

Georgia 2024 Parliamentary Elections

Summary

Main Findings (1/6)

Based on a detailed review and analysis of the 2024 Georgian parliamentary elections, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **Elections were not free and fair**: Parliamentary elections of October 2024 in Georgia have not been qualified as “free and fair” by any of the reputable international and local organisations and Georgia’s international partners.
- **Large discrepancies between exit polls and official election results**: This discrepancy raises additional doubts about how free and fair the elections were. 13% discrepancy in case of Edison Research and 12% in case of HarrisX, according to the opinion of these companies (based on the post-election audit), “cannot be explained” and is “statistically impossible.”
- **Georgian Dream (GD) electoral ‘victory’ was achieved mostly through election fraud**: Despite the extensive misuse of administrative resources by the ruling party, ‘victory’ in the elections could not have been achieved without rigging, and the Georgian Dream would have achieved approximately the same results - with some minor deviations - as documented in the exit poll results (42-44%).
- **Abnormal turnout of male and female voters**:
 - According to International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED), “the difference between turnout rates of male and female voters at a significant number of polling stations deviates from the normal distribution and exhibits practically improbable characteristics”. More specifically, at 23 polling stations the number of actual male voters exceeded the number of registered male voters.
 - Based on the analysis of actual gender-disaggregated voting results (published officially by the Central Election Commission), in 2024 the difference between female and male turnout is unusual compared to the 2020 and 2016 elections, namely the number of male voters in 2024 substantially exceed the number of female voters while in previous elections this difference was in favor of female voters.
 - Importantly, this difference broadly coincides with the unexplained statistical variance of over 8% (172,523 votes) identified by the exit poll company HarrisX in their post-election audit and indicates that excessive male turnout can be explained by the existence of carousel methods of voting.

Main Findings (2/6)

- **Statistical analysis creates grounds for legitimate doubts about rigging**
 - Statistical extrapolation of voting distribution by experts, based on the widely used model for assessing the degree of how free and fair elections are, **reveals deviations from normal voting patterns and raises legitimate doubts about rigging.**
 - According to estimates of an independent election observer and data analyst (Roman Udot), **the scale of distortions in the 2024 elections is 300,000 votes in favor of the Georgian Dream.**
- **Systemic and repeated nature of violations**: In total over 4,500 claims about election violations were filed by observers at polling stations. Out of these, 1,479 claims were reviewed at the Election Commission district level and/or court level. **Analysis of these claims revealed that violations occurred at 72% of polling stations and 85% of these violations were of systemic or repeated nature. Only 5% of claims – of minor importance and not having an impact on the election results - have been fully satisfied at the Central Election Commission (CEC) level.** It should be noted, that the **vast majority (about 70%) of claims filed at the polling stations, have not been reviewed, or have been rejected after questioning only the chairman of the precinct election commission, or without questioning anyone at all.**
- **Fundamental constitutional right to vote freely was compromised heavily as vote secrecy was not guaranteed** (Article 37 of Constitution of Georgia):
 - Preliminary conclusions made by the **OSCE/ODIHR indicate that „vote secrecy was potentially compromised in 24% of observations“.**
 - According to the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), **in all polling stations, where voting was conducted electronically, ballot secrecy was compromised as the paper used for machine voting was very thin and the marking showing the voter's choice could be well identified by observers. Transparency of ballots further aggravated the consequences of the practice of intimidation as voters were afraid to vote freely.** GYLA requested annulment of results from **all 2,263 electronic polling stations, which represents 75% of the total 3,111 precincts and covers some 90% of the electorate,*** but the second instance court ultimately rejected the claim.

Main Findings (3/6)

