

INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY IN THE GEORGIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

BAKUR KVASHILAVA

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INTRODUCTION

Political parties play a significant role in the modern state. It is difficult to imagine running a country without them. There are still countries where no political parties exist; however, these are exceptions to the norm. Without political parties, it is difficult for the government of any country to solve the complex and diverse issues that the modern state is responsible for solving. Foreign policy, economics, social security, education, environmental protection, public development, law enforcement – this is just a small and general list of functions performed by a state in the modern world. When political parties do not function, we are dealing either with a government based on antiquated principles or with a microstate with a population of less than 20,000. Political parties are an integral part of modern reality and perform their functions not only in democratic nations but also even in authoritarian regimes.

Naturally, political parties have a special role to play in a democratic system as the optimal means of gaining power. Depending on various political traditions, parties may perform different functions, but at the most basic level, they each represent a certain segment of the population and/or their interests and pursue these interests in politics by either coming to power or influencing the existing government. At the same time, these parties, along with other public institutions, influence the creation and modification of these interests by helping to shape public opinion and sometimes creating a social security net for their members, thus promoting social unity among themselves.

Even though many scholars view political parties as part of civil society, it would not be an exaggeration to state that most scholars still think that political parties should be separated from civil society and affiliated with political society instead. The logic of this approach is confirmed in Linz and Stepan's 1996 analysis, in which political society is viewed separately from civil society.¹

First, parties, unlike civil society organizations, fight for political power. Even in the case of groups with narrow interests, such as the Green movements in European democracies, their goal, inevitably, is to at least participate in a coalition government, if not to form a full-fledged government. Even though both civil and political organizations fight for certain policies, only organizations that are willing to pursue political goals can be considered part of political society, as opposed to civil society, which instead aims to influence politicians in order to pursue outcomes favorable to their interests.

¹ Linz, Juan & Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Consolidation* (Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1996), 7-10.

The democratic transformation of post-soviet Poland makes it obvious how political society differs in character and content from civil society. In addition to the fundamental difference noted above, the example of Poland demonstrates that these two different spaces are guided by different social and political values and principles: the origin of the civil society is truth, justice, the pursuit of truth, and its unwavering protection afterward. Following this truth to the end is the highest goal.² According to Havel, unlike the deception of Communism's support for the official line, civil society allows for life within the truth.³ This dichotomy in post-Soviet countries originated in the Soviet period and became the basis for the consolidation of every anti-communist force in the battle for liberation from the Soviet yoke. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, similar approaches persisted in some countries, such as Poland in the 1990s, and introduced these elements of uncompromising battle into politics.

The need for this historical excursus arises from the current state of Georgian political culture, and one of the main reasons for the polarization of Georgian politics should be sought there. Since the day that Georgia gained independence, political parties have been trying to impress their supporters and voters through uncompromising positioning. Compromise and legitimation of the other party are rare in political discourse. The opponent is the enemy and should be eliminated since there can be no two truths and, thus, no two opposing legitimate interests.

This attitude, which is perfectly acceptable in civil society, is completely unproductive in politics. The etymology of the very word party refers to being part of something. By definition, there cannot be just one party and one bearer of the truth since each party expresses the opinion of only a part of society. By the same principle, there must be contact with another party, either another political party or another part of society, and that contact cannot be perceived as the betrayal of the truth and, consequently, one's own conscience. Linz and Stepan identified a similar problem in Poland, and this factor hindered the completion of Poland's democratic transformation. Unfortunately, this challenge still remains in Georgia 25 years later – political society has not been transformed, and Georgia has not established itself as a truly democratic country.

During the anti-Soviet dissident movement, unity was the paramount value, and opposing the Communist regime was the main drive, in spite of the diversity of ideological and tactical approaches of those fighting against Communism. It is quite possible that this idea has proved so viable in the period that followed because every important political organization since independence has used this ideology to gain people's support. For the last 30 years, the ruling party and its opponents have presented themselves to the voters as the only force that really cares for the country and portrayed everyone else as a useful idiot, if not an enemy. Therefore,

² Linz and Stepan, 269-276

³ Havel, Vaclav, *The Power of the Powerless* (London: Vintage 2018), Chapter 7.

it is always a fight until complete victory, as reflected in common slogans. The history of Georgian election campaigns features several cases when a political party, even one that could not overcome the election threshold, has tried to persuade voters of the inevitability of its victory. Tactics like these breed radicalization since, after such political campaigns, it is difficult to convince supporters that cooperation with another party does not imply an equal betrayal of principles when, for example, it had been stated in recent rallies that the other party was the enemy of the homeland. That is why we have a political culture in which it is unacceptable to compromise, form coalitions, cooperate with opponents, or find common ground.

