

Edison Research survey: Kaladze - 43%, Melia - 30%, Gakharia - 12%



If elections were held tomorrow - IPSOS: Georgian Dream - 35%, UNM - 30%, Gakharia's Party for Georgia - 9%; Edison Research: GD - 36%, UNM - 27%, Gakharia's Party - 11%.

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The results of the public opinion poll of the company "Edison Research" were published on September 27, according to which the incumbent mayor Kakha Kaladze is leading among the Tbilisi mayoral candidates.

To the question, if the Tbilisi mayoral elections were held today, who would you vote for? Support for the candidates was distributed as follows: Kakha Kaladze - 43%; Nika Melia - 30%; Giorgi Gakharia - 12%; Ana Dolidze - 6%; Ana Bibilashvili - 3%; Other - 6%

A public opinion poll commissioned by FormulaTV by Edison Research includes a ranking of political parties across Tbilisi.

To the question, which party would you vote for if the elections were held today? (Tbilisi), the answers of the population of Tbilisi are as follows: Georgian Dream - 32%; National Movement - 23%; Giorgi Gakharia - for Georgia - 12%; Zurab Japaridze - Girchi - more freedom - 9%; Lelo - 4%; Girchi - Iago Khvichia - 4%; Droa - 3%; Ana Dolidze - for the people - 3%; Labor Party - 3%; Alliance of Patriots - 2%; Third Force - Strategy Builder - 1%; Citizens - 1%. Other - 3%.

The results are relatively different across the country. To the question, if the local self-government elections were held today, who would they vote for by allocation, the answers of the population were distributed as follows: Georgian Dream - 36%; United National Movement - 27%; Giorgi Gakharia - for Georgia - 11%; Labor Party - 4%; Lelo - 4%; Zurab

Japaridze - Girchi More Freedom - 4%; European Georgia - 2%; Girchi - 2%; Third Force - Strategy Builder - 2%; Alliance of Patriots - 2%; Elene Khoshtaria - Droa - 1%; Ana Dolidze - for the people - 1%; Citizens - 1%; Other - 3%.

However, when asked how confident they are in their choice, the answers of the supporters of different parties were distributed as follows: 84% of Georgian Dream supporters say that they are confident in their choice and will definitely vote for this party; Accordingly 16% say they are not sure; 89% of United National Movement supporters are confident in their choice, 11% say they are not confident; Giorgi Gakharia's party - 76% of supporters for Georgia are confident in their choice.

Edison Research polls show the current opinion of people who voted for the ruling party in the 2020 parliamentary elections. As results show, 12% of those, who say they voted for the Georgian Dream party in last year's elections, support the party of ex PM Giorgi Gakharia in upcoming local self-government elections. 4% of Georgian Dream supporters from the last elections, would vote for the National Movement, 2% for the Labor Party, and 2% for the Lelo. In the 2020 elections, 74% of Georgian Dream supporters still support the ruling party.

The fieldwork was conducted from September 12 to September 25. 1500 people were interviewed by face-to-face interview method. Georgian citizens over the age of 18 eligible to vote were interviewed. Survey error range +/- 3% for 95% confidence level. Local self-government elec-

tions in Georgia will be held this Saturday, October 2.

Recall that according to a survey commissioned by the Main Channel, the second round will decide the fate of the Tbilisi mayoral election. The survey published on September 26, was conducted by public opinion research company IPSOS SA. For comparison, on the question of who would be elected mayor of Tbilisi if the elections were held tomorrow, the Mtavari Arkhi survey results were 2% less for GD candidate and 6% more for opposition candidate: Kakhi Kaladze - 41% Nika Melia - 36% Giorgi Gakharia - 13% Ana Dolidze - 4% Ana Bibilashvili - 2% Other candidates - 4%

As the television reports, the results were obtained by the so-called allocation method, i.e. it reflects the answers of the respondents who have already decided who to vote for. According to the Main Channel, 1,500 randomly selected respondents were interviewed by a direct interview between September 21-25. The margin of error is +/- 3%.

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili commented on the poll results, saying that Edison Research and IPSOS are Saakashvili's organizations. "These are brand organizations that simply bear the name of these studies and nothing else," he said, noting that "these studies are being conducted by Levan Tarkhnishvili, who was the CEC chairman during Mikheil Saakashvili's presidency and the main falsifier of the elections."