- **Issues with electronic voting machines**: Electronic voting machines produced by Smartmatic lacked important functions such as face and fingerprint recognition, which guarantee transparency and fairness in the elections, and were equipped with USB ports, which **raise doubts about possible hacking practices**. This in turn raises suspicion about possible rigging practices. Moreover, as reported by ISFED, **the number of male voters exceeded the number of registered male voters in 2 electronic polling stations too** (out of total 23 mentioned above), which also raises suspicion **about the use of electronic voting machines for manipulation purposes**.
- **Issues with voting markers**: **Voting markers used in voting trainings prior to elections on the one hand and on the election day on the other hand were different. Based on the procurement contract between the CEC and Smartmatic, markers should be manufactured and supplied by Smartmatic. Markers used in the election trainings were branded, while there is no proof available that markers used on the election day were produced by Smartmatic as they had a different shape and were not branded. A combination of improper paper and suspicious marker raises serious doubts whether there was a purposeful effort of violation of vote secrecy.**
- **Voting irregularities in polling stations abroad**: **Substantial part of Georgians residing abroad were not able to vote** because they were unable to register, polling stations were not open by the election commission in several tens of locations irrespective of sufficient amount of voters present, there was a lack of registrars and thus long queues at polling stations.
- **Video footage and journalistic investigations provide evidence of election fraud**: Journalistic investigation has uncovered significant electoral fraud and manipulation practice in Georgia's October 2024 parliamentary elections, including **fraudulent voting** in empty villages, **voter intimidation, vote-buying, and misuse of government resources**. Persons involved in election fraud have given public interviews about how they participated in election fraud.*

*Video materials are available here: [TV Pirveli](#); [TV Pirveli](#); [georgiaelections2024](#); [Coalition 4 Change](#)

Main Findings (4/6)

- **Whistleblower confessions**: A **whistleblower**, who participated in election fraud in favor of Georgian Dream has publicly described how he and three other people traveled to different villages in the Gori municipality by car and voted using other people's IDs. He himself voted at approximately **30 polling stations, and by doing so, directly participated in the carousel voting scheme**. As the whistleblower reported, **a total of 120-130 cars were operating under this scheme, meaning that about 500 persons took part in carousel voting in the Gori municipality alone**. Based on the information provided by the whistleblower, it can be assumed that **at least 15,000 votes for Georgian Dream were illegally obtained through this scheme in the Gori municipality alone**.*
*Source: [TV Mtavari](#)
- **All branches of power were involved in election rigging**: Based on the analysis of the whole election process (prior and during the elections) all branches of power participated in election rigging, including the central government (e.g. Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education), local government bodies, Parliament, National Bank of Georgia, Central Election Commission and Courts. This indicates that **election fraud and violation schemes were planned and organized with the use of administrative resources** – financial, human and technical.
- **Russian interference**: It is reasonable to have **suspicious about Russian interference in the election process**. Various reputable international media outlets and investigative journalists have reported about Russia's involvement in the 2024 elections. Among others:
 - Bloomberg reported that **Russian spies have monitored Georgian government structures and major companies for years**, gathering data for potential sabotage of critical infrastructure.
 - Investigative journalist at Bellingcat, Christo Grozev, said that **Russian intelligence had plans to interfere in the Georgian elections**.
 - St. Petersburg media manager, **Alexander Malkevich, who is sanctioned by several countries** (including the USA and Ukraine) for illegal activities and Russian propaganda, **was in Tbilisi for several days during the elections as an accredited (by CEC) observer**.

Main Findings (5/6)

- **No impartial investigation possible in Georgia**: The outcome of court discussions clearly revealed that no impartial investigation of alleged election fraud is possible in Georgia as all government institutions and courts are controlled by the ruling Georgian Dream party.
- **Strong case for international investigation**: Available data and proofs of fraud form a very strong case for **an international, impartial and independent investigation in order to establish if, how and at what scale elections were falsified in Georgia**.
 - **The European Union**: Notably, on November 18, after the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Vice-President of the European Commission Josep Borrell announced that the EU will send a mission to Georgia, over concerns about alleged fraud in the October 26 parliamentary elections. **The EU investigation is important in order to assess whether the standards for “free and fair” elections were met in the 2024 elections, taking into account Georgia’s EU candidate status and the EU’s 4th recommendation (out of 9) on ensuring “free and fair” elections.**
 - **OSCE/ODIHR**: OSCE/ODIHR could start investigation in order to identify possible election rigging by **comparing voter ID numbers stored in electronic voting machines with ID numbers of registered voters at polling stations, and a direct survey of a selected number of voters** (for identification of accuracy of voting).
 - **The United States**: The US could start investigation and conduct **IT and technical audits of Smartmatic’s electronic voting machines** to identify their possible use for election fraud.

