

# Georgians are Split Over the Prosecutor's Office in Georgia

On November 3, 2018 - Rustavi 2 broadcasted an investigative film created by the Studio Monitor and Radio Liberty about a suspended investigation of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. The film [How to subjugate a judge?](#) focused on accusations against prosecutors and judges related to the abuse of power, seizure of real estate, and giving of land to private individuals.

On November 16-28, 2018 - CRRC - Georgia conducted a phone survey to find out if people watched the film and what was their attitude towards the issues raised in it. The survey specifically asked about:

- How often people think prosecutors abuse power and make deals with judges;
- If the Prosecutor's Office prosecutes current and former high-ranking officials impartially;
- What the goal of the [restoration of justice](#) investigations was.

The phone survey resulted in 599 completed interviews. Its results are representative of the adult Georgian-speaking population of the country. The average margin of error of the survey is 2.4%. Results discussed in this blog are based on all completed interviews (599) and are weighted according to main demographic characteristics of respondents.

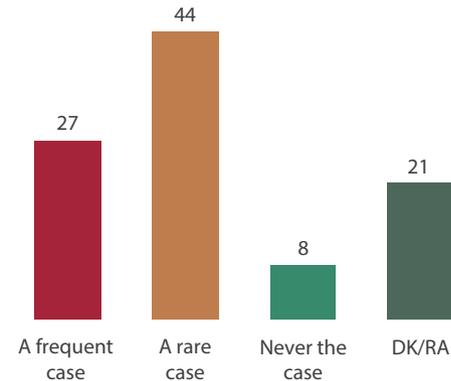
Even though the film [How to subordinate a judge?](#) was broadcasted on Rustavi 2 and shared on the websites and social media pages of Radio Liberty and Studio Monitor, only 2% of the adult Georgian-speaking population reported watching it. The majority of those who watched saw it on Rustavi 2 and found the film convincing or partially convincing.

Respondents were asked if abuse of power by prosecutors in Georgia was, in their opinion, frequent, rare, or never occurred.

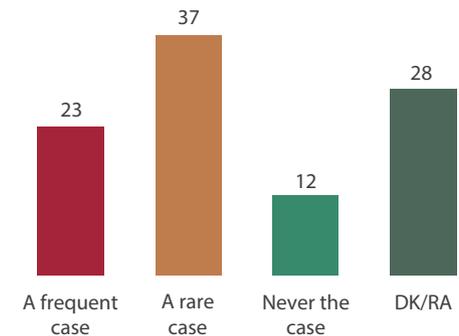
Even though few watched the investigative video, a quarter of the public (27%) said abuse of power was frequent, 44% said it was rare, and only 8% reported it never happened in Georgia. About a fifth (21%) did not know what to answer to the question.

The same scale was used to ask about whether prosecutors made deals with judges to have favorable decisions. About a quarter of the population (28%) said they did not know. Another quarter (23%) said it happened frequently, 37% said it happened rarely, and 12% said it never took place.

Abuse of power by prosecutors is... in Georgia (%)



Prosecutors making deals with judges to have decisions favorable for them is... in Georgia (%)



Opinion on the Prosecutor's Office in Georgia is relatively split. On the survey, about half the public (52%) reported trusting the Prosecutor's Office (22% fully trust and 30% trust more than distrust). With current officials, 41% say the Prosecutor's Office will prosecute them impartially and 41% partiality. The public is also split about former officials, with 41% reporting they would be prosecuted impartially and 38% partially. Interestingly, in terms of both current and former high-ranking officials, only 4% and 3% of the population, respectively, said the Prosecutor's Office will not prosecute them at all, whether it is reasonable to do so or not

