



# **EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF ZUGDIDI**

# CONTENTS

Introduction:	_____	3
Chapter 1: Main Findings	_____	3
Chapter 2: General Information about the Municipal Council of Zugdidi	__	4
Chapter 3: Important Developments	_____	8
Chapter 4: Activities of Commissions and Factions of the Municipal Council	__	9
Chapter 5: Control of Bodies Accountable to the Municipal Council	__	12
Chapter 6: Activities of ad hoc Task Forces	_____	13
Chapter 7: Incomplete Asset Declarations and Incompatible Activity	__	14
Chapter 8: Involvement of Members of the Municipal Council in the Council's Activities	_____	16
Chapter 9: Citizens' Involvement in the Municipal Council's Activities	__	17
Chapter 10: Activities of the Gender Equality Council	_____	18
Chapter 11: Expenditures of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi	_____	18
Recommendations	_____	23

## INTRODUCTION:

Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) is presenting its evaluation of the performance of the representative body of the Zugdidi Municipality – the Municipal Council elected in 2017.

The report is based on information requested and received from the Municipal Council and that posted on the Council's official website, as well as on observations of our organization.

The reporting period of the study is from November 2017 up to 2019.

## CHAPTER 1: MAIN FINDINGS

- During the reporting period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi exercised weak supervision on the Zugdidi City Hall and legal entities established by it, and the control over the officials and individual agencies accountable to the Municipal Council was formal in most cases.
- During the reporting period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi held 65 sessions, more than half (40) of which were extraordinary sessions.
- During the same period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi adopted 189 resolutions, out of which 146 were authored/initiated by the Zugdidi City Hall and 43 – by the Municipal Council.
- Only 7 of the 50 members of the Municipal Council are [women](#), which is 14% of the total membership.
- As of 2019, 4 of the 21 officials of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi had filled out their asset declarations with shortcomings.
- During the same period, only 2 of the 6 factions of the Municipal Council – the Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia and the Conservatives – submitted initiatives, while the factions of the United National Movement, the Industrialists, the Greens, and European Georgia didn't submit a single initiative to the Municipal Council.
- Considering the minimum activity carried out by the factions, the expenditures incurred by the Zugdidi Municipality on their functioning, which amount to GEL 582,032 in total, are disproportionately large.
- The Municipal Council of Zugdidi includes the Gender Equality Council, whose action plan was approved by the Municipal Council on April 2019; accordingly, a part of the planned activities are scheduled for the time following the reporting period of this study.

- All members of the Municipal Council have been absent from the Council's sessions during the reporting period. There were 965 absences from the Council's sessions in total, including 918 absences without a valid reason. Members of the Council failed to take part in commission sessions 1,012 times, including 993 absences without a valid reason.
- The Chairperson of the European Georgia faction, Gela Toloraia, missed the most sessions of the Municipal Council (57) without a valid reason, while a member of the same faction, Irakli Ghurtskaia, missed the most commission sessions (72) without a valid reason.
- During the reporting period, the salaries given to members of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi amounted to GEL 1,952,557 in total, while the staff of the Municipal Council received a total of GEL 26,700 as monetary rewards.
- During the same period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi spent 89.8 tons of fuel, with a value of GEL 193,777; out of this, 16.5 tons (16,531 liters) of fuel (with a total value of GEL 36,606) was spent by the Chairperson of the Municipal Council, Mamuka Tsotseria.

## CHAPTER 2: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF ZUGDIDI

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi is the representative body of the Zugdidi Municipality which exercises the [powers](#) determined by the Local Self-Government Code **in the Zugdidi Municipality**. The Municipal Council also **exercises control on the activities of the executive body and its officials** within the limits established by law and carries out other powers determined by the Constitution of Georgia, other legislative acts, and the Rules of Procedure of the Municipal Council.

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi has **50** members, **35** of whom were elected in local single-mandate majoritarian electoral districts, while **15** were elected through the proportional system.

