

# GEORGIA: HISTORY OF GREEN POLITICS

## Introduction

In 2012-13 at the initiative of the South Caucasus regional office of the Heinrich Boell Foundation, researchers studied the role of the Green Movement in the development of Georgia's political and public life. The aim of the study was to gauge the popularity of environmentalist and Green ideological views in independent Georgia, and also to increase public interest in processes surrounding the formation of the political party system.

With the aim of bringing to life the recent history of Georgia's party system, the researchers visited the archives located in the offices of the Green Movement and Green Party and the National Library archive, where they found official documents, original recordings, newspaper materials and photos, and also conducted interviews with prominent representatives of the Green Movement. They compiled an electronic archive of the Green Movement, which covers the activities of the Greens in 1989-2003.

On the basis of materials from the electronic archive, the research group described the important stages in the development of one of the first popular political parties in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They focused on the Greens' ideological principles and on cases where they were successfully implemented in political life, as well as on specific decisions that resulted in failure and later cost the Georgian Green Party its popularity.

An analysis of events clearly shows that the activities of the Georgian Green movement and the Green political groups were influenced by the ideology of Green parties in European countries, cooperation between Georgian Greens and their European partners and the peculiarities of the development of Green ideology in Western European countries. At the peak of their popularity, the Georgian Greens stood out for their commitment to democratic values and actively supported Georgia's democratic transformation. Their political plans and stated aims were close to those of the European Greens, though there were differences.

The first chapter analyses how the Georgian Green Party and Green movement tried to promote European Green ideology in the Georgian political discourse.

This process was most apparent during the first stage of the formation of the Georgian state, in the early 1990s, when the Green Party was created. No less interesting was the development of events in the following period, when the Green Party grew stronger along with the strengthening of the Georgian political system. But just as the party reached the peak of its popularity, its leaders quit and started participating in the formation of a pro-government party. This led to both the weakening of the Green Party itself and reduced public interest in the ideology and values of the Green movement.

The researchers tried to determine why it seems at first glance that over the past 20 years environmental problems have not lost their importance or acuteness while at the same time the public is not especially sensitive to environmental protection issues.

Many issues that inspired the creation of the Green movement are just as pertinent today, and many well-known problems are once again on the political agenda (such as the construction of the Khudoni hydropower plant and the laws on the use of forests and protected territories), but as early as the mid-

1990s it was already clear that the public had little interest in these issues while the representatives of the Green Party – those who remained in it – gradually lost public support.

This collection reflects the history of the Green Party and Green movement at different stages of its development. It shows how, during the period of transition to democracy in Georgia, political and economic processes, the specifics of the formation of the political system and the formation and patterns of development of the political party system impacted the development of the Georgian Greens as a political party and as a public movement.

In this regard, it is interesting to examine the historical experience of the Green movement in the context of the development of party systems in other transitional democracies like Georgia. Experience shows that the Georgian political party system is characterized by general patterns and tendencies very close to those in other transitional democratic systems which, according to Huntington, still have very weak institutions.

In Georgia's party system there is still no sense of stability in terms of who the main players and competitors in the political system are; there are no fundamental rules or boundaries for party competition and behaviour. Sudden change is very much to be expected, as can be seen in the unpredictable nature of the political regime and the economic and institutional/legislative environment.

In addition, a review of the stages of the Green Party's development shows that, after achieving political success, the leaders of the Green Party used various famous methods characteristic of transitional democracies in response to the challenges of the undefined nature of the system. They seek out strong political partners and get on their "bandwagon". They also join coalitions without regard to shared ideology.

There have been cases where Green Party leaders have left the party with the aim of achieving future political success. In this regard it should be taken into account that, like other actors of the Georgian political system, the "strong personality" factor played a role in the organizing of the Green Party. Moreover, the party's policies did not cover the whole spectrum of ideological priorities of European Greens, which over the years did not help it gain the attention of potential voters.

### **Creation of the ideological basis of the Georgian Green movement and Green Party**

This chapter overviews the formation of the ideological basis of the Georgian Green Movement and Green Party and its development from 1987. This process facilitated the introduction of European Green ideology in the Georgian political discourse, which proceeded particularly intensely during the first period of Georgia's establishment as an independent state.