Another reminder of the Soviet dictatorship retained by our political culture, with several modifications, is the denial of any achievement of the previous government. From Khrushchev onwards, it had become a Soviet tradition to condemn, humiliate or ignore any initiative of the previous leader. This continued even after independence, and it is not at all surprising that every political campaign has been fueled by radical slogans. Liberation of the homeland from the enemies of the country – in other words, from the previous government – has always been on the opposition's agenda. Naturally, when this task was completed successfully, as it was in 1992, 2003, and 2012, humiliating their predecessor and ignoring all of their achievements seemed like the only logical conclusion of that process.

These circumstances make it clear that polarization among political opponents in Georgia has nothing in common with recent trends in Western democracies, where new political forces, armed with populist ideas, have come into power with radical slogans and attempted to shake up the status quo. Unfortunately, our political polarization and delegitimization of opponents have deeper roots and a more solid foundation. There are various reasons for this radicalization in Georgian politics, and it is one of the main impediments to democratization.

Therefore, our main goal is to break through the vicious cycle and form a different political culture that is more amenable to democracy. One of the most tested ways is electoral reform, and we should greet 2024 more or less optimistically in this regard – a proportional electoral system with a relatively lower threshold will promote the inclusion of more parties and significantly increase the likelihood of forming a coalition government. While this is a promising prospect, considering the sharply negative attitude of the society towards political cohabitation in 2012-2013, as well as the political crisis that developed after the 2020 parliamentary elections, it has become obvious that not only compromise and consensus, but even any kind of civil relationship with opponents is often awkward and undesirable for the main actors of Georgian politics.

Another means of disrupting this winner-take-all political warfare is the democratization of political parties. Even though sometimes the characteristics of a system are not determined by the characteristics of its constituent elements, in this case, we can still be optimistic that

intra-party democracy will make political culture more tolerant. Democracy within parties will emphasize their representative nature and will, therefore, make it difficult for opponents to demonize membership-based organizations. A demonizing strategy is more convincing when the other party can be portrayed as an instrument of the selfish ambitions of one individual or group. When the opponent is an organization based on democratic principles, demonization carries more political risks. If party supporters fail to comprehend such risks, this will be reflected in their party's electoral performance. This is the principle on which the liberal peace theory in international relations is based - democratic states do not wage war with each other.⁴ They avoid war for two main reasons. First, decision-making is delayed in democratic governance. Many people participate in the process, allowing other parties to observe the process and defuse the situation since democratic governance is more open and allows for observation from outside. Second, if one democracy perceives another state as democratic as well, it understands that the opponent's position also enjoys support from its people and, thus, at the minimum, also deserves respect. It is quite possible that the same principles can mitigate the confrontation between political parties as well.

Internal democracy additionally brings transparency, increasing trust in political parties and complicating their delegitimization. Internal democracy ensures the involvement of larger groups of citizens, which, in turn, guarantees that different views exist and are being shared within the organization. The effect is strengthened after the inclusion of minorities, women, and youth increases in the party. These differing viewpoints grow in proportion to the growth of democracy. Thus, when discussing transitional democracies and hybrid regimes, more and more emphasis is being paid to the topic of democratization. However, this topic is still new, and, therefore, there are no commonly recognized and shared standards that could be applied for defining party democracy. There are, however, several articles and specific models that define the degree of party democracy. We are hopeful that as the interest in this topic grows, researchers will focus on one model. Before this happens, we will be looking specifically at Georgian political reality to offer an index that is both based on shared theoretical models and takes our individual circumstances into consideration.

⁴ Russett, Bruce & John Oneal, *Triangulating Peace* (New York/London: Norton 2001), Chapter 2.