There are only 7 [women](#) among members of the Municipal Council, which amounts to 14% of the total membership. Among the female members of the Council, 5 are officials, including 1 chairperson of commission, 2 chairpersons of factions, and 2 deputy chairpersons of factions.

The Municipal Council has the authority to create commissions for the purpose of preparing issues for the Municipal Council, facilitating the implementation of decisions, and exercising control on the structural units of the City Hall and legal entities established by the Municipal Council. The Municipal Council of Zugdidi has created the following commissions for the duration of its term of office:

1. The Commission on Legal, Mandate, and Human Rights Issues (Chairperson – Sandro Sordia);
2. The Commission on Finance, Budget, and Revision Issues (Chairperson – Davit Gakharia);
3. The Commission on Healthcare and Social Issues (Chairperson – Otar Kadaria);
4. The Commission on Education, Culture, Sports, Youth and Gender Issues (Chairperson – Ekaterine Kipaia);
5. The Commission on Economy, Urban Development and Property Management Issues (Chairperson – Irakli Lagvilava).

There are 6 factions at the Municipal Council:

<b>Faction</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia	Tamuna Jikia
United National Movement	Ana Tsitlidze
Conservatives	Dazmir Dzimtseishvili
Industrialists	Mikheil Jobava
Greens	Joni Jikia
European Georgia	Batlome Shelia

Each chairperson of faction has a deputy, while the Chairperson of the Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia faction has 2 deputies.

Members of the Municipal Council exercise their powers without remuneration, only the work of officials of the Municipal Council is remunerated. In total, 21 of the 50 members of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi are officials, specifically:

<b>Name/last name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Date of election</b>
Mamuka Tsotseria	Chairperson of Municipal Council	14/11/2017
Besik Tchezhia	Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Council	14/11/2017
Tazo Patsatsia	Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Council	14/11/2017

<b>Chairpersons of commissions</b>		
Sandro Sordia	Chairperson of Commission	14/11/2017
Davit Gakharia	Chairperson of Commission	14/11/2017
Otar Kadaria	Chairperson of Commission	14/11/2017
Ekaterine Kipaia	Chairperson of Commission	14/11/2017
Irakli Lagvilava	Chairperson of Commission	14/11/2017
<b>Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of factions</b>		
Tamuna Jikia	Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia - Chairperson	14/11/2017
Iruza Kakava	Deputy Chairperson	26/11/2017
Zaza Prokopenko	Deputy Chairperson	26/11/2017
Ana Tsitlidze	United National Movement - Chairperson	14/11/2017
Davit Shelia	Deputy Chairperson	25/01/2018
Dazmir Dzimtseishvili	Conservatives - Chairperson	20/11/2017
Konstantine Kakava	Deputy Chairperson (former)	26/12/2017
Giorgi Todua	Deputy Chairperson	01/07/2019
Mikheil Jobava	Industrialists - Chairperson	26/12/2017

Edita Kodua	Deputy Chairperson	25/01/2018
Joni Jikia	Greens - Chairperson	01/02/2018
Amiran Chkholaria	Deputy Chairperson	01/02/2018
Batlome Shelia	European Georgia - Chairperson	28/02/2018
Gela Toloraia	Deputy Chairperson	14/03/2018

### **General statistics:**

During the reporting period, the Municipal Council held 65 sessions in total, more than half of which (40) were extraordinary sessions. The extraordinary sessions were initiated by the Mayor (in 25 cases) and the Chairperson of the Municipal Council (in 15 cases). Not a single session of the Municipal Council was cancelled due to lack of quorum during the reporting period. Seventy-two sessions of the Bureau were held during the same period.

<b>Number of extraordinary sessions of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi, according to years</b>		
<b>2017 (November-December)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
3	12	25

During the reporting period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi adopted 189 resolutions, 146 of which had been initiated by the City Hall and 43 [by the Municipal Council](#).

The body responsible for the oversight on the legal acts adopted by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi prepared 17 negative reports. The Municipal Council agreed with all of them.