Main Findings (1/6)

Post-election developments

- **Constitutional lawsuits:** Soon after the CEC published a summary report of the 2024 parliamentary elections (on November 16, 2024), the President of Georgia and opposition members of the parliament filed constitutional lawsuits:
 - On November 19, **the President of Georgia, Salome Zurbishvili, filed a lawsuit demanding that the final results of the parliamentary election be declared unconstitutional on the grounds of violation of the principles of universality and secrecy of elections.** On November 21, **30 opposition members of parliament** filed a lawsuit at the Constitutional Court demanding that the elections be declared unconstitutional.
 - Both lawsuits were rejected by the Constitutional Court.
- **New parliament convened in breach of Constitution:** The ruling GD party held the first session of the “new” parliament on November 25th, 2024 in breach of the Constitution as the President had not convened the first session. Thus the **GD violated the Article 38 of the Constitution**, according to which **“the first meeting of Parliament is called by the President.”** In addition to this, appointment of the first session of the “new” parliament was illegal because of the **two lawsuits at the Constitutional Court** by the President and by 30 opposition members of the parliament - still pending at that moment - requesting declaration of elections as unconstitutional.
- **The Declaration of EU Parliament:** **On November 28, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution, stating that “the Georgian parliamentary elections must be re-run under international supervision”.** The EU Parliament calls for sanctions against high-level officials and states that “Policies pursued by the Georgian government are incompatible with the country’s Euro-Atlantic integration prospects”. The EU Parliament does not recognize the 2024 Georgian parliamentary elections and calls on the international community to do the same. The list of persons to be sanctioned includes Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, Mayor of Tbilisi and Secretary General of Georgian Dream Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Georgian Parliament Shalva Papuashvili and former Prime Minister and oligarch Bidzina Ivanishvili.

Responses to Some Frequently Raised Issues (1/2)

Below are responses/explanations of some key questions, raised by international observers and Georgia's partners. More specifically, responses cover two questions:

1. Signature of summary protocols of election results by opposition election commission members
2. Claims submitted to election commissions and courts by opposition parties

1. Signature of summary protocols of opposition members

Question: Does the signature of final protocols of voting results by election commission members mean that all signatories confirm the results?

Response: Signature of final protocols of voting results by members of an election commission, including those appointed by the opposition, does not mean that they confirm voting results.

More details:

According to Paragraph 20, Article 8 of Election Code of Georgia - "Election commission rules of operation" - a District Election Commission (DEC) or Precinct Election Commission (PEC) member "**is obliged to sign a summary protocol** of polling or election results. If the DEC or PEC member disagrees with the information reflected in the protocol, he/she may indicate this in the respective section of the summary protocol of polling and election results and attach a **written dissenting opinion** to the protocol. **In the case of dissenting opinion, the DEC or PEC member is obliged to sign the summary protocol** of the voting results in the appropriate section for the signature of the commission member." By signing the protocol a member of the DEC or PEC **does not confirm the objectivity or accuracy of the results**, but rather **affirms that he/she was present during** the period of summarizing the results in the protocol (as evidenced by his/her signature). Failure to sign a summary protocol by a DEC/PEC member is a violation of legislative requirements and respectively, a commission member could face disciplinary or other forms of penalties (including financial penalties).

Reportedly, the largest majority of the opposition parties/coalitions, represented in the election commissions, which passed the electoral threshold of 5%, submitted a dissenting opinion in the District Election Commissions. More specifically, commission members of Unity – National Movement as well as Strong Georgia – Lelo For People, For Liberty submitted dissenting opinions in almost all districts whereby Coalition for Changes Gvaramia Melia Girchi Ddoa did not have representatives in election commissions.

Responses on Some Frequently Raised Issues (2/2)

2. Claims submitted to election commissions and courts by opposition parties

Question: Are there claims filed by opposition parties/coalitions, which passed the electoral threshold of 5% but do not acknowledge the results of elections?

Response: Based on the publicly available official statistics published by the CEC,* out of the total number of claims - 1,657, as of 21.11.2024 - on violations during the 2024 parliamentary elections, which were advanced to district election commissions, the Central Election Commission (CEC), or the first and second-instance courts, about 48% were filled by the registered election subjects i.e. political parties/coalitions. The rest was filed by observers and various organizations.

More details:

98% of all claims submitted by political parties/coalitions have been submitted by those opposition parties/coalitions, which passed the electoral threshold of 5% but do not acknowledge the results of elections: 1. Coalition for Changes Gvaramia Melia Girchi Droa, 2. Unity – National Movement, 3. Strong Georgia – Lelo For People, For Liberty and 4. Gakharia For Georgia.

*Official statistics of claims are available on the webpage <https://sachivrebi.cec.gov.ge/#/>