

ANNUAL REPORT

**2018**

# SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY AT TIMES OF CRISIS



**EECMD**

EASTERN EUROPEAN CENTRE  
FOR MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY

## **IMPRESSUM**

EECMD - Eastern European Center for Multiparty Democracy

2018 Annual Report

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## Who we are

Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) is an independent organization founded in 2017 and succeeding the Eastern European Neighborhood Office of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), which was established by the local parliamentary political parties in the Hague in 2000 with the aim to aid the countries that are in need of democratic reforms. Georgia was in the focus of NIMD as yet in 2009. It was then that our office was established, which some years later became an NIMD representative first in the South Caucasus and then in the Eastern European neighborhood. In 2017, having accumulated enough resources and experience, we came up with an idea to establish ourselves as an independent organization.

Similar to the previous year, the EECMD's priority this year is to improve the political environment and to foster a democratic political culture that is also envisaged within the existing projects. Currently Georgia and Ukraine are the biggest destinations for the EECMD. In addition, we run programs in Armenia, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan. The organization operates 10 offices in the regions of Georgia and Ukraine, where we are elaborating on the development of democratic political parties and movements, including the strengthening of inter-party democracy, political education, modern technologies, ethnic minorities, gender equality, etc.

# EECMD

## bears its work upon five core principles

We believe that:

### **Democratic countries need democratic political parties:**

Without open and transparent political parties, true democracy cannot exist; Hence, we support them to increase the involvement of different groups in political discourse. Our paramount focus lies with the employment of modern technologies in the field of political organization, gender equality and the inclusion of ethnic minorities in political processes.

### **Democracy needs free and fair political competition:**

We strive to encourage political and civil groups to refine electoral legislation or regulations related to the activities of political parties so that everyone has the space and voice to express political aspirations.

### **Democracy is a never-ending process:**

We share innovative ideas and accumulated knowledge with stakeholders as to solve democratization problems and enhance their participation in political discourse.

### **Democracy needs democrats:**

We work to improve the individual and collective capabilities of democratic leaders. We focus on the democratic values and knowledge and skills required for non-violent political action.

### **Dialogue fosters democracy:**

We believe in the power of consensus and promote multi-party dialogue to address the challenges of political transformation.



**Dear reader,**

We, at EECMD believe that liberal democracy is the very system that best protects human dignity and freedom, and which best enables the citizens to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

We also believe that democracy is not only the result of the goodwill of political parties or of decision-makers but is the expression of political capacities of different societies. Our task is to strengthen this very democratic capabilities as they represent the cornerstone of the existence of strong democratic societies that do not wait for favorable circumstances to someday be formed as a result of the goodwill of someone. Our priority is to help societies develop vibrant democratic citizenship and democratic political cultures, and to help democratic political parties better represent the aspirations of the citizens through a political system which is free and also fair.

**Political culture is one of the cornerstones of a democratic society.** One cannot build democracy in a Bolshevik society. Where the destruction of the adversary is seen as the only worthy form of victory, the consensus is seen as weakness, and political coexistence and cooperation as a crime, democratic reform becomes

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impossible. Under such conditions, democracy remains only a means of power competition where politicians manipulate democratic framework to gain power, only to subvert freedom and the rule of law afterwards. This is an enchanted circle with no possible exit.

Against this backdrop, democratic political culture is even more important as a basis for positive change. Societies that better internalize cooperation, consensus, equality and other important values of democratic organization are better evolving towards more consolidated democracies. **This is why the strengthening of democratic culture is one of our priorities.** The schools of democracy, which have been operating in different regions since 2012 promote the formation of a new, democratic generation of political leaders who are not content with being the mere 'inhabitants' of a country but rather, who aspire to positively shape their own future and of their fellow citizens through the pursuit of democratic politics.

**The second condition for democratization is the very presence of democrats on a political playing field.** This is what our also motto implies: that "Democracy Needs Democrats". A country may well have a democratic constitution, but it may be abused and manipulated by anti-democratic political parties. At such times, there is a great risk of what has also happened in some other countries, that irresponsible, radical anti-democratic forces win free elections. There is a lot of criticism of political parties and we also share many of these, but there is no better alternative today to help us properly represent public interests in politics. Political parties,

often acting as gatekeepers of democratic participation, are one of the main and unfortunately very weak links in the chain of contemporary democratic politics in the region. The failure of this important channel of democratic representation will destroy the link between society and politics, and create conditions that may lead to disorder, anarchy, and violence. That is why we are striving to support better institutionalization of political parties to help them become strong electoral players and also democratic institutions themselves.