"These polls have 0 credibilities, it has already been confirmed in 7 elections. Their pre-published polls serve only one

purpose - to use these manipulations and figures to form some different opinions of the population, but of course, the main survey and the main result will be published on October 2, Election Day." Gharibashvili said. He reiterated that there would be no elections in the next 3 years and 'everyone must obey the election results.'

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Ex-President Saakashvili pledges to arrive in Georgia on election night

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Ex-President Saakashvili pledges to arrive in Georgia on election night



“If coward Saakashvili returns, he will be arrested,” PM Gharibashvili said.

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, now a Ukrainian citizen and chair of the Executive Committee of the Ukrainian National Reforms Council, has shared a photo of a booked Kyiv-Tbilisi flight ticket for the evening of the day of Georgia’s municipal elections on October 2.

He urged people to rally behind the opposition and march to the streets after voting booths close to ‘defend votes’. He stated again that the local elections are ‘also a critical referendum for the country’ and that ‘I cannot observe the situation afar’. Saakashvili claimed that his decision to return was motivated only by concerns about Georgia’s fate and not by his future political ambitions.

In a video address, Saakashvili stated that the fate of Georgia would be determined in the next elections and that he will travel to the capital city to safeguard the decision of the voters and ‘participate in saving’ the nation alongside the people. He hopes that everyone would rally behind one another and put their differences aside. Saakashvili is wanted on multiple charges in Georgia. He pledges that he will return to Georgia this time.

According to the ruling Georgian Dream party, Saakashvili lies frequently on his returns.

GD is certain that they will win the elections with at least 46% of the vote, and that Saakashvili, who has pledged to come back to Georgia 17 times, will not do so. On the other hand, GD claims that if he returns, he

will be jailed. Since crowds of his supporters are anticipated to gather at the airport to prevent his detention, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili gave a notice that those who resist Saakashvili’s

detention if he arrives will be arrested as well. “No one on this land can oppose or impede the enforcement of the law,” he stressed, yet dismissed claims that people will gather to prevent Saakashvili’s detention, claiming the opposition can ‘barely mobilize 5,000 people.’

“Every provocation will be strictly responded to by the state within the law. If Saakashvili, this coward, decides that there is no place for him in Ukraine and returns to Georgia, the law will be enforced and he will go to prison,” Garibashvili said.

Recall that the April 2021 EU-mediated agreement, which resolved the post-election political standoff in Georgia, obliged the Georgian Dream to accept the holding of repeat parliamentary elections by 2022 if the party received less than 43% of votes in this municipal elections. However, the GD withdrew from the agreement at the end of July and stated that ‘no early elections will take place in the country.’ For information, the biggest opposition party UNM joined the agreement only after the ruling

party withdrew. After the Georgian Dream came to power in 2012, Saakashvili, who served as the country’s third president from 2004 to 2013, fled the country in 2013. After ex-President Petro Poroshenko revoked Saakashvili’s citizenship in 2017, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy restored it in 2019. In 2015-2016, he was the Governor of Odessa until quitting due to a conflict with Poroshenko. In Georgia, he faces several criminal charges including the violent dispersal of anti-government mass rallies on November 7, 2007, a riot police raid of TV channel Imedi, the unlawful takeover of property, and other offenses. In particular, in 2018, Saakashvili was sentenced in his absence on 2 separate charges of abuse of power: 3 years for pardoning former Interior Ministry officials convicted in the high-profile murder case of Sandro Girgvliani, and 6 years for organizing an attack on opposition MP Valeri Gelashvili. He is also accused of misappropriating public funds and abusing official power in the 2007 anti-govt protests case. Saakashvili denies the allegations against him, claiming they are politically motivated.

FABRIKA TURISMA		BOOKING REF: PDZ897	
79/1, KANATNAYA STR.		DATE: 27 SEPTEMBER 2021	
ODESSA		ALASANIA/GIULI MRS	
UKRAINE		SAAKASHVILI/MIKHEIL MR	
TELEPHONE: 0482 320 320			
FAX: 0482 320 328			
FLIGHT PS 511 - UIA		SAT 02 OCTOBER 2021	

DEPARTURE: KYIV, UA (BORYSPIL INTL), TERMINAL D -		02 OCT 19:20	
INTERNATIONAL/DOMESTIC			
ARRIVAL: TBILISI, GE (INTERNATIONAL)		02 OCT 23:05	
FLIGHT BOOKING REF: PS/PDZ897			
RESERVATION CONFIRMED, ECONOMY (N) DURATION: 02:45			