METHODOLOGY

The following model is based on the concept developed by the Brazilian political researcher Eneida Desiree Salgado. This concept was created by integrating preexisting approaches.⁵ The model assesses Brazilian political parties in five main areas:

1. Rules for staffing the party's governing bodies
2. Rules for conflict resolution
3. The party's organizational structure
4. Rules for defining the party platform
5. Membership procedures

Different criteria are used for each area. In the evaluation process, each criterion is given a score of either 0 or 1. If a specific criterion is present, 1 point is assigned; if not – then 0. A positive response (1) indicates democracy, while a negative response (0) refers to non-democracy. The arithmetic mean of all five criteria gives us the degree of party democracy in a specific area on a scale of 0 to 1, where a higher score indicates better democracy. The same method is used to calculate the general democracy index of a political party – by the mean of the total index of the same five areas. This model presents 31 criteria sorted into the five main areas. However, many of them are tailored to the Brazilian political context and consider aspects such as the country's federal arrangement, electoral system, legislative requirements, and political traditions. We decided to follow the same path and take some of these factors into consideration when defining the degree of democracy for Georgian political parties.

However, due to the less complex nature of Georgian political society, simplifying the model proved optimal. For example, in our model, membership procedures have been integrated with procedures for the selection of candidates in elections, while the rules for the formation of governing bodies of the organization, organizational structure, and dispute resolution procedures have been separated. We have also included election-related matters in a separate area, combined the criteria for the relationship between governing bodies and their subordinate agencies under organizational structure, and joined dispute resolution procedures with rights protection mechanisms for ordinary members and less integrated groups. This result is that we now have main areas instead of five:

⁵ Salgado, Eneida Desiree, "Intra-Party Democracy Index: A Measure Model from Brazil", *Journal of Constitutional Research* 7, No. 1 (January/April 2020): 107-136 <https://revistas.ufpr.br/rinc/article/view/74101> last accessed on 02.06.2021.

1. Electoral institutions
2. Organizational structure
3. Rights protection mechanisms

These areas were again evaluated against specific criteria. The list, descriptions, and justifications for usage are given below in the appendix. We have reduced the overall number of criteria to 15 evenly distributed across each area. The grading system has also somewhat changed. In the Brazilian model, each criterion was assessed with a score of either 0 or 1. In our model, an intermediate score of 0.5 has been added, although the complexity of evaluation has not increased: 0 indicates the absence of a specific indicator, 0.5 implies the procedure that has been established, and 1 indicates that additional requirements are met. This is also presented in the appendix. In other aspects, the model replicates the Brazilian formula and defines the degree of a democracy of a party in a given area on a scale of 0 to 1 by calculating the average of the criteria of that area, while the average of three main areas leads to an overall rating, which is also represented on a range of 0 to 1.

In this pilot project, assessments are entirely based on an analysis of official charters and documentation from selected political parties as presented on their official websites and in the Registry of Political Parties. Although in practice, parties may be governed by more or less democratic principles, we believe that the institutionalization of rules is crucial for democratic governance. Even though the likelihood of having detailed rules in an authoritarian organization cannot be ruled out, dictatorship is even more likely in the absence of these rules. In a political party of an accountable size, democratic governance is practically impossible without the existence of detailed rules. If there are no such rules, the number of participants in the process, since we are not dealing with the sole rule, and the possibility of various interpretations of unwritten rules make management extremely difficult. Based on this logic, we are assuming that an analysis of only official documentation would still give an overall idea of the degree of internal democracy of Georgian political parties.

All of this should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results we obtained using this model. Institutions consist of formal and informal rules, while this index only assesses the formal ones. Unwritten rules, quite frequently, have no less significant an impact on the character, behavior, and game rules of an organization. We can use the Soviet Union as an example – the constitution did not in any way reflect the main characteristics of how the country was functioning and governed. Of course, such a dramatic discrepancy between the written rules of governance and actual practice would not be the case for Georgian political parties. However, informal governance is more likely in a less institutionalized environment,

and we can assume that such informal rules would suggest more authoritarian tendencies, especially in the case of relatively old parties. In newly created organizations, informal institutions may indicate more democracy than what actually appears in our model. It is important to also consider these limiting circumstances when interpreting our research results.