**The third important factor affecting democratization is the political system itself.** Without a democratic political system, enabling fair competition and representation of different political groups, it is impossible to build a democratic state. To achieve this, we strive to embed a culture of political dialogue into the political life of the countries we work in to help shape better electoral and political environments. The offices of our organization host many meetings of politicians to allow party representatives to speak in neutral and safe spaces. The establishment of democratic institutions requires a democratic process in place, which is often as important as the end result. We aim to create a system where competition between political parties are based on ideas and political platforms, rather than personal animosities. We hope that by contributing to the development of political culture, democratic political parties, and political dialogue, we are contributing to the development of better democracies in all countries where we engage.

2018 was an important year for our organization in many respects. We successfully continued to build upon the existing programming in Ukraine and Georgia, initiated new projects in Moldova and Kyrgyzstan and renewed our work in Armenia. For Ukraine, it was a year of programmatic consolidation, in Georgia, we had to work under very difficult conditions.

2018 was a year of Presidential Elections, which deepened the previously existing political divisions. Amid decreasing confidence in political parties in the country, highly polarized society, wide-spread apathy and personalized politics, it was challenging to focus the politicians on systemic, political or intra-party reforms and long-term policy issues. Under such circumstances, it was important for us to support and enhance democratic impulses in the country and keep such topics as reform policies, gender equality, representation of national minorities in politics, intra-party democracy and transparency and other important issues on the political and partisan agenda.

We focus on all of this to ensure that politicians do not forget the existence of the issues of strategic importance in the light of political chaos that is often prevalent and to safeguard important aspects of political life from being swept away by personalistic politics and to ensure that we are not left defenseless against violent zero-sum politics.

In 2018, Georgia's democracy ranking has declined the most amongst the 28 Eastern European countries. It was a big step backward for democracy. Our job was to limit the danger which this downward slide created. Amidst the democratic crisis we worked for the survival and expansion of democratic capacities.



**Levan Tsutskiridze**

*Executive Director at Eastern European  
Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD)*


**Levan Tsutskiridze**
*Executive Director*

Levan has served as Rector of the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs and Project Manager of the First Phase of Civil Registry Reform. He has worked at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Open Society Georgia Foundation. He holds a Master's degree from John Hopkins University - Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIAS). His research and professional interests include foreign and security policy, political institutions and democratic development.


**Salome Mukhuradze**
*Senior Program Officer for the Political Party Assistance Program*

Post hoc completion of her undergraduate studies, Salome worked in local NGOs and international organizations, where she was actively involved in developing a democratic model of civil society. She has delivered lectures on international organizations and international law at Georgian Technical University.

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**Salome has graduated from Tbilisi State University, Faculty of International Law. She holds a Master's degree in intercultural conflict management from Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences, Berlin.**


**Nino Khitarishvili**
*Program Officer for the Democracy Education program*

During 2012-2017 years, Nino worked for the non-governmental organization International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED). In 2010-2011 years, she did an internship at the Foreign Relations Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, while during 2011-2012 she was the Parliamentary Program Fellow of the National Democratic Institute. In 2017, she participated in the Professional Fellows Program and completed the fellowship at the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, United States.

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**Nino Khitarishvili has graduated from Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University with the major in International Relations. She also holds the Master's Degree in International Relations from the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs.**

**Shorena Joel**

*Finance and Administrative  
Officer*

**Nino Kochiashvili**

*Financial Assistant/  
Accountant*

**Kirillo Tretyak**

*Ukraine Program Officer*

During 2009-2015 years, she worked as the Finance and Administration Officer at United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Georgia - UNFAO.

She also worked at IREX/IATP as a Country Coordinator for Georgia in 2006-2007 and as a Training Program Officer at IREX Media Innovations Program – USAID funded project during 2005-2006.

Between 2007-2008 she received a governmental scholarship from the Cyprus Planning Bureau and obtained the MBA from the Cyprus University.

She also holds the Master's degree in Oriental Studies (1990-1995) as a graduate of the Tbilisi State University.

