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Free, Fair and Equal Electoral-Political 2019-2022 Cycle in Georgia

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INTRODUCTION

In August 2019, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) started the implementation of the project Free, Fair and Equal Election electoral political cycle during 2019-2022 throughout Georgia. One of the goals of the project is to promote the improvement of the election environment through monitoring and evidence-based advocacy. In order to achieve this, the organisation will monitor ongoing policy processes and develop recommendations that will be communicated to the public and presented to decision-makers. At the moment, we present Newsletter #27, which describes the events of December, that have had an impact on the political environment.

I. BOYCOTT OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

On December 3, the assemblies elected as a result of the local self-government elections of 2021 began to exercise their powers.¹ However, the first sessions were not held in Batumi, Rustavi, Zugdidi, Tsalenjikha, Chkhorotsku and Senaki.² Since none of the parties won a majority here, it was not possible to elect assembly chairmen and, in some cases, to recognise the powers of the members.³ A similar stalemate threatened early elections.⁴

In Batumi, members of the Georgian Dream did not appear at the opposition-initiated meetings to elect a chairman, resulting in a no quorum.⁵ For their part, members of the opposition did not attend the meetings of the assemblies of some municipalities in protest.⁶ This still led to the absence of a quorum, making it impossible to elect a chairman.⁷ In particular, in Zugdidi local assembly, the chairman could not be elected even after four sessions due to no quorum.⁸ The reason for this was that members of the opposition, the United National Movement and the Party for Georgia did not appear at the meetings or left the meetings.⁹ Members of both the Georgian Dream and the opposition parties in Senaki¹⁰ and Tsalenjikha did not attend the local assembly sessions.¹¹ Assembly chairman could not be elected in Rustavi either.¹²

The Chkhorotsku local assembly overcame the crisis, where the chairman became a member of the opposition

¹ “The chairmen of the assemblies of six municipalities could not be elected”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 5, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/460040>, updated: 07.02.2022.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ “Assemblies without chairmen - what is the purpose of the boycott of the opposition”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 10, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31603728.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵ “Batumi Municipality City Council is again faced with the problem of quorum”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31632893.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶ “Local Assemblies without chairmen - what is the purpose of the boycott of the opposition”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 10, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31603728.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ “The chairman of Zugdidi local assembly could not be elected even at the fourth session”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 24, 2021, available: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31624285.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁹ “The second session of Zugdidi local assembly has been postponed”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 10, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31602990.html>, updated: 07.02.2022; “The chairman of Zugdidi local assembly could not be elected even at the fourth session”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 24, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31624285.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

¹⁰ “UNM MP of Senaki local Assembly Accuses Georgian Dream of Bribery”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/464821> updated: 07.02.2022.

¹¹ “The Chairman of Tsalenjikha local assembly could not have been elected again”, information portal “Netgazeti”, December 23, 2021, available at: <https://netgazeti.ge/news/583803/>, updated: 07.02.2022.

¹² “Rustavi local assembly without a chairman”, information portal “Info Rustavi”, December 9, 2021, available at: <https://inforustavi.ge/?m=31&news>, updated: 07.02.2022; “Rustavi Municipality City Council Office Releases Statement”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 31, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/690760>, updated: 07.02.2022.

party ‘For Georgia’.¹³ However, the latter was elected without the participation of the ruling party MPs, as they announced a boycott.¹⁴

II. FINAL REPORTS ON THE 2021 LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

On December 14, the US National Democratic Institute (NDI) released its final report on local self-government elections.¹⁵ The document covers the events from September 1 to November 5.¹⁶ According to the conclusion, the elections were held in a process of long political stalemate.¹⁷ A number of violations were revealed, which were manifested in the misuse of administrative resources, vote buying, as well as pressure on voters, candidates and journalists.¹⁸ The document also noted that the election period was characterized by negative rhetoric and did not devote time to discussing important issues.¹⁹ The media was characterized by pluralism and diversity of opinion, although it reflected a deep polarization between political parties.²⁰

On December 30, the final report on the October 2021 elections was published by the non-governmental organization ‘Multinational Georgia’.²¹ According to the report, the ruling party was disproportionately superior to other parties in terms of the use of administrative and other resources.²² In addition, the initiation of infrastructure and social projects by the Georgian Dream, the implementation of which coincided with the pre-election period, blurred the line between the ruling party and the government.²³ During the reporting period, facts of political persecution and pressure were also recorded.²⁴ At the same time, the pre-election campaign was taking place against the background of confrontations and mutual accusations between the parties, with little time devoted to discussing issues related to local self-government.²⁵ According to the report, the voting process took place mostly in a calm environment, although violent incidents were also reported.²⁶ The response of the election commissions to the violations did not meet the established standards, as they did not try to fully investigate the circumstances.²⁷ As a result, District Election Commissions were unable to make sound decisions objectively.²⁸ The document states that the standard of reasoning was as low as that of election commissions in court decisions.²⁹

