

State Memory Politics in Georgia after 1991 and Similarities with the Other Post-Soviet Countries

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Legal Dimension

Lustration

- **Latvia** – Lustration started in 1994 based on the 5000 documents left by the KGB. The persons connected to the secret security services of the Soviet Union and the members of Latvian Communist Party were banned from participating in parliamentary and local elections.
- **Estonia** – No documents were left by KGB, so the lustration was mainly voluntaristic. Former high officials of the Soviet Union and the former employees at security services had to report to the state. 1153 people reported and by 2005, 250 names of those individuals, who refused to confess their collaboration with the Soviet intelligence services, were published.
- **Lithuania** – In 1998, “Law on the registration, recognition, reporting, and protection of identified persons who secretly collaborated with the former special services of the USSR” was adopted. Around 1500 individuals have reported to the state.



Legal Dimension

Lustration in Georgia

- Due to the political tensions and the fire in the KGB building during the Tbilisi Civil War which destroyed 210 000 archival files, the adoption of the Lustration law in Georgia had been postponed until 2011 when the Parliament of Georgian finally adopted the Freedom Charter.
- Freedom Charter encompasses three main directions:
 1. Anti-terrorist activities
 2. Lustration
 3. Prohibition of the Soviet symbols



Lustration in Georgia

The positional restrictions apply to those persons, who, from 25 April 1921 until 9 April 1991, served as:

- Secret officials of the former Soviet Union's special services
- Those who have refused to cooperate secretly with the special services of independent Georgia
- Those who were dismissed from the office of secret officials for state security reasons
- Those who broke off their relations with the special services of independent Georgia for unclarified reasons
- Officers of the former USSR State Security Committee, who, since the day of Georgia's declaration of independence, have refused to continue working with the special services of independent Georgia or who, for state security reasons, were refused work at the special services of independent Georgia
- Chairman of the Georgian State Committee on Television and Radio Broadcasting.



Lustration in Georgia

The Freedom Charter restricts persons, listed below, from being elected or appointed to the following state positions:

- Members of the Georgian government, deputy ministers and ministry department heads;
- Members of the National Security Council
- Members of Emergency Management Agency
- Members of Central Election Commission
- Government members of Abkhazia and Adjara
- General auditor of the State Audit and his/her deputies
- Director of the National Archives and his/her deputies
- Head of the President's Administration
- Head of the Government Administration

- Head of the State Security Service
- Ambassadors, envoys, consuls
- President and vice-president of the Georgian National Bank
- Members of national regulatory bodies
- Employees of the territorial bodies of Ministries of Defense and Internal Affairs, and the State Security Service
- Judges of the Constitutional and Common Courts of Georgia.
- Rectors of higher education institutions
- General Director of the Georgian Public Broadcaster

Lustration in Georgia



- The work of the Freedom Charter Commission at the State Security Service of Georgia
- According to the information IDFI received from the State Security Service in 2018, in 2016–2017, the Commission had considered an unspecified number of appeals to look into candidates for public positions regarding their connection with Soviet secret services, and it did not find a single violation of the law.

Legal Dimension

Prohibition of Symbols

- The Freedom Charter bans the public display of memorials, buildings, inscriptions, bas-reliefs, public gatherings, names of the streets, squares, villages, towns, and the other places that contain the propaganda elements of the Communist totalitarian or Fascist regimes and the names of respective leaders.
- According to the information acquired by IDFI from the State Security Service, until 2015, the Commission had only met once while between 2016-2017 it only asked five entities to stop displaying Communist totalitarian symbols. In 2018, it also warned both leftist and neo-fascist groups against using totalitarian symbols in public places.



Prohibition of Symbols



- **Estonia** adopted the law banning the public display of Soviet and Nazi symbols such as flags and emblems in 2006.
- **Lithuania** prohibited the usage of Soviet and Nazi symbols such as flags, emblems, orders, portraits and anthems in public places in 2008.
- **Latvia** adopted the similar law banning Soviet and Nazi flags and emblems in public places in 2013.