Nino has worked at the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia in the capacity of Assistant to the Deputy Minister. Prior to that, in 2014-2015 years, she worked as a Financial Officer at the JSI – Georgian branch of Jonh Snow Inc. – USAID Funded SUSTAIN Project. From 2007 to 2014, she served as a Financial Manager at the APLR – Association of Professionals on Land and Realty – USAID Funded Land Market Development Project. In 2001-2007 years, she worked at the Financial Department of the Association for Protection of Land Owner's Rights in various positions.

Nino Kochiashvili graduated from Tbilisi Independent University with the degree in Economics (specialization in the field of Credits and Finances).

Kirilo graduated from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kiev. Between 1998-2002 he was a lecturer at the Faculty of History, and between 2002-2016 he worked at the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament (Verkhovna Rada). In 2007-2011 and 2014-2016 he held the position of Director of the Department of International Relations of the Secretariat. In 2011 he was elected as the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).



**Petro Kuzyk**

*Coordinator of Lviv Democracy School*

Petro also occupies Assistant Professor position at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Formerly, he worked as an Assistant to MP and a Coordinator of Ukrainian Parliament intern programme run by the U.S. Association of the Former Members of Congress. More recently, Petro worked on his long-term research project on Ukrainian post-communist transformation and its societal rifts at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands.

Petro Kuzyk graduated from the Department of International Relations of the Ivan Franko University. He also holds Master's degree in Political Philosophy from the University of York (UK).



**Tamar Mameishvili**

*Coordinator of Batumi Democracy School*

Tamar has worked as a Project Coordinator for the Institute of Democracy and as a Media Monitor for the Institute for Polling and Marketing. She also has an experience of working as an Editor of the website "Ajaranews.ge" and as a reporter at the newspaper "Batumelebi."

Tamar Mameishvili holds a Master Degree in Journalism and Media Management from the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA). Her professional interests lay in covering News, theories of media management and public opinion surveys.



**Temur Jvarsheishvili**

*Coordinator of Kutaisi Democracy School*

Temur has worked in the capacity of the Assistant to the Chair of Kutaisi City Council. Prior to that, he did internship at the Foreign Relations Committee of the Parliament of Georgia. For many years he had worked with the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy on civic engagement in local government.

He holds the Master's degree in Social Sciences in International Relations from Akaki Tsereteli State University. His professional interests lay in elections and electoral systems.

**Zaza Chipashvili**

*Coordinator of Gori  
Democracy School*

**Nikoloz Sharvashidze**

*Coordinator of Telavi  
Democracy School*

**Tamta Japarashvili**

*Program Assistant*

Zaza has worked as a coordinator of various social and humanitarian projects at the local NGO – Charity Humanitarian Centre “ABKHAZETI” (CHCA). Through his carrier, he was employed in different public institutions – held the position of the Head of Social Service Regional Agency and Head of Gori Municipality Social Department.

Zaza Chipashvili holds a Master degree in Local Governance and Self-government from the Georgian Institution of Public Affairs (GIPA). He also graduated from the Tskhinvali State Pedagogical Institute, the faculty of History and Philology.

Nikoloz has worked for Telavi Division of National Statistics Office of Georgia with Millennium Challenge Georgia Impact Evaluation Project in Telavi and Akhmeta. He used to work for Youth Affairs Department of Local Government of Telavi Municipality. Nikoloz Sharvashidze has an experience of working with government institutions, as well as at various international projects.

He holds Master’s Degree in Diplomacy and History of International Relations from the Telavi Jakob Gogebashvili State University. He graduated from the same university with the Bachelor Degree in History of the World and Diplomacy.

Tamta has undergone internship at the Eastern European Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prior to that, she worked in private companies in the fields of sales, partnerships, and project management.

She graduated from the International Relations Program at the International Black Sea University with minor in International Economics. Her professional interests lay in women’s political engagement, gender politics, women’s economic empowerment and Political Party Assistance Program.

# Programs and Projects

## The Political Party Assistance Program

is one of the principal areas of the EECMD's activities, which aims to encourage parties to become more transparent, democratic, accountable to the electorate and society. There are many parties registered in Georgia. Naturally, we are not able to cooperate with each and every party. Since the aim of the program is to establish democratic values in the country and promote their development, we give preference to parliamentary parties, yet we also work with newly-formed political parties. Mostly those who do not have a parliamentary platform but have the positive potential of creating a political climate in the country. Last year, our focus

was on the "Development Movement" and the "Civil Movement", which were offered programs for strategic planning and organizational development.