A total of 3 petitions were registered at the Municipal Council of Zugdidi during the reporting period. The Municipal Council supported 1 and rejected 2 of them.

## CHAPTER 3: IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

### ***Changes in the composition of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi:***

In the by-elections held in May 2018, Tengiz Almasia, a candidate of the Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia, [was elected](#) as a new member of the Municipal Council. It had become necessary to hold the by-elections after the majoritarian deputy of the village of Tsaishi, Tamaz Zhorzholiani, [passed away](#).

In July 2019, Konstantine Kakava, a member of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi who had been elected on the party ballot of the Georgian Dream, was appointed as the Deputy Mayor of Zugdidi. He was replaced by Joni Zarandia, a member of the same party, at the Municipal Council.

### ***Transfer of property to the State free of charge:***

During the reporting period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi transferred the following pieces of property to the State free of charge:

- 2 [land plots](#) (cadastral codes – 43.31.71.099 and 43.31.71.100) located at 35 Bendeliani Street in the City of Zugdidi;
- A land [plot and a building](#) (cadastral code – 43.24.44.244) in the village of Orsantia, Zugdidi Municipality;
- A vehicle owned by the City Hall – Toyota Land Cruiser Prado (it was transferred to the Administration of the State Trustee).

### ***Consent on taking a loan***

During the same period, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi gave its consent twice to the City Hall to take a loan:

- By Decree No. 5 of January 23, 2018, the Municipal Council gave its [consent](#) to the Zugdidi City Hall to take a loan of GEL 5,987,218.23 from the Municipal Development Fund for the rehabilitation of the Botanical Garden of Zugdidi;
- And by Decree No. 8 of February 1, 2019, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi gave its [consent](#) to the City Hall to take a loan of GEL 3,500,000 with the aim of renewing the bus fleet.

### ***Important documents adopted by the Municipal Council:***

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi adopted the following important documents during the reporting period:

- The Municipal Waste Management Plan of the Zugdidi Municipality (Decree No. 45 of 28/12/2017);



- The Action Plan for Compatibility with Requirements for Institutions of Pre-School Education in the Territory of the Zugdidi Municipality for 2018-2020 (Decree No. 73 of 03/08/2018);
- The Youth Development Strategy (2019-2020) and the Action Plan for Youth Development of the Zugdidi Municipality (Decree No. 2 of 04/01/2019);
- The Action Plan of the Zugdidi Municipality for Gender Equality for 2019-2020 (final Decree No. 39 of 05/04/2019).

**Control of bodies accountable to the Municipal Council:**

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi has not identified any conflict of interest or infractions in the activities of the Zugdidi City Hall, including in the process of public procurements – not even when the State Security Service [arrested](#) the Mayor of Zugdidi, Lasha Gogia, and the Deputy Mayor, Gia Gulordava, on the charges of bribe-taking in November 2018, or when TI Georgia published [studies](#) about alleged corrupt [deals](#) at the Zugdidi City Hall and Municipal Transport of Zugdidi LLC.

## CHAPTER 4: ACTIVITIES OF COMMISSIONS AND FACTIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

**Activities of commissions of the Municipal Council:**

The five standing commissions of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi held 200 sessions in total during the reporting period. Not a single session was cancelled due to lack of quorum. The commissions submitted a total of 282 issues to the Municipal Council for consideration. In addition, the Commission on Legal, Mandate, and Human Rights Issues prepared 114 reports on compliance of draft legal acts to be considered by the Municipal Council with legislation.

