

Mdinaradze Defends Shift to State Control in Broadcasting Law Amendments

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Mamuka Mdinaradze, executive secretary of the Georgian Dream party, has defended the recent amendments to the Law on Broadcasting, claiming that while the content of the regulations remains unchanged, the mechanism for their enforcement is undergoing a significant shift.

In his statement, Mdinaradze emphasized that the amendments do not alter the regulations themselves, but instead transfer the responsibility of enforcement from self-regulation to state control. "Not a single point of what was previously in the form of regulations is changing," he said. "But all this was subject to self-regulation, which was not implemented, therefore, the lack of self-regulation created stillborn norms."

Mdinaradze explained that the self-regulation system had failed, particularly within television stations. "Television stations, for example, were absolutely inert in the area of self-regulation," he added. "As it turned out, and after a thorough study, the main norms were taken from British standards, which, according to many journalists, were met with disdain."



The amendments, according to Mdinaradze, simply replace the ineffective self-regulation framework with state regulation, a shift he believes is crucial for enforcing the norms effectively. "The norm is not

changing. What all journalists in Georgia have recognized is that these norms will be translated into real life, and the state will establish control over their implementation, because self-regulation is not able to do this,"

Mdinaradze concluded.

The proposed amendments have sparked mixed reactions in Georgia, with some expressing concerns about the potential for increased government oversight of the media. However,

Mdinaradze's remarks suggest that the Georgian Dream party views the transition to state regulation as necessary to ensure that the broadcasting norms are properly implemented and adhered to.

GD Considers Amendments to Limit NGO Involvement in Decision-Making

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Georgian Dream has begun considering a legislative package in Parliament, that would exclude non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) from the public decision-making process. The proposed amendments, which are part of 14 different laws, represent a joint initiative by the ruling Georgian Dream

party and the People's Power faction.

The Parliamentary Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules is scheduled to discuss the issue on February 28th. The pro-

posed changes would impact the Rules of Procedure of Parliament and other laws that currently require mandatory NGO participation in public decision-making.

According to GD, the amendments aim to address what they describe as the failure of NGO involvement to achieve its intended purpose. "The existing reality has shown that the mandatory participation of NGOs cannot fulfill the real purpose that the will of the legislator served," the statement reads.

The bill's authors also cited recent global developments, particularly those surrounding USAID, as a reason for the changes. They argue that NGO involvement in decision-making processes has hindered effective state governance. "A large part of non-governmental organizations is funded from abroad. Accordingly, they are organizations that carry out the interests of the funding states and organizations," the bill's authors stated. "Their actions in the public decision-making process are not based on the interests of the local community, but serve the political and economic agenda of external forces."



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The News in Brief

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Government Rejects Trade Union Registration, TI Alleges Political Motives



The Georgian Public Registry has refused to register the “Independent Trade Union of Civil Servants – Article 78 of the Constitution.”

Transparency International-Georgia (TI-Georgia), which is providing legal aid to dismissed civil servants, argues that the

rejections are politically motivated. Director Eka Gigauri alleged on February 27 that the government seeks to suppress independent organizing within the civil service.

The union was established in response to GD’s withdrawal

decisions as violations of Georgian law and international labor agreements. TI-Georgia has appealed to the International Labor Organization for intervention.

Reports indicate that around 400 public employees have been dismissed recently, with layoffs affecting the Public Registry, the Probation Agency, and the Civil Service Hall. The Ministry of Defense is also undergoing reorganization.

Gigauri stated that public servants are being removed for upholding constitutional principles and refusing to participate in unlawful practices.

EU and KAS Launch ‘REACT for Georgia’ to Strengthen Civil Society

A two-year project, ‘REACT for Georgia: Resilient, Engaged, Active Civil Society for Transformation,’ has been launched with the support of the European Union (EU) and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS). The initiative aims to enhance local civil society in Georgia’s regions by promoting democratic governance and civic engagement.

The project will support local community initiatives, improve youth skills, and fos-

ter collaboration with local businesses. A grant component will be available to assist civil society hubs, local initiatives, civil activists, and corporate social responsibility efforts. Activities will take place across 10 regions of Georgia.

On February 26-27, the REACT project hosted a two-day inception workshop with regional partners. From March 2025, the REACT team will conduct meetings throughout Georgia to introduce the project’s objectives to the public.



from EU integration, which led to a purge of government employees who expressed dissent. According to Gigauri, despite meeting all formal requirements, the Public Registry has denied registration multiple times, once objecting to the organization’s name.

Gigauri condemned these de-

EU-funded ‘Support for Health Resilience in the Eastern Partnership’ programme launched in Armenia

On 26 February, the EU-funded ‘Support for Health Resilience in the Eastern Partnership’ programme, implemented by the World Health Organisation, was officially launched in Armenia.

In Armenia, this initiative aims to strengthen the country’s health resilience by addressing critical workforce challenges and expanding access to mental health support.

“Investing in health today means building a stronger, more



inclusive, and resilient healthcare system for the future.” Vassilis Maragos, EU Ambassador to Armenia, said at the launch event. “Through our partnership with WHO, we are committed to strengthening Armenia’s healthcare system – working together to make quality healthcare a reality for all in Armenia.”

The ‘Support for Health Resilience in the Eastern Partnership’ initiative, which will be active until March 2027, aims to contribute to resilient and interconnected health systems in Eastern Partner countries to strengthen their capacities to handle health emergencies and core health challenges.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Friday, February 28

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 6°C

Night ☁️ Mostly Cloudy
Low: -3°C

Saturday, March 1

Day ☁️ Partly Cloudy
High: 3°C

Night ❄️ Snow Showers
Low: -5°C

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43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia
Founded by Prof.

Zaza Gachechiladze
Tamar Gachechiladze
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli
Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze
Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili
Layout Designer, Photographer

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