**The second direction refers to strengthening internal democracy in political parties** – we assist our partner political parties in recruitment, promotion, electoral enlistment, intra-party decisions, and other important organizational and political processes that help to introduce novel, further democratic and efficient approaches.

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**We use different methodologies in our bilateral cooperation program. The most important one is strategic planning program. In strategic planning, we assist a party to formulate its mission, values, internal structure, analyze risks and create a development plan. While our program staff is ready to instruct and guide, the party representatives work on the development plan themselves.**

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**Salome Mukhuradze:** *"One of the advantages of the program is that we do not have the same approach towards all parties. We work individually with each of our partner political parties and offer development projects specifically designed for them."*

# EECMD and Elections

**2018 was a year of presidential elections, which we responded with the traditional online platform.**

**P**REZIDENTI.GE  
სამომრჩეველის ვებ-გვერდი

**www.presidenti.ge**

The website represents an important online resource that has been publishing pre-election views of Georgia's presidential candidates since 2013 on important political, economic and social issues for the country. The purpose of the website is for presidential candidates to offer the electorate specific, result-oriented and clearly formulated pre-election visions that will make decision-making easier on the election day.

With the same project we strive to promote pre-election competition and conduct rational, business and policy-oriented discussions on this topic. The website is accompanied by social media apps that could be used for quick sharing of the current information.

The format is simple: electoral candidates are sent out a questionnaire that covers important

societal issues - economy, security, healthcare, education, foreign policy, employment policy, etc. The answer to each question should not exceed 250 words. Consequently, we obtain the election program of each candidate - briefly and clearly formulated. It all serves as a wonderful opportunity for interested individuals to get acquainted with the vision of the candidates and make the right decision. It is also a good resource for political scientists and sociologists, and politicians themselves - for evaluating their own or their opponent's positions.

For 2018 Presidential Elections, we sent out the questionnaire consisting of 19 questions to 5 candidates. One month before the elections, voters could rate their answers on the web platform.

## Spaces for Multi-Party Dialogue

### **Spaces of Multi-Party Dialogue: Regional Engagement to Advance the Creation of Hubs for Democracy (REACH for Democracy)**

is an EU-funded pilot project launched in 2018 aimed at promoting dialogue between political parties. The program is rolled out in: Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Benin, Morocco and Tunisia. The project is being implemented in Georgia by the Eastern European Center for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) in partnership with the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and the Center for Mediterranean and International Studies (CEMI).

**Salome Mukhuradze:** “This project aims to introduce multiparty dialogue formats to other countries and to share their experiences. We have a lot to say in this regard. Our organization has been elaborating on developing a multi-party

dialogue format for years. In our office or other neutral space, we regularly invite political parties and convene discussions on various issues. We select one of the most pressing topics for the initial phase - women’s engagement in the political process, which is way important to the rest of the participants. We tried to share our experiences and make them cognizant of our reality. “

“It was within the same project, when we visited Moldova and Kyrgyzstan last year. We have selected 10 young fellows from either country, who will arrive in Georgia this year to participate in a two-week training with their local and Ukrainian peers. The Georgian side is trying to create as many knowledge-based products as possible for the multi-party platform and thus help the countries of the region to develop.”



## Women's Engagement in Political Processes

Women's engagement in the political processes is one of the most important constituents of EECMD. In 2011, within the multi-party dialogue format, we set up a working group that got actively involved in empowering women in politics. We have been working on a variety of issues since 2012 - starting with legislative changes - including internal party mechanisms.

**For the third year in a row, we are assessing the gender equality of Georgian political parties.** Relevant research suggests the status of the parties within this context and defines the gender policies they have developed in both the legislative and political, as well as the inter-party arenas. The third study on gender equality ratings was published in 2018 and is available on our organization's website.

## Roundtable on International Support to Political Party Development

In May, 2018, Georgia hosted the expert roundtable dedicated to the role and development of political parties in the modern era: “International Support to Political Party Development – Reflection on Strategies, Achievements, and Challenges” organized by the Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) with a financial support of the Embassy of Kingdom of the Netherlands to Georgia. Representatives from foreign aid community, political parties, and academia presented their views on the trends of democratization, political party development and evolution both globally and in the wider region.

Both in the EU and its Eastern neighborhood, the nations are facing a challenging turning point in history. Economic challenges, anti-democratic propaganda, a decline of trust in political parties and institutions, the resurgent

threat from authoritarian players, state fragility and corruption have all produced a painful realization of the fact that there is a need for a renewed emphasis and a perhaps a new approach to supporting democracy in the region. These are the persisting challenges of political parties with which political party aid organizations are confronted.