The next stage was the selection of relevant parties. According to current data, 265 political associations are registered in Georgia,⁶ of which many no longer function. Naturally, it would not be relevant to assess each of them in terms of democracy. In order to evaluate the Georgian political system and culture through internal party democracy, we will only consider active and significant parties. In practical terms, we use specific criteria to determine whether a political party meets these characteristics. There are several approaches we could take. We could apply the Laakso-Taagepera index, which calculates the number of parties by the proportion of votes received or seats won.⁷ It is also possible to follow the substantive definition of Giovanni Sartor, which states that the only relevant parties are the ones that can have a real influence on the legislative process, that is, those parties whose votes are required to pass a law.⁸ On the other hand, given our political dynamics, a party that is relevant today might not even exist at all tomorrow, which is why it is important to think beyond today's political landscape.

We also need to set a time frame that will make our conclusions more convincing. Therefore, we consider as relevant only those political associations that represented similar units in both the 2012 parliamentary elections and today. However, we have to apply a modification. Neither Laakso-Taagepera's nor Sartor's definitions of relevance would be suitable for parties in our political context because such strict criteria would, in the best-case scenario, leave only 2-3 parties for consideration. This would not be a problem if not for that unique factor of dynamism that emerges out of nowhere and promotes newly created political parties as important players in Georgian politics. That is why in an unshaped, dynamic, and chaotic system like ours, it is important to not forget seemingly insignificant players that may acquire a significant role in tomorrow's political field. Therefore, we consider as relevant every political party that won at least 1% of total national votes in any election starting from 2012 and participated in 2020 elections on the party list. In the case of coalitions, we grant the overall coalition result to the leading party. We use the logical approach to determine the leader. For example, in 2014, the Burjanadze - United Opposition coalition received more than 3% of votes. It was obvious that Nino Burjanadze's political organization was the leader in this case. Based on these considerations, we have selected 14 political associations:

⁶ National Agency of Public Registry. Political Associations. <https://napr.gov.ge/p/477> last accessed on 02.06.2021

⁷ Laakso M, Taagepera R, "Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe" *Comparative Political Studies* 1979 12(1):3-27. doi:10.1177/001041407901200101 last accessed on 02.06.2021

⁸ Sartori, Giovanni, *Parties and Party Systems* (Colchester: ECPR Press 2016), Chapter 5.

1. Georgian Dream
2. United National Movement
3. Georgian Labor Party
4. The Alliance of Patriots
5. European Georgia
6. Giorgi Vashadze - Strategy Aghmashenebeli
7. New Political Center - Girchi
8. Lelo for Georgia
9. Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens
10. Free Democrats
11. Georgian Republican Party
12. Democratic Movement - United Georgia
13. Free Georgia
14. State for the People

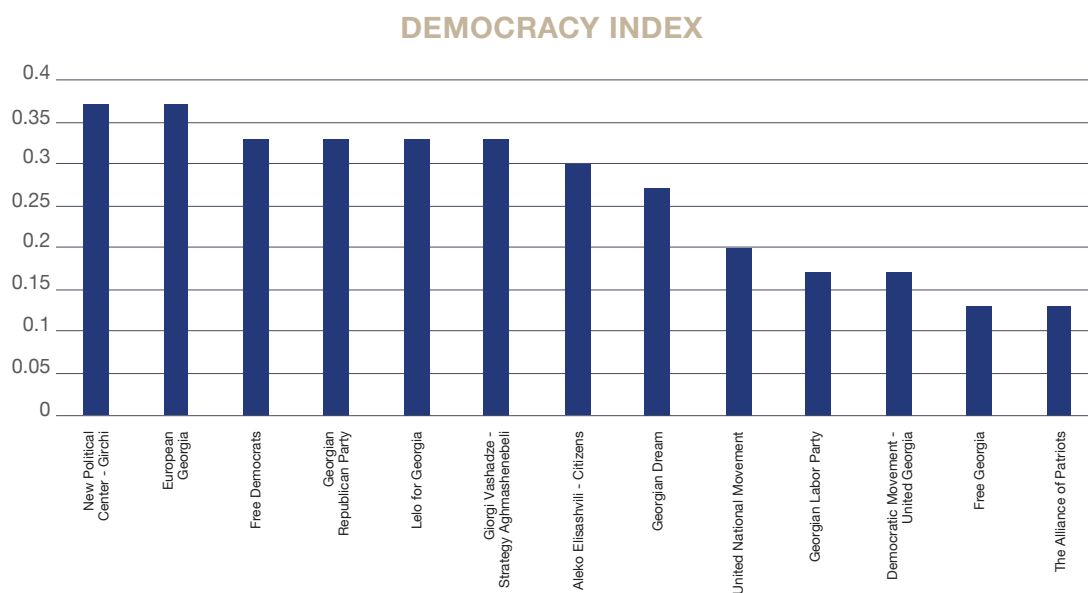
State for the People was removed from the list since its charter was untraceable, even in the Public Registry. The party does not have a website, and its Facebook page was last updated in 2016. This, along with the overall spirit of the criteria, proved sufficient grounds for the removal of the party from the list.