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE:	2PC		
SEAT:	04E CONFIRMED FOR ALASANIA/GIULI MRS		
SEAT:	04F CONFIRMED FOR SAAKASHVILI/MIKHEIL MR		
MEAL:	FOOD FOR PURCHASE		
NON STOP KYIV TO TBILISI			
EQUIPMENT:	BOEING 737 ALL SERIES PASSENGER		

FLIGHT(S) CALCULATED AVERAGE CO2 EMISSIONS IS 130.22 KG/PERSON			
SOURCE: ICAO CARBON EMISSIONS CALCULATOR			
http://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/CarbonOffset/Pages/default.aspx			
FLIGHT TICKET(S)			

TICKET: PS/ETKT 566 2407196036 FOR ALASANIA/GIULI MRS			
TICKET: PS/ETKT 566 2407196037 FOR SAAKASHVILI/MIKHEIL MR			

The former president plans to return to Georgia with his mother, Giuli Alasania.

Weather

Wednesday, September 29

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 19°C
Night Light Rain
Low: 14°C

Thursday, September 30

Day Light Rain
High: 15°C
Night Rain
Low: 12°C

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Misuse of administrative resources during electoral processes, harassment of opposition party candidates are key challenges, TI reports



Transparency International Georgia

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

According to the local non-governmental organization Transparency International Georgia's (TI) Interim report ahead of October 2 local elections, misuse of administrative resources during electoral processes remains a problem for Georgia.

TI's observation also revealed other key challenges in the election environment, including ineffective investigation of alleged cases of intimidation and dis-

missal of the employees on political grounds, the politicization of public institutions, harassment of opposition party candidates, and the use of budget programs for parochial party interests.

TI reports that starting from June 2021, there have been reports about alleged politically motivated dismissals from budgetary organizations as well as pressure on the supporters of ex-prime minister Giorgi Gakharia's party For Georgia.

In August and September, TI Georgia studied several such

cases and identified 'political harassment' in 17 of them.

The interim report says that various opposition political parties announced alleged cases of pressure used by the State Security Service (SSS).

TI notes that the party For Georgia was notable for a particularly high number of such reports. Representatives of the parties Girchi - More Freedom, the United National Movement (UNM), and Third Force - Strategy Aghmashenebeli have also been subjected to such pressure.

According to the TI, there have been reports that the government representative in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region and the regional heads of the SSS and the Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance allegedly tasked local businesspeople to make financial contributions to the ruling party.

TI revealed that 87 individuals and five companies from the country's south-eastern region of Samtskhe-Javakheti made donations to the ruling party amounting to a total of ₾ 714,000 between August 2 -16.

According to the organization, "this amount of donations made



TI identified 10 state programs and initiatives which may be deemed to be electorally motivated expenses.

from this single geographic area in such a short time is quite unusual and may be considered to be indirect evidence backing the above mentioned reports."

TI notes that during the reporting period (June 1 to September 25), 10 state programs and initiatives were identified 'which may be deemed to be electorally-motivated expenses'.

The organization issued the following recommendations:

• During the pre-election period, the investigative bodies should promptly and impartially

investigate the cases of alleged violence, pressure, and other signs of crime against the parties involved in the elections;

• The Ministry of Internal Affairs must proactively and promptly publish information regarding the progress and results of the investigation into election-related cases;

• The government should refrain from initiating large-scale social programs shortly ahead of the elections to avoid damaging healthy competition among electoral subjects.

On September 28, Ambassador of Japan, H.E. IMAMURA Akira held press conference for the project for providing medical equipment for strengthening the Healthcare System of Georgia. Within the project worth 2.8 million USD, Government of Japan provided Georgia with 110 defibrillators and 155 electro-cardiographs, which will help monitor key pa-

Japan Government Support to Georgia's Healthcare System

rameters of severe patients' condition and help save lives in the middle of pandemic and beyond. Equipment is particularly important as it is known that Covid patients are at a higher risk of

developing heart failure, regardless of previous condition. It is especially important in the context when overcrowding of hospital beds may cause the need for temporary stay of the patients

in the ambulances.

This is the second large-scale support package provided to Georgia by Japan within the past year, first one being 2.5 million USD project provided

through Asian Development Bank's Natural Disaster Response Fund. Earlier in the year, Japan also provided 4 emergency C-type reanobiles to Georgia worth 290'500 USD, in addition to making one of the largest contributions (1 billion USD) to the COVAX platform, enabling more equal access to vaccines for the developing countries like Georgia.