The discussion touched upon the role of international donors and organizations in shaping the political context. Participants dwelt on the global issues and answered interesting questions: whether the current approaches and methods turned obsolete with the arrival of the digital age; whether it is time to introduce updated format to work with political parties amid the current international situation and new challenges. Discussions on these and other important topics will continue in the future as well.



**Bakur Kvashilava,  
a political scientist:**

*“In the Georgian reality, where the political spectrum is highly polarized, there are few organizations that can successfully co-operate with various parties, including the government and the opposition. In this respect the Eastern European Center for Multiparty Democracy (EEMCD) stands out with its contribution to the establishment of a democratic environment since its being NIMD - representing a branch of the The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy.*

*This organization has implemented a number of interesting projects in Georgia, including assistance to democracy schools, cooperation with political parties, program development and strategic planning, etc. One of the relatively new beginnings is the OSCE-supported program - Strengthening the Inclusion of Ethnic Minorities in Political Life of Georgia. Therefore, I believe that the role of the EEMCD in the development of democratic processes in the country is quite significant and, more importantly, covers the whole range of parties with liberal values.”*

# Ethnic Minorities in Political Life of Georgia



For four years, the EECMD, together with the OSCE-HCNM, **has been implementing a program for the empowerment, integration and inclusion of ethnic minorities in Georgian social-political life.** This project began in 2014, when we launched a multi-party dialogue platform to discuss the engagement of ethnic minorities in politics, where we brought together parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties that met each other regularly - both in Tbilisi and the regions. They have been particularly active in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, where most ethnic minorities reside. In 2018, the Pankisi Gorge was also supplemented to the regions involved in the project, where for the first time a multi-party meeting with local people was convened.



**Salome Mukhuradze:** *“Post hoc the developments of 2017 it was clear that the bridge between the local population and the political parties had fallen. It was necessary to restore it and gain public confidence so that the situation would not worsen. That is why we brought representatives of various parties to Duisi. Strangely enough, this was the first precedent in the history of independent Georgia when political parties in Pankisi came together to meet and present their vision to the local population.”*



**The project was implemented in two phases. In addition to meetings with the population, various researches were carried out on minority issues in 2018. In December, a three-day camp was organized that helped to bring together young people from different regions - ethnic minorities who are distinguished with their civic and political activism.**



# Democracy School Program

**Democracy Schools stand out as the second and most important direction of EECMD**, which aims to empower, educate and support the new generation of political leaders. It is an intensive educational program for active citizens interested in modern politics, urban development and democracy.

The project, which is supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Georgia, has been in its ninth year with more than 600 graduates. These people are actively involved in the public and political life of the country and are trying to expand the democratic space and strengthen the democratic culture.

Implementation of the program in Georgia started in 2012 with the Telavi School of Democracy, which was soon joined by Kutaisi, Gori and Batumi. In 2018, Democracy Schools opened in **Pankisi and Tbilisi**.

The program includes a 5-month training course and is open to any interested person over 18 years. At the first stage, applications are qualified, and the final candidates are interviewed. The full course covers up to 30 different types of trainings, divided respectively into 4 modules.

## 1 Introduction to Democratic Politics

## 3 How to Do politics

## 2 Challenges of Modern Democracy

## 4 Cities and Development in Modern Era

**Nino Khitarishvili, Program Officer for the Democracy Education Program:** *"The schools of democracy established seven years ago serve to fill the void that still exists in the field of political education and democratic culture, both in Georgia, Ukraine and elsewhere in the region."*

In addition to the topics covered by the module, the course also includes extra activities - discussions, film screenings, meetings with politicians, democracy camps. Graduates are offered a small grants program, where representatives from different regions create joint

projects. Participant exchange programs are also being actively pursued: last year several of them visited Ukraine and Tunisia, which turned out to be a positive experience. Last year, the Dutch held a week-long training course for students of the Democracy Schools.

**Petro Kuzyk, Coordinator of Lviv Democracy School:** "One of our goals is to help people develop. We strive our students to come into politics themselves and to bring about the change at the local level. The action is significant. It is not enough to just express discontent."