It should also be noted here that only eight political parties have official, active websites (the first eight organizations in the above table, with the omission of Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens), while the remaining parties only have Facebook pages.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

These 13 parties were assessed in accordance with the methodology that we developed, and the resulting picture reveals a relatively low degree of democracy. None of the political parties could surpass even the intermediate score (0.5). This is demonstrated in more detail below:

TABLE 1. Intra-party Democracy Index 2021



An analysis of specific areas revealed that Georgian political parties have the most difficulty in guaranteeing the protection of members' rights. The analysis also reveals that relatively new parties demonstrate more democratic tendencies. It is likely that with institutionalization, these tendencies will improve.

Free Georgia is one of the two parties that received the lowest score. This is due to several factors. First, the only traceable document was the party charter uploaded to the Registry of Political Parties.⁹ The organization does not have a website, and official documents are not disclosed on Facebook. Second, their charter is the shortest document of all such documents that were reviewed and, therefore, fails to explain many details. For instance, in relation to election matters, the document only states that the party will act in accordance with democratic principles but does not say anything about the mechanism. The document does not discuss the function of constituent structural units and only lists them. Not a word is said about the

⁹ National Agency of Public Registry. Registry of Political Parties. https://pareg.napr.gov.ge/main.php?c=app&m=view_doc&doc_id=575123 last accessed on 02.06.2021.

protection of members' rights, accountability mechanisms are overly general, and the powers of the chairman are even wider than they are in other parties.

TABLE 2. Free Georgia – Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0
Selection of Majoritarian	0
Local Elections	0
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.10
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0
Organizational Structure	0.20
Accountability	0.5
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	0
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.10
Total Index	0.13

The Alliance of Patriots, which has been a parliamentary party for ten years, has a similar rating. Even though it has a website and a much more informative charter, unlike Free Georgia, matters important for internal democracy are, in fact, not presented here either. It should also be noted that the Georgian Law on Political Associations¹⁰ is quite liberal compared to similar documents of many other countries and does not require parties to ensure regional coverage

¹⁰ Legislative Herald of Georgia. The Law on Political Associations of Citizens. <https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/28324?publication=34> last accessed on 04.06.2021.

by opening permanent offices or including a specific number of members. The only aspect that is regulated in more detail is the transparency of funding sources and the fulfillment of financial obligations to the state. Roughly speaking, seven pages of the 13-page law cover finances and only three regulate rules for the creation and functioning of the party. However, the state does not interfere with the distribution of resources and does not demand that these resources be allocated to certain groups, such as youth, minorities, or women, or that members have an effective mechanism for controlling the budget.

On the other hand, there are still certain requirements in the law aimed at ensuring or, as a minimum, promoting democratic governance in the party. For example, the law requires that each party has supervising, executive, and monitoring branches. It is important to take this context into account to avoid misrepresenting the democracy of parties registered in Georgia. Their charters invariably meet their legal obligations. It is therefore important to see if these topics are simply mentioned in charters or are explained in greater detail. For example, an audit body is found in every charter, but only some parties clarify that a member of this unit may not be a member of another governing body. This is important for the audit committee to perform its functions in an unbiased manner. Thus, in any charter, you will see the supervising body (the congress), the executive body (the secretariat), the board and/or the political council, and the control service (the audit commission). This creates the impression of democracy. However, such a claim cannot be made without analyzing the function of each unit. We took this into account in our analyses of these two parties and those of the remaining parties that we discuss below.