<b>Number of sessions of commissions of the Municipal Council</b>					
<b>Year</b>	Commission on Legal, Mandate and Human Rights Issues	Commission on Healthcare and Social Issues	Commission on Finance, Budget and Revision Issues	Commission on Education, Culture, Sports, Youth and Gender Issues	Commission on Economy, Urban Development and Property Management Issues
2017 (November-December)	5	3	6	2	3

2018	14	14	18	11	24
2019	21	13	15	13	38
<b>Total:</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>65</b>

**Number of issues submitted by commissions to the Municipal Council for consideration**

<b>Year</b>	Commi- ssion on Legal, Mandate and Human Rights Issues	Commi- ssion on Healthcare and Social Issues	Commission on Finance, Budget and Revision Issues	Commission on Education, Culture, Sports, Youth and Gender Issues	Commission on Economy, Urban Develop- ment and Property Management Issues
2017 (November- December)	31	3	6	0	4
2018	27	14	22	9	40
2019	30	7	15	10	64
<b>Total:</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>108</b>

**Activities of factions of the Municipal Council:**

There are 6 factions in total at the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017. Four of these factions didn't initiate a single issue from the time of their registration up to 2019.

The factions of the Municipal Council were only able to initiate 14 issues during the reporting period. The Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia faction initiated 11 [issues](#), while the Conservatives initiated 3 [issues](#). It is noteworthy that the Conservatives faction only submitted issues to the Municipal Council in 2018. The Council adopted a relevant decree in all the cases.

<b>Faction</b>	<b>Number of initiated issues</b>
Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia	11

United National Movement	0
Conservatives	3
Industrialists	0
Greens	0
European Georgia	0
<b>Total number of initiated issues</b>	<b>12</b>

Only the Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia faction invited representatives of the executive body with the aim of considering issues at the faction's session, and only nine times.

And considering the minimum activity carried out by the factions, the expenditures incurred by the Zugdidi Municipality on their functioning - which amounted to GEL **582,032** in total - are disproportionately large, specifically:

<b>Expenditures incurred on the activities of factions (in GEL)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Telephone communication</b>	<b>Work trips</b>	<b>Price of fuel</b>	<b>Salaries</b>
2017 (November-December)	0	0	599	8,095
2018	1,300	3,674	40,174	237,071
2019	1,455	2,726	37,988	248,950
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>6,400</b>	<b>78,761</b>	<b>494,116</b>

## CHAPTER 5: CONTROL OF BODIES ACCOUNTABLE TO THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

According to the Local Self-Government Code, the municipal council has the powers to monitor the activities of the municipality's executive bodies and of their officials and to hear and evaluate their reports,<sup>1</sup> and the mayor is accountable to the municipal council of the municipality and to the population.<sup>2</sup>

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 heard and gave a positive evaluation to the [reports](#) of the Mayor of Zugdidi and individual officials of the City Hall. Representative of the City Hall were invited to the Municipal Council's sessions to discuss individual issues 25 times.

According to the Municipal Council, none of the members of the Council "has approached a body accountable to the Council, the mayor, or other officials with a question".

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi has not identified any conflict of interest or infractions in the City Hall's activities, including in the process of public procurements, whereas:

- The former Mayor of Zugdidi, Lasha Gogia, and the Deputy Mayor, Gia Gulordava, were [arrested](#) by the State Security Service on the charges of taking a bribe in particularly large quantities and were [found guilty](#) by the court. The Head of the Economic Policy and Service Management Service of the Zugdidi City Hall, Tengiz Kobalia, was also [arrested](#) on the charges of failure to report the crime as part of the same case.
- In December 2018, TI Georgia published a [study](#) which established that Evromsheni 999 LLC – the former company of Lasha Jaiani, the then Head of the Supervision and Architecture Service of the Zugdidi City Hall – had taken part in more than 70 tenders in 2016-2018 and won 39 of them. The absolute majority (35) of the contracts were concluded with the Zugdidi Municipality and its legal successor, the City Hall of the Zugdidi Municipality.
- In December 2019, TI Georgia published one more [study](#) about alleged signs of corruption in individual tenders of the Zugdidi Municipality. The study established that the companies in which Badri Nemsadze, Director of the Municipal Transport of Zugdidi, and his spouse, Ekaterine Keburia, own stakes – Zugdidi Auto Trans Georgia, Zugdidi Auto Trans, and Clean City – were winning tenders announced by the Zugdidi Municipality.