### **Specificities of the Green movement in Western European countries and the Green movement in Georgia (1987-1992)**

In the late 1960s student activist movements lost steam in Western Europe and a new type of social movement took shape on whose basis a completely different set of issues were politicized.

Specifically, new issues became the subject of debate, including water and air pollution, control of hazardous substances, protection of natural resources, urban renewal, new roads, the building of new atomic power stations, feminism and the peace movement. In many European countries the

politicization of environmental issues laid the groundwork for the creation of environmental protection groups at the local and regional levels. Later on, local environmental protection movements in many countries united under umbrella organizations. As a result, public environmental organizations were founded in Germany (1972), and Friends of the Earth groups were founded in France (1971) and the Netherlands (1972).

In the mid-1970s the nuclear power issue environmental groups to step up their activism in European countries. Amid rising petroleum prices, the governments of many European countries decided to expand their nuclear energy programmes. In response, more and more local groups united in "anti-nuclear energy" movements – in Denmark (1974), the Netherlands (1973), Sweden (1976), Austria (1976), and Norway (1974).<sup>1</sup>

Later on, in the late 1970s, still more issues troubled the public. Specifically: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) policy of stationing Pershing mid-range nuclear ballistic missiles in Europe. The anti-nuclear movement enhanced solidarity among environmental activists in various countries: wide-scale demonstrations and protests were organized mainly by national-level pro-peace movements.

Organizations and movements espousing new values tried to establish new contacts with social-democratic or other left-wing political parties. However, the newly formed movements' negative experience of joining forces with already established left-wing political parties and then trying to influence their political platforms from within provided the impetus for the foundation of the Green Party.

As such, Green parties were established in various European countries for similar reasons. They began functioning as initiative groups of like-minded citizens at the local level focusing on social and environmental issues.

Like the European Green parties, the Georgian Green Party was born of a civic movement which focused on issues of environmental protection – issues that had been receiving little public attention up to that point. By attempting to engage society in the resolution of these problems, the Georgian Green movement shared the ideological basis of the European Greens. In its initial stages, the movement developed as a public organization, and its initial resolutions made no mention of political goals.

When the Green movement was being established (1987) Georgia was still part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and was not recognized by the international system as an independent state.

Around that time, at Gorbachev's<sup>2</sup> initiative, the period of "glasnost" and "perestroika"<sup>3</sup> began and the previously totalitarian system started allowing private property, prices were demonopolized, some free expression was tolerated, and public movements could be formed.

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<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand MÜLLER-ROMMEL, 1994. Green Parties under Comparative Perspective, Wien Universität, Working Paper n.99, Barcelona.

<sup>2</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev – secretary-general of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1985-91) and head of state (1988-91). Under his leadership, one-party Communist rule came to an end and the country dissolved.

<sup>3</sup> "Perestroika" ("transformation") was the Soviet policy associated with Gorbachev of reconfiguring the Soviet political and economic system. It is regarded as a key cause of the defeat of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the end of the Cold War. "Glasnost" ("openness") was the Soviet policy associated with Gorbachev where state institutions were called on to be more open and transparent.

As a result of these changes, public organizations were formed and multiplied in the USSR's constituent republics, especially Georgia. Their leaders became gradually more active in declaring their desire to get involved in political life.

At that time, the political system in Georgia, like in the Soviet Union as a whole, began to open up and free itself from the totalitarian pressures which had forbidden any political organization apart from the Communist Party to function. It should be pointed out that in the same period, Green movements were started in other Soviet republics as well, including in neighbouring Armenia and Azerbaijan, in the Baltic republics and in Russia itself.

The Georgian Green Movement was formed and functioned as a public movement in the last years of the USSR as an environmentalist association affiliated with the Rustaveli Society, a newly created public movement. Its ideological bases were fundamentally different from those of the other public – and later political – movements of the time. The charter of the Georgian Green Movement largely echoes the aims and priorities of European Green organizations, envisaging as it does "...the fight for improvement of the environmental situation, protection of the humanitarian and ethno-cultural environment, promotion of ecological knowledge and awareness among the masses, elimination of the technocratic-consumer attitude towards nature, [and] introduction of environmentally safe technologies."