On December 21, the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) presented the final report on the monitoring of the 2021 elections.³⁰ According to the organisation, polling day was largely competitive and technically mostly well administered.³¹ However, the Georgian Dream’s concentration of financial and administrative resources prevented the creation of an equal electoral environment between the parties.³² Concentration

¹³ “Chkhorotsku Local Assembly Chairman was Elected from Gakharia Party”, information portal “Radio Tavisupleba”, December 23, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31622677.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “Long-Term Small-Scale Election Evaluation Mission: Georgia 2021 Local Self-Government Elections, Election Evaluation Report - September 1 - November 5”, NDI Georgia, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/wp-content/uploads/2021/>, updated: 07.02.2022.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 7.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 16.

²¹ “Final Report of the October 2, 2021 Election Monitoring Mission of the Municipal Bodies - Summary and Recommendations”, website of Multinational Georgia, 2021, available at: <http://www.pmmg.org.ge/home/article/225>, updated: 07.02.2022.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy presents Final Report on 2021 Municipal Election Monitoring, ISFED website, 2021, available at: <https://isfed.ge/geo/presrelizebi/samartlianma->, updated: 07.02.2022.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

prevented the creation of an equal electoral environment between the parties.³³ There were also cases of political pressure, threats, dismissal or compulsion to leave the service, to which the state did not respond properly.³⁴ Public confidence in the election process was negatively affected by the presence of suspicious individuals at polling stations on polling day, voter registration and organized voter turnout, as well as cases of alleged bribery.³⁵ According to the organisation, the combination of violations identified in the second round in some municipalities may have had affected on the results as well.³⁶ The report notes that the media environment was sharply polarized during the election period.³⁷ As a result, voters were not able to receive objective information. Interference with the professional activities of journalists was also observed, including the fact that physical retaliation was frequent.³⁸ The organization said in a report that the NGO activities under the auspices of the non-governmental observer organization had an “alarming and large-scale” appearance.³⁹ As for the election disputes, according to the conclusion, the decisions of the courts were stereotyped and did not meet the minimum standard of justification.⁴⁰

III. THE CASE OF SAAKASHVILI

On December 2, the Tbilisi City Court held a hearing on the case of budget embezzlement against Mikheil Saakashvili, which was also attended by the accused.⁴¹ The prosecutor’s office accused him of embezzling up to 9 million budget funds.⁴² Saakashvili’s lawyers have denied the allegations, calling the prosecution politically motivated.⁴³ During the trial, the ex-president spoke about the disputed issues as well as the charges against him.⁴⁴ The next hearing of the same case was held on December 27, which was not attended by Mikheil Saakashvili.⁴⁵ He did not take part in the hearing on the illegal crossing of the border on December 22,⁴⁶ nor in the trial of the “November 7 case” on the next day.⁴⁷ His lawyers named Saakashvili’s health condition as the reason for this.⁴⁸

According to the statement of State Inspector’s Office on December 7, the Ministry of Justice and the Special Penitentiary Service violated the Georgian Law on Personal Data Protection by releasing Saakashvili’s video footage.⁴⁹ The Inspector’s Office imposed a total fine of GEL 2,500 on both agencies.⁵⁰ This decision was appealed by the Ministry of Justice and the Special Penitentiary Service, which court hearing began on December 28.⁵¹

On December 27, Mikheil Saakashvili refused to be forcibly transferred from the Gori Military Hospital to the

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy presents Final Monitoring Report on 2021 Municipal Elections, ISFED website.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Mikheil Saakashvili is attending another trial against him”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 2, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/459263>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ “The trial of Mikheil Saakashvili is underway in court”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 27, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69001>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ “Saakashvili: I am being tried on the “November 7 case” and the accusation is based on only two testimonies”, information portal “Radio Liberty”, December 23, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31623219.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ “Decision of the State Inspector on the legality of obtaining and disclosing personal data of the third President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili”, website of the State Inspector’s Service, December 7, 2021, available at: <https://personaldata.ge/ka/press/post/7757?>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵⁰ “The city court is considering the lawsuit of the Ministry of Justice, which concerns the decision of the state inspector to disclose Mikheil Saakashvili’s video footage”, Information portal “Interpressnews”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69019>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Rustavi Prison.⁵² However, according to him, on the next day, people dressed in “black uniforms” at the hospital tried to transfer him against his will, as a result of confronting them, he lost consciousness.⁵³ On December 28, the Special Penitentiary Service issued a statement stating that the medical staff of Gori Hospital decided to discharge Saakashvili from the medical facility due to the improvement of his health condition.⁵⁴ And the patient did not obey the lawful request of the penitentiary staff on transfer to Rustavi N 12 facility.⁵⁵ The Minister of Justice also made a statement regarding the incident.⁵⁶ According to him, the prisoner could not stay in the medical facility after completing his treatment.⁵⁷ He also noted, that in case Saakashvili went on a hunger strike again and his health was endangered, he would be transferred to a medical facility in Gldani N18 prison.⁵⁸ According to Khatia Dekanoidze, a member of the United National Movement, it was necessary to take Saakashvili to a clinic abroad so that he would not become a “victim of personal revenge by Bidzina Ivanishvili.”⁵⁹