Other official documents are not traceable on the official website of **The Alliance of Patriots**. Therefore, the only source of our evaluation is the organization's charter obtained from the party registry.¹¹ This document does not discuss elections, election lists, or the process of candidate selection. The charter does not directly mention a platform, but since article 8.2 states that the chairman develops the strategy and tactics of the party, we assume that the platform is also implied here and, therefore, the evaluation of this component is slightly above absolute zero. The party demonstrates average results in the second component, which assesses mechanisms of mutual control, the level of decentralization, and democracy of governance. It is noteworthy that this is the only organization on our list that restricts the reelection of the same individual as a leader. **The Alliance of Patriots** does not receive a positive score in the third component, which assesses the rights of minorities and ordinary members since their charter lacks all such mechanisms.

¹¹ The Registry. The Statute of the Alliance of Patriots. [http://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=900&bid=w\]OAAks1dpXcKWTUQz9j1TswJF5I\[xz0di2ce7eXwdroSLMyoAvsUqSieg5\]WI](http://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=900&bid=w]OAAks1dpXcKWTUQz9j1TswJF5I[xz0di2ce7eXwdroSLMyoAvsUqSieg5]WI) last accessed on 04.06.2021.

TABLE 3. The Alliance of Patriots - Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0
Selection of Majoritarians	0
Local Elections	0
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.10
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0.5
Rule of Early Dismissal	0
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0
Organizational Structure	0.30
Accountability	0
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	0
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.00
Total Index	0.13

The **Democratic Movement - United Georgia** is also at the bottom of the list with 0.17 points. In this case, as well, nothing is said about the formation of the electoral list. However, the electoral platform is mentioned. In addition, similarly to other parties, it is not clear how many members of the party can participate in the formation of this platform. In terms of organizational structure, there is more distribution of power than there is in **Free Georgia**. There are also certain mechanisms that allow members to protect their own interests.

TABLE 4. Democratic Movement - United Georgia - Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0
Selection of Majoritarians	0
Local Elections	0
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.10
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0
Organizational Structure	0.20
Accountability	0
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	1
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.20
Total Index	0.17

The **Georgian Labor Party** has a similar average score. The Labor Party receives the lowest assessment in the areas of elections and rights protection while appearing relatively strong in organizational arrangements.

TABLE 5. Georgian Labor Party - Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0
Selection of Majoritarians	0
Local Elections	0
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.10
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0.5
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0.5
Organizational Structure	0.30
Accountability	0.5
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	0
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.10
Total Index	0.17

The **United National Movement** is in ninth place with 0.2 points. It has an average rating in terms of elections and control mechanisms but has no points at all in the rights protection area. Georgian parties, in general, pay very little attention to dispute resolution. It seems implied that, in case of a dispute, they simply obey the decision of a superior.

TABLE 6. United National Movement - Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0.5
Selection of Majoritarians	0.5
Local Elections	0.5
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0
Electoral Institutions	0.30
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0.5
Organizational Structure	0.30
Accountability	0
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	0
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.00
Total Index	0.20

The ruling **Georgian Dream** is only one place ahead of the main opposition party, with a total score of 0.27. We did not discover any particularly weak points in any one component, and, in spite of a generally low score, this result can still be presented as average. If we consider nearly identical scores received by these parties, this is the fourth-best result among the seven different scores (see TABLE 1).

TABLE 7. Georgian Dream - Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0.5
Selection of Majoritarians	0.5
Local Elections	0.5
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.40
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0
Organizational Structure	0.20
Accountability	0.5
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	0.5
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.20
Total Index	0.27

The **Aleko Elisashvili – Citizens** party, is in seventh place with 0.3 points. It receives a particularly positive assessment in electoral and organizational structures. They earn the maximum score in the area of decentralization.