In this regard it should be pointed out that in 1989-90 the Green Movement, which was one of the first public-political movements, engaged in activities that met the standards of the European Greens and was actively involved in discussions on ecological issues and political development processes. Two years before the collapse of the Soviet Union, members of the movement harshly criticized proposed large-scale infrastructure projects in Georgia. Specifically, experienced members of the Green Movement prepared reports and scientific assessments on the expediency of building various infrastructure projects, as well as works related to land, forests, private gardening, air pollution, and the construction of the Caucasus' central gas pipeline.

In 1987 the Georgian Green Movement organized the first events where issues of environmental protection were discussed, most notably the construction of the Trans-Caucasus railway. This was followed by protest against the construction of the Khudoni hydropower plant (Khudonhesi) and demands for the removal of the Soviet army's firing range at the Davit Gareji monastery complex.

It is important to point out that, just like the European Green Movement, the Georgian Greens also tackled the issue of nuclear weapons and nuclear energy. It is especially surprising that the members of the Green Movement took interest in the nuclear issue before the collapse of the Soviet Union, on 19 November 1988, when the Rustaveli Society's ecological association expressed support for the letter sent two days earlier by the Ilia Chavchavadze Society to the secretary-general of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the president of the United States which called for the declaration of the South Caucasus as a nuclear weapons-free zone.

In the same letter, prominent Georgian ecologists and leaders of the Green Movement cite the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in harshly criticizing plans to rehabilitate and reopen the Georgian nuclear research reactor in Georgia and the temporarily suspended reactor in Armenia and point out that "in conditions of the current culture of technology and construction", building or operating an electricity-generating atomic plant in the region was inadmissible.

These concerns openly expressed by the members of the Rustaveli Society's ecological association (Green Movement) yielded results – a part of Georgian society began expressing a negative attitude

towards the research reactor and later, on 30 March 1990, the presidium of the Georgian Academy of Sciences took a decision to suspend the functioning of the reactor after certain conditions were put in place (resolution No 83).

As such, Georgia's Green Movement, like their European partners, took active part in protests and organized a number of protests itself. In addition, like the European Greens, the main nucleus of the protest movement initiated by the Georgian Greens was young people, often university students. The Green Movement had a wide network across Georgia and, starting in 1989, regional organizations were founded.

The Green Movement itself, as a public organization, consisted mainly of highly professional researchers and activists. Its members included famous academics, members of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, PhDs, and leading academics who represented research institutes of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, state universities, experimental or theoretical laboratories and the state museum. They included Givi Tumanishvili, Revaz Khuntsaria, Shota Adamia, Mikheil Ghoghoberidze, Iulon Gagoshidze, Giorgi Gachechiladze, Nana Nemsadze, Nugzar Zazanashvili and Zurab Zhvania.

The founders of the Green Movement now say that the Green Movement's leaders, Givi Tumanishvili and Zurab Zhvania, managed to create the first Western-type nongovernmental organization in the late 1980s. This organization allowed participants in the movement to maintain professional unity and intergenerational linkages. Biologists, geologists, hydrologists and seismologists took part in the Green Movement, as did specialists in related fields and multi-sector professionals.

In addition to elaborating specific professional documents, the experienced members of the Green Movement tried to create precedents of working together with the executive authorities. They offered them recommendations, pointed out violations of the law and worked on elaborating necessary legislation. "If the Georgian government and the top party leadership fail to implement the aforementioned actions, it will be very difficult to control the ecological situation in the republic," says one declaration published by the Green Movement.

On 12 May 1989 the first conference of the Rustaveli Society's ecological association took the decision to transform the group into a separate organization called "Georgian Greens".

### **Ideological bases of the Green Party**

In 1990 Green Movement activists created the Green Party in order to take part in the first ever multiparty elections in the Soviet Union (shortly before its collapse). Members of the Green Movement recall that the Green Party's leader, Zurab Zhvania, understood that resolving environmental issues would not be possible without entering the political realm. This period coincided with the rise of broad political activity in Georgia, with many parties being set up ahead of the first multiparty polls.

Despite the fact that the Greens were not very successful in these elections and none of their political leaders won seats in parliament, the visibility of the Green Movement rose in society and remained high. This visibility was inherited by the Green Party, which grew popular in the coming years.