## “Democracy Leader” Award

In 2015, the Democracy Leader Award was introduced to motivate participants in Democracy Schools. From every city we choose one candidate that is distinguished by their activities - be it civic activism, creative protest or any other action. The best of them becomes the “Democracy Leader”. This is a kind of encouragement from EECMD for students to employ their knowledge and skills more actively in the Democracy School. Last year, the Telavi school graduate, Archil Mchedlishvili, won the award who rolled up the wave of protests following the abolition of Telavi’s self-governing city status: he quit the public office and even

made the public remember him with his original form of protest – he declared a sheep as a candidate for Self-Government Elections.

With our support, Archil Mchedlishvili left for the Netherlands last year. He participated in the “Conference on Innovating Democracy”, which is run annually by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). Archil Mchedlishvili was awarded a € 1,000 cash prize with which the Democracy Leader prepared for a small project: training local youth on civic activism.

## Archil Mchedlishvili, first generation of Telavi Democracy School Graduate and the holder of 2017 “Democracy Leader” Award:

*“The Democracy School has taught me what I think is one of the key cornerstones of the modern world – hearing different opinions and their analysis. The most important thing I gained there is a sense of responsibility. Regardless of status, social state and education level, every citizen has a responsibility to contribute to the improvement of society.”*

## Tbilisi and Pankisi Democracy Schools



Tbilisi joined the Democracy Schools last year, for which the existing module has slightly changed. In light of the problems that have arisen in recent years, the urban theme has intensified in the capital. Ecology, construction, transport - there are very painful issues that urbanists, historians and city experts are talking about. Along with the discussion, feedback is also important - how things can change and what can be done to solve the problem. Participants think a lot about this. Similar communities are

also planned to be activated in other cities, such as Batumi, where the problem has also been acute recently.

It is also important that the Democracy School Program is constantly changing and trying to adapt to the current reality. Last year’s novelty was the labor and social rights that were constantly violated in different directions. This year’s module was supplemented with the topic of corruption, which has unfortunately become a topic of recent debate.



**Nino Khitarishvili:** *“At first glance, corruption in Georgia has been significantly reduced and to some extent it is true. However, not paying a bribe to a police officer does not mean that there is no problem. All this has taken other forms, especially in the regions. Tenders, issues of direct procurement in the local self-government bodies are formally public, but in reality, many violations occur. That is what we are focusing on.”*

**The establishment of the Pankisi Democracy School** is one of the important innovations. Although the Telavi Center had one or two participants per year from Pankisi, due to the current socio-political situation, it was important to have a separate school in this region. The school was opened in Telavi and lectures are delivered there, though half of the group consists of Pankisi residents. They are served by special transports so as not to create additional barriers.

The need for political participation and dialogue between society and government in the Pankisi Gorge is acute. It is important for Pankisians to be more involved in the country's social and political life, to have representatives in local and legislative government, to have their voices heard better and their interests reflected in decision-making. This is what the Democracy School helps to achieve.



**Ramzan Gorgishvili**  
 (Pankisi, civil activist)

*“The lectures of the Democracy School included topics that I was not able to study at the university, so I listened to each of them with particular interest. I saw a lot of things from a different angle. That would help me, as a civil activist, do better in my future work.”*

*The Democracy School is crucial in Pankisi-type regions populated by ethnic and religious minorities where the level of political and civic engagement is quite low. Projects like these are helping to increase the number of young people who strive to change their living environment for the better and refract the peer thinking.”*



**Marina Gumashvili**  
 (Pankisi, Lawyer of Akhmeta Social Service Agency)

*“Along with critical thinking at the Democracy School, I have learned to adequately perceive community issues and speak openly about them. I have become more confident and try to share the knowledge I have with others here, convincing them of the need for continued development. I looked at many things in a different way. I would never have imagined that Vazha-Pshavela, who is just a “poet of nature” and a great author, wrote many important letters on human rights.”*

*It is important for the Pankisians to continue this project and make it further available to the wider scale.”*

# Ukraine in EECMD

**2018 marks the year of consolidation of the EECMD program in Ukraine - our activities and projects advanced to be more stable and systematic: programs launched in previous years became bound; a stable team of staff was formed, and our awareness of the country increased. One of the novelties was the new Democracy School in Poltava, one of Ukraine's most important cultural centers.**



