

The Most Closed and Unaccountable Public Institutions in Georgia in 2015

Within the framework of the implemented study IDFI revealed the most closed public institution, which is the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. It was the institution that left biggest number of requests (44) unanswered.

Unfortunately the Ministry for Economy and Sustainable Development refused to publish information in 2014 and 2015; even though it provided the same information in the years before (2012-2013). In 2015 IDFI appealed two times to the Ministry; however, these appeals were not approved. Also in 2014, the Ministry did not respond to the recommendations of the Public Defender as well as IDFI’s open letter regarding the violation of the public’s right to receive information. It is important to note that on October 28th 2015 Tbilisi City Court completely approved the appeals of IDFI and ordered the Ministry of Economy to respond to all 16 requests for information. In the years of 2013-2015, IDFI and the Ministry of Economy were actively and productively working together on several projects (Support for Transition to Digital Broadcasting, Research on the Effectiveness of State Industries, etc.) Due to such cooperative working experience, it was especially unexpected to encounter cases of disregard of accountability and transparency from the above mentioned Ministry.

The Least Accountable Public Institutions

Out of 286 administrative agencies, 8 institutions completely ignored all requests for information, violated the law by not abiding their duties and did not cooperate with IDFI in 2015. All requests were ignored by **7 agencies belonging to the Ministry of Justice and the Tsalka Municipal Council.**

The Most Closed Public Institutions in Georgia in 2015				
www.idfi.ge				
N	The Most Closed Public Institutions	Number of Requests	No Reply	Access to Information
1	Tsalka Municipal Council	37	37	0%
2	Center for Crime Prevention	37	37	0%
3	Training Center of Justice	35	35	0%
4	National Archives of Georgia	28	28	0%
5	Notary Chamber of Georgia	28	28	0%
6	Legislative Herald of Georgia	28	28	0%
7	Public Service Development Agency	28	28	0%
8	LEPL “SmartLogic”	26	26	0%

Extract from the Report: **Access to Public Information in Georgia 2010-2015**

The agencies subordinate to the Ministry of Justice listed above, were distinguished for their high accountability within the years of 2012-2013, however, the level of access to information has considerably worsened in these agencies since 2014, as they left every FOI left unanswered in 2015.