The first statement about the creation of the Green Party was made on 12 March 1990, but in fact the party was registered only on 24 April 1992. In the first few years of its political activity, there

remained significant institutional overlap between the Green Movement public organization and the party. In subsequent years the Green Movement and the Green Party shared common goals and principles and often planned joint events.

There are numerous documents in the archives of the Green Movement and the Green Party which reflect the ideology of the Georgian Green Party in the 1990s. On 23-March 1991 the second unified congress of Georgian Greens was held, where members of the Green Movement and the Green Party established the main principles of the Georgian Greens.

"Human life is in danger because of the total pollution of the environment and merciless destruction of natural resources. All our actions are aimed at countering this danger," it was said in the set of principles adopted at the congress.

The document adopted at the second congress also says that the centralization of power is unacceptable to the Greens and that they support a system of state power with clearly divided branches of government - legislative, judicial and executive - and with strong local self-governance. In the economic sphere, the Greens supported the establishment of a market system that ensured competition among participants and would be open to private initiatives while also meeting environmental protection standards.

These principles indicate that the Georgian Greens (which brought together members of the Green Movement and the Green Party) saw their main role as participating actively in the process of state building and seriously discussed the structure of the state political system and the establishment of democratic values, which echoed the sphere of interest of the European Greens.

Like the European Greens, the Georgian Greens opposed all violence and pursued their political goals through peaceful methods. They also proclaimed opposition to all kinds of oppression and persecution based on religious, political or other views.

At the same time, in contrast to the European Greens, who opposed nationalism, one of the stated aims of the Georgian Greens was the popularization of national values. One reason for this was the active support for the national liberation movement that started in Georgia in the late 1980s. Accordingly, the Georgian Greens said in a document adopted at their national congress that one of their aims was the popularization of national values because "[Georgian] national culture includes the unique experience of thousands of years of co-existence and reconciliation with the outside world. The disruption of national culture leads to the destruction of the environment and vice versa."

The Georgian Greens acknowledged that they attributed "great" importance to the restoration of traditional institutions and experience of coexistence with nature because, as it says in the main principles adopted at the second congress of Georgian Greens, "a society cut off from its roots can never resolve development problems".

Along with the acknowledged aims of "support for traditional and national values", the Georgian Greens' ideology was further distinguished from that of their European counterparts by their active support for national sovereignty and security. On 24 April the Green Party was registered and approved a charter whose aims include restoring and strengthening national sovereignty:

"...in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, [we] aim to protect the natural, humanitarian and ethno-cultural environment, fight to improve the ecological, economic and social situation, promote ecological awareness among the people and to eliminate the technocratic-consumer

approach to nature, create democratic and just legislation, establish real democracy, harmonization of relations among nations, and restore and further strengthen Georgia's total sovereignty."

The aims laid out in the Green Party's charter are fully shared by the Georgian Green Movement. The ideological unity of the Green Party and the Green Movement was demonstrated once again at the fourth programme congress of Georgian Greens on 18-19 July 1992. In the platform adopted it was noted that Georgian Greens "are a constituent part of the global Green movement" and "represent the Green Party and the Green Movement together".

The aforementioned documents say that the Georgian Greens share adhere to an ideology which is close to that of the majority of European Green parties. But there were differences, mainly related to the Georgian Greens' involvement in the national liberation movement.

It should be pointed out that in the 1980s and 1990s the priority values of the European Greens included equality and the protection of human rights (especially minorities); ecologically-focused thinking and opposition to nuclear energy; peace and disarmament; solidarity with the third world and, in general, a leftist egalitarian position, as well as the elaboration of an effective environmental protection policy which ruled out support for unconditional economic growth based on the principles of liberal market economics.

In addition, the European Greens, given their essence, found more common ground with organizations of leftist ideology. By participating in the political system they managed to further "open up the political systems of European countries and elevate authorities' sensitivity to public demands". The European Green parties also sought to protect the rights of minorities and migrants and opposed nationalism and chauvinism in every arena.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that the European Green parties supported values such as individualism, self-realization and personal self-determination and placed less emphasis on material wellbeing in many cases represented a challenge to the basis of their respective states' economic and security policy and thereby contravened national interests.<sup>5</sup>

For Georgia, however, issues of safeguarding newly won independence and security, protecting the country's territorial integrity, and economic independence and welfare were inseparable parts of the common political agenda, and it was impossible to find public support in the political space without acknowledging this. Accordingly, the Georgian Green Party paid special attention to the country's national interests, including issues of security policy, and linked the resolution of ecological and other problems facing the state to the restoration of Georgia's total independence.