**Kirilo Tretyak:** *"In 2018 we launched a very interesting program for Ukrainian women politicians seeking political finance. This issue is particularly relevant to them, as in Ukraine, as in many other countries, one of the main barriers to women's participation in politics is lack of funding. In the meantime, parties nominate candidates who can fund their election campaigns or donate money to a party piggy bank. Running a political marathon has become more difficult for women, so we started a long-term program to train them how to make money independently of politics and fund their own election campaigns. We have assembled a compact group of Ukrainian women politicians in the project - from both large and small towns - to help them learn the basics of political finance. The second phase involved detailed campaign planning. We are now working individually with each to take specific steps to fund their campaign, advertising and election headquarters. The success of these people is important to us because we can help others by following their example."*

## EECMD Publications

Last year we released number of important research and publications. Some of them covers 2018 year, some - analyzes the specific events of 2017. Each represents a good resource to draw conclusions and assessments from experts, political scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders in general.

### “Politics and Democracy - Essential reading” Book 2, 2017

**Collection of Essays by: Berlin, Isaiah; Kagan, Robert; O’Donnell, Guillermo; Fukuyama, Francis; Heitman, Carol; Garton Ash, Timothy; Habermas, Jurgen**

*Translators: Tornike Sharashenidze, Gia Nodia, Ketevan Kiknavelidze, Mariam Chikhladze, Shorena Lortkipanidze, Nino Zhvania*

“Essential Reading” is a series of Georgian translations of influential political articles published by the NIMD’s Eastern European Neighborhood Office.

The first part of this book was released in 2015 and quickly gained popularity thanks to its interesting political essays, many of which were not published in Georgian.

The idea of working on the book emerged in the translation of several articles for Democracy School students, and it was soon announced to be further elaborated on. It was decided to translate and publish important essays without which the development of political and social sciences in the modern world is unthinkable. These papers continue to shape debate about international politics and democratization. The collection is composed of the following essays.



## Participation of Women in Ukrainian Politics

highlights the current situation in this field. At first glance, political leaders hail women’s involvement in politics and advocate for gender equality, but party lists and the number of women in leadership positions suggest otherwise. The study serves to analyze the existing situation.



## Analysis of the Current State of Political Education in Ukraine

Given that Democracy Schools are a political education program, we wondered what was going on in the country, what the political parties themselves were doing to educate and socialize their members, which is one of their important functions. We have also studied the work of other international organizations in this regard in order not to repeat their course and at the same time greatly improve our program.

## The third publication deals with The Role of Parties’ Youth Wings Regarding Engagement of Youth in the Political Life of Ukraine

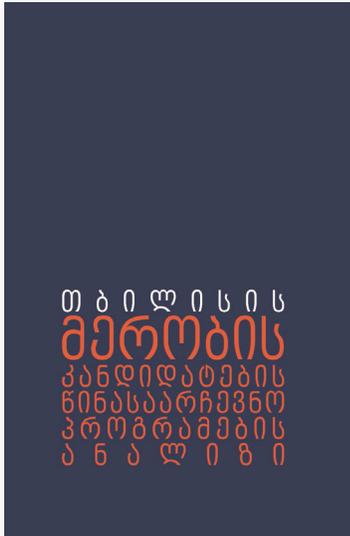
The situation here is similar to that of women: at first glance, politicians hail the advent of young people into politics, new blood and vision, but the picture is actually quite different, and this study illustrates the situation well.



## The fourth publication looks at the Values, Programmes and Actions: Examining the Ideologies and Legislative Positions of Ukrainian Political Parties

We have studied what a particular party has to say in public, what course it takes and what kind of decisions it actually upholds. In this respect, this publication reveals many interesting facts, which are additional interesting research material for experts and international organizations.

Values, programmes and actions:  
examining the ideologies and legislative  
positions of Ukrainian political parties  
Denys Rybachok



## Expert Analysis of the Electoral Programs of Tbilisi Mayor Candidates

**Authors: Givi Korinteli, David Lezhava,  
Koka Kiguradze, Irakli Zhvania, CENN**

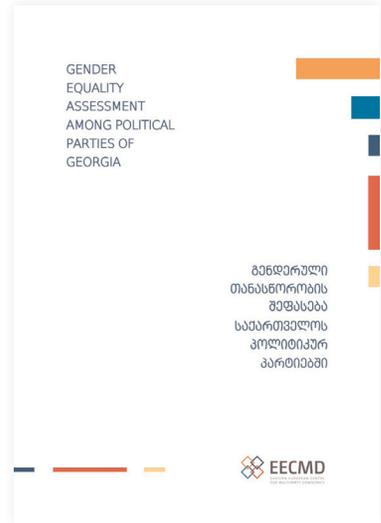
The publication is an expert analysis of the Tbilisi Mayor Candidates' pre-election programs based on the candidates' programs themselves and is integrated into several thematic baskets. It includes topics relevant to the city and citizens such as economic policy, social spending, city governance, public infrastructure, urban mobility, housing, environment and culture, sport and youth. These are the issues that are comprehensively analyzed in the publication, the sources of which are the pre-election speeches and programs of the Tbilisi mayoral candidates themselves.