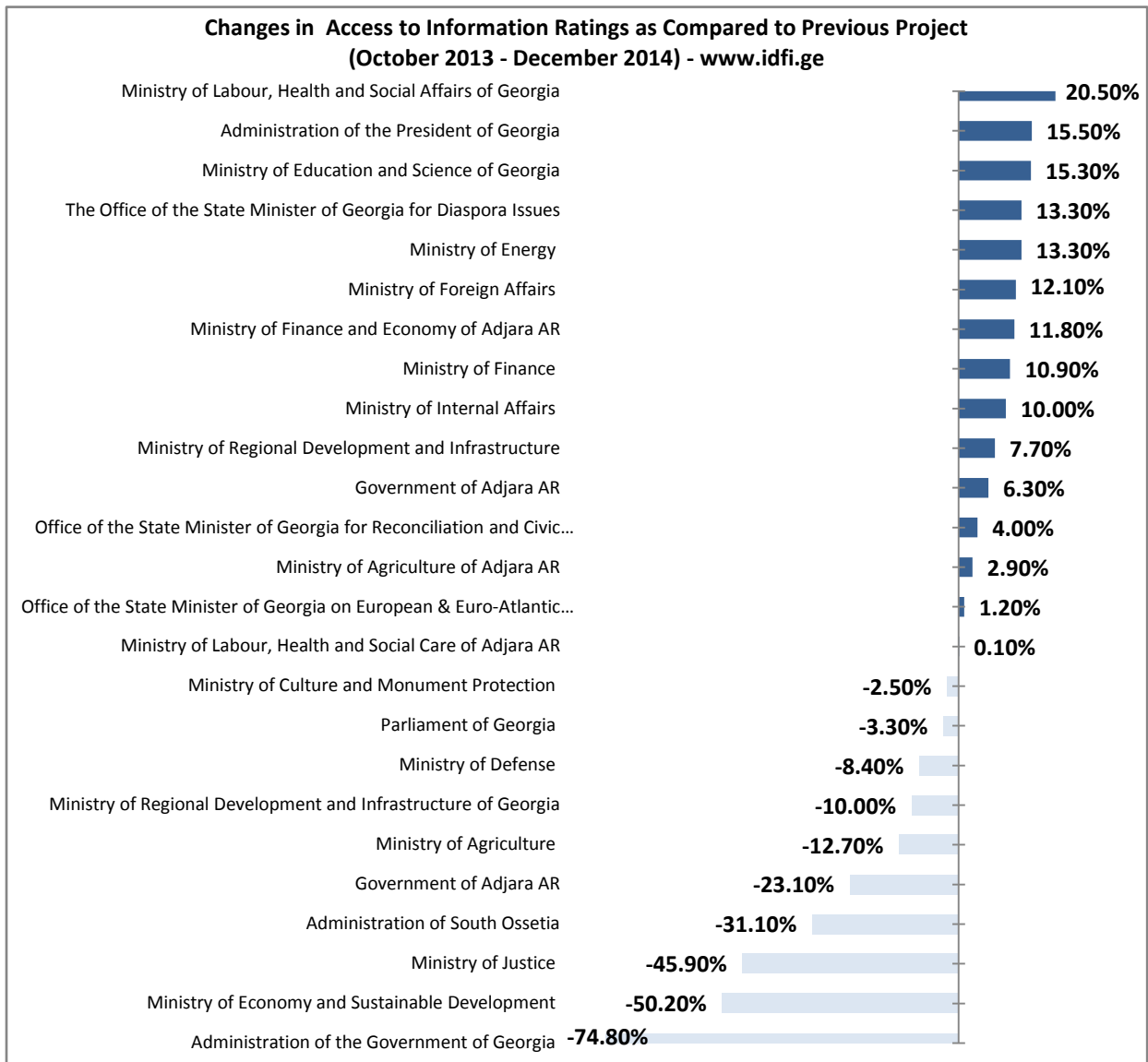
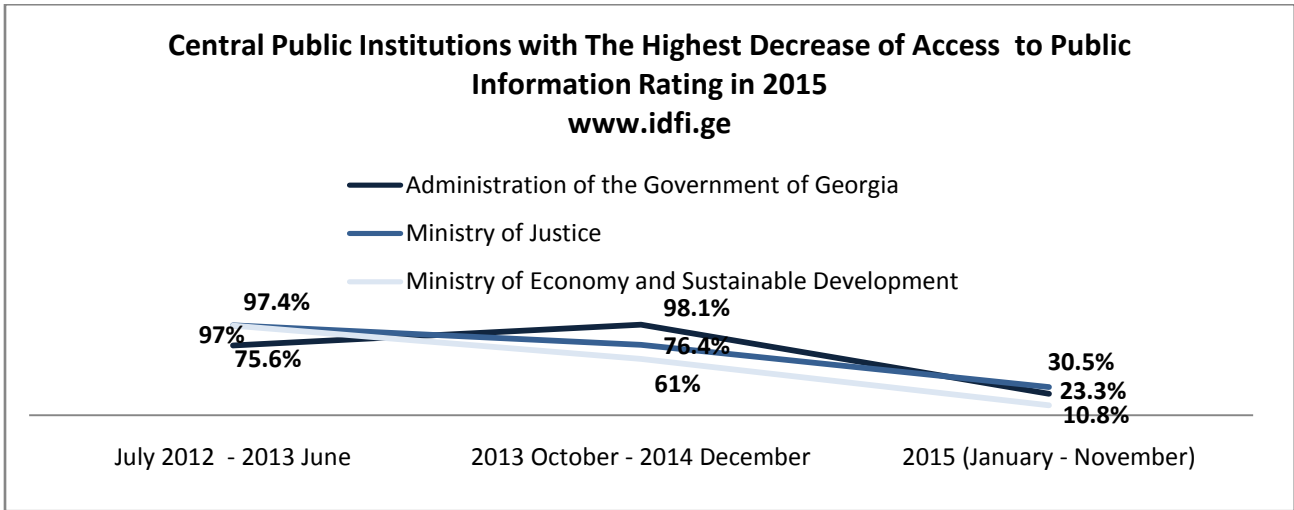
Access to Information Ratings by Project of the Most Closed Public Institutions in 2015 www.idfi.ge			
Public Institution	Project 2015	Project 2013-2014	Project 2012 -2013
Public Service Development Agency	0%	73.3%	99.1%
“SmartLogic”	0%	67.1%	99%
Legislative Herald of Georgia	0%	73.1%	94.2%
Center for Crime Prevention	0%	24.7%	88.3%
Training Center of Justice	0%	19.3%	96.7%
National Archives of Georgia	0%	24%	99.5%
Notary Chamber of Georgia	0%	15.6%	90.6%