"In Georgian society all spheres of public and state life are in tatters – the economic system is completely destroyed, as are healthcare and social services. We cannot produce specialists even for the most important sectors, we do not have modern equipment and technologies; our environment is on the verge of destruction; the demographic situation is very grave; having fallen victim to the pincers of empire, we are unable to avoid the ceaseless provocation of ethnic conflicts and so on. The ecological problem today faces all of mankind, as a matter of life and death, but whereas states in the West are able to devote all their energy to the resolution of this problem, we must simultaneously tackle national, economic, ecological and social problems. We have essentially emerged in an unprecedentedly dire situation... We will be able to resolve all our problems only after we fully

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<sup>4</sup> Ferdinand MÜLLER-ROMMEL, 1994. Green Parties under Comparative Perspective, Wien Universität, Working Paper n. 99, Barcelona.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

restore our state sovereignty...", the speaker of the Green Party, Zurab Zhvania, wrote in his famous article "Green Alternative", which was published in the Green Movement's newspaper on 10 August 1990. The article emphasizes that in that period Georgian politicians considered the process of restoring Georgia's independence and statehood to be unfinished and considered the possibility of Russia seeking to pursue its lingering "imperialist" aims to be a major obstacle.

Likewise, starting in the early 1990s, the Georgian Greens and Green Party actively used European rostrums to draw attention to Georgia's security problems in and increase European support for Georgia.

At numerous international forums held at the initiative of the European Greens, the Georgian Green Party appealed to its European partners and like-minded people to protect Georgia from Russian aggression amid the conflicts with its separatist regions. Specifically, after the events in the former "South Ossetia" in late June 1992, the Georgian Greens sent an appeal to the European Green parties, members of the European Parliament, and members of various national parliaments which said that, just like in 1921, Georgia was again faced with Russian aggression, and asked them to take all possible measures to prevent this aggression and keep Georgia from losing its sovereignty once again.

In connection with the military conflict in Abkhazia in September 1993 and the tragic events that accompanied it, the Georgian Green Party issued a press release. In it, Zurab Zhvania, the speaker of the Green Party and co-chair of the Union of European Greens, called on the other co-chairs and the leaders of the Green factions in European countries' parliaments to support "Georgia in its fight for independence and declare solidarity with its leader, Eduard Shevardnadze."<sup>6</sup>

Likewise, on 27-31 January 1994, a Georgian delegation led by Zhvania attended the congress of the European Green Federation in Vienna. In a speech at the event, Zhvania emphasized the danger posed by aggressive separatism to the new Europe and the new world order.<sup>7</sup>

As such, the documents outlining the ideology of the Georgian Green Party and Green Movement dealt both with environmental issues and the restoration and strengthening of Georgia's sovereignty. However, in the final charter of the Green Party, adopted in 1998, the main focus of Georgian Green ideology is nonetheless environmental issues. This is followed by protection of human rights, strengthening "real democracy", creating democratic and fair legislation and establishing "harmony among peoples".

Indeed, the environmental protection theme predominated in the legal initiatives proposed and the events organized by the Georgian Green Party. At the same time, representatives of the Green Party paid less attention to issues such as strengthening inclusive democracy, individual freedom, diversity, gender equality. An overview of the Georgian Greens' legislative initiatives adopted by parliament in the 1990s also reveals a lack of attention to some issues of great importance to the European Greens.

The Green Party did well in the 1992 parliamentary elections, winning 11 seats. Green MPs were given high posts in various committees (see following chapters), including the chairmanship of the environmental protection and natural resources committee and the deputy chairmanship of the defence

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<sup>6</sup> Press release by the Georgian Greens' press service about the statement by the head of the Georgian state addressed to the leaders of the Green faction of the European Parliament and the European Green Alliance's co-chairs and aimed at familiarizing their respective countries' leaders with the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia (archive document).