TABLE 8. Aleko Elisashvili – Citizens - Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Assessment
Proportional Elections	0.5
Selection of Majoritarians	0.5
Local Elections	0.5
Election Resources	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.40
Governing Bodies	0.5
Position of Leader	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5
Level of Decentralization	1
Organizational Structure	0.40
Accountability	0
Distribution of Resources	0
Dispute Resolution	0.5
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0
Promoting Equality	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.10
Total Index	0.30

The second-best score is achieved by four parties at the same time. The fact that the **Republicans** and **Free Democrats** topped the list was not unexpected. It is also promising to see that relatively new organizations are building their structures on a more democratic basis from the outset – **Lelo for Georgia** and **Strategy Aghmashenebeli** also have the second-best scores, with 0.33 points each.

TABLE 9. Strategy Aghmashenebeli, Lelo for Georgia, Republican Party, and Free Democrats – Detailed Assessment

Indicators	Strategy Aghmashenebeli	Lelo for Georgia	Republican Party	Free Democrats
Proportional Elections	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
Selection of Majoritarians	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
Local Elections	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
Election Resources	0	0	0	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Electoral Institutions	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.20
Governing Bodies	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Position of Leader	0	0	0	0.5
Rule of Early Dismissal	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Level of Decentralization	1	0	0	0
Organizational Structure	0.50	0.30	0.30	0.50
Accountability	0	0	0.5	0.5
Distribution of Resources	0	0	0	0
Dispute Resolution	0.5	1	1	0.5
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0	0.5	0	0.5
Promoting Equality	0	0	0	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.10	0.30	0.30	0.30
Total Index	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33

European Georgia and **Girchi** are in first place with 0.37 points. It should be noted that, if we assess only by points, there is not much difference between the parties.

TABLE 10. European Georgia and Girchi - Detailed Assessment

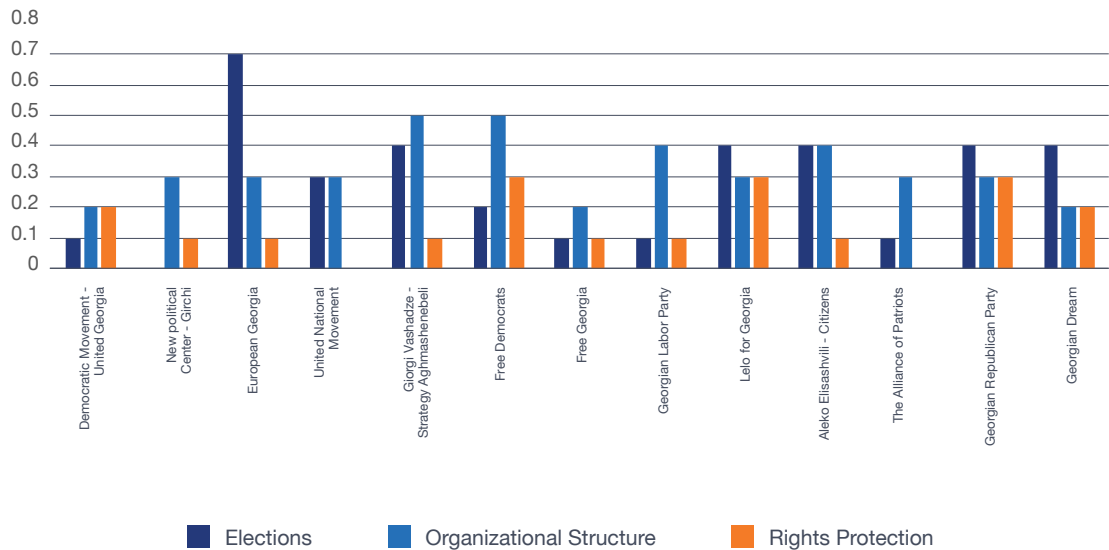
Indicators	European Georgia	Girchi
Proportional Elections	1	1
Selection of Majoritarians	1	1
Local Elections	1	1
Election Resources	0	0
Election Program/Platform	0.5	0.5
Electoral Institutions	0.70	0.70
Governing Bodies	0.5	0.5
Position of Leader	0	0
Rule of Early Dismissal	0	0.5
Internal Monitoring Service	0.5	0.5
Level of Decentralization	0.5	0
Organizational Structure	0.30	0.30
Accountability	0	0
Distribution of Resources	0	0
Dispute Resolution	0.5	0.5
Investigative Disciplinary Commissions	0	0
Promoting Equality	0	0
Rights Protection Mechanisms	0.10	0.10
Total Index	0.37	0.37