According to the Public Defender, on December 27, the representative of Public Defender and a member of a group of experts were not allowed to enter the Gori Military Hospital to assess Saakashvili’s health condition.⁶⁰

On December 29, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry called on the Georgian government to protect the rights of Ukrainian citizen and not to endanger their lives.⁶¹

On December 30, Mikheil Saakashvili was transferred from Gori Military Hospital to Rustavi Prison.⁶² On the same day, the ombudsman’s representatives twice tried to interview the prisoner.⁶³ However, this was not possible due to his health condition.⁶⁴ During the visit, the trustees obtained the necessary medical documentation, at the same time, they talked to the administration of the institution and the doctor, who said that they did not use force against the prisoner.⁶⁵ A similar comment was made by Saakashvili’s lawyers as well.⁶⁶

In connection with the incident, the Public Defender of Ukraine said that Saakashvili was in a difficult situation and his transfer violated international standards.⁶⁷

⁵² “Mikheil Saakashvili, who is in the hospital, refuses to return to prison”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/464670>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵³ Mikheil Saakashvili’s Facebook page, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/SaakashviliM>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵⁴ Facebook page of the Special Penitentiary Service of Georgia, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/381617901>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ “Minister of Justice on Saakashvili - Naturally, after the completion of treatment, the prisoner will not be able to stay in a medical institution”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6902>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵⁷ “Minister of Justice on Saakashvili - Naturally, a prisoner cannot be in a medical facility when the treatment is over”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/690269>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵⁸ “According to Rati Bregadze, in case Mikheil Saakashvili starts his hunger strike again and his health is endangered, he will be transferred to the 18th medical facility in Gldani”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69027>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁵⁹ “Khatia Dekanoidze - Mikheil Saakashvili will become a victim of Bidzina Ivanishvili in Georgia, so it is necessary to transfer him to one of the clinics abroad”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 28, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6902>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶⁰ “The Public Defender releases a statement regarding the transfer of Mikheil Saakashvili from the Gori Hospital to the Rustavi Prison”, Interpressnews news portal, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6906>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶¹ “Ukrainian Foreign Ministry calls on Tbilisi not to endanger Saakashvili’s life”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 29, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/464998>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶² “Penitentiary Service - Mikheil Saakashvili was transferred to the 12th Establishment in Rustavi, which was carried out in full compliance with the law”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69060>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶³ “The Public Defender releases a statement regarding the transfer of Mikheil Saakashvili from the Gori Hospital to the Rustavi Prison”, Interpressnews news portal, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6906>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ “The Public Defender releases a statement regarding the transfer of Mikheil Saakashvili from the Gori Hospital to the Rustavi Prison”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/690>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶⁶ “Nika Gvaramia - Saakashvili was not physically abused, he was weak, cluttered with sleeping pills - they approached him by a wheelchair and he could not resist”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69062>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶⁷ “Ombudsman of Ukraine - such actions of the Georgian government are assessed as torture and violation of the right to life of Ukrainian citizen Mikheil Saakashvili”, information portal “Interpressnews”, December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/690637>, updated: 07.02.2022.

Salome Samadashvili, an opposition member of parliament, noted that the authorities' actions constituted violence against a prisoner and grossly violated his rights.⁶⁸ He also appealed to the ruling party to have Saakashvili's health assessed by an independent expert.⁶⁹ According to Ana Natsvlishvili, a member of the Lelo party, the authorities "revived the hearth of crisis and tension" by transferring Saakashvili to Rustavi prison.⁷⁰ Nino Burjanadze, the leader of United Georgia, pointed out that the Georgian Dream by such actions was trying to deal with the third president not only physically but also mentally.⁷¹

The Public Defender noted that the State Council was not involved in the decision to return the third president to prison in Rustavi, and neither the ombudsman's expert group was allowed to monitor him.⁷²