**Comparison of Access to Information Figures in 2014 and 2015
(Progress and Regress in Public Institutions)**

The graph below visualizes the percentage change of accessible information compared to previous projects (October 2013- December 2014). Attention needs to be paid to the decline in accountability of the Ministry of Justice and the Administration of the Government (the Ministry of Economy is one of the three least accountable public institutions). In spite of the fact that IDFI awarded the Administration of the Government for being the most accountable and transparent institution in 2013-2014, for receiving a rating of 98 % for access to public information, already in the beginning of 2015, the situation changed radically and the Administration left 24 requests unanswered and therefore only received 23 % in the new ratings. Thus, the decline in public accountability was 74.80%.

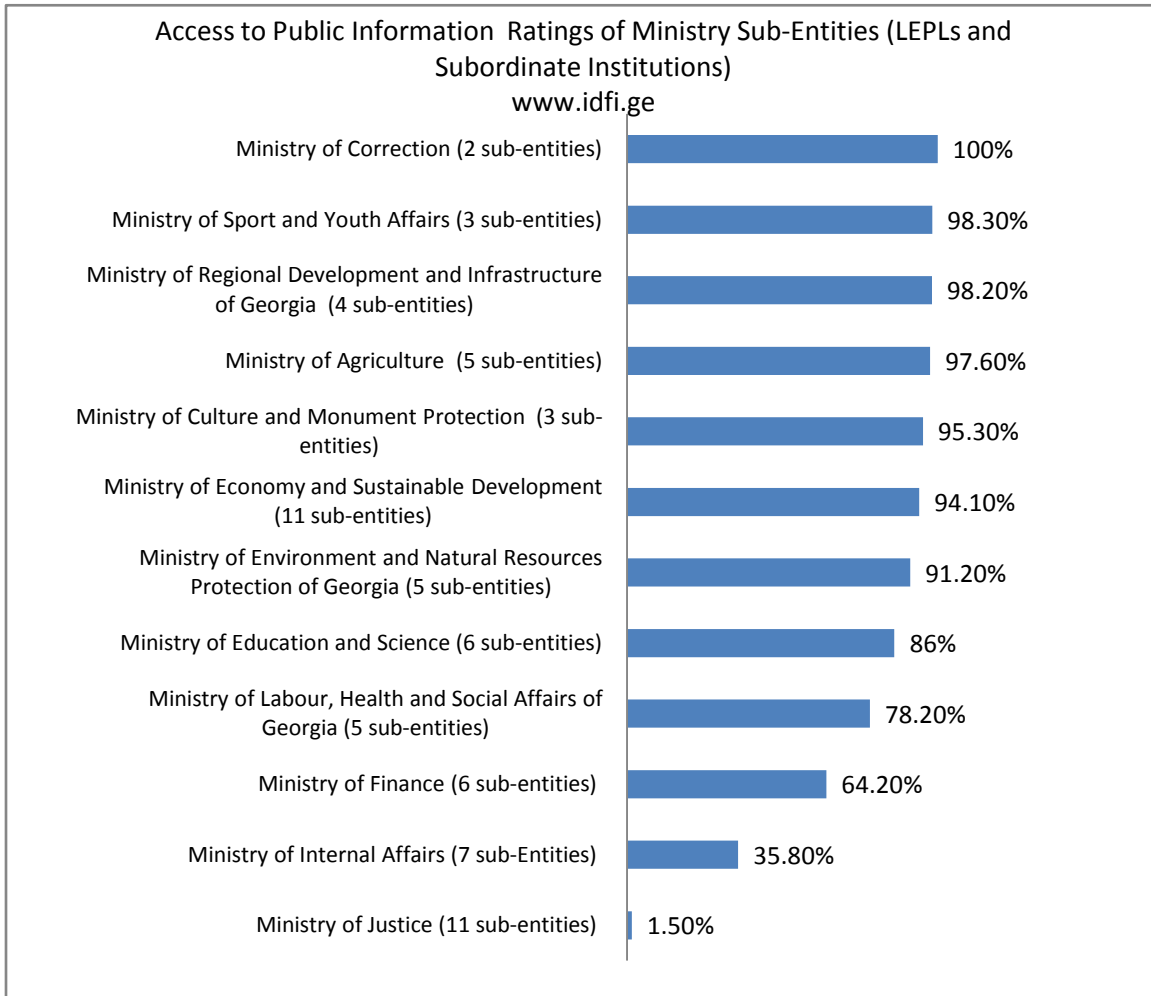
Note: The response to the FOI request sent to the Administration of the Government of Georgia sent on August 17th, 2015 (16 requests) was sent on December 10th, 2015. Also, the response to the FOI request sent to the Administration of the Government of Georgia sent on August 19th, 2015 (8 requests) was sent on December 4th, 2015. Since the presentation of the present report was held on December 11th, IDFI was not able to consider in the report the responses sent from the Administration of the Government. If the Administration of the Government had responded to FOI requests in time, it would have 91,1% rating. Therefore, its indicator of access to information would only decrease by 7% as compared to 2014, instead of current 74,8%.