Looking at the overall picture, it should be noted that significant challenges have been identified in terms of accountability. Often, parties do not have written rules that ensure the submission of reports, while in some organizations, the dismissal of leaders is not even discussed. When parties do mention this topic, they do not specify any details. Members' rights are rarely protected, and members do not have an opportunity to protect their positions. With rare ex-

ceptions, parties are strictly centralized organizations whose constituent units are granted a secondary role with management entirely in the hands of the central office. No party has a rule for the distribution of material resources such as annual expenses or the election campaign. No party has a positive anti-discrimination policy, and only some possess mechanisms that pay attention to representativeness. Although elections are the most regulated event, the rules for the selection of candidates are usually quite generalized, and some parties do not mention this topic at all.

Broadly speaking, the picture painted by our assessment was not unexpected. The level of democratization of political parties is low. Our research revealed a low level of institutionalization in these organizations. This is also not surprising, given the rate that political parties disappear and emerge in Georgia. However, several democratic tendencies in newer parties give us hope for the future.

TABLE 11. Assessment of Three Components of the Intra-party Democracy Index



APPENDIX

1. ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

- 1.1 The rule for proportional listing – In assessing this and any other criteria, the minimum requirement is to have a written procedure since the formalization of rules indicates not only institutionalization but also democracy. Transparency of rules and procedures allows a wider spectrum of participants to use existing opportunities. Rules that are unwritten usually grant special advantages to the leaders of the organization when exercising their discretion. The next indicator is the democratic nature of this written rule. The more members are allowed to participate smoothly, the more democratic the process. In other words, the closer the selection process is to the norms adopted in democratic elections, the more democratic it is.
- 1.2 The rule for the selection of majoritarian candidates – Same as 1.1.
- 1.3 The rule for the selection of candidates for local elections – Same as 1.1. In case there is no separate rule, and the same rule applies as in parliamentary elections, the score will simply be repeated.
- 1.4 The rule for the distribution of electoral resources – In addition to the minimum requirement, we consider how detailed and reasoned the rule is.
- 1.5 The rule for the creation of an election platform/program – In addition to the minimum requirement, attention will be paid to conditions ensuring high levels of inclusion in the creation of the platform and the consideration of different interests.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- 2.1 The rule for the selection of governing bodies – The extent to which representativeness is ensured, including limitations on the length of service.
- 2.2 Restrictions related to the position of leader – The existence of a rule prohibiting the election of the same leader multiple times or consecutively. Even though this rule seems overly strict, limitations on the reelection of the party leader strengthen democratic tendencies, especially in an environment where the institutionalization of political parties is weak.
- 2.3 Procedure for the early dismissal of the party leader – The existence of such a procedure, at minimum, and the extent to which that procedure can be put into practical use.

- 2.4 The selection and functions of internal monitoring service – Same requirements as 2.1. Additionally, making sure that these bodies are composed of members not serving in other leadership positions is recommended.
- 2.5 Elements of decentralization – The existence of rules that reflect the rights of regions, youth, women, and other organizations and how broad these rules are.

3. RIGHTS PROTECTION MECHANISMS

- 3.1 Leader's mandatory and regular reports to members – In addition to the minimum requirement, it is assessed whether the report is published and whether the members can ask questions.
- 3.2 The mechanism for mandatory distribution of resources to regional, local, youth, women, and similar units – same as 1.4.
- 3.3 The established mechanism for dispute resolution – In addition to the minimum requirement, the extent to which protection capabilities, such as preparation time, the opportunity to present counterarguments, confront the opponent, and appeal a decision, are ensured.
- 3.4 Disciplinary and investigative commissions and principles of their establishment – Same as 2.1 and 2.4.
- 3.5 Promoting equality – The existence of rules ensuring the representation of less included individuals, except for cases already considered by law. The comprehensiveness of these approaches is assessed.

EECMD

**Eastern European Centre for
Multiparty Democracy**

7, Sharashidze str., Tbilisi, 0179 Georgia

Tel.: +995 32 291 56 50/51

E-mail: contact@eecmd.org