IV. THE PROCESS OF "NATIONAL CONSENT"

On December 16, President Salome Zourabichvili spoke of the importance of ending the polarization in the country and said she was ready to facilitate the start of the "national consent" process.⁷³ As part of this process, the President held meetings with political parties,⁷⁴ non-partisan politicians, the Public Defender and the State Inspector.⁷⁵ On December 21, the chairman of the United National Movement, Nika Melia, announced the start of a "mass hunger strike" in order to demand the release of Mikheil Saakashvili in Tbilisi.⁷⁶ He pointed out that the hunger strike was a non-violent method of protest.⁷⁷ Melia welcomed the president's December 16 statement, noting that the hunger strike was not a hindrance to the president's initiative to launch a "national agreement."⁷⁸ The US ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan, welcomed the president's offer, saying she was supported by the United States.⁷⁹ According to Degnan, it would be a long process and everyone should contribute to it.⁸⁰

⁶⁸ "Salome Samadashvili - I appeal to the authorities to immediately give an independent medical expert the opportunity to meet with Mikheil Saakashvili and assess his condition", information portal "Interpressnews", December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ "Ana Natsvlishvili on Saakashvili's transfer to Rustavi prison - I am sorry that in the pre-New Year days the ruling party resumed the center of crisis and tension in this way", information portal "Interpressnews", December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/69065>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷¹ "Nino Burjanadze - not only they do want to physically destroy Saakashvili, but this is an attempt at mental assassination - such methods are used by the fascists", information portal "Interpressnews", December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/690>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷² "The Public Defender releases a statement regarding the transfer of Mikheil Saakashvili from the Gori Hospital to the Rustavi Prison", information portal "Interpressnews", December 30, 2021, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6906>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷³ "At the New Year reception, the President spoke about the importance of depolarization", information portal "Civil.ge", December 16, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/462606>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷⁴ He met with representatives of the United National Movement, the Georgian Dream, Lelo, Girchi, Girchi - More Freedom, Citizens, United Georgia - Democratic Movement, and For the People. See. "Degnan on National Consent Process: "We welcome the President's initiative and support it", information portal "Radio Tavisupleba", December 23, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31622919.html>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ "United National Movement launches mass hunger strike demanding Saakashvili's release", information portal "Civil.ge", December 21, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/463467>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ "Degnan at National Consent Process: The President's Initiative is welcomed and we support It", information portal "Radio Tavisupleba", December 23, 2021, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31622919.html>, updated: 07.02.2022

⁸⁰ Ibid.

V. VISIT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (PACE) TO GEORGIA

On December 8, members of the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) paid a fact-finding visit to Georgia.⁸¹ During the visit, significant attention was paid to the current political developments in the country, the October 2021 local self-government elections, judicial reform and other issues.⁸² The representatives of the organisation met with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Speaker of Parliament and members of the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs.⁸³ At the meeting with the Prime Minister, the parties discussed the 2021 elections. Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili noted that the government ensured that the local elections were held in a transparent, free and fair environment.⁸⁴ On December 10, PACE co-rapporteurs met with members of the United National Movement to discuss issues related to the detention of the third president.⁸⁵ The guests also met with members of the “Lelo”, “Citizens”, “Girchi” parties and other opposition MPs.⁸⁶ Among other issues, they have discussed the implementation of the April 19 agreement and constitutional changes.⁸⁷ During the visit, the representatives of PACE met with heads of diplomatic missions and representatives of the non-governmental sector, including GYLA.⁸⁸ During the meeting with the civil sector, the parties discussed justice, elections and other important issues. PACE co-rapporteurs ended their visit on December 10.⁸⁹

VI. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP SUMMIT IN BRUSSELS

The Eastern Partnership Summit was held in Brussels on December 15.⁹⁰ At the meeting, the associated trio (Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova) expressed readiness to continue working towards EU membership.⁹¹ For his part, the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, pointed out that the readiness of the European Union for partnership depended directly on the implementation of reforms by the states and the fulfilment of their commitments.⁹² Within the framework of the summit, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili met with Charles Michel and European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Oliver Varhelyi.⁹³ During the meetings the sides discussed the reforms to be carried out in Georgia. According to the Prime Minister, the EU representatives were convinced of “Georgia’s commitment to the reform agenda on the path to EU integration.”⁹⁴

⁸¹ Titus Corlatean (Romania) and Claude Kern (France). See. “PACE co-rapporteurs to make monitoring visit to Georgia”, PACE website, December 6, 2021, available at: <https://pace.coe.int/en/news/8546>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ “PACE Co-Rapporteurs Visit Georgia”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 10, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/461308>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ “PACE co-rapporteurs have completed their visit to Tbilisi”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 12, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/461719>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “Eastern Partnership summit, 15 December 2021”, Website of Council of the European Union, available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁹¹ “The Associated Trio is ready to work towards EU membership”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 16, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/462544>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁹² “Presidents of the Council of Europe and the European Commission on the Eastern Partnership”, information portal “Civil.ge”, December 16, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/462511>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁹³ “Irakli Gharibashvili met with European Union leaders before the Eastern Partnership Summit”, Information Portal “Civil.ge”, December 15, 2021, available at: <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/462455>, updated: 07.02.2022.

⁹⁴ Ibid.