The Ministry of Justice worsened its rating by 45.9% compared to 2014 due to the fact that it left 25 requests of IDFI unanswered. This is surprising because the Ministry of Justice is supervisory board member of the group of international initiative of the “Open Government Partnership”. In addition, the Ministry of Justice is the initiator of the “Law on Freedom of Information”.



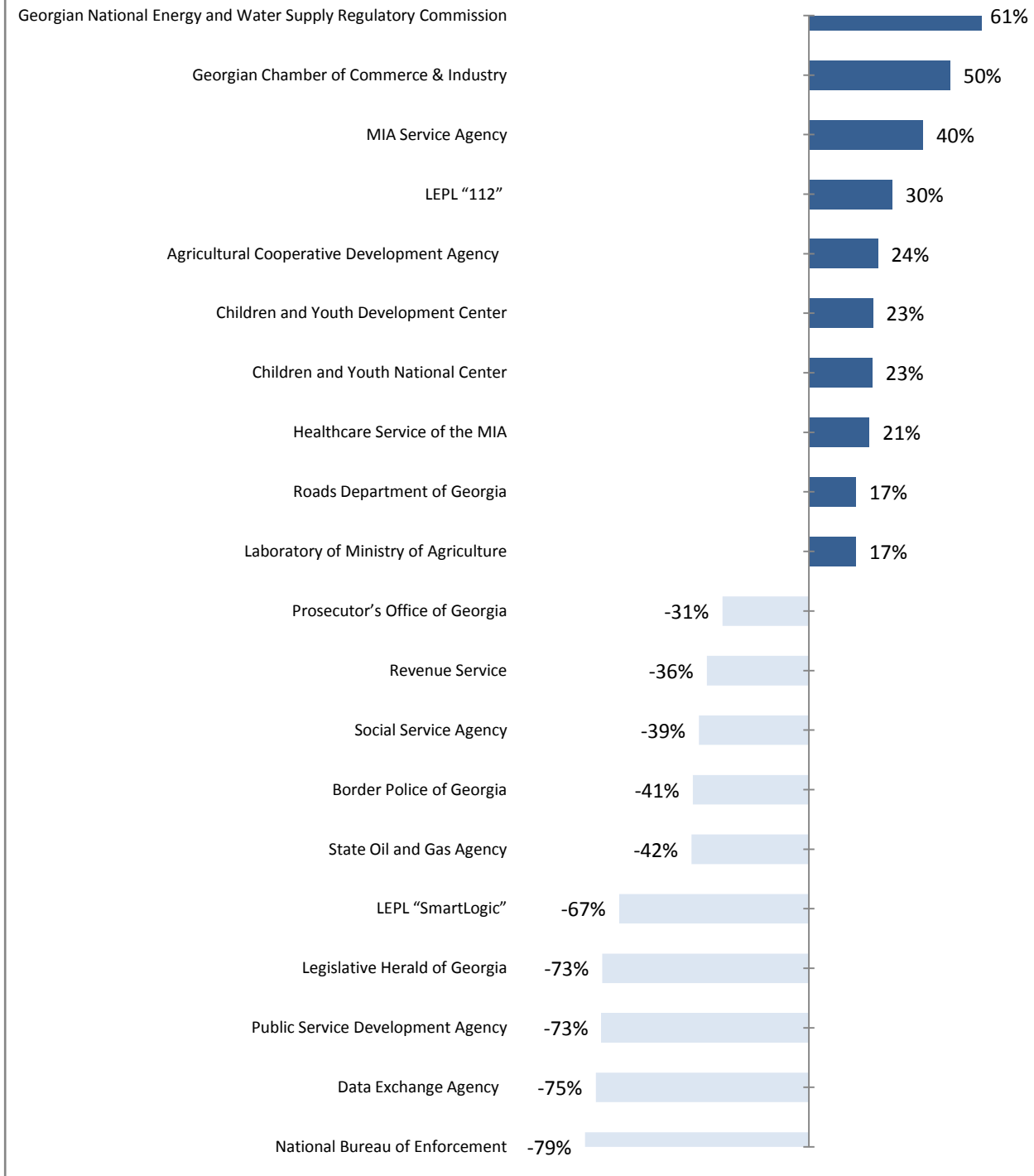
Extract from the Report: **Access to Public Information in Georgia 2010-2015**

As it was mentioned above, the lowest rate of access to information in 2015 was shown in case of the sub-agencies of the Ministry of Justice (11 public entities in total). The average rate of access to information in 2015 in their case amounts to 1.5%. Other institutions which showed low level of accountability in 2015 are sub-agencies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (7 entities), the average rating of which amounted to 35.8%. According to the study, on average the highest, 100% level of access to information was shown by two sub-agencies of the Ministry of Corrections of Georgia.



As compared to the project in October 2013 – December 2014, among the LEPLs, sub-agencies and other public institutions the biggest progress in terms of improvement of access to information rate was shown by the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission (progress 61%), while the public institution which has most worsened its practice in the same period was the National Bureau of Enforcement (regress 79%).

**Changes in Access to Information Ratings as Compared to Previous Projects
(October 2013 - December 2014) - www.idfi.ge**



The indicators of Tbilisi City Hall and City Council for making information accessible are characterized by diverse tendencies. The Tbilisi City Hall indicator for publishing information in 2015 was 90.9% Tbilisi City Hall showed 14.8% increase of the rating in June 2012-July 2013 and 10% increase of the October 2013 - December 2014.

Extract from the Report: **Access to Public Information in Georgia 2010-2015**

The situation differs in Tbilisi City Council. The 2015 indicator of 62.3% is the result of a decline of 27.2 % from the October 2013- December 2014 period. This decline occurred because in 2015, as opposed to previous years, the council did not provide complete information on bonuses and salary benefits to employees, representative expenses, mission expenses, etc.