In connection with none of the aforementioned issues did the Municipal Council of Zugdidi convene a session, start studying the alleged corrupt deals in public

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<sup>1</sup> Sub-paragraph C.A, Paragraph 1, Article 24 of the Local Self-Government Code.

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 2 of Article 48 of the Local Self-Government Code.

procurements, and make an attempt to demand full and comprehensive explanations from the City Hall or present such explanations to the public itself.

Members of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi identified violations of the Code of Ethics in 2018. According to the Municipal Council, the Chairperson of the United National Movement faction, Ana Tsitlidze, violated the Code of Ethics and was given a “warning with recording in the protocol”, while a member of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi, Salome Patsatsia, was given a “warning” due to violation of the Code of Ethics.

The Municipal Council refused to vote in support of 2 issues initiated by the Mayor during the reporting period:

- the initiative of arrangement of a memorial cemetery in the administrative unit of Tsaishi;
- the issue of transferring a vehicle owned by the municipality to N(N)LE Destination Management Organization of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti.

## CHAPTER 6: ACTIVITIES OF AD HOC TASK FORCES

Five *ad hoc* task forces, designed to study various issues, were created at the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017. Their activity involved individuals invited from various sectors along with representatives of the municipality. Only 1 out of the 4 task forces achieved its goal completely, while three task forces accomplished their goals partially.

### ***Establishing the symbols (flag and coat of arms) of the municipality***

The *ad hoc* task force for the establishment of municipal symbols was created in February 2018. The task force elaborated a sketch of the flag and coat of arm of Zugdidi, which was [approved](#) by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi in July 2018.

### ***Regulation of parking***

The *ad hoc* task force for resolving [problems](#) related to parking in the territory of Zugdidi was created at the Municipal Council in July 2018. A number of shortcomings were revealed in the parking system (which was put in place from July 2017 and was being operated by JSC Town Park), both in terms of legal issues and risks of corruption, which was also confirmed by a [study published](#) by TI Georgia in July 2017.

The task force studied the existing problems and also elaborated new parking [rules](#), which were adopted by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi in December 2018. However, the parking operator failed to enforce the adopted rules, while the City Hall terminated the contract with the company in [January](#) 2019, and the Zugdidi Municipality has yet to select a new operator. Accordingly, on the one hand, the legal regulations of parking are in order, though the service itself is not yet provided to the population.

### ***The task force on the issue of street vending***

In August 2018, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi created an *ad hoc* [task force](#) with the aim of regulating street vending in the territory of Zugdidi. The task force held a number of meetings, and the Municipal Council also adopted a [relevant rule](#), although the problems in the area of street vending are yet to be resolved.

### ***The task force for studying the activities of municipal legal entities***

In December 2018, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi created a task force for studying the activities of municipal legal entities, which aimed to reduce bureaucracy as a result of reorganization of non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entities and limited liability companies, to ensure reasonable spending of budget funds, and to increase the quality of their work. The task force also provided the City Hall with relevant recommendations, though the [process](#) of reorganization has yet to be completed.

### ***The task force for improving the appearance of the City of Zugdidi***

In December 2019, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi created an *ad hoc* task force which aims to improve the appearance of the City of Zugdidi, as well as to select the form of street address signs. The task force has not completed its work yet.

## **CHAPTER 7: INCOMPLETE ASSET DECLARATIONS AND INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITY**

The issue of officials' filling out asset declarations incompletely and with shortcomings is problematic at the Municipal Council of Zugdidi. As of 2019, 4 of the 21 officials of the Municipal Council (Chairperson of the Municipal Council, chairpersons and deputy chairperson of factions) had filled out their asset declarations with shortcomings.



### **MAMUKA TSOTSERIA**

*Chairperson of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi*

In a [declaration](#) filled out in October 2019, Mamuka Tsotseria indicated that he owns a 100% stake in [Essential Oils Company of Zugdidi LLC](#), although, despite the requirements of law, he hasn't transferred the management rights of this stake to another person.



