a police officer or any other person; in some cases, [it is unclear](#) whether the defendants threw any object at all; moreover, even where an object [appears](#) to have been thrown, it is uncertain what kind of object it was and whether it had any hypothetical potential to cause harm. Additionally, the video footage [contains](#) audio of verbal abuse and threats directed at protesters. [According to the lawyer](#), he asked the prosecution whether an investigation had been launched regarding this episode, to which he was told that an investigation was ongoing under the article concerning abuse of power.

Alongside the video evidence, witnesses [are](#) being questioned - namely, representatives of the Special Tasks Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs who have been granted victim status. [According to them](#), they cannot confirm nor deny whether they were injured as a result of the actions of the defendants.

On July 23, a court hearing was also [held](#) in the case of 8 individuals charged with organizing and participating in group violence. The prosecution [presented](#) evidence against Zviad Tsetskhladze, who is accused of organizing the group violence. Notably, the prosecution [submitted](#) as evidence comments made by various users during a Facebook livestream by the youth movement “Daphioni,” in which Zviad Tsetskhladze is speaking. One such comment [refers](#) to batons and gas masks. [According to a police witness](#), this comment, posted by a third person, is linked to Tsetskhladze's alleged planning of strategies to resist the police during the livestream. However, the witness [was](#) unable to point to any specific part of the video where Tsetskhladze mentions batons. **As for the video itself, during the court proceedings, it was [revealed](#) that the video presented by the prosecution as key evidence in the case against Tsetskhladze — allegedly showing him organizing violence — has no audio.** Tsetskhladze himself [states](#) that in the video, he is speaking about how citizens should protect themselves during a dispersal, how to deal with violent police officers, and so on.

At the July 28 session, police officer Arsen Khunashvili, appearing as a witness, [stated](#) that he had a video with accompanying audio related to Zviad Tsetskhladze's case on a flash drive and

[requested](#) that it be played, to which the prosecution agreed. Defense lawyers [objected](#), arguing that it is inadmissible to replace evidence already submitted in the case with an unexamined recording brought to the hearing by a witness. Judge Tamar Mchedlishvili [granted](#) the witness's request and authorized the playing of the video he had brought to the hearing. This decision [was met](#) with objections from the defendants' lawyers, who requested a postponement of the hearing to align their positions with the defendants. Ultimately, the video in question [was not played](#) during that session, and based on the lawyers' request, the hearing was [postponed](#), and the session scheduled for July 30 was also canceled.

On July 28, Vepkhia Kasradze, who is charged with organizing group violence, [stated](#) during the court hearing that the video recording presented against him, which constitutes the prosecution's key piece of evidence, is falsified. It was [revealed](#) during the hearing that no phonoscopic examination had been conducted on the video evidence to determine whether the voice indeed belongs to Vepkhia Kasradze. [According to Kasradze](#), the refusal to conduct such an examination constitutes negligence, as a result of which the charges brought against him are entirely unfounded.

### 3.3. Other major developments in ongoing criminal cases

On July 16, the lawyer of Nino Datashvili, who was [charged](#) with allegedly assaulting a court bailiff and [placed](#) in pre-trial detention, [stated](#) that Datashvili was experiencing difficulty moving due to back pain and requested her transfer to a civilian clinic. On July 17, the Public Defender [announced](#) that his representatives had visited Nino Datashvili in a penitentiary facility multiple times. [According to the Public Defender](#), during a meeting on July 11, Datashvili asked the representatives not to make her health-related personal data public, which is why that information has not been disclosed. The statement also [notes](#) that during the meeting, Datashvili discussed various issues, in response to which the Public Defender's Office "contacted the General Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Medical Department of the Special Penitentiary Service for their action."

At the July 21 court hearing of Mzia Amaghlobeli, prosecutor Tornike Gogeshvili [stated](#) that, upon request, the Prosecutor's Office is ready to consider entering into a plea agreement, under which Mzia Amaghlobeli would plead guilty to the charge of assaulting a police officer. [According to the lawyer](#), Mzia Amaghlobeli does not consider herself guilty and rules out a plea agreement. "[Mzia Amaghlobeli] does not need legal concessions; she needs a fair trial," the lawyer [stated](#).

At the July 21 hearing of 11 individuals charged with participating in group violence, Judge Nino Galustashvili [expelled](#) defendant Giorgi Terishvili for making a remark. Specifically, during the proceedings, defendant Andro Chichinadze [asked](#) a police witness, “Are you sober?”, which caused a stir in the courtroom, prompting the judge to warn the defendants. After this, Giorgi Terishvili [addressed](#) the witness with the phrase “you are being impudent”, following which he was expelled. [According to the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association \(GYLA\)](#), the expulsion of Giorgi Terishvili from the courtroom violated the principle of proportionality. For over a month now, another defendant, Revaz Kiknadze, [has been unable to attend](#) his court hearings. On June 26, Judge Nino Galustashvili [expelled](#) him from the courtroom “for disobeying the judge.” At the July 22 hearing, Judge Nino Galustashvili [allowed](#) Giorgi Terishvili to attend the next hearing but continued to deny Revaz Kiknadze the right to return to the courtroom.

On July 22, Publika [reported](#) that Artem Gribul and Anton Chechin, who are charged with drug-related offenses, have begun a dry hunger strike. In a letter released by Gribul, he [states](#) that the defense is not being afforded the opportunity to enjoy a fair trial to prove their innocence. The letter also [notes](#) that Anastasia Zinovkina, who was arrested alongside Gribul on drug charges, suffers from serious spinal issues and that the penitentiary service is not providing her with appropriate conditions. As a result, Artem Gribul [demanded](#) that the media be granted access to cover the court hearings, that an investigation be launched into crimes allegedly committed by law enforcement officers, and that Anastasia Zinovkina be provided with conditions in the detention facility that are appropriate to her medical needs. On July 24, the lawyer [stated](#) that Artem Gribul and Anton Chechin had ended their hunger strike.

At the court hearing held on July 24, the prosecution [changed](#) the classification of the charges against Saba Skhvitaridze, who had initially been accused of harming a police officer in connection with their official duties (a crime punishable by 7 to 11 years of imprisonment). He is now [charged](#) with the intentional infliction of minor bodily harm, which is punishable by a **fine, correctional labor, house arrest, or imprisonment for a term of 1 to 3 years**. [According to the prosecutor](#), the decision to reclassify the charge was based on the fact that it could not be confirmed beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant was aware that the individual in question was a police officer performing official duties at the time of the alleged offense.

### **3.4. Strict enforcement of the prohibition on photo, video, and audio recordings of the court hearings**

The courts are strictly enforcing the amendments adopted in [June](#) and [July](#) to the Organic Law of Georgia on Common Courts, which prohibits photo, video, and audio recordings, including those of court hearings. For instance, on July 10, Judge Nino Galustashvili [closed](#) the

Lomidze-Zasokhashvili trial to the public due to the dissemination of a photo showing an employee of the MIA's Special Tasks Department. The fact of the photo's release was [brought](#) to Galustashvili's attention by prosecutor Ani Khubejashvili.

Based on the amendments, photography, filming, video, and audio recording in court, as well as broadcasting, require specific authorization from the High Council of Justice for each court session. Despite the requests of [media representatives](#) and the [defendants](#), as of July 28, according to the publicly available information, [no permission has been granted](#) in cases of high public interest.