## How objectively or unobjectively will the Prosecutor's Office prosecute them? (%)

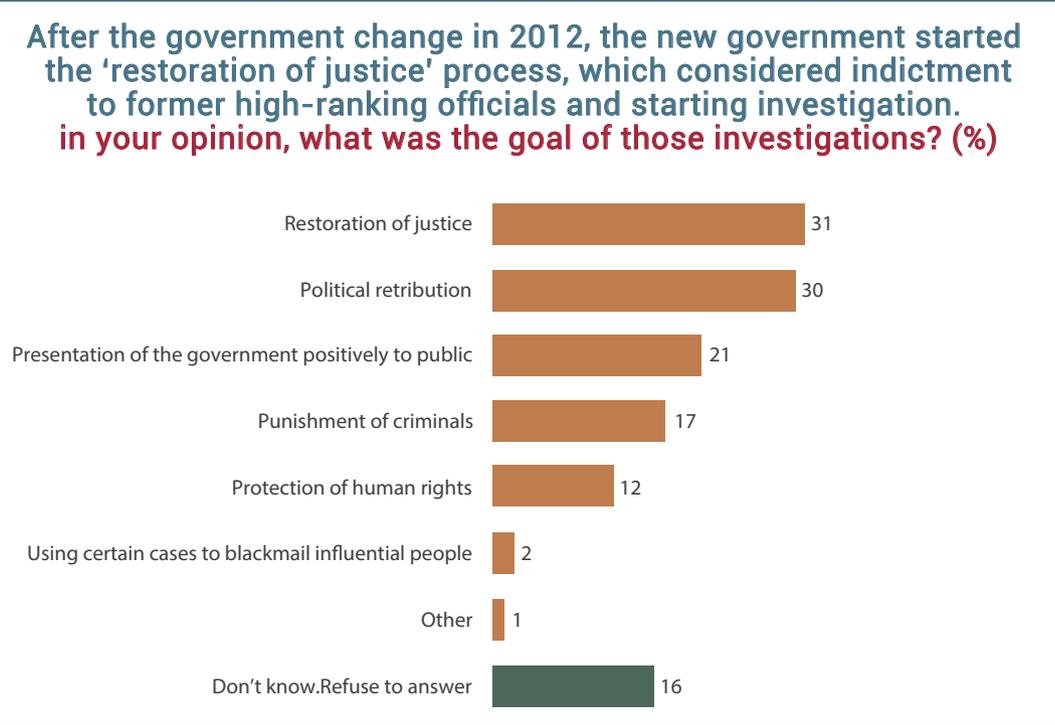


Of those who responded that the Prosecutor's Office will prosecute high-ranking officials very un-objectively (17%), more than a quarter (28%) recalled Saralidze's case, 6% named the cases of Saralidze and Machalikashvili, and 3% the Partskhaladze case as recent examples of unfair prosecutions. However, almost half (49%) could not recall a specific case of unfair prosecution.

Of those who said the Prosecutor's Office will prosecute former officials very un-objectively (11%), half (50%) could not recall a specific case, 6% named the Saralidze's case, 4% the Mirtskhulava case, and 2% the cases of Robakidze and Merabishvili.



Studio Monitor and Radio Liberty discussed the “restoration of justice” that the Georgian Dream government initiated after coming to power in 2012. Respondents were asked their opinion about the “Restoration of Justice”. Officially, the process was meant to prosecute former high-ranking officials who allegedly abused power during the previous government. Although some groups argued that it was used for justifying **persecution** of political **rivals**. When asked what the goal of those investigations was, the most frequent response was “restoration of justice” (31%). A fifth (21%) reported it was a way to present the government positively to public. About a third (30%) named political retribution as a goal of the “restoration of justice” investigations. Less than one fifth of the population (17%) said it was to punish criminals, and 12% related it to the protection of human rights. Another 16% of the population did not know what to answer to this question.



**Note:** Respondents were allowed to give multiple answers. Therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%.

Overall, the public is relatively split in terms of attitudes towards the Prosecutor’s Office. About half the public trusts them, and relatively equal shares think they will do their job impartially and partially when it comes to prosecuting current and former officials. This suggests the need to work towards increasing trust in the Prosecutor’s Office among the public that distrusts them.

They survey is part of the [Promoting Prosecutorial Independence through Monitoring and Engagement \(PrIME\)](#) project implemented by the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) in partnership with CRRG Georgia and Studio Monitor with the financial support of the European Union (EU).