



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Transparency International Georgia launched the National Integrity (NIS) System Assessment Report

Transparency International Georgia released today a comprehensive national integrity system report examining the functioning of 12 institutions in Georgia. The report “National Integrity System Assessment Georgia 2015” was prepared under the framework of the regional project, “National Integrity System Assessments in European Neighborhood East Region”, which is coordinated by Transparency International Secretariat and funded by the European Union in the amount of EUR 680,517.

Instead of attempting to measure the level of corruption in a country, NIS studies (which have been conducted in multiple countries according to a methodology developed by the Transparency International Secretariat in Berlin) aim to assess the strength of the institutions that each play an important role in terms of establishing good governance, increasing transparency and accountability and therefore preventing corruption in the country. The first assessment of this kind was published in 2011. The 2015 report reflects (both positive and negative) changes that have taken place in the system over the last four years.

### The following major positive changes that occurred between 2011 and 2015 are:

- An increase in the level of the media’s independence, resulting in a more diverse and balanced coverage of the political developments and the government’s activities by the largest TV stations
- A more independent judiciary as demonstrated by a more proactive behavior of judges vis-a-vis the Prosecutor’s Office in criminal trials as well as the growth of the number of administrative disputes won by private parties against the state
- A more pluralistic Parliament with a higher degree of independence from the government
- An increase both in the number and the quality of the audits conducted by the State Audit Office
- A more independent electoral administration that operates more transparently and conducts the elections better than before

### At the same time, a number of serious problems of the system must be noted:

- There are signs of informal external influence over the executive branch which reduces its independence
- Parliament is still not sufficiently independent to effectively oversee the government’s activities
- Evidence of political motivation and selective application of justice in the criminal cases against former public officials cast a shadow over the independence of both the judiciary and the law enforcement agencies
- Mass dismissals from public institutions after the last parliamentary and local elections indicate that Georgia is yet to establish a professional civil service that would be free of political influence
- Alleged cases of nepotism and favoritism in public sector appointments are a matter of concern
- A significant part of public procurement is still conducted without open and competitive tenders

### Based on these and other findings, a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the Georgian NIS are proposed, including:

- The legal provisions designed to prevent corruption and conflict of interest in public service must improve and appropriate mechanisms must be created for their enforcement in practice, possibly through the establishment of an independent anti-corruption agencies equipped with the necessary powers and resources
- The shortcomings of the public procurement law must be eliminated and the volume of contracts concluded without competitive bidding must be reduced
- Progress must continue toward the establishment of more equal electoral conditions for political parties, which requires elimination of the electoral system’s remaining problems and provision of political parties with more even access to resources
- Informal external influence over the government must end
- An independent and professional civil service free from political influence must be established. This requires completion of the legislative reform, creation of a transparent system of recruitment, promotion, dismissal and remuneration in civil service, and eradication of the cases of favoritism and nepotism as well as of the practice of mass dismissals of civil servants after elections

The full results of the research are presented in the “National Integrity System Assessment Georgia 2015” publication (available in both English and Georgian).

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