<sup>7</sup> Summary of the Georgian Greens' participation at the congress of European Greens in Vienna on 27-31 January 1994 (archive document).



and security committee. The party's chairman, Zurab Zhvania, became the deputy chair of the parliamentary foreign affairs committee. Leading members of the Green Movement were appointed to the post of environment minister (Shota Adamia) and deputy environment minister (Nino Chkhobadze).

The bills initiated by the Greens and adopted by the parliament were of an environmental nature, specifically, the laws "on natural resources licensing", "on collective logging", "on the transit and import of waste in Georgian territory" (which banned any entry or transit of radioactive or any other kind of toxic waste into Georgia), "on protecting plant life", etc.

Later on, the former leaders of the Green Party continued their activities in parliament or took posts in the executive government as members of a different party, the ruling Citizens Union. In the 1995 election the Green Party did not take part independently but two of its representatives entered parliament having been placed on the Citizens Union's party list.

In the 1995-99 convocation of parliament several laws initiated by the Green Party were adopted, notably the laws regarding the issuance of mineral mining licences, ecological testing, protected territories, protection of the Kolkheti National Park, protection of the animals, radiation and nuclear safety, hazardous chemical substances and clean air protection, as well as the ban on construction in parks and the forestry code. These laws formed the basis of Georgian environmental legislation. One of the most important legislative achievements of the Green Party is considered to be the article of the constitution dealing with environmental issues, Article 37.

An overview of the aforementioned laws shows that many laws initiated by the Green Party were adopted in the 1990s, though at the same time the activities of the party did not pave the way for raising public environmental consciousness. Furthermore, in the late 1990s the former Greens in government even began revising their position opposing the construction of the Khudoni hydropower plant.

In addition, in the late 1990s the Green Party stayed quiet with regard to the important public demands that did not concern directly to the environmental protection but rather to integration of the environmental issues in elaboration and implementation of the economic and social policies.

The Green Party's participation in the political system failed to raise the authorities' sensitivity to public demands and the Green Party showed less interest in upholding the principles of participatory democracy, which ensured greater public participation in the decision-making process. This was especially important in Georgia, as a transitional democracy where protecting the ideas of human rights, equality and participatory democracy had represented a problem from the very day the country became independent.

## **Conclusion**

As such, in the early stages of their formation, the Georgian Green Movement and Green Party were greatly influenced by the success of Green public and political movements in European countries and the fact that they shared their ideological bases. As was the case with the European Green parties, in the Georgian reality the Green Movement was born out of a civil movement focused on ecological issues and problems of pollution that had received less attention from other civil movements.

At the same time it should be pointed out that the Green Movement and the Green Party were among the first public-political movements which met the standards of the European Greens through its real-

world achievements and were actively involved in discussing ecological issues and the political process of development.

But it should be borne in mind that the ideological peculiarities of the Georgian Green Party and Green Movement – which distinguished them from their European partners and which were linked to Georgia's stage of political, economic and societal development at the time. The Georgian Green Party, both at the declarative level and in terms of action, focused on Georgia's sovereignty and independence and took active part in discussions concerning national interests and security policy.

In addition, the Georgian Greens made less of an effort than their European partners to put the most pertinent and important issues to society on their policy agenda. This would have been possible by integrating the principles of Green policy in state politics and familiarizing the public with them. This in turn would imply envisaging responsibility for enshrining environmental protection principles, protecting the principles of individual freedom, inclusive democracy, diversity, social justice and equality, and at the same time retaining the opportunity for sustainable development and peace.

It is also important to point out that, due to the weak institutionalization of the entire political system in Georgia in the 1990s, the Green Party was susceptible to the problems facing the political party system: there are high expectations for change and the political regime and the economic and legislative environment are highly unpredictable. Amid the challenges emanating from the unsustainability of the system the Green Party's leaders resorted to familiar methods of keeping themselves in politics: they sought partners in the form of strong parties and either choose to follow them or enter into a coalition with parties of differing ideology in order to improve their chance of victory in future elections.

In addition, like in other transitional democracies, the "personality factor" in the organization of parties in the Georgian political system plays a decisive role while the norms of intraparty democracy are not well established and the voters are less aligned to a particular party and the parties are less bound by the obligations they undertake in their platforms.

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