## **ZAZA PROKOPENKO**

*Deputy Chairperson of the Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia faction*

In a [declaration](#) filled out in February 2019, Zaza Prokopenko failed to indicate that he owns a 50% stake in [Ani+Nini LLC](#) and is the director of [Registered Cooperative Kulishkari-2014](#).



## **MIKHEIL JOBAVA**

*Chairperson of the Industrialists faction*

In a [declaration](#) filled out in February 2019, Mikheil Jobava indicated that he owns 50% stakes in [Nigi-21 LLC](#) and [Georgian Natural Product LLC](#), although, despite the requirements of law, he hasn't transferred the management rights of these stakes to another person.

It is noteworthy that Mikheil Jobava's business partner in Nigi-21 LLC is the Chairperson of the European Georgia faction, Batlome Shelia.



## **BATLOME SHELIA**

*Chairperson of the European Georgia faction*

In a [declaration](#) filled out in July 2019, Batlome Shelia indicated that he owns a 50% stake and is the director of [Nigi-21 LLC](#). However, despite the requirements of law, he hasn't resigned from the director's position and hasn't transferred the management rights of his stake to another person.

### **Requirement of legislation:**

According to the [Law](#) on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public Institutions, an official is obliged to fill out an asset declaration completely within two months after his/her appointment to the office,<sup>3</sup> indicate information about his/her and his/her family members' property and economic interests,<sup>4</sup> transfer the management rights of his/her stakes in business entities to another person, and resign from the position of the head (director) of the business entity within 10 days after being appointed to the office.

## **CHAPTER 8: INVOLVEMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL IN THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES**

The [Rules of Procedure](#) of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi do not specify what kind of absence from a session by a member of the Municipal Council should be considered as absence without a valid reason. The Rules of Procedure rely on a provision of the Local self-Government Code, [according](#) to which the powers of a member of a municipal council is to be prematurely terminated if he/she has not participated, without a valid reason, in the work of the municipal council for 6 consecutive months.

In the information provided by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi, the reason for absences from the Municipal Council's and commissions' sessions is explained as follows - "Without", which presumably implies that members of the Municipal Council who were absent from sessions of the Municipal Council and/or commissions were not on vacation or a work trip.

### **Participation in sessions of the Municipal Council:**

Members of the Municipal Council were absent from the Council's sessions 965 times, including 918 absences without a valid reason.

Among members of the Municipal Council, the Deputy Chairperson of the European Georgia faction, Gela Toloraia, missed the most sessions (57 sessions) of the Municipal Council without a valid reason, followed by a member of the Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgian faction, Otar Marshava (44 sessions), and the Deputy Chairperson of the United National Movement faction, Davit Shelia (42 sessions).

See detailed information in the [annex](#):

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3 Paragraph 1, Article 14

4 Article 15



### ***Participation in sessions of the Municipal Council's commissions:***

Members of the Municipal Council also missed sessions of commissions. There were 1,012 absences in total, including 993 absences without a valid reason.

Among members of the Municipal Council, Irakli Ghurtskaia, a member of the European Georgia faction, missed the most sessions of commissions (72 sessions) without a valid reason, followed by Malkhaz Tsikutania, a member of the United National Movement faction (67 sessions), and Ana Tsitlidze, Chairperson of the same faction (63 sessions).

The Chairperson of the Municipal Council, Mamuka Tsoferia, and the Deputy Chairpersons, Besik Tchezhia and Tazo Patsatsia, are not members of commissions and, accordingly, they do not take part in sessions of commissions with the status of a commission member.

See detailed information in the [annex](#):

## **CHAPTER 9: CITIZENS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES**

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi has adopted, by relevant resolutions, all the regulations that ensure citizens' involvement in the activities of the municipality, including in those of the Municipal Council:

- The website of the municipality has been updated, and an electronic system of petitions is now being introduced;
- The minimum number of constituents' signatures required for submitting a petition has been [decreased](#) from 1% to 0.5%;
- Citizens can submit a concrete initiative to the municipality in electronic form, as well as request desired information through the website;
- The Civil Budgeting Program has been introduced, by which citizens themselves decide what should be done with allocated funds;
- Citizens are informed about important issues through SMS Info;
- The Zugdidi Municipality is the only municipality in the region in which members of the Municipal Council [submit](#) activity reports four times a year;
- The Municipal Council holds public discussions of the budget together with the City Hall;
- Members of the Municipal Council are involved in "general assemblies of

settlements” and in the process of implementation of the Village Support Program; they also hold meetings with constituents;

- The quality of access to public information has [improved significantly](#).