This publication has been prepared by the Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) with the financial support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Georgia.

## Gender Equality Assessment Among the Political Parties of Georgia

**Authors: Bakur Kvashilava, Khatia Gogilashvili, Zviad Barkaia**

The Gender Equality Ranking of Political Parties of Georgia produces its assessment in three dimensions – Electoral, Institutional and Programmatic. Each of these dimensions consists of a set of indicators to which pre-determined weights are assigned and the resulting aggregate can be used to create a common index of gender equality in the political parties. The first ranking of gender equality among the political parties of Georgia was produced in 2014. This is the third ranking and it covers the year of 2017.



## Inclusion of Ethnic Minorities in the Political Process in the Context of 2018 Presidential Elections of Georgia

**Author: Bakur Kvashilava**

This publication has been prepared by the Eastern European Centre for the Multiparty Democracy (EECMD) with the financial support of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in the framework of the project “Multiparty Dialogue – Strengthening the Participation of National Minorities in Political Life”. The topic of this publication was selected based on the analysis of the issues discussed during consultations and meetings with the political parties involved in the project. The study - “Political and Social Integration of Ethnic Minorities after Acquisition of State Language: Challenges and Opportunities, Example of Pankisi Gorge” - briefly outlines four key components of national minority integration and analyzes the causes of the problem of local population in the Pankisi Gorge.

## Money and Politics: Legislative, Institutional and Cultural Factors of Political Competition

**Author: Levan Tsutskiridze**

The paper deals with the political implications of money and discusses ways in which fairer and more effective political and electoral competition can be determined in the country. Such kind of competition ensures that the policy is in the service of the common financial interests.



## Inclusion of Ethnic Minorities in the Political Process in the Context of 2018 Presidential Elections of Georgia

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## Decentralisation in Ukraine and Odesa Oblast

**Author: Dr. Sierhieï Sakhanienko**

The analytical note “EECMD Roundtable on Decentralization in Ukraine and Odesa Oblast” is written by Dr. Sierhieï Sakhanienko, expert from Odesa Regional Institute for Public Administration. It summarizes the arguments and propositions put forward by the experts during the EECMD roundtable in Odesa on 16 November 2017. It questions, among others, the economic, political and policy rationales for the decentralization debate, further effects of decentralization on political parties and Ukrainian political system as well as the challenges it represents to local actors.





## Intra-Party Democracy: A Pathway to Political Renewal

**Author: Levan Tsutskiridze**

Recent years have been estimated as years of stagnating democracy. There are many reasons for this, be it the slowdown in the economies of democracies or the growing influence of money on politics that alienates voters from politics. In many democratic countries, this process is reflected in the decline of confidence in parties and parliaments, downsizing in party membership, rise in the average age of membership, strengthening of extremist-populist parties, and the weakening of traditional, democratic political parties. This publication is dedicated to seeking ways and alternatives to overcoming these problems.

## Decentralisation in Ukraine and Lviv Oblast

**Authors: Dr. Maryan Lopata, Dr. Yevhen Laniuk**

The analytical note “EECMD Roundtable on Decentralization in Ukraine and Lviv Oblast” is written by Dr. Maryan Lopata and Dr. Yevhen Laniuk, experts from the Centre of Innovation Research. It is a summary of arguments and propositions elaborated by the experts during the EECMD roundtable in Lviv on 24 November 2017. The publication dwells upon, among others, the gains and disadvantages of the decentralization process, the effects of the decentralization reform on political parties and Ukrainian political system as well as the specific features of the decentralization process in the Lviv Oblast.



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The Eastern European Center for Mutyparty Democracy (EECMD) actively cooperates with various organizations that act as EECMD's partners and sponsors in implementing its programs.

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- The Embassy of Kingdom of the Netherlands to Georgia
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## EECMD Online

**Voter Information Website:**

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