Legal Dimension

Rehabilitation of Victims

- In Georgia, the rehabilitation of victims of the totalitarian regime is regulated by the law “On the Acknowledgment of Citizens of Georgia as Victims of Political Repression and Social Protection of Repressed Persons” adopted in 1997.
- According to this law, political and social rights, military and special titles, awards and private property will be restored to those individuals who are recognized as the victims of repressions.
- A separate article also regulates the compensation of the victims, indicating that such individuals have right to request compensation from the state, but if a repressed person is already dead, his or her lawful heir is eligible to claim the indemnity.
- Today compensation limit is minimum 1000 GEL and maximum 2000 GEL.



Rehabilitation of Victims

Georgia	Estonia
<p>The term “repression” includes the following categories:</p>	<p>The term “unlawfully repressed person” includes the following categories:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deprivation of life • Damage to health • Imprisonment • Exile, expulsion, deportation • Forcible placement in psychiatric institutions • Deprivation of citizenship • Forced labor • Confiscation and destruction of property • Illegal dismissal from workplace • Movement to special settlements by force • Eviction from a dwelling house • Other restrictions of human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the legislation of Georgia, which were conducted by the State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims of genocide • Those who were imprisoned or sent into exile due to beliefs, property status, origin, religion, etc. • Freedom fighters and prisoners of conscience • People sent to forced labour • People who were prohibited to live in Estonia • Children who were born while in exile or in a place of parent’s detention • Persons who were subjected to radiation, as a test subject • Persons who were forcibly sent to a nuclear disaster area

Institutional Dimension

Commissions for Historical Truth



- In 2010, the Commission for Establishment of the Historical Truth was established in Georgia
- In 2011, the commission published the 50-page document about the 200 years of Russian occupation
- Similar institutions in the other post-Soviet states:
 - **Estonia:** Estonian State Commission on Examination of the Policies of Repression; International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity; Estonian Institute of Historical Memory
 - **Latvia:** Latvia's History Commission
 - **Lithuania:** International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania

Institutional Dimension

Museum of Occupation

- The Museum of Soviet Occupation was founded in 2006
- There are more than 3000 exponents in the museum, covering the different periods of the Soviet Union, Stalin's repressions, National Liberation movement, etc.
- The museum also encompasses a short film about the Russian-Georgian war in 2008



Institutional Dimension

Museums of Occupation



Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights (1992)



Museum of the Occupation of Latvia (1993)



Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom (2003)

Commemorative Dimension

Celebration of 9 May			
Georgia	✓	Azerbaijan	✓
Lithuania		Armenia	✓
Estonia		Kazakhstan	✓
Latvia		Kirgizstan	✓
Ukraine	✓	Tajikistan	✓
Moldova	✓	Uzbekistan	✓
Belarus	✓	Turkmenistan	✓
Russia	✓		



Commemorative Dimension



- In Georgia, today several streets are still named after Stalin. The most popular street is a central avenue in Gori, Stalin's birthplace.
- Most of the streets named after Stalin can be found in Russia.
- Most of the post-Soviet states have renamed the streets commemorating Soviet leadership and ideologists.



Monumental Dimension

- On 26 June, 2010, the Georgian government removed Stalin's statue from the center of Gori late at night.
- The removal of the statue had been maintained secret in order to avoid possible protest among the local population of Gori.
- The removal of Stalin's statue had clear political connotations.
- Particular "Stalinist" groups in Georgia demand the re-erection of the statue until now.



Monumental Dimension



Bronze Soldier, Estonia



Lenin's Statues, Ukraine

Monumental Dimension



The memorial commemorating the citizens of Gori who have died in the wars in Abkhazia and South Ossetia standing in front of the WWII memorial
Gori, Georgia

Thank you for your attention!



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