## CHAPTER 10: ACTIVITIES OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi includes the Gender Equality Council, whose action plan was approved by the Municipal Council on April 5, 2019, and the main part of its the planned activities is scheduled for the period following the reporting period of the present study.

Accordingly, during the reporting period, the Gender Equality Council didn’t analyze the legal acts adopted by the bodies of the Zugdidi Municipality and, also, didn’t conduct the review of a single draft legislative act.

## CHAPTER 11: EXPENDITURES OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF ZUGDIDI

### Salaries and bonuses:

The total amount of salaries given to members and staff of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 amounts to GEL 1,952,557 (from November 2017 up to September 2019). During the same period, monetary rewards were only given to the Municipal Council’s staff, with a total amount of GEL 26,700 (GEL 17,300 in 2018 and GEL 9,400 in 2019).

<b>Salaries and bonuses issued at the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 (in GEL)</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Salaries</b>	<b>Bonuses</b>
2017 (November-December)	114,954	0
2018	934,810	17,300
2019	902,793	9,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,952,557</b>	<b>26,700</b>

You can see information on salaries given to officials of the Municipal Council during the reporting period in the table below:

<b>Salaries given to officials of the Municipal Council (in GEL)</b>		
<b>Name/last name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Mamuka Tsotseria	Chairperson of Municipal Council	67,764
Besik Tchezhia	Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Council	61,371
Tazo Patsatsia	Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Council	61,371
Sandro Sordia	Chairperson of Commission	51,143
Ekaterine Kipaia	Chairperson of Commission	51,143
Otar Kadaria	Chairperson of Commission	52,286
Irakli Lagvilava	Chairperson of Commission	51,143
Davit Gakharia	Chairperson of Commission	51,143

You can see information on salaries given to chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of factions of the Municipal Council in the table below:

<b>Salaries given to chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of factions (in GEL)</b>		
<b>Name/last name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Tamuna Jikia	Chairperson of Faction	51,143
Zaza Prokopenko	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	29,950
Iruza Kakava	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	30,000
Ana Tsitlidze	Chairperson of Faction	51,142
Davit Shelia	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	28,750
Dazmir Dzimtseishvili	Chairperson of Faction	49,810
Konstantine Kakava	Deputy Chairperson of Faction (former)	22,500
Giorgi Todua	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	7,500
Mikheil Jobava	Chairperson of Faction	48,000
Edita Kodua	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	30,000
Joni Jikia	Chairperson of Faction	46,000
Amiran Chkholaria	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	28,750
Batlome Shelia	Chairperson of Faction	43,429
Gela Toloraia	Deputy Chairperson of Faction	27,143

#### **Expenses of work trips:**

During the reporting period, a total of GEL **16,269** was spent on the work trips of members and staff of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi within the country and abroad.

<b>Expenses incurred by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 on work trips (in GEL)</b>	
2017	193
2018	7,309
2019	8,767
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,629</b>

#### **Telephone communication expenses:**

The Municipal Council of Zugdidi incurred expenses of GEL **15,726** on telephone communication.

<b>Expenses incurred by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 on telephone communication (in GEL)</b>	
2018	8,074
2019	7,652
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,726</b>

#### **Remuneration for the work of members of the Municipal Council:**

The Local Self-Government Code provides for the possibility of reimbursement of costs associated with the exercise of powers by those members of the Municipal Council who are not officials and, accordingly, do not receive remuneration. The total amount of these reimbursements at the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 equaled GEL 285,169.

<b>Reimbursement of costs incurred on the exercise of powers of members of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi elected in 2017 (in GEL)</b>	
2017 (November-December)	13,875
2018	137,902
2019	133,392

## Vehicles and fuel expenses:

There are 3 vehicles on the balance sheet of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi:

Vehicle brand	Year of production	Year of acquisition	Price paid (in GEL)	Used by
Volkswagen Amarok	2011	2012	58,000	Mamuka Tsotseria - Chairperson of Municipal Council
Toyota Camry	2012	2012	44,500	Besik Tchezhia - Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Council
Toyota Corolla	2007	2008	27,800	Out of order

During the reporting period, 3 additional vehicles were on the balance sheet of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi, and the Council has transferred all of them to the Zugdidi City Hall.

A total of GEL 33,866 was spent on the repair and changing of tires of the vehicles on the balance sheet of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi during the reporting period (GEL 22,711 in 2018 and GEL 11,155 in 2019).

Only the officials of the Municipal Council use the fuel purchased with the local budget; the Chairperson spends 700 liters of fuel per month on average, the Deputy Chairpersons spend 250-300 liters, and the chairpersons of commissions and factions spend an average of 150 liters.

In total, the Municipal Council of Zugdidi [spent](#) 89.8 tons of fuel, with a value of GEL 193,777.

Fuel spent by the Municipal Council of Zugdidi		
Year	Liters	Cost (in GEL)
2017 (November-December)	1,844	2,511
2018	42,858	92,849
2019	45,185	98,417

The Chairperson of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi, Mamuka Tsoferia, spent 16.5 tons (16,531 liters) of fuel during the reporting period, with a total value of GEL 36,606, which amounts to 18% of the fuel spent by the Municipal Council during the same period.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Exercise of control:**

Members of the Municipal Council of Zugdidi should participate more actively in supervision activities. Specifically, they should use mechanisms of control more frequently and supervise the process of public procurements and large infrastructure projects more effectively.

- The standing commissions of the Municipal Council should get involved actively in the process of supervision of the activities of executive bodies.
- The Municipal Council should actively and conscientiously reveal cases of conflict of interest, incompatibility with office, and violations of the Rules of Procedure of the Municipal Council and of ethical norms in the municipality.
- The Municipal Council should exercise control on the process of fulfillment of recommendations given, including those prepared by *ad hoc* task forces at the Municipal Council, and take care of the fulfillment of each recommendation.

### **Sessions of the Municipal Council:**

- The Municipal Council of Zugdidi should improve the organizational aspects of its work and reduce the number of extraordinary sessions, as they fail to ensure citizens' involvement, mobilization of interest groups, preparation of issues to be considered at the sessions, and transparency of the deliberative body.

### **Accountability:**

- Attendance of members of the Municipal Council at the sessions of the Council and its commissions should be improved. We believe that every member of the Municipal Council should exercise responsibility and attend the sessions. In addition, members of the Municipal Council should be subjected to corresponding sanctions in the event of missing a session without a valid reason.
- Filling out asset declarations by officials is an important mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability. At the same time, filling out declarations incompletely also contains a risk of corruption. For this reason, it is necessary that officials fill out declarations completely and without any shortcomings.

### **Activities of factions:**

- It is important that the activities of factions be beneficial for the relevant self-government body. Factions should get actively involved in the process of considering and deciding on issues that fall under the powers of the Municipal Council, study/control the activities of the City Hall and municipal legal entities; submit initiatives to the Municipal Council; get actively involved in the budgeting process; etc. Factions increase citizens' involvement in self-government, as well as support local initiatives and advocate for citizens' needs and problems. Therefore, we call upon the factions to use the said instruments actively.

### **Expenditures of the Municipal Council:**

- It is important that the expenditures incurred by the Municipal Council be in full conformity with the exercise of the powers assigned to the Council by law.
- The Municipal Council should exercise strict control on the administrative expenditures of both the representative body, in particular, and the municipality, in general, and be oriented at efficient